"That's the stuff."

Flipside

Spring 1987

MIKE KUNSA

Even Tough Bears Get the Blues: A pucked-off Teddy Ruxpin

Special Olympics: The Flipside

Article by Tyra Braden

"And now, if everyone will please clear the track, athlete Ronnie Miller will carry the torch for the final lap and light the Olympic Flame!"

The Executive Director of PA Special Olympics spoke into the microphone, his voice echoing throughout Kutztown University's football stadium. He stood with PA First Lady Ginny Thornburg and a handful of other dignitaries on a raised, covered platform. Below them, more than 3000 mentally retarded athletes, aged 12 to 80, picked their noses, scratched their genitals, drooled or shaded their eyes from the afternoon sun.

Ronnie Miller, all five feet and 200 pounds of him, finished his crab-like scuttle around the track. Face as red as the polyester warm-up pants that inched down his thighs to expose his flabby behind, he started the 20-step climb to the flambeau. Left foot pointing east, right foot pointing west, tripping over his pantlegs, Ronnie Miller at Kutztown was no match for Rafer Johnson at Los Angeles.

like hyenas after a carcass. The assistant executive patted his hair into place, smiled, turned left, then right. Ronnie, his behind still shining, his tongue covering his chins with a foamy layer of saliva, smiled too.

Five minutes later, the Executive Director spoke again. "Will everyone please rise so that we can all recite the Special Olympic Pledge. Melinda Sanders, special athlete from Butler County, will lead the pledge."

Melinda took her place beside the Director. Photographers elbowed one another for position. The pledge—Let me win; but, if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt—flashed on the scoreboard.

"Emmi-win-icanno-bravitem."

"Thank you, Melinda. And now, LET THE GAMES BEGIN!"

My brother Chuck, co-ordinator for Area D Special Olympics, and I took our four

WHENCE THE NAME, WHAT'S THE GAME?

Once again, Dr. Music has slouched off in one of his Albrecht Durer funks to contemplate how many pins can be jabbed into the head of an angel or one of those other chunks of important metaphysicality that possess him when he gets this way, so I suppose the job of explaining away what you are even now pawing falls to me.

***Flipside**... now, there's a name to conjure by, and, believe me, when the staff of this magazine decided to change the format of its predecessor, **Old Main,** they plowed through a whole fat lexicon of possible names.*

*We tried the Boy-Aren't-We-So-Clever-Droll-And-Witty Type: **Yesterday's Tomorrow, Snakebite Repellant, The Camel's Back** (making me wonder where he'd gone and why he didn't stay there).*

*The Nightmare-The-Thirteenth-Slasher Type: **Edge, Cutting Edge, Double Edge, Student Edge** (leaving out only Edge Lubricating Gel and Don't Push Me, I'm Close to the Edge).*

*The Just-Say-Probably-To-Drugs Type: **Wasted, Wired, Zigzag, Higher Student.***

*The Suffering-Misunderstood-Literary-Arteest Type: **The Demon Box** (inviting a lawsuit from Ken Kesey), **The Lower Depths** (Maxim Gorky would sue, too, but he's dead), **Ah, Humanity** (Eugene O'Neill is also dead, but he'd roll over in his grave), **Burning Heart** (and its sister publication Bleeding Ulcer), **The Visionary Company, The Answer** (which reminds me of the joke about the guy who climbs this mountain in Tibet to ask this famous mystic the answer to the mystery of life, to which the mystic replies, ''I would tell you, but it would only piss you off).*

*The Tribute-To-Woody/Ethan-Allen Type: **Interiors.***

*The I-Like-The-Beatles-So-Much-I-Want-To-Do-All-Kinds-Of-Gymnastics Type: **Jump, Shout, Twist** (why not Twitch or Tremble?).*

*The Damn-I-Lost-My-Watch-Again Type: **Modern Times, Le Temps Moderne, These Times, Our Times, Our Time, This Time.***

*The Old-Chuck-Darwin-Was-A-Fine-Fellow-No-Matter-What-That-Monkey-Said-About-Him-In-Court Type: **Evolution.***

*The C'Mon-Let's-Just-Cut-It-Out-And-Make-All-These-Conservative-Folks-Proud-Of-Us Type: **Student, Student World, On Campus, General Student** (meet General Custer), **Creative Student** (a rare book, indeed), **Student Life** (subtitle: The Magazine of Wasted Years).*

*The Can't-Back-Up-The-Promise-Of-The-Masthead Type: **Nobody's Fool, Vital Force, New Directions.***

*And, finally, The I'd-Really-Like-To-But-I'd-Better-Not Type: **Embryo.***

*The name **Flipside** was chosen neither for its musical connotations nor for its suggestion of an iconoclastic cant to its editorial content. We'll take stuff about music, but it must meet our editorial criteria. We have no predilic-tion for revolutionary subject matter, because to approach a story from any predetermined point of view is to be little more than a wooden-headed feature player in a Punch and Judy show. No, the staff picked **Flipside** because of the synonmyms for ''flip''—''impertinent'' and ''light''—and because they realize that every subject a writer takes on has within it two stories—the glib, facile one and the deeper, more significant one.*

The first story is easily found, quickly written and completely unsatisfying. It has a ''lede,'' follows the sacred inverted pyramid structure and informs...however, it takes the reader nowhere, teaches him nothing. This kind of piece merely processes information; it's the story that holds the ads together in a magazine. The other story doesn't surrender its secrets so easily. To get at it, the writer must become a kind of intellectual vivisectionist, cutting and probing among the viscera of his subject...looking for—Moses forbid that a mere ''journalist'' should be so presumptuous—some universal truth. In short, he must ''flip'' the story over as one might a fallen log, concentrating on the wriggling underlife rather than on the bark and limbs.

Such are the kinds of stories we hope to publish.

*Since some of what is printed in this first issue of **Flipside** might irk a few folks, I warn you fair. You will not find ''personalities'' here. Instead, you will find ''people''...people marred by the flaws that make us all the kind of damaged units one finds at a firesale: pettiness, deceit, confusion, ill-temper, rudeness, delusion, vulgarity, ignorance. Our writers haven't tried to put the ''best face'' on their subjects. They've tried to show you true faces.*

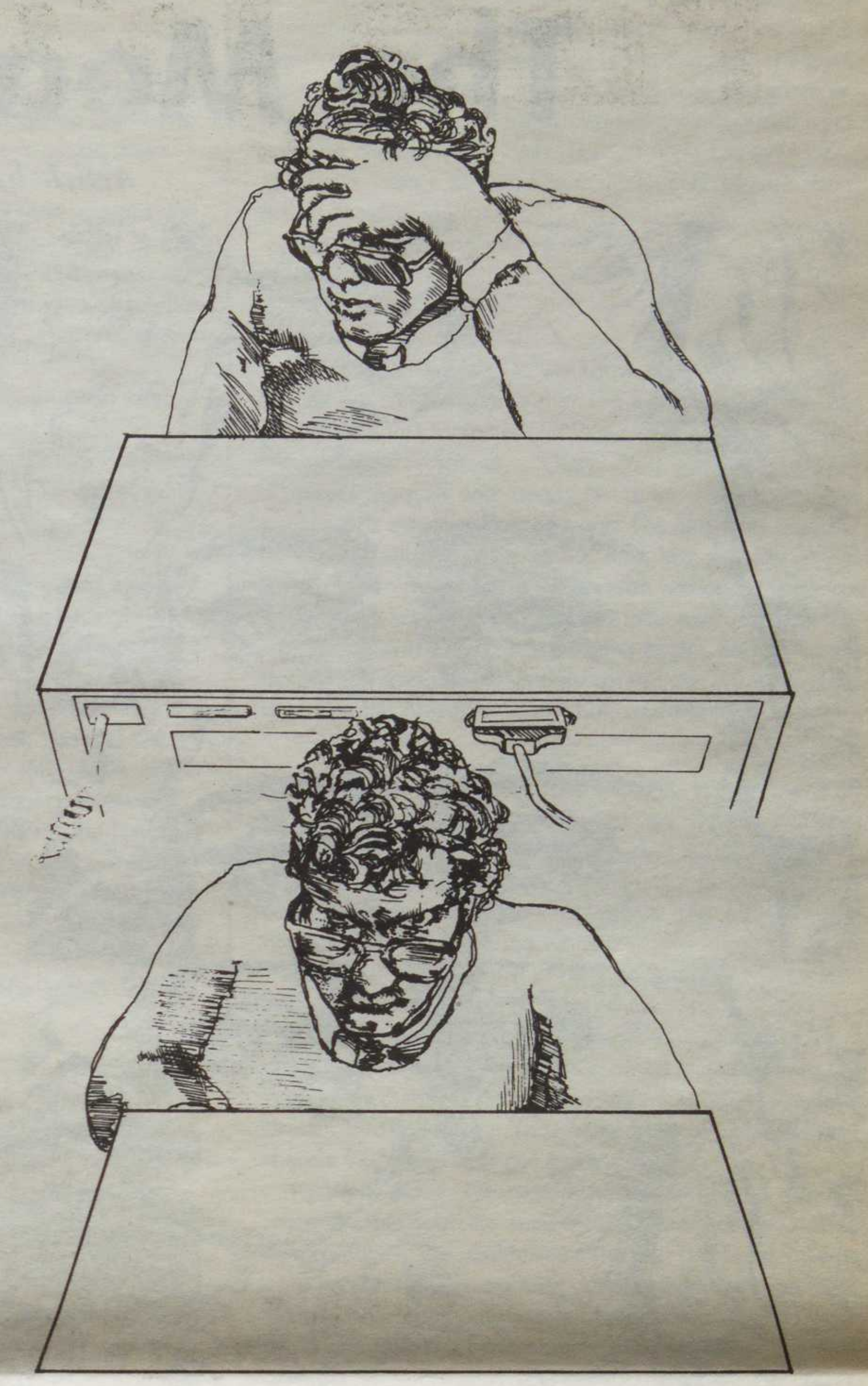
*You will find in **Flipside** the bleak landscapes of Alan Natali's lyrical essay ''Iron Valleys'' and Arthur Winfield Knight's splendid poem ''Brass Unicorns.'' Three stories—Kathleen Vail's ''Of Teddy Bears and Purple Haze,'' George Swaney's ''Revival at a Wrong Turn'' and Mary Carolyn Morgan's ''Brother Hugh's Serpent''—are either about religion or use religion as a controlling metaphor. None will make Jerry Falwell's ''must read'' list, or even, Lord knows, Jim and Tammy Bakker's. Mike Kunsa's ''Saturday's Hero'' is, in a way, sad. In our lead story, Tyra Braden strips the sentimental veneer from the Special Olympics. In ''The Mean Season,'' Jennifer Kamerer's grim account of alleged crime and real punishment, justice is never done. The subjects of Bill Rice's ''First Blood, Last Rites''—a rugby team—speak in language that would earn a film an R-rating. Cyndi Braun ends her ''Winner Take Nothing'' with a cruel twist of fate that turns a winner into a loser. But isn't that the way this old world wiggles around?*

*But we don't want to be pose as the dull priests of a fatuous journalistic religion or be doomsayers and gloom-merchants. **Flipside** includes humor—Lee White's ''Bongo's Fall From Grace,'' Jean Newell's ''Solomon, I Ain't'' and ''Diary of a Mad Housewife'' and Bill Bennett's bizarre and hilarious collection of ''Weird Wildlife.'' And you will find moments of great courage, as when a Special Olympian, a girl afflicted with Down's Syndrome, pulls herself to her feet and staggers from a track...and poignance, as when a second-string quarterback, after playing one down while the All-American he replaced was stitched back together, looks up into a cheering crowd... and brutal honesty, as when a wandering writer meets an old friend who has become a fundamentalist preacher and in doing so, wonders why he has never found such a clear path to any kind of salvation.*

We are also very proud to publish a new poem by Charles Bukowski, one of this country's most reknowned poets.

Ah, it's Music back from his sojurn among the other schizoids. He's shuffled in quoting Wallace Stevens...yes, yes, you're right...be is likely the finale of seem...yes, of course, Good Doctor...there's only one Emperor...I hate it when he gets this way.

*I guess all we can say is we tried to do what we thought was right. If **Flipside** turns into **Flipflop** or **Dipside** or **Flubflop** or **Gypside**... wait, more names...we must have a staff meeting to consider the Predict-Your-Own-Downfall-In-The-Masthead type.*



FRED VAUGHN

Regus Patoff Bone

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Flipside

EDITOR: Dean O'Brien
SUPERVISING EDITOR: Kathleen Vail
SENIOR EDITOR: George Swaney
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Frank Miklos
DESIGN DIRECTOR: Alan Natali
COPY EDITOR: Bill Rice
ADVERTISING DESIGNER: Emily Feagin
ADVERTISING SALES DIRECTOR: Laura Chikar
BUSINESS MANAGER: Jack Carson
PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR: Greg Christianson
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR: Steve Martin (mental health)
Mike Kunsa (recreation)
FACULTY ADVISORS: Bill Bennett, Alan Natali
STAFF: Ron Bender, Jamie Coffman, Tyrone Costello, Carole Lee, Mike Maisco, Dave Malloy
PUBLISHER: Professional Writing Program, California University of Pennsylvania

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true, only the earth abides, but sometimes when the winds blow foul, we find ourselves in the midst of...

The Mean Season

Article by Jennifer Kamerer

California University of Pennsylvania sits in the Monongahela River Valley—not a sprawling institution spawning a town crowded with fast food chains and apartment buildings, but spawning, instead, a huddled community of aging red brick buildings, bisected by Third Street, which runs through the borough of California before reaching the school and finally ending in a gravel parking lot between the railroad tracks and the river, shortly beyond the last red brick building.

The university seems to have grown beyond its founders' expectations, and now completely fills the space between its boundaries. At one end of campus stands the town—two rows of small businesses flanking Third Street on its way to the university: a barbershop, a florist, a bank, a laundromat, a bar, a gas station—all shielding the old houses, many of which have been converted to apartments, fraternity houses and rest homes that are rented from California's numerous landlords, who live "up on the hill," away from their tenants. All other sides of campus are cut off by the river's bend, a broad moat that surrounds California, forbidding more expansion.

September's end is a beautiful time in California. A time in the first stages of fall when the errant foothills of the Appalachians surrounding the school are sparked with vivid red sumacs and brilliant orange maples, blazing

against the mossy greens of a dying summer. A warm, lingering time that chases students out of stuffy dormitories, onto sidewalks and into courtyards to spend idle afternoons with old friends, while the work load is still light and dusk still hesitant. A time too soon dampened by a cold, never-ending rain that fades summer's azure skies to gray mist and washes the hills rusty brown on its way to the rising Monongahela.

Many of the university's students are locals—not wealthy offspring sent away for four more years of polishing before becoming junior executives in the family concern, but sons and daughters of steelworkers from Pittsburgh to Jersey, straying only far enough away from home to get that added edge, that degree in business or education that will assure them the comfortable future the mills once gave their fathers and mothers. All around them are constant provocations to stay and work, like burrs under a horse's saddle: the fewer barges pushing upstream beyond the college, the stillness of evenings not filled with the bellowing horns of tugs navigating in the thick valley fog, the absences of mournful whistles echoing off the steep hills banking the other side of the river, as fewer and fewer trains chug past delivering less and less raw material to working mills that are more and more scarce.

After nightfall, students walk down Third Street, off campus and into town, past the drugstore and pizza shop to the houses that line the streets. They walk in groups to fraternity parties, private parties, MUTT parties (frat parties of a sort, but without Greeks), Hollywood Bowl parties (rent the old bowling alley, throw a cold keg in every corner and a DJ on the dance floor, sell tickets for a couple bucks apiece and use the profit to finance an even bigger party, The Formal), wherever there's a chance of unlimited beer for two dollars a head and willing overnight companionship, until everyone's paired up with someone else and plastic party cups are placed over taps to signal empty kegs. Then they take the long, lonely walk back to campus, shouting and laughing to fill the unnerving stillness.

It's always the same people who make it to the parties: girls, Greeks, and GDI's (God-Damned Independents), coming back again and again just to drink with their friends after a week's classes, the same people who take the same streets to the same houses to drink the same beer and lighten the same load, and it was among these same people that he first appeared, someone who could be one of them, someone who maybe was one of them. At first he went unnoticed, a dormant fear moving among them as a vapor, visible only when lit by a spark.

On Sunday, September 21, at 3 a.m., that fear is realized as a 21-year-old university co-ed tells police that she has been raped after leaving a private party at 183 Beazel Street.

About the same time on Sunday morning, four male university students are trying to get into Stanley Hall, a female dormitory, through the front door. Denied admittance by the desk clerk, the four resort to windows. With the help of his three friends, Pat Garase climbs through a second-story window, climbs the stairs to the fourth floor and asks a resident to sign him into the dorm so he can see his girlfriend. The girl refuses and tells Garase to leave. Soon afterward, caught by the police, he lies on the floor, yelling that he didn't do anything. The other three men are arrested outside the dormitory. A fifth man is seen running away from the scene but isn't apprehended until the following Tuesday. Later in the day on Sunday, the resident assistants in Stanley Hall are told about the two incidents. The RA's ask the rape victim if she thinks the rest of the girls should be warned, and she says yes.

The women's dormitories are usually quiet by the time 12:30 rolls around on Sunday nights. The male guests, after enjoying a weekend of 24-hour visitation, are required to leave the dorm by then. A few girls are still up studying, brushing their teeth, or borrowing clothes to wear on Monday, but almost everyone is settled down in her room.

At 12:45 on Sunday night of that weekend, though, the fifth-floor residents of Stanley Hall are summoned by five loud raps on each door. As the girls poke their heads out of their rooms, they are told by Addie, the Graduate Assistant, that there's a floor meeting. The girls groan and complain.

"A floor meeting? At a quarter to one? What kind of shit is this?"

Addie continues knocking on doors. "I know it's late but we need everyone to be here. So come on, it won't take long."

"Well, at least it's not a fire drill."

Girls wander out of their rooms, rubbing their eyes and complaining like kids just wakened from naps. In their mismatched pajamas and furry slippers they look like giant, over-loved rag dolls.

"Why do we have to have a floor meeting now? It's almost one and I've got an eight-o-clock class."

The girls gather by the elevators in the middle of the floor, sitting and standing against the cool concrete walls, chatting and laughingly questioning why they're having a floor meeting at such an insane hour. Addie stands between the elevators, ready to speak; she doesn't look her usual capable self. Her pale face is tired and serious; her walnut brown hair is tousled and lank, and her shoulders slouch under her wrinkled teeshirt. She stands frumpy, weak and withered.

"Okay guys, quiet," she says, looking first at the floor, then at the last of the girls as they join the group, pulling their robes about them, and back at the floor. "I'm sorry we had to get you out of bed, but there were some incidents that happened over the weekend that we felt you should be told about."

"I wasn't here this weekend! I didn't have anything to do with it," a girl across the hall from Addie calls. Everyone laughs except Addie. She sighs, holds up her hands and looks straight ahead at the wall.

"No. It's nothing like that. A girl from our dorm was raped early this morning."

Smiles fall. Sleepy eyes open wide. The girls stare.

"What?"

"Where?"

"In the dorms?"

"No. In the parking lot. And..." But Addie can't continue; the girls want answers first.

"Who did it?"

"Do they know who it was?"

"Did they catch him?"

"If they catch him, I hope they kill him." A slight, pretty girl with charcoal black hair has been sitting back against the wall calmly, but now she leans forward and draws her knees toward her, clenching her fist. "Bastards," she says through gritted teeth. Trembling, face flushed, eyes narrowed, she stares at her fist. "They should kill every one of them." Her outburst goes unnoticed among the shocked inquiries. Addie puts her hands out again, quieting the hall.

"And," she continues patiently, evenly. "Eight guys broke into the dorm. They think they may be the same ones that raped her." Addie is barraged with questions again, but she stands calmly until the noise dies down, then begins to relate the facts as she knows them, in a rush, emphasizing her words with the halting motions of her upheld hands. "They caught four of them, two on the fourth floor and two coming out of the building. The guys are from out of state. They don't know why they came up here, but they broke into a second story window and were roaming around in the halls. Four of them are still loose, so please, don't go anywhere by yourselves, not even across the parking lot."

"Did they get into any rooms?"

"We don't know."

"Who caught them?"

"Security."

"Who was the girl? Do we know her?"

"All we can tell you is that she lives in this dorm. So keep your doors locked at all times and don't go anywhere alone, okay?" Silence. "Okay. You can go." Addie dismisses the girls and lowers her arms, waving away a knot of girls asking more questions. The girls walk dazedly down the halls, and spend the next few minutes going from room to room, filling the air with whispered speculations. Then, as the girls return to their own rooms to lie wondering in the dark, the banging begins on the fourth floor; the Graduate Assistants spread the warning. The doors on the fifth floor slam shut, and the locks click.

Monday morning came cool and still, bringing with it the first hint of fall. As the day went on, the sun warmed the air and the hills, removing the chill left by the night. The news of the rape spread quickly but quietly through campus, in low conversations before and after classes among sober-faced young women.

"Did you hear about that rape on Sunday?" The question was always followed by a pause.

"Rape? No, uh-uh, what happened?"

"A girl from Stanley hall was raped in the parking lot on Sunday morning and they caught four guys who had broken into the dorm. They were from out of state and there's four more that got away."

By Wednesday, the rumors had been filtered through more reliable sources, such as the editors of the weekly school paper, the California **Times.** The break-in was now known to be a separate incident from the rape—Pat Garase had really only wanted to see his girlfriend. Now there was talk of a private party somewhere in town that the girl, her name only speculation, had been to, and a guy that she had met there walked her home—then raped her outside the dorm when she refused to take him to her room.

"Someone must have known him for him to be at a private party." Girls counted their blessings, thinking back to parties when they were introduced to "a friend of a friend," talked to him for a while...

"Where are you from?" "Do you know so-and-so?" "Really?" "Ummm. How 'bout John Something-or-other, he was on the hockey team—I think." Drank a few beers with him until the beer was kicked and then noticed that all her friends had left and there was nobody to walk home with.

"You'll walk me home? Really, you don't have to. You're sure you don't mind? I appreciate this. I hate walking all the way up campus alone at night." He seems like a nice guy. He just lives in Uniontown, and he knows a lot of the same people she knows. A little bit drunk, she stumbles several times on the way back to campus; he catches her and they laugh.

"Oops! There I go again. I'm not really that drunk, just a little tipsy, really." Somewhere between town and her dorm, they stop beneath the trees that line the side streets and he kisses her. She kisses back without thinking. She doesn't want to think now. She's drunk and you're not supposed to think when you're drunk. They walk on to her

dorm, and he stops her in the building's shadows to kiss her again, a bit harder now than before, holding her there with her arms pressed to her side. She puts her palms against his shoulders and gently pushes him away.

"Thanks for walking me home. I do appreciate it." His arms remain around her, his face, only inches from hers, is expressionless, but his eyes seem to search hers. She drops her eyes.

"Maybe we'll see each other at another party sometime. Do you go to that party every weekend?" He doesn't answer, and when she looks up again, he's still staring at her.

"Look, I'd better go in now. Thanks again for walking me home." He still holds her, and her heart beats a little faster as she looks around for people, for anyone.

"Really, I've got to go."

How many times had they left with someone they knew so little about? What would have happened if someone had not stumbled by at the right moment? The girls shiver; even the afternoon sunlight feels chilly.

On Thursday, the victim's name was whispered all over campus as if it were a cold breeze.

"You know the girl they call Jabba? Her mother sent her flowers on Wednesday with one of those balloons coming out of it and it said 'cheer up' and she cried all day."

Some found it hard to believe.

"I heard a rumor about who the girl was who was raped. They say it was Jabba."

"Jabba? She's so huge, who would want to rape her?"

Jabba sat on Stanley's front desk where she works as a desk clerk Thursday mornings. Her flat, mouse-brown hair, cut short on the crown but shoulder-length in the back, framed a pallid, puffy face whose incongruously tiny features are all but lost in folds of skin. She was dangling her feet, ankles crossed despite the size of her legs, laughing and talking loudly, her rounded shoulders heaving with each grating laugh. Meanwhile, the staff of the **Times** was preparing Friday's paper, with the front page story about Jabba's alleged attacker.

I picked up Friday's paper and there he was, right on the front page, "Suspect Sought in Rape Case" above his head. With my free hand, I shoved two more copies of the **Times** into my duffel bag and turned away from the stacks of papers on Stanley's front desk, slowly making my way through the crowd of girls discussing the composite sketch, staring at that face the whole time. Outside the dorms, I nearly got hit by a red Rabbit as I crossed the parking lot, still staring at that face. He stared cooly back at me, challenging me with his eyes: "Find me if you dare." I folded the paper so I couldn't see him and stuck it under my arm, threw my bag in the car and went to get my friend Elaine in Clyde Hall so she could follow me home for the weekend.

Elaine was on the phone when I got to her room, so I sat on her bed and opened the paper. He stared straight at me through small slits set too close together. I stared back, contemplating the face I had wondered about for the five days since we were told about last weekend's rape.

Fine sooty hair, parted down the middle, capping a high wide forehead and ending in the middle of the ear—a little longer on the right side than the left. Almond face passive, arrogant. Skin smooth, translucent. Heavy black brows drawn slightly almost imperceptibly together, shrouding the eyes in shadow, making them seem even more close-set. Eyes leering from murky sockets.

"Are you ready?" Elaine interrupted. I folded the paper again.

"Yeah. Let's go," I said and walked out of the room, Elaine following with her bags, down the stairs and to our cars. As I got in my car, I tossed the paper on the passenger seat floor. It fell open to the front page. The penetrating gaze made me look up quickly—and there he was. Across the parking lot in front of Stanley, hands on his hips, laughing with some unsuspecting girl. He tossed his head back, shaking inky hair off his forehead. I looked down at the floor, and up again, and the couple was still laughing. It wasn't him. His face was too round, smiling, his eyes too clear. They kissed goodbye, and he started walking across the lot towards me. I looked down; the face on the floor returned my gaze. 'It's only a composite drawing,' I told myself, flipping the paper over and starting my car. At home, I unloaded my car, leaving the **Times** where it lay on the floor.

Searching for the shirt I wanted to wear out Friday night, I was leaning over, half-dressed, rummaging around in my duffel bag, when another copy of the **Times** fell out, open, of course, to the front page. I sat down cross-legged on the floor and studied the face again. Short, slightly-broad bridged nose breaking up a seemingly flat, oblong face. Nostrils almost imperceptibly flared—dark pits set far above the lips. Lips set with minutely upturned corners, mocking. The upper lip just a thin, dark line over a full, pouty lower lip, above a chin that begins round but squares off at the very tip. I searched his eyes for another second, then started to read the print below, glancing quickly over the information I already knew—date, time, place—to his description.

"White pants with a drawstring-type belt, a white Oxford style shirt with a thin unknown color stripe and white tennis shoes—possibly Nike brand—with a blue side swish."

That tells me a lot, I muttered, reading on.

"5-feet 7-inches to 5-feet 8-inches tall, weighs between 140-150 pounds and has medium brown hair and extremely smooth complexion." I looked up from my paper.

5-feet 7 or 8 inches... Not much taller than me, I thought, half out loud. Not built very big, either... I looked back at the sketch. His hair seemed black in the picture. I met his eyes again and paused. Then I folded the paper and buried it in my bag, found the shirt I wanted, stood up, and threw the shirt on over my head as I walked out of the room.

Monday morning the sun shone on the hills, making some of the trees look as if they glowed but leaving others in the shadows of stray clouds that crossed the sky quickly, continually changing the colors of the hills, a reminder that fall was near and nothing stays the same for very long. The rumors were changing too, and Friday's composite sketch was a major force behind that change.

"I know the guy whose picture that is. He looks just like this guy I went to high school with; his name is John. I saw him at the bar the other night after the paper came out and I was teasing him about it. I said, 'I saw your picture in the paper.' He didn't seem too amused. He just said 'Yeah, you're next.' She staged the whole thing for attention. John was just the last person she talked to at the party so she described him. John says she left, came back, and left again, alone."

Rumors like that continued through the week, but nothing was verified in Friday, October third's paper. There were some letters to the editor about the Resident Assistants withholding important information, like the exact site of the rape, from the female students. The **Times** Editor, Cyndi Braun, said that the RA's weren't even supposed to say that it was in a parking lot, because there was still some evidence there.

Before the paper was out on the eleventh, other evidence had brought police to a turning point. On October 3, after examining the evidence and questioning the suspects and witnesses from the party, the police administered a polygraph test to the girl called Jabba. Further questioning by the police led to a confession. She made the whole thing up.

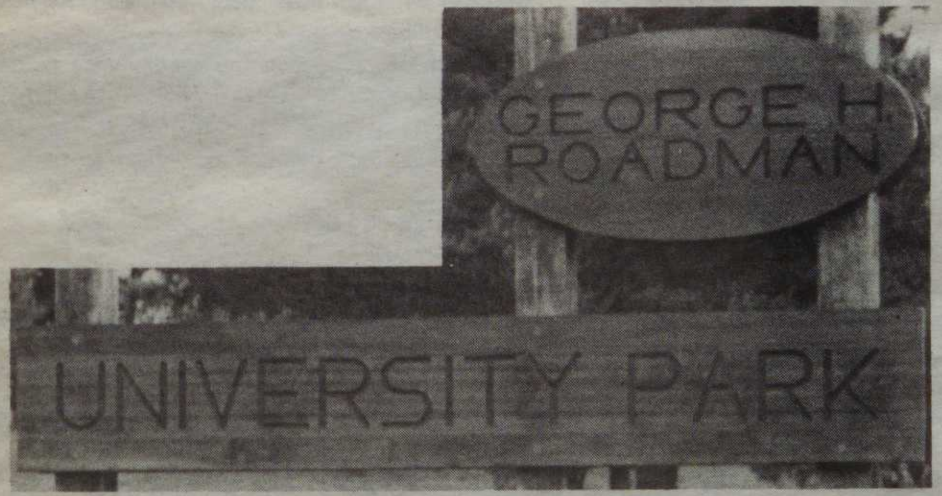
On Friday, October 11, the **Times** headline read "Rape: It Never Happened." The lead story and editorial were written by the News Editor Mike Kennedy. As soon as he heard of the confession made by the victim, he said, "I knew it wasn't rape." But not everyone was so willing to accept that view.

On an early October day when the first leaves had begun to fall from the trees, covering the ground in a mottled, gold and brown carpet, Jim Levdansky, a student living at 183 Beazel Street, passed a group of girls as he walked across campus through the warm Indian summer afternoon. They watched him as he walked by.

"There goes the Beazel Street rapist," one of them said. Levdansky just kept walking. What good would it do to argue? He'll just have to wait it out as everyone at California waits out the early winter months of cold, soaking rains that strip the sky and the trees and the land bare, in preparation for the snow that is sure to come. **Flipside**

Drawings by Susan Smith-Stasicha

Student Association Inc.



50 Years of Service

what he thought was a game became the moral equivalent of war for one who had no desire to fight.

GREG CHRISTIANSON

First Blood, Last Rites

Article by Bill Rice

This article contains language that almost everyone will find offensive.

I was late, but still stopped at the keg to draw a beer. The A-side game—Rugby's equivalent of varsity—was almost over, and the B-sides would be forming soon, but I wasn't about to go out on that field without some sort of painkiller in me. Besides, the best thing for a hangover is more beer. Pre-game parties the night before seemed to be a tradition with the Roosterhead Rugby team, and who was I, a first-time player, to deny years of accumulated wisdom?

I wandered down to the sideline to watch the last few minutes of the A-side game. The other members of the Roosterhead's "Killer Bees," as we were dubbed by the more experienced A-side, crowded the sideline.

"Come on, kick some ass! Half a minute left! Run 'em over Andy! Tear 'em up!"

I saw Andy charging up the sideline ten yards away—short, thick legs pumping, punishing the ground—normally pale face crimson—a blond, runaway trash-truck—I swear I heard him growl. He clutched a white, undersized football in his paws. Four blue-and-white-uniformed State players intercepted him. They locked arms and closed in on Andy.

Andy didn't break stride. He spun and barreled backward into his would-be tacklers. His growl became a grunt. One hundred eighty pounds of rampaging gristle and bone collided—thwack—with the wall of State players. Suddenly, I understood rugby: a slam dance in cleats.

Blue and white players swarmed around and over Andy, reaching, grabbing, trying to rip the ball from his death-grip. He tucked the ball to his chest and squatted; one State player climbed over his broad back. He looked like a Sumo wrestler who had turned his back on a full-scale assault of grade-school punkers.

Failing to strip the ball from Andy, the four State players shoved him—and the ball—downfield, back the way he had come. Andy fought to hold his position. His high-top cleats tore the turf as he dug in.

Andy yelled, "Support! Support!" It was the voice of a lone Marine sergeant calling for help during a firefight in the Mekong Delta. It came from behind a slimy mouthpiece, set in a face smeared with Vaseline and sweat.

A State player tried to lean around Andy. Andy stuck one paw in the player's face; his arm shot out like a piston and heaved the offender out of bounds.

"Fuckin' support me, Roosterheads!"

Two Roosterheads plowed in, drove their shoulders into his hips, pushed him upfield. Another State player charged, butted Andy in the ribs, wrapped his arms around Andy's waist. Andy's elbow shot back and down. I recoiled from the sound of bone hammering skull.

Five more Roosterheads bound onto Andy. Two more State players piled on. Thirteen grappling, grunting, crazed Rugby players, all fighting for the ball he held, buried Andy. Still, from the middle of the writhing, struggling mass came that voice: "Push, faggots, push!"

A whistle blew. The game ended. The maul broke up, leaving Andy still squatting in a neanderthal hunch. He straightened and walked over to me on the sideline.

Andy's right sleeve was ripped half off at the shoulder. The left side of his neck was brushburned. Grass, mud and blood were ground into both knees. He took out his mouthpiece and spat red.

"Ready for your first game, Bill?"

"Yeah, sure, just let me get another beer..."

"Okay. And hey—remember what I told you. This isn't football."

Those words—"this isn't football"—eventually become part of every Rugger's initiation. It's the price one pays for playing a foreign sport. Most Americans have vague notions of how Rugby is played and so compare it with its American cousin, football: "Don't they use a football?... It's sort of like soccer and football, but different... Those guys are nuts, man!... They all get in this circle around a football, and kick each other... It's like, well, you know, football without pads." The comparison is almost valid, but don't ever tell a Rugger he's playing football. At best you'll get a sour look; at worst...

Actually, Rugby is traditionally thought to be the offspring of soccer, its birth occurring at an English college named Rugby School. A plaque the Old Rugbeian Society installed at Rugby School in 1895 tells the story: "This stone commemorates the exploit of William Webb Ellis, who, with fine disregard for the rules of football (soccer) as played in his time, first took the ball in his arms and ran with it, thus originating the distinctive feature of the Rugby game, A.D. 1823."

That disregard for the rules kept Rugby from becoming an organized sport for almost half a century after Ellis' charge down the field. Games involved anywhere from 20 to 300 players, depending on who played and where they played. Some clubs allowed hacking another player's shins with the toe spikes; other clubs, such as Cambridge, strictly forbade it. Games might last an afternoon, or as long as five days. Some clubs allowed a player to run the ball into the try zone (end zone) to score, others required kicking it through two upright goal posts.

In 1871, the representatives of 21 English and Scottish Rugby clubs met at Pall Mall Restaurant on Cockspur Street, London, in an effort to standardize the rules of the game. Over mugs of stout and hunks of beef, they formed the Rugby Football Union and drafted a set of 59 rules which became almost universally accepted. The Rugby Football Union is still the governing body of Rugby, and while the rules have changed, they are based on the same four premises: play never stops; the only way to get the ball down field is to do it yourself; it's anybody's ball; and protective gear is for sissies.

The last premise has prevented Rugby from becoming an official intercollegiate sport. No college will sponsor a contact—no, combat—sport whose players refuse to wear anything more protective than a mouthpiece. Rugby is played entirely on the club level. Small college teams (like the Roosterheads), city park clubs and major universities (like State) all play one another at will.

Ten minutes later, I was standing on our 22 yard line, the other 14 "Killer Bees" deployed around the field. I was playing fullback.

Chiselhead, who had the countenance of an Easter Island idol, explained between games: "Fullback's easy. When State gets the ball deep in their own end, their fullback will kick the ball downfield to gain yardage fast..."

"So what do I do?"

"Kick it back."

"Oh, what else?"

"Cover breakaways. You'll get some help from your wings, but remember, you're our last defense."

"What if I fuck up?"

"Just go out there and kill somebody. You'll do O.K. And watch their kicker. He's good."

The whistle blew, and State's kicker booted the ball from the 50, deep into our end. I stood paralyzed, a rookie soldier caught in his first barrage, a four-inch shell incoming and someone yelling, "Catch it, it's yours, play it!"

I sprinted for position, set myself to catch the ball and thought, 'What do I do with it after I get it?' By the time the ball reached me, State's forwards had charged deep into our territory. I held out my hands to catch the ball, and it dropped miserably between my fingers. The ball bounced crazily back and to my right. I scrambled after it,

clutched at it, almost fumbled it as I turned to kick it upfield and out of our territory. I held the ball in front of me, tried to punt it, certain it was going to be a good kick... someone hit me chest-high just as my foot reached the apex of its arc, and suddenly I was four feet in the air, stretched out horizontally, just enough time to think, 'Oh Shit,' before I hit the ground with my left side. The air rushed out of me like confetti pouring out of a busted pinata.

I crawled to my hands and knees, sucked the air into my lungs. I tried to breathe with just my right side. The ribs on my left seared. Half a dozen players from each side were scrambling for the ball—elbowing, cuffing, butting each other, like shell-shocked soldiers fighting for the only weekend pass in camp. I had to get that ball and kick it out of our end before a State player got hold of it and ran it into our try zone.

I dove on the ball and booted it downfield. The referee blew his whistle.

"Penalty on Red! HANDS! Scrummage here!" The ref dug his heel in to mark the spot where I had picked up the ball.

"You can't pick up the ball when there's more than two guys around it!" Chiselhead yelled back to me from his position as one of the forwards. "You have to use your feet to get it out of the middle of a ruck and to your teammates! THEN we can pick it up!"

"Sorry," I said, dazed.

The seven forwards from each team bound themselves into two wedges, three men interlocked across the front and the other four tapering behind. The eighth man from each side took positions at the rear of each wedge, but not holding on with the rest. The two formations faced each other a foot apart at the mark the ref had made, like 14-legged rams about to do battle. I stood 15 yards behind our scrum, waiting nervously for something, anything, to happen.

The ref called, "Seconds!"

The wedges collided.

A State player rolled the ball between the two scrums and the hookers, the middle men from each front row, shot their legs out, fencing for the ball with their feet. I heard Andy yell, "Push, Roosterheads, PUSH!" State's scrum passed the ball down the tube formed of the feet of the men in the back rows and out the point of their wedge to their eighth man. He scooped the ball and winged it, sidearm, ten yards out and behind him to one of the waiting backs.

State's backs worked the ball down their line and out to their wing with short, quick passes. State's wing sprinted with the ball up the sideline. John Paul, a five-foot-six version of the Hulk, tackled State's wing on the fly. Just before they went spinning out of bounds, State's wing flipped the ball to his fullback, who had been following close behind. He charged straight up the sideline, a wild boar on the rampage, two hundred pounds of blue-shirted, black-trunked, pissed-off bristleback. And he didn't give a damn about me, the 140-pound kid with the shaking legs and sick feeling in his stomach and the phrase, "...remember, you're our last defense," running over and over through his mind like the prayer I didn't have to stop this crazed assault.

I ducked, jumped, threw myself at him like a suicide Volkswagen ramming a tractor-trailer. I overshot and sailed across his path instead of into him. He hit me in the air and we went down, him on top of me. He landed on my left ribcage. I screamed.

When I got up, Andy had the ball and was going down under three State players. He tossed the ball to John Paul, who exploded downfield, weaving between State players like a slalom skier out of control. The players he couldn't dodge he straight-armed as he ran them down. His breakaway carried him to the 50 before two State backs hit him at once—their fullback picked up the fumbled ball and punted it deep into our end. I caught it on the bounce and kicked it back.

"Run like hell NOW!" Andy screamed at me. I gave him a blank look, then it hit me that when a player kicks the ball downfield, he must be the first to reach the ball before anyone on his team can touch it. I bolted downfield.

Before I was even close, one of State's forwards had the ball. A mass of Roosterheads trapped him, and Chiselhead stripped the ball. I scrambled for the ball, straightened, started to run. Then I froze, terrified, as I watched four State players close in on me like Hell's Angels attacking a rookie cop.

"Turn and set, Bill!" someone yelled.

I spun, braced myself for impact, held the ball close in to my chest and waited for help, or hell, to come. They careened into me, and I gave six feet before two Roosterheads drove their shoulders into my hips and stopped me cold. Suddenly I was caught in the center of a gang of snorting, growling, heaving combatants, all of

them seeming to press in on that one side of my ribcage. I lashed out and back with my elbows, tucked my chin down, ripped the ball away from the hands that clawed at it.

"Gimme the ball, Bill!" someone shouted in my ear. I looked up. It was Andy. It was his hands that had been trying to strip the ball. I was overjoyed to let him have it, and he passed it out of the maul to John Paul. The maul broke up, and the teams stampeded after the ball. We were a little less than a minute into the game. Already I was bruised, befuddled and barely keeping up. When the game was over, my body felt as if it had been slammed repeatedly by Hulk Hogan, and my mind felt as if I had taken a bar exam on a crowded subway platform.

While that first minute seemed to me to last a decade, most Rugby games last anywhere from forty to ninety

cont. on pg. 37...

by Charles Bukowski

now that I'm told...

I.

now that I'm told that I'm fairly famous,
facing this white rectangle of paper
hardly helps at
all.

now here in this room
the act of a fly suggests a
possible eternity.
I kill it,
surprised by my
swiftness.

II.

now that I'm told that I'm fairly famous,
I put on this certain shirt
and my wife says,
"where are you going? you're going to
meet somebody, some
female..."

I throw the shirt into the corner,
put on an old torn one
which is
smitten with cigarette
holes.

"last thing I need is one more
woman..."

"it's the novelty," she
says.

actually, I am tired of the novelty
of
hell.

III.

now that I'm told that I'm fairly famous,
people come up to me in public
places,
ask for my autograph:
"do you mind?"

"it's all right..."

"thank you..."

"forget it..."

yes, forget it:
knowing that fame is the offshoot
of the collective consciousness of
most ordinary minds
therefore
generally
the more famous you are
in your own time
the greater the chances are
that
what you are doing is
utterly
worthless.

IV.

now that I'm told that I'm fairly famous,
I meet others who are fairly famous
and we sit about
drink
and talk about things that happen to
the fairly famous
and how we
react to all
that.

strange thing about the fairly famous:
some of them are even sensible
and
at times
truthful and
humorous.
others of the fairly famous
of course
are utterly gross and dumb,
terribly stupid
for they believe in their greatness
which is proven,
of course,
by their bank
accounts.
these are almost always the younger,
the less talented
and their life-span via bank
account and everything else
is from
2 to 5
years.

V.

now that I'm told I'm fairly famous,
I have a new art-form to work
with: to forget all that
and continue to work
the quick knit fix
this existence has placed us
in.

at my age
fame means much less
than to a
peach-faced youngster of
23.

at 67
I know that to endure means to
fail again and again and
not to
quit.

I have only the grave to face—
that's my greatest critic,
and let this not lend to a
sombre seriousness
but rather to
an easy laughter with the
gods
that the luck of this place
has allowed me
to go this far
with this much, this
little.

VI.

now that I'm told that I'm fairly famous,
do let me say that
I enjoy my wife more
and the cats more
and the man down at the gas
station
and the bag boy at the supermarket
and even the motorcycle cop who pulls me
over to write a ticket, even the man
at the fishmarket,
even the gang of drunks I hired to paint
my house
who
left white brush smears on the
windows—
all those should be
fairly famous too
and
given enough sheets of paper
and
a minor consideration of
time,
they will
be.

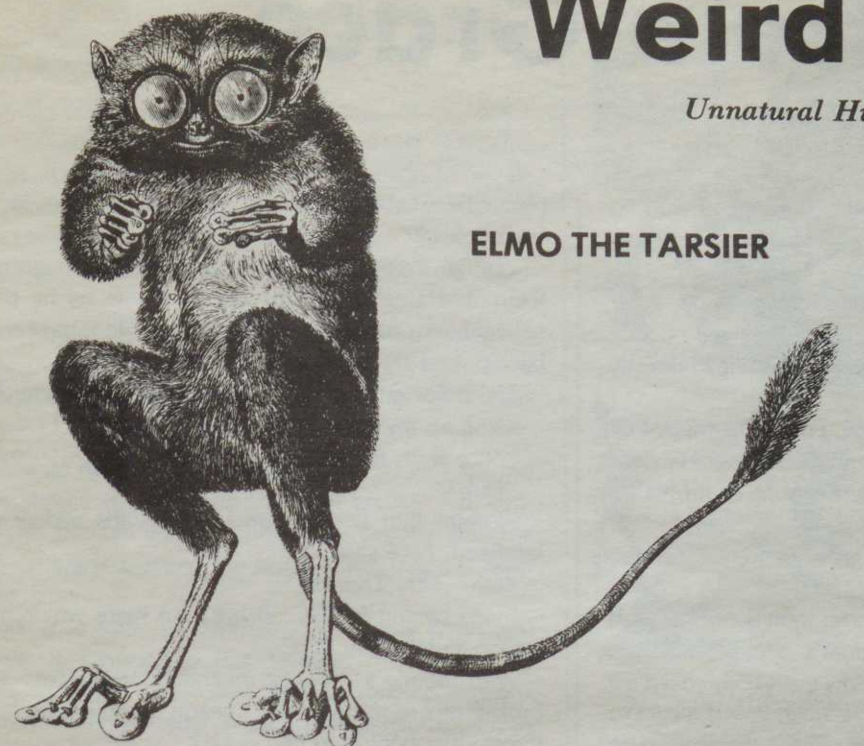
VII.

now that I'm told that I'm fairly famous,
I realize I had good reason
to suspect and not accept the fairly famous
of the centuries
and those more than
fairly so.

now
let's let it
rest.

Weird Wildlife

Unnatural History by Bill Bennett



ELMO THE TARSIER

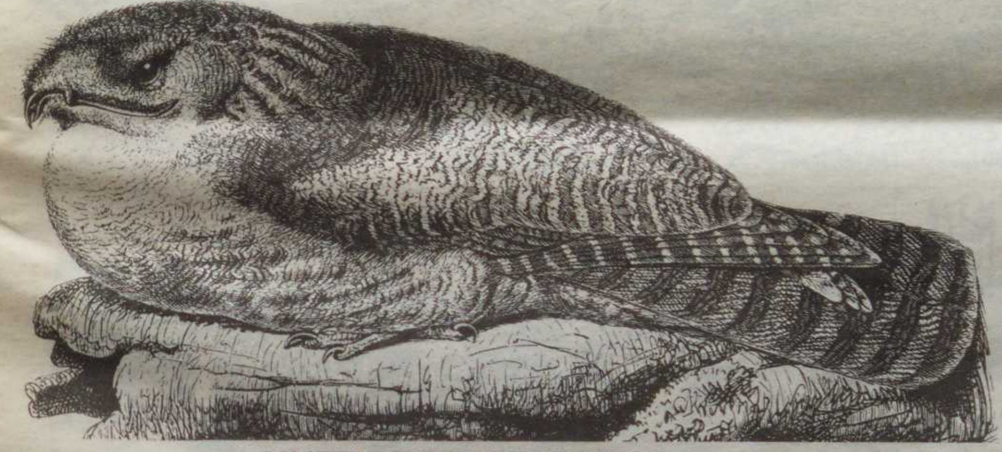
Time was, people, I was a nervous wreck. Trapped in the nine-to-five ratrace, the fear of being fired hanging over my head like an anvil, I'd go home with a case of the jitters a shaker full of martinis couldn't even begin to cut through. Not that home itself was a haven of tranquility. No sooner was I settled on the sofa when the missus would start denting my ears with a dismal litany of domestic horrors. One of the kids dropped his braces down the john, the other got sent home from school for cross-dressing and calling his teacher a slopehead dingbat, what I make won't cover this month's bills, we'll be lucky they don't send some burly thug out to repossess the TV, the soffit and fascia are rotting like a sugar fiend's teeth, the dog took a dump on the dining room carpet, the doctor doesn't want to talk about her X-rays on the phone, the refrigerator is making a sound like a fat man with severe gastritis, the dryer's started to leave the clothes smelling like urine, the critter we thought was a mouse was a rat—two rats, in fact, since one of them seems to have died behind the kitchen wall, when I am going to get up the nerve to ask for a raise, have I read that article on psychosomatic impotence yet, am I going to wait until all my socks are open at both ends before I clip my toenails, have I noticed that gassy smell every time the furnace comes on, does that low hum in the stereo mean it's on its way out, who do I think I'm fooling with those nasty magazines I keep hidden along with a bottle of rye and pack of Camels down in the workroom, did I notice how much the drains in the cellar have been backing up lately...

Enough! I was wired so tight in those days that one night in a restaurant, when a waiter accidentally dropped a plate, I jumped so high out of my seat that I knocked over our table and fell to the ground in a catatonic fit and had to be carted home on a door, stiff as a broomstick, an insane rictus plastered on my face like a paper Halloween mask. It was getting mighty near the end, I tell you. If something didn't happen soon, I was going to be one of those guys who stands swaying in his front doorway, brandishing a bloody breadknife, gibbering that Jesus in the form of a fox terrier made him do it and defying the SWAT team to come and get him.

Then one day I saw a book in a flea market. Called **You Are/Inwardwise/Yourself You**, it was written by a former attorney named Max Bloodstone, who one day saw the folly of worldly success and its attendant stress and began a new life as a yogi named Raga Ramadan. Since his great transformation, Ram had reduced his possessions to a loincloth and a prayer wheel, moved from his Bel Aire split-level into a packing crate on the outskirts of a Calcutta leper colony, and found himself happy as a clam without a care in the world.

I wasn't so sure about Calcutta, but the rest of it sounded good, so I plunked down my nickel and took the book home, followed the directions and got so blissed out you could have set off a twenty-kiloton blast next to my left ear and all I'd do is smile and hum a few bars of "Within You Without You."

These days, nothing bothers me. Well, almost nothing. I still get annoyed when some dope comes up and asks me, "Hey, man, you seen a ghost or something? Your eyes are gogging from your head like ping-pong balls and your hands are niddering and jittering like you were a junkie two days past his last fix." Listen, hamheads, of course my eyes bulge out and my fingers twitch. In case you haven't noticed, I'm a tarsier, and that's the way we're put together.



MYRTLE THE GREAT POTOO

In the beginning, after God had created the earth and all the creatures therein and turned the whole business over to Adam and Eve, He came to them one day and said the time had come to name all the animals, because otherwise future scientists would have a tough chore of putting together taxonomy charts, which would make pretty grim reading if the entries said things like "Big fat critter with ears like sails and a nose like a garden hose, also has tusks," or "Itty-bitty thingy that comes up out of the weeds and affixes itself to folks' tender parts and sucks out blood and won't let go until you singe his rump with a lit cigarette."

So one fine morning Adam and Eve sat down in a clearing and God paraded the earth's creatures before them. For the first few hours the job was easy enough. Eve would say, "Oh look—that's just got to be a giraffe," and giraffe it was, and Adam would say, "That fellow there: I'm going to call him the rhinoceros, because that's Greek for 'nose' and 'horn,' even though Greek hasn't been invented yet." And so on.

We birds got to go after the mammals, and Eve, who thought we were so cute, got to pick most of the names, and she really laid on the fancy nomenclature: Great Crested Grebe, Snowy Egret, Ruby-throated Hummingbird. But when I waddled out into the clearing, there was a long silence. And then Adam asked God, "Is this one of Yours? You're sure this isn't something the elephant dropped on his way through?" God told Adam to cut the comedy, they still had a lot of wildlife to name, all the way from reptiles to blobby items from the briny deep, and only the rest of the day to do it in.

So Adam said "Potoo." (Actually, he didn't say any kind of word, he just made a kind of spitting sound.) God said, "All right. Next!" When I didn't move off—I was hoping this name wasn't final, that maybe Eve would say, "Oh honey, let's call her the Full-throated Tropical Nightjar, she's so cute in a froggy kind of way"—Adam looked sort of vexed, but I guess he sensed my disappointment, because he turned to God and said, "Okay, write this down: **Great** Potoo." Ha ha ha. As though this made everything just fine, like there's a difference between "**puke**" and "**great** puke" or "jerk" and "almighty jerk."

I know, I know, sticks and stones and all that, but how eager would you be to appear in **Every Good Girl and Boy's Guide to Our Feathered Friends** if the price of entry was to be called the Great Potoo? Right. You'd say no thanks, I'll pass. Go right from Penguin to Prairie Chicken without me. It's so depressing I feel like going out and eating worms, except that's what I do already anyway.

THE PIGS AND THEIR POET PAL

Pigs is pigs, the saying goes; don't we know it. We're not deaf and dumb, you know, and we're wise to what you people out there think of us. We're dirty. We stink. We've got gargantuan appetites and stuff ourselves until we're as round as Goodyear blimps. Let Baby Billy or Grandpa make the mistake of tumbling into our pens and we jump up from wallowing in mud and manure and eat the bugger. Every awful thing about yourselves, you act like we're responsible. Your kid stuffs his grimy underwear under the bed and spills soft drinks on the dresser and you call his room a pigsty. Bad cops, greedomorph speculators, spotty-faced waitresses who give their favors to fraternity boys two dozen at a time—you call them pigs. Even your so-called kindness is cruel. After you've filled us up with mash and table scraps you lug us off to some stumblebumpkin county fair where sagjawed jeeters admire us not for our beauty, brains or personality, but for the potential pounds of bacon they figure they can lop off our butts. Our skins you make into balls that get kicked around by armored cokeheads so the cokeheads' masters can sell more beer. Some of you, who without hesitation cram your faces with cereal made of equal parts toxic dye and wood chips, and bolt down rat feces fried a golden brown by Colonel Chickenparts, have the nerve to say our flesh is unclean. (Believe us, your sentiments are way off base, but we do appreciate the resulting abstinence.) Even when you turn one of us into a cartoon hero, you give him the brain of a gnat and afflict him with a stutter.

Being a thick-skinned sort, as every snow-snorting quarterback knows, we don't take a whole lot of offense at your insensitivity, except for the pork part; even the most stoic creature in the world can't get too thrilled by the prospect of being jerked aloft on a hook and having some drooly-faced feeb cut its throat. On the other hand, we aren't exactly crazy about you, and are just as glad you don't see fit to associate much with us.

So imagine our surprise when one day this human wanders in among us while we're rootling around the woods for supper, gabbling like he'd found a magic mushroom among the acorns and tubers of the forest floor. Fellow turned out to be a poet, a gentle soul who told us he found our simple lifestyle refreshing after the tumult and turmoil of the big city, where only Man is vile, etc., etc. He went so far as to call us his true brothers, and hoped he might dwell in our humble company forever.

We were touched. We really were. So much so that after we ganged up on him, crushed him into offal with our bulky bodies and ate him, we observed a moment of silence.

Bongo's Fall from Grace

Humor by Lee White

The final football game of my senior year was for the Century Conference Championship. Buck, my older brother, was in the stands for the game. Not because he thought he'd see me play (three weeks before, he went to get a cup of coffee and missed that chance), but because the powers-that-be had asked him to be on hand when Bongo Barfly broke Buck's record for career rushing at our high school. Bongo, who often identified himself as "God's gift to football and the female race," needed only 60 yards in this game to ascend to godhood and, in the process, knock Buck out of the Pigskin Pantheon.

For three years I played high school football. That added up to 36 games, 327 practices, 20,148 wind sprints and 144 hours spent watching game films. My rewards for these labors: 30 seconds of playing time and 35 hours, 59 minutes and 30 seconds of watching the football messiah score touchdowns, dance in the endzone and throw kisses to cheerleaders melting on the sidelines.

Not that I'm complaining or anything; I consider my 30 seconds of playing time (achieved one evening in the fourth quarter when Bongo decided to take himself out for a few plays to order pizza) among the most memorable seconds of my life. They're right up there with my first car accident, my first hangover and the first time my mom found a **Penthouse** under my mattress. And as long as Bongo played in front of me, the half-minute of action was likely to be all I would see.

splayed hips and rotating his knees, then moon-walking to the 50 yardline, where he bowed and blew kisses to all four sides of the stadium.

With cheers and applause still ringing in his ears, Bongo swaggered to the sidelines, allowed Coach Weakbladder to pat him on the back and stepped directly in front of me.

Bongo shoved me into the bench. Four of us tripped all over each other and hit the ground. Coach Weakbladder saw this and, being the father figure that he is, turned his back without saying a word.

"Your brother's record is history, Runt," Bongo crowed.

I jumped up. Several inches shorter than Bongo, I found myself looking right into his Adam's apple. I was the shortest guy on the team. That's why everybody called me "The Runt." When I was given this label, it was meant to be an insult from the other guys. But once I started holding my own during practice, it became a nickname, almost a compliment. It wasn't long before everyone in school was calling me "Runt." Instead of my first name, I had "Runt" put on my football jacket. Somehow, though, Bongo could say "Runt" as if he were saying, for example, "Pondscum."

"Runt, anyone related to a chump like you isn't worthy of having a record at my school."

His school, I thought. Everything is his. We're **his** football team. They're **his** cheerleaders. Now it's **his** school.

please be excused? I just shit my pants." Again, laughter from behind.

"Laugh it up, little man," Bongo said through gritted teeth. His steel-gray eyes glared at me as he put his helmet back on. "While you still can." He turned and ran back out on the field.

The other guys laughed, patting me on the back and messing up my hair.

"Nice shot, Runt," one of them said.

"Huh?"

"Puttin' that hocker smack dab in the middle of his forehead. Nice shot."

"Oh, yeah. Thanks."

I was aiming for his left eye, but there was really no reason to tell them that.

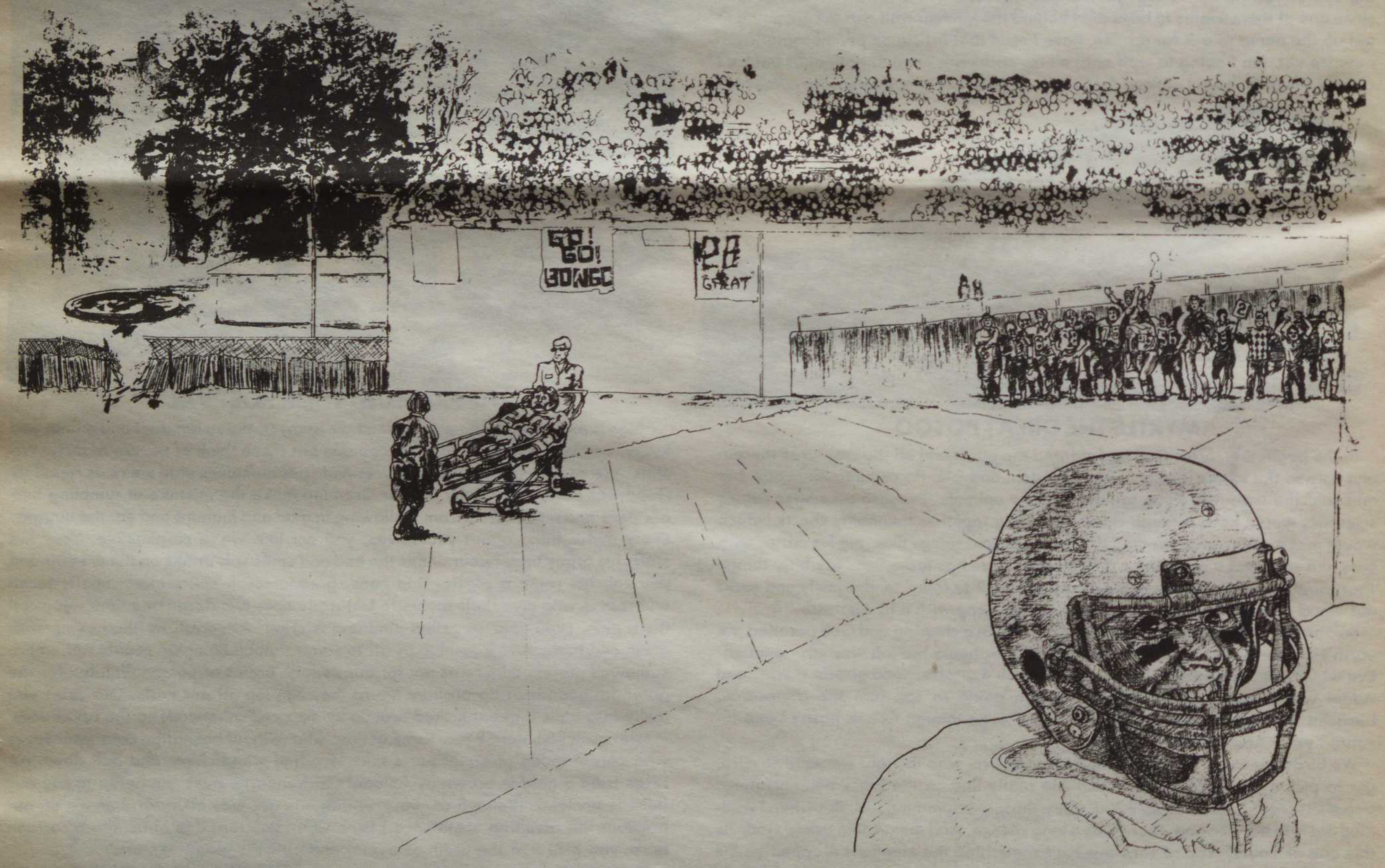
With Bongo's threats repeating themselves like a broken record in my head, I began scanning the faces in the stands, hoping to find Buck.

"Anyone related to a chump like you..."

Some of my earliest memories were of Buck. He loved to mess around with broken televisions, radios and record players, and I'd always try to look over his shoulder. After a while, he let me be his assistant. I'd hand tools to him the way a nurse hands scalpels to a surgeon. As I got older, **I** did the work while **he** watched.

"Your brother's record is history, Runt."

Sometimes when I was supposed to be sleeping, I would sneak into Buck's room, and he would tell me football stories from high school. He'd talk for hours. Eventually, he would forget I was there, and he'd just stare at his old football pictures. Then I'd sneak back to my room and go to sleep.



You see, besides being an arrogant, pompous, self-centered buffoon, Bongo Barfly was 6-2, weighed 190 pounds, ran the 40-yard dash in 4.5 seconds and, despite how innocuous I was, loathed me. When he carried the ball, Bongo—thighs as thick as the trunks of oak trees—looked like a man scattering a gang of dwarfs, rather than a high school senior churning through blockers and tacklers.

On his first carry that fateful night, Bongo broke three tackles, spun twice, touched the ground to regain his balance and scampered 47 yards down the right sideline for a touchdown. Bongo removed his helmet, exposing the tight curls of his long blond hair. Before slamming the ball to the ground, he went into his dance, swiveling his

"Your school, huh?"

I stared Bongo in the eye: "When they change the name to Bongo High, you let me know. Until then..." I snorted heavily and loudly and spat out a large glob of phlegm that landed directly in the center of Bongo's forehead. From behind I heard the laughter of the other guys who had hit the turf with me. Bongo wouldn't do anything right then, not while there were others to back me up. I think what Bongo hated the most about me was the fact that most of the guys on **his** team were **my** friends.

"Just wait until after the game, Runt," Bongo snarled as he wiped my snot off his forehead. "You're dead meat."

"You really know how to scare a guy, Barfly. Oh, Coach Weakbladder," I called back sarcastically. "May I

Halftime.

I heard the announcer proclaim over the P.A. system: "Bongo Barfly needs just four yards to break the Riverdale career rushing record set by Bucky White in 1961." The crowd cheered, and the band struck up a chorus of the Bulldog fight song, which some people mistakenly referred to as the Bongo fight song.

Four yards, and Bongo would be ordained a saint. And Bucky would be forgotten. Unless, of course, I became the devil's advocate. But how could I beat a mountain of muscle like Bongo Barfly? How did David beat Goliath? He cheated. Remembering a stunt Bucky had pulled when he was in college, I realized that the time had come. **Bedtime for Bongo.**

While the rest of the team was heading for the locker room, I dashed across the street to Radio Shack. Once inside, I darted from aisle to aisle, gathering rocks for my sling: a penknife, a thousand feet of #181AWG intercom wire, a Hayes high-frequency transmitter, a flashlight, a U.S. Robotics double-density receiver and a tube of Super Glue.

As I ran back to the stadium and crawled under the fence behind the fieldhouse, a little voice in the back of my head praised me. Runt White, it said, Killer of Giants. Destroyer of Legends. Preserver of Chaos.

I flicked on the flashlight and found what I was looking for: the service entrance and the main breaker that controlled the stadium lights. I turned the breaker off. The sudden darkness silenced the band and brought a gasp from the crowd.

Intending to take full advantage of the darkness and confusion, I sprinted to our sideline, and, using my penknife, I spliced into the wire that ran from the pressbox to the transmitter on Coach Weakbladder's headset. I then uncoiled my intercom wire around the perimeter of the stadium, over to the Quarrybank coach's headset, and spliced into his receiver.

Phase one of Operation Bedtime was completed: the Quarrybank coach would now be able to hear the plays that Coach Weakbladder called.

Just as the stadium lights were turned back on, I came casually strolling into the locker room. While Bongo was posing in front of the mirror in the restroom, his helmet sat unprotected under a bench near the exit. I sat on the bench and picked up Bongo's helmet. Using the Super Glue, I cemented the double-density receiver underneath one of the earpads. I then emptied more than half of the remaining Super Glue all over the insides of the helmet. I put the helmet back where I had found it and congratulated myself on phase two of Operation Bedtime.

The rest would be a cakewalk.

We returned the opening kickoff to our own 30 yardline and started our first series there. Coach Weakbladder called the first play: "Thirty-two dive." The Quarrybank coach took his headset off and looked at it curiously.

"Barfly up the middle for two yards," the P.A. announcer said. The Quarrybank coach smiled. It was a big, broad, devious smile. He had figured it out.

On the next two plays, Bongo was smeared for losses of seven and five yards. The next time we had the ball, Coach Weakbladder called a screen pass. Bongo caught it and started upfield. The Quarrybank defenders were ready for it, but the big goon still managed to break into the open field.

That's when I pulled out my high-frequency transmitter. "The purpose of today's experiment, boys and girls," I whispered to myself, "is to attempt to measure the amount of pain a retarded chimpanzee can withstand before passing out. Since we couldn't find any retarded chimps on such short notice, we'll have to make due with a somewhat dumber beast: Bongo Barfly."

I turned the transmitter on half-power. Bongo stopped dead in his tracks, dropped the ball and began tugging frantically at his helmet. Thanks to half a tube of Super Glue, his tugging was to no avail: the helmet was cemented tightly to his head.

"Hmmm. Very interesting," I muttered. "He's obviously in a great deal of pain. However, in the interest of science, I cannot allow sympathy for the test subject to interfere with the pursuit of knowledge."

I turned the transmitter on full-power overload. The result was insanity. Bongo ran to the endzone, and after banging his head off the goalposts, trying to crack his helmet open, he careened off the field, crashed through a fence surrounding a nearby sewage treatment plant and tumbled into a cesspool. Unconscious, Bongo lay in the basin of refuse, doing his imitation of a turd floating in the neighborhood swimming pool.

"Thank you so much for showing up, boys and girls," I said to no one in particular as I ditched the transmitter. "You can hand in your lab reports next week. Class dismissed."

The trainers, ambulance crew and 18 terror-stricken girls dashed for the cesspool.

Perplexed though they were, the officials finally got the game started again. Coach Weakbladder reluctantly sent me, his only healthy runningback, into the game with the play. He called, "37 Power Sweep on three." Knowing that the Quarrybank coach had heard the play, I called, "38 Counter Trap on set," when I got to the huddle.

The play caught the Quarrybank defenders out of position. While Bongo's comatose form was being fished out of the cesspool, I raced 88 yards untouched and scored the winning touchdown. For the first time in my life, the music and the cheers were for me. The Runt.

Operation Bedtime had been a success. In the course of one football game, I had become a hero, rescued my brother's immortality and reduced Bongo Barfly from aspiring godhood to cesspool decoration. Not a bad night's work—for a Runt. **Flipside**

Drawings by Fred Vaughn

what we need to get us through the night can be as damaging as a pill, as comforting as a teddy bear or as numbing as a prayer.

Of Teddy Bears and Purple Haze

Article by Kathleen Vail

"Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
All the king's horses and all the king's men
Couldn't put Humpty together again."

The walls of the tiny basement are saturated with the sweat of a hundred drunken students who, plastic cups in hand, crowd each other towards the makeshift bar, where the keg is tapped. The frantic, roaring music prevents conversation, but the students have not come to talk. They have come to take part in the fraternity party, a long-standing and much cherished institution at California University. How wasted can you get for a dollar? Among the hard-core habituates, the competition to answer this question is not only fierce, but also fanatical.

Far from the hordes of beer guzzlers, in a serenely decorated dorm room, sits Francine. Francine is not really a college girl, but rather a 30-year-old ex-addict, ex-alcoholic who resides among the retrieved artifacts of a childhood she never lived. Francine had no fairy tales to believe in. No **Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle, the cow jumped over the moon.** No **Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair.** No visions of Sugar Plums. However, Francine did have a junkie mother who marched her 11-year old daughter to a doctor for "diet pills" when Mama could no longer get her own uppers. She did have a father who abandoned the family before Francine was born and who, although he never lived more than ten minutes away from his daughter, never attempted to see her. So after years of sucking on vodka bottles, after years of tripping on Purple Haze and crashing on Reds, after years of toking, retching, falling and crawling, after years of trying desperately and unsuccessfully to make visions of sugar plums dance in her head, Francine has constructed a childhood for herself. A childhood of unicorn posters, duck planters, fluffy slippers and many, many teddy bears, all of which adorn her dormitory room.

Francine became addicted to amphetamines at the age of 11. Her mother, a long time addict herself, had exhausted her cache of crooked doctors and turned to Francine as a fresh possibility of gaining a continuous supply of uppers. The doctor obliged, though Francine was not overweight, and did not lose weight after she, like her mother, was hooked. Both mother and daughter now craved the same drug.

Francine's father abandoned the family before her birth. Her mother had been addicted before she was born, and Francine has no memory of her straight. Once, on an errand to the pharmacist to pick up Mother's prescription, Francine innocently told the druggist her mother was going on a trip. When the druggist replied, "Your mother is always on a trip," Francine left, puzzled.

From amphetamines, Francine progressed to LSD. She craved stimulants and tripped almost non-stop until she was about 16. "Then," she says, "a friend gave me some Purple Haze, and I saved it to trip by myself, later. I hid it in the tape behind a poster, and went to sleep. The Lord came to me in a dream, and said, 'If you take that acid, you'll never come back.' It was such a vivid dream." Although the Lord had spared her from LSD, he had voiced no opinion of the speed, so she continued to pop those Reds.

Francine had two recurring dreams during her addiction: "I dreamt that I was on a race track, with cars coming toward me. I would roll away just in time. For some reason, I never got hit. Six months before my recovery, I dreamt that I was in a fort with high walls, and Indians were trying to kill me. The Lord reached down and pulled me out." Yet as terrifying as those dreams could be, Francine says that she prefers to sleep and to dream. "Dreams are more exciting and fulfilling than reality."

By the time she was eighteen, Francine had added alcohol to her repertoire of drugs. Vodka and beer lessened the jarring effects of the speed. When Francine overdosed a final time, her mother had her admitted to a hospital, where Francine begged the doctors to put her into rehabilitation. She told them, "Cut off my arms if it will help." Gateway Rehabilitaiton Center, she says, "was like crawling into my mother's womb," and it was there that she was first encouraged to seek help and solace in the God who had come to her in a dream and saved her long ago from a bad acid trip. Her mother showed up high at the family counseling session, and when the counselor inquired of the woman if she thought she had a healthy family, she replied, "Hell, yes."

Finally rehabilitated, Francine, however, was not permitted to return to her mother's home until her mother sought counseling, so she went to South Dakota to live with her older sister. On New Year's Eve, when she had been straight for six months, she opened a wine bottle while everyone was gone, and just as she was about to sip from the glass, the phone rang. It was her mother. She had been rehabilitated, too, and wanted her to come home. Francine poured the wine into the sink, and returned home.

Just as mother and daughter had once been united in their addiction, Francine and her mother were now united in their rehabilitation. Lacking the friends she had driven away during her addiction, Francine became very dependent on her mother. They attended AA meetings together, and it was at one of these meetings that Francine's mother met Dickie, another reformed alcoholic, and they began to date. Francine resented Dickie's intrusion into their lives. Five years after her last pill, Francine downed some Quaaludes one night after her mother and Dickie had gone out to see a movie. In her stupor, she almost gave her grandmother the wrong dose of heart medicine. "When I realized that I could have killed my grandmother, I vowed that I would never take pills again."

The main, driving force in her rehabilitation, Francine maintains, was God. "When I was born again, the old me died. I don't belong to myself anymore. I belong to the Lord. He can do with me what he wants." So Francine ditched her blacklight posters, her Emerson, Lake and Palmer albums, and dove for the symbol of a secure and peaceful childhood: the teddy bear. This stuffed animal seems to have a special significance to her. "I crashed from speed really bad, once, when I was 16, or 15. My mother found me in the closet, sucking my thumb and clutching a teddy bear." And in a much earlier incident: "When I was five, my mother took my teddy bear and gave it to my new-born sister." She seems determined, by the number of teddy bears in her room, that no one will ever take them away again.

Ten years after her last drink, Francine decided to come back to school. Ever since she had been straight, she had worked as a secretary in a monastery. Then, about two years ago, she started having panic attacks in the office. "The noise from the typewriters and the copy machine suddenly got too loud. Everything ran together, and I had to leave the room. I ran to the bathroom, and started to get tunnel vision. I couldn't stop crying. I wanted to run, but I felt trapped." She stayed in bed for two days after that attack. When she went to see a doctor, he suggested Librium. Not wanting to take the drug, she went into "panic therapy." The psychological tests showed she had "a lot of suppressed anger." Her therapist suggested she go back to school, and find a fulfilling career, so Francine applied to California University.

Francine's first obstacle was her mother. Since their recovery, mother and daughter had clung to each other as tightly as they had each clung to their addiction. "I don't resent my mother," Francine says. "She was a different person when she was an addict. I was a different person when I was an addict, too. We're not the same people now, so how could I resent her?" However, as Francine's therapist had pointed out to her, her mother was one source of her suppressed anger. And Francine admits her panic attacks may have been because "I felt that my mother was holding me back." But, unexpectedly, Francine's mother supported and even encouraged her.

The next obstacle was money, and for this Francine decided to tap her unknown, long-absent father. She could only contact him through lawyers, although he lived quite near her. When he refused to pay up, she took him to court. "The first time I ever saw him was when I was12 or 13," Francine says. "My mother and I were in the supermarket and my mother pointed to a man in the checkout line and said. 'Do you want to see your father? There he is.' At the hearing he sat only 10 feet away from me, and he wouldn't look at me. When we walked out, he turned his head so he wouldn't see me." Nonetheless, the court ordered Francine's father to pay her tuition, and he was forced to oblige.

Francine decided to major in art, a talent that she wanted to use to "help people." When she found she could not study art therapy as she had wanted to, she changed her major to social work, another profession that helps people. "I like to feel needed," Francine says.

Francine's biggest adjustment to California was not academic but social. "There's nothing to do around here. No movies, no nice restaurants or skating rinks. The only thing to do is party." And, of course, Francine doesn't party any more. She says she does not miss the company of people her own age. "I'm basically a loner. I never had many friends my own age. So I don't miss them."

Despite Francine's girlish demeanor and appearance, or maybe because of it, the freshmen on her floor flock to her for advice and information. Mystitied by the contents of the gift box given to each girl in the dorm, one girl embarrassedly asked Francine what the douche was used for. Besides enlightening the girls on the uses of feminine hygiene products, Francine dispenses advice on boyfriends, make-up, school work, roommate problems, indigestion and menstrual cramps.

The room that these girls can go to for such diverse information does not look like the room of a 30-year-old woman. Teddy bears seem to sprout from every

GREG CHRISTIANSON

direction—Winnie-the-Pooh and Paddington Bear on her bed, teddy bear eyes staring from every corner. Francine even looks a bit like a teddy bear: childlike, pointed face, short, stiff eyelashes, and blank, shoebutton eyes. She couldn't possibly be the woman who was a speed freak at the age of 11. A woman who, in the sixth grade, shook her overdosed mother but could not rouse her from a suicidal stupor. A woman who dropped acid in her blacklight-illuminated room and tripped staring at her strobe light and listening to Emerson, Lake and Palmer. Her smooth, pink, unlined face is washed clean of the sunken, baggy eyes and pouchy, blotched cheeks that should mark the features of a veteran of cherry vodka, reds, Prellys, and Purple Haze. The only hint of her past life is in her mouth, which she closes tightly when not talking, until her lips are nearly white, as if she fears she might lose control and reveal a part of her past that she had not packaged and wrapped carefully for inspection—by herself, and others.

She need not fear, though. She knows her story well, and tells it with dispassionate precision. She turns her past into some kind of modern day fable—with a moral and a tidy ending. Her addiction was her own fault, because she made her own choices, and she chose wrong. Her life now is different because she lets her God make decisions for her. What she seems not to see from her sterile story is that she has never been in control of her life, from the moment her mother gave her the first diet pill until now.

Francine is a woman who spent her childhood strung out and wired, and now spends her adulthood as a little girl safe behind nursery walls. She is a woman who says, "feminism is horseshit," that women should be soft and pliable, but then confesses that she thinks men are intimidated by her because of her straightforward manner. She is a woman who calls herself a loner, but is continually surrounded by a circle of admiring girls. She is a woman who traded her dependence on drugs for a dependence on God: one higher power for another. She has defined her past, found a pleasing and simple rationale for her pain, and then disassociated herself completely from the person she was during her addiction. She can unemotionally relate that her own father would not acknowledge her presence in the court room, but then cheerfully say that God directs her life so completely that he chooses even the jeans she buys and the spices she uses in the soup. Finally, she has a fairy tale to believe in, even if that fairy tale is her own past. **Flipside**

Note: "Francine" is a pseudonym.

even one who triumphs from monday through friday dreams of that moment in the sun, the brief time when he becomes...

Saturday's Hero

Article by Mike Kunsa

While All American Brendan Folmar ponders a play, his back-up, Tom Ulizio, ponders a future.

AUGUST

Smell of sweat fills humid air. Cracking of shoulder pads and grunts of pain and frustration echo over practice fields. For a hundred or so players, this is Pickett's Charge, San Juan Hill, a chance to prove themselves to the generals who will lead them through the season.

Tom Ulizio, Brendan Folmar, and Joe Colosimo, three players fighting for the starting quarterback position, huddle around Head Coach Jeff Petrucci, listening.

"Men, we have to get out of the chute faster. You men have to get the ball away from center. That's why we're going to work here until I'm satisfied that all of you men can do this."

Looking around at the hopefuls, Petrucci chooses at random.

"Ulizio, you're first. Crowell, get the hell over here and start to snap the damn ball."

Center Billy Crowell grabs a football, hustles over and waits at a hash mark.

Buckling his chin strap, then adjusting his facemask, Ulizio begins to call signals in a make-believe huddle: "Eighteen Option right on two; Eighteen Option right on two; ready, break."

Ulizio leads his invisible troops to the line—he can imagine Walter Payton and Joe Morris in the backfield and the Hogs of the Washington Redskins on the line. But in the quarterback drills there is only the center, the quarterback, and the coach. Ulizio settles behind Crowell.

Petrucci watches intently as Ulizio starts to call the cadence: "Brown, 99; Brown, 99. Set. Hut. Hut."

Crowell snaps the ball, and Ulizio pulls away from center. He pivots his right foot, pulling the ball from between Crowell's legs; he draws his left leg over his right, then drops back. He holds the ball properly close to his body; however, in backing up, he trips and fumbles.

"NO. NO. Remember to lift those feet or else you're going to be on your dammed wallet every time you get a snap," Petrucci barks. "Folmar, get under there..."

SEPTEMBER, two weeks into football season.

Education Building, Room 112. Dr. William Benedetti, the professor, is talking to his "Seminar in Exceptional Children": "First of all, I think congratulations are in order for our football team as they look for their third win. Mr. Ulizio, is that what's going to happen this week?"

"Yeah, I guess so," says Ulizio through a tight-lipped grin. He looks down at his open textbook, embarrassed, hoping that no one heard the professor's question.

Time drags. The classroom is warm. Students are having trouble concentrating.

"If there is a special child in the class, and he does not wish to participate in classroom discussions, how does the Martel Method come into play?" asks Benedetti.

Half of the class is dozing, half daydreaming. Silence. A raised hand catches Benedetti's attention.

"Mr. Ulizio, you have an answer?"

"I'll try," says Ulizio. "If you can show him that you're a friend and a teacher and that he or she can trust you and that all you want them to do is participate like all other children in the discussion."

"Very good, Mr. Ulizio. Did the rest of you hear that? Some of the class seemed to miss the answer you gave, Mr. Ulizio. How about telling us the answer again..."

The town of Lower Burrell was founded on the shores of the Allegheny River in 1826. In the early days, this town lived off its heavy industry: United States Steel, Jones and Laughlin Steel and the Pittsburgh Brewing Company. USX's Tube Steel Division, Burrell Construction Company—third largest in Pennsylvania—and Duquesne Light Power Station Number Three are still here, albeit with reduced payrolls. Few people work in Lower Burrell.

If you drive up Route 356, the main drag, you pass through Lower Burrell's business district. Lower Burrell is like most depressed mill towns—devoid of big wages and good times. A town where jobs used to be plentiful, and if your father worked in the mill, you were "in" as soon as you were old enough to work. In today's economy, though, you are lucky to find a job scouring skillets at a greasy spoon in this town.

Turn left at 356, and go up Common Street for three lights and then make a right; you leave the business district and enter the bluecollar section. Here, city workers have set up their spreads—lines of homes that look the same, as though the architect had built the entire community from one set of plans. Maybe he did; at that time, people needed houses as fast as the carpenters could put them up.

Travel down Kipp Avenue; the third house on the left is somewhat different from the other houses on that block. A small sign out on the curb advertises: "Ulizio Tool and Die." The house is a white splitlevel with red shutters and a driveway. A basketball hoop hangs over the garage door.

I knock at the door.

Richard Ulizio, a tall man with graying hair and deep brown eyes, clasps my hand in a leathery grip.

"Tommy's around back," Richard says.

I turn the corner and see Ulizio about to toss a freethrow from a duct-taped foul line. He concentrates on the hoop, eyes fixed. He crouches, sets the ball in his hand, fingers almost halfway around it. In one smooth motion, he comes out of the crouch and lets the ball fly. The ball spins in a perfect arc; the black stripes pitch and roll as the ball swishes through the hoop.

"Touche," I say.

Startled, Ulizio looks my way.

"How long have you been there?"

"Long enough to see that Larry Bird has some competition. Seems you're a killer from the line. You any good?"

"Naw, I was never a big hooper. I never tried out in high school. I went to the games. I played a lot of two-on-two here in 'Ulizio Garden.'" He starts to laugh. "Me and Ed Mima are champs."

We walk from the driveway to the back door. Ulizio bounces the ball on the sidewalk. His mother yells from the window: "Tom, it's one of those gals. Please tell them that you're real busy right now and that you'll call her back. Be respectful to your guest. He drove a long way."

"Don't worry; go ahead and answer the phone call. I'll hang out here," I say.

He nods and rushes off to the call.

Mrs. Ulizio, a small woman with graying hair and a pleasant smile, appears, carrying a tray of Oreos, milk, Pepsi and a bowl of potato chips and pretzels.

"Didn't know what you liked, so I made a sort of smorgasbord of snacks," she says. "Tom is a real sweetheart to the ladies. I hope one day he doesn't become a sweetheart for the wrong reason. Even back in grade school he was a ladies' man, or girls' boy, whatever you want to call it."

"Mother," calls Richard Ulizio from the garage. "You're giving him the wrong idea. You know Tommy just has his father's good looks. Remember how you were swooned by me in grade school? From the fifth grade on, you were hooked."

The Ulizios tell me that their son was a quiet sort of kid throughout elementary school, where he made A's and B's and played tackle, running back and defensive end for the Lower Burrell Elementary School Pirates. Bigger than most of the kids in the fourth grade, Tom practiced with the seventh graders. He lost his desire to play end, and at the beginning of his sixth grade year at Lower Burrell Junior High, switched to quarterback.

"Tom was so excited," his mom remembers. "He came home every day after practice, and he would throw the football to his father or uncle. I tell you, there were some nights that I thought for sure that he slept with a football."

His practice paid off. He tossed 14 touchdown passes, ran for seven more touchdowns and led the Pirates to an undefeated season—the only perfect record in the history of the school.

Ulizio returns to the threesome that has gathered on the back patio and heads for the snacks. At 21, he is a tall, dark, muscular figure. His sneakers are untied, his blue sportshirt—two buttons undone—has sweatstains under both armpits, and he is wearing loose-fitting, faded Levis. He has a chew stuffed in his lower lip. His brown eyes disappear into a crunch of wrinkles as he smiles and gives me the O.K. signal with his long, thick, muscular hands—much like his father's—to assure me that I have made good with his mom and dad.

In the bright fall sunshine, Ulizio has a perceptible air of the bright, good-looking athlete whose smarts and savvy are the envy of the jocks who don't have the brains for the college scene and of the whiz kids who don't have a lick of athletic talent. His dress and lifestyle are reminders of a simpler time, a time when the New York Yankees were World Champs and every kid wanted to be Mickey Mantle. The family car was a four-door Dodge, and the mills produced steel at record-setting paces. The total Fifties' character, he seems deserving of all the rewards that were due a smart ballplayer thirty years ago: a football scholarship, a new car and a good job when he graduates. But that time is long gone. Now, the owner with the most money can buy the best players, every kid wants to be William "The Fridge" Perry and the mills are as dead and quiet as a row of tombstones. The promise of the Fifties is a dream in the Eighties. Tom will be lucky just to find a job.

"We were talking about you," says Mr. Ulizio.

"Oh, yeah, what about?"

"All about your growing up days. When you were just a little bitty fella. Remembering your young football days."

"He's kiddin' you, don't listen to a word he says. He's crazy. Gone off the deep end," says Ulizio.

"Hey, you were the best quarterback Lower Burrell ever had. You did better than that fella who played ahead of you. He was good, but you were much better, and the coach knew it," says Richard as he devours Oreos.

The statistics bear out Richard Ulizio's opinion. In high school, Tom threw for 2,189 yards and rushed for 452. He threw 22 touchdown passes and ran for seven scores. He was an honor student, and unlike most high school students, he appreciated those who helped him become successful.

"Playing in high school was a lot of fun," says Tom as he picks up an Oreo and shakes it. "Coach Bernie really helped me learn the position. He took some extra time after every practice to help me with my drop or my passes and even handing the ball off. He was a great coach."

Tom started in his junior year of high school, leading the Bucs to a 7-3 season. He threw for 875 yards and nine touchdowns.

"Tommy was a real smart kid, and that helped him on the football field," said his former coach, Bernie Storer, now an assistant at Penn Hills. "He was one of the few high school athletes that shed his macho image to take time for his studies and help others on the team when they had problems, either academic or football related. He's a real good kid."

During the summer, Tom fell in love with a girl three years younger, Leslie Wick, a petite blonde who modeled for Sears and Gimbels advertisements.

"We met at a party," Ulizio says softly. "She was going home because her date made her cry. I asked my friend who that girl was. He said that he would introduce me to her and that's all he had to do. From then on, we were an item."

Ulizio thought he had it all: a pretty girl, good grades and major-league stats on the football field.

Until.

"It was the first quarter of my first game of my senior season, and it happened," remembers Ulizio. "I ran the ball on a busted play and I got tackled high by a defensive end and a defensive back drilled me low and twisted my leg. I remember the surge of pain in my right knee. I thought I was going to die."

Five weeks later, Tom returned to lead the Bucs. He threw for 981 yards and led the team to the 1982 conference championship.

"If Tom was healthy all season he could have thrown for 1,500 yards," said Storer. "He was in good shape, and he was dealing with a hot hand. He was on the verge of going somewhere, but after the injury, he seemed gun shy at times."

Ulizio graduated with a 3.7 grade point average. He waited to see if any school would offer him a scholarship for his football talents: "I wanted to go to a school that offered a special education program. The only offer I received was from Carnegie-Mellon University, and that didn't appeal to my tastes."

An offer from CMU was nothing to scoff at. He could have been a computer programmer, software designer. Yet, he chose to deny CMU and wait. When Ulizio balked,

Photography by Mike Kunsa

MIKE KUNSA

Close, yet always at arm's-length, Ulizio listens intently as Jeff Petrucci gives a play to Ed Alford.

MIKE KUNSA

Rare Bird: Tom Ulizio lets fly a pass

CMU Head Coach Chuck Klausing called California University Head Coach Jeff Petrucci to tell him of the prospect from Lower Burrell.

"Coach Petrucci came here and spelled it out for me and the folks. He said that he could not offer much, but that I would get my shot at playing on the college level, if I would stick around and wait my turn."

Ulizio enrolled in the fall of 1983 and began his wait. That season, he was back-up to Brendan Folmar, who was back-up to Kevin Russell, an All-American who set almost every California passing record.

"It was funny being third-string. I watched from the sidelines and never played a down that season. I wanted to call it quits. Maybe I should have gone to CMU. There were a lot of questions I had to ask myself. Well, I sat down and decided that I was going to stick it out and try to make myself a better player."

During the 1983 off-season, Ulizio thought to improve himself by lifting weights and conditioning for the spring drills. Despite his efforts, Ulizio found Petrucci had plans for Folmar, the enormously talented sophomore. The coach placed Ulizio on the red-shirt list.

"I was disappointed. I had hoped the coach would take a good look at me. Instead, I got the clipboard and charted plays. I had hoped to help the team, but I became a cheerleader."

Tom Ulizio sat out 1984, a season that saw the Vulcans take the Western Division Championship from Indiana University of Pennsylvania at George P. Miller Stadium.

"I was on the edge of my seat for the whole game," said Tom. "I wanted to be down there so bad. I wanted to be part of the team that slaughtered the Big Indians. I hated to be there in the stands."

A week later, the Vulcans won the State Game, a thrill that Tom again sat by and watched from the seats at the Hershey Bowl.

"I was so excited for the team. I stayed with tight end Ed Mima most of that night. He was telling me about how all the players were so excited and were ready to crush Bloomsburg. All I could say to him was good luck and hoped that he would have a good game."

The Vulcans won the State Game, the final game for Kevin Russell. The starting job was up for grabs.

In the off-season, Ulizio worked hard on his studies. He was on the Dean's list for two years and was working on a 3.58 QPA, preparing himself academically for the inevitable future without football.

In spring drills, the fleet, powerful Folmar, a junior from California by way of Alabama, was Ulizio's competition for Russell's place. But there was not much competition. Folmar—faster, stronger, and with a better throwing arm than Ulizio—won the starting job.

"It was, again, another setback. But I was second-string and that meant that I was now just one position away from the starting job. I was happy," said Ulizio.

The fall of 1985 started out with the Vulcans winning their first three games. California was undefeated in the conference when it came up against the Golden Eagles of Clarion. The Vulcans lost a heart-breaker 24-23, a game that turned the season sour for the Vulcans and for Ulizio.

"After the Clarion loss, we were crushed. I had never seen players so drained. As I was walking out of the dressing room, I looked up and saw Leslie. She told me that it was over between us and that we could be friends. I was depressed even more now," he said. "I was devastated."

The next week, the Vulcans traveled to Lock Haven to square off against the Bald Eagles. In the third quarter, Folmar went down, injured, and Ulizio was finally going to get his chance. The heavily favored Vulcans trailed the Eagles by seven and had the ball deep in their own territory.

Ulizio started his series first-and-ten from the California 34-yardline.

First-and-Ten: A pass falls three yards short of wideout Frank Sacco.

Second-and-Ten: Ulizio fumbles the handoff and falls on the ball.

Third-and-Ten: He drops to pass, throws across the field and is almost intercepted. The Vulcans are forced to punt. Ulizio returns to the sideline. California loses.

"It was the first time I had taken a snap in a college game. I was nervous, and it was hard to concentrate. I guess I blew it, and I thought that Coach Petrucci was going to ask me to turn in my helmet and playbook. Instead, he turns to me and asks what coverage I thought they were in."

From there, the Vulcan season took a grim slide. The Vulcans would win only one more game—against Waynesburg. The season finale was against IUP, and the Big Indians came to California undefeated. It rained most of the night and all during the game. The Vulcans went belly up in the slime of Adamson Stadium. Tom Ulizio got yet another chance to be the sacrificial lamb. The IUP defense ravaged Ulizio with four sacks. He threw for minus 12 yards.

"I remember one of the defensive ends who sacked me said, 'Welcome to the game, fresh meat.' I wish that I wasn't out here, I thought. But I got the call and had to show the coach I wanted to play."

The season ended, and Ulizio again hoped to become a starter next year.

When spring drills started in April, Petrucci took a good look at all of the hopefuls at the quarterback position. Of the four, two had legitimate chances to win the starting job—Folmar and Ulizio. Not much had changed in five months. Ulizio ended up second-string, but he was now challenged for even that dubious distinction by freshman Joe Colosimo.

"It was a good camp," Ulizio said. "It gave me a lot of incentive to do better. I thought that if Joe got the job ahead of me, I was going to hang it up. But I decided that I wanted to be a part of the team and I really wanted to be a starter."

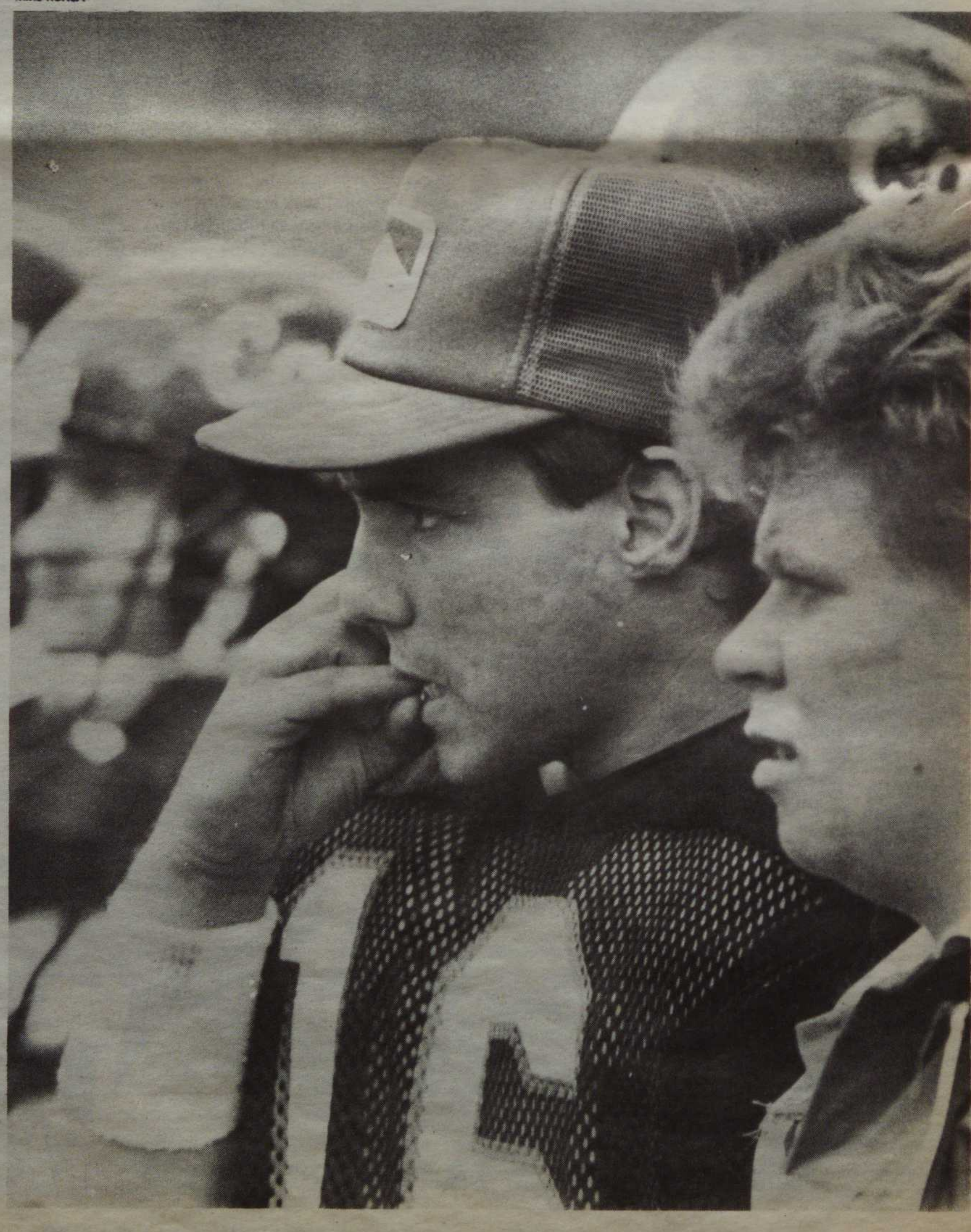
By the end of spring drills, Ulizio had bested Colosimo, but had again finished second behind Folmar.

Petrucci speaks carefully about Ulizio, lauding the quarterback for his hard work, yet recognizing that Ulizio might never become a star: "Tom has some real character. He is a good kid. He works harder sometimes than Brendan does. He has to know the game plan, and has to be alert all of the time. He never knows when he is going to be called on. Tom will go a long way in life. He has a good academic background, and he has a life after football. He has prepared himself very well."

In his four years at California, Ulizio has earned a 3.78 QPA and has been on the Dean's List for all but one semester. He has completed five of 22 passes for a minus

cont. on pg. 38...

MIKE KUNSA



Nail-Biting Time: The sideline warrior

THE BONESHOP

WHEN THE TRAIN COMES

We stand in front of the lumber mill.
And the brown dust at the edge
of the tall weeds
is already beginning
to stir.
Do you know the feel
of August—hot rails
burning through
child-shoes?

We are waiting for the train,
stretching our steps across the splintered ties,
and my Uncle carries the berry pail.
His Swisher Sweet Cigar smell
mixes with honeysuckle.
The smoke
pushes the gnat storm.

Glass bottles have exploded
on the gravel, and Unca steers me
from the sharp shine. He moves the jaggers back
so I can reach the berries.
but his mouth is more purple
than mine.
We have crowns of Queen Anne's Lace,
and we have walking stick-twigs.
And we have buttercups underneath our chins.

We are waiting for the train.
But not to ride it, no. Far aways
are for older, are for younger than us.
We are only to watch the
blur-wheeled boxes from beside
the rails,
the blackberries and thistle.
Only to hear the whistle scream
louder than our own screams
through purple stained hands covering ears.
We are only to feel the train pass
on our tracks. Only to feel the train pass,
not to wish
that it would stop.

Amy Yanity

I SHALL NOT WANT

Leaves blend into green meaning
Against a background of blues.
In the space of time or distance,
The parts are not easily separated.

You warmed my world until
Chance winds dispelled your rays.
Tattered memories still float by.

The question is not fallow or fertile.
Tears without color left this quagmire.
And if you were to shine on me again,
My soul would dry hard with
Surface cracked and scarred.

I recognize my shadow and fear no evil.
Whose rod could comfort me?
By choice I inhabit this valley.

Cheryl Cantoni

TIME AGAIN FOR A WARM SWEATER

Waiting for the tea kettle to whistle
this slow September afternoon
I stand with my back to the stove
and am surprised the oven is warm.

Dad leans against the big oven door
wearing the gray cardigan my mother knitted,
watching my mother peel the carrots;
roast and potatoes already are cooking.

When I lean back against his stomach,
he folds his arms around my shoulders.
I pull his arms down so I can see,
resting my chin on them,
and notice how warm the oven
has made his woolen arms.

The kettle is whistling.
My father and mother are in New York.
I'm in Connecticut
writing poems.
And it's getting cool now.

Anne Minicozzi

WALK

Cold—Quiet—Very Quiet—
A fog—heavy—thick.
Unmoving.
Lights in the distance
obscured by the fog.
So quiet it's almost unreal.
Even the river is silent.

The twisted trees throw strange shadows
on either side of me.
Can't even see the railroad tracks,
even though they should be
just to my left.

Absolute silence.

There—a dog barking
in the distance.
Behind me, closer to the river—
Barks only briefly,
and the echoes die fast.

I scuff my shoes hard
on the pavement
just to hear something.
The moon looms overhead.

I start to move faster,
straight ahead into the fog.
No sign of life—
Nothing stirs at all.

Home soon—move faster
through the fall chill
for no reason.

Mist curling slowly
along the ground.

Dave Malloy

TALKING WITH THE CAT

My wife is learning two computer languages,
COBOL and FORTRAN. Through this,
we are able to talk with the cat
for the first time.

This is a fifteen year old siamese
named Samantha.

The cat says, "I want to advance
to Marvin Gardens, or maybe Park Place."
She says, "I want to take a walk
on the Boardwalk, pass GO
and collect two hundred dollars."

I find this astounding. Pat says
it is only the beginning.

Michael Wurster

BABY

The phone rang
about ten-thirty.
It was my father
calling to tell me
that I was an aunt,
again.

I went to sleep
smiling.
The phone rang again.
It was my brother
calling to tell me
I was an aunt,
again.

I said to him,
"I already know."
I hung up the phone.

Sheryl Gottlieb

DOWN AT GREASY GYPSY'S

When he has lost all hope,
all object in life, may often
becomes a monster in his misery.
*Dostoevsky—**The House of the Dead***

Guilt-ridden in my
I'm-a-sure-sucker-suit,
pinned by betrayals (my own
& other's) to the rotating
Budweiser sign down
at Greasy Gypsy's

I whirl in a blur of blasphemy
with bared fangs
& limp whanger in hand
railing, implicating any passers-by.

Gerald Y. Chorba

BABY'S CRYIN'

No food on the table,
But twenty-eyed, multi-colored high-tops on his feet.
Baby's cryin'.
Where's his daddy at?
"Outside, playin' basketball, somewheres down the street.
I think that's him."

Brothers everywhere—
In beds, on tables, in clothes and the sweetpeas.
Baby's cryin'.
Where's his daddy at?
"Down wit the boys, drinkin' Mad Dog twenty-twenty.
I think that's him."

Knocked up again, again—
Though baboon faced and smelly crotched.
Baby's cryin'.
Where's his daddy at?
"Down to the niggers' motel, lyin' in the morgue.
I think that's him."

Will Rodgers

RICHMOND

to be sure there are people here
but they have no names or faces
bodies are breaths of air
for cold hands on a winter day

it's a familiar small-town emptiness
that is a routine death
a search for retreat

the scrapyards of Richmond
fragment of life that is the South
that is the edge of town
is a mirage that ends
abruptly

passing into wasteland
that is the great American highway

that has no embassy
that is the freedom to resist
exposing what doesn't want
seeing change

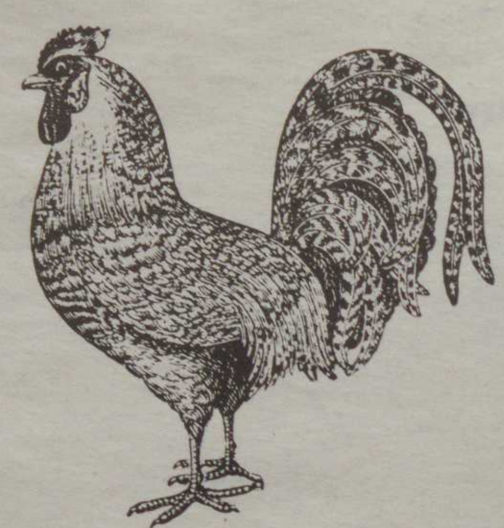
already businesses have closed

and the people have the right to work

Frank Correnti

Diary of a Mad Housewife

Humor by Jean Newell



Maybe I was missing something. Maybe it was hormonal. Maybe it was because all of my friends were married. Maybe I was bored. Maybe I was temporarily infected by an alien brain parasite. Probably I was just in love with love. No matter the reason, I wanted to get married.

My betrothed—a frugal, squat, dark man with one long connected eyebrow over small piercing blue eyes—worked for several years at a fairly good job in the local steel mill. For the most part, he was a quiet, unobtrusive person, but those can be the worst kind.

We had a grand time the year before the wedding: Car shows on weekends, dinner at a fast food restaurant after I watched his team bowl, hockey in winter, drag races in spring, baseball in summer. We went many places **together**: camping with his six younger brothers, shopping with his mother, studio wrestling matches with his buddies, even the car auction with his father.

One evening as I popped corn over the fire in the open Franklin stove—his house had no furnace—he murmured between double mouthfuls of popcorn, "You know, it would probably be cheaper if we got married. I would save a lot on gas if I didn't have to drive between your house and mine every day. We can live by the mill and you can get work at the hospital over there." I interpreted that bizarre rationalization as a proposal. Stranger still, I accepted.

For weeks, I searched jewelry stores for that one special ring, a precious symbol of our eternal love, or more precisely the lack of it, until in DeRoy Jeweler's window, on the middle shelf right up in front, in a black velvet box, I saw my dream ring, a half carat heart-shaped solitaire. Weeks passed after I showed him the ring. He said, "Hey, Baby, I'll get it as soon as it goes on sale." A few days later, he drove up in a jazzy, souped-up, red Bronco, proclaiming it "perfect for work, a real buy, just what we need." My ring was sold the next week; I've never seen one like it since.

Soon I was busy with all the preparations for a wedding: reserving the church; hiring an organist; choosing music; sending invitations; ordering flowers; looking for a caterer. But he objected to every caterer I found: "Baby, you're the best cook in the world, better than any caterer." The next day, he arrived at my house with thirty dead chickens for me to pluck: our reception feast.

He rented a rusting trailer, set on cement blocks in an alley behind the mill parking lot. Night after night I blissfully scoured, scrubbed and disinfected the bug-infested crackerbox we were to call "home," while **he** went fishing at Pymatuning Lake with his best friend.

The days immediately before the wedding, my sister Kathy and I filled roasters with enough food to feed a hundred guests. He went hunting in Oil City with his uncle.

Finally, my big day arrived. The sun, never brighter; my bouquet, more fragrant than flowers could be. By five a.m. I was bathed, powdered and perfumed. My grandmother's hand-tatted lace wedding gown lay carefully draped across my bed. A teary mist covered my eyes, and my reasoning, when I touched that relic, a memento of the love that set up my grandparents in perfect sync, yin for yang, each bending to support and assist the other in all things. Their life-long love was embodied in this delicate gown, a fragile anachronism.

Historic Saint Peter's Roman Catholic Church where I was baptized, received Holy Communion, attended mass every day before parochial school and was confirmed was as quiet as a mausoleum. Gloomy relatives sat quietly on the right; boisterous strangers crowded together on the left; he waited stoically at the altar. Dad and I stood at the back of the church and watched Mother at the far end of the trailing white runner, adjusting the small bouquets attached to each pew. She muttered to herself, shaking her head. Her granite gray features, solemn as the Madonna of the Pieta, turned to glance mournfully at us. I waved and flashed a toothy grin. Mom hesitated, nodded, then sat down. Eyes glazing over, Dad leaned close to my ear, "You know something? We could walk out, Jeanie. Just leave. Everyone would understand." Surely, I thought, he's just testing me.

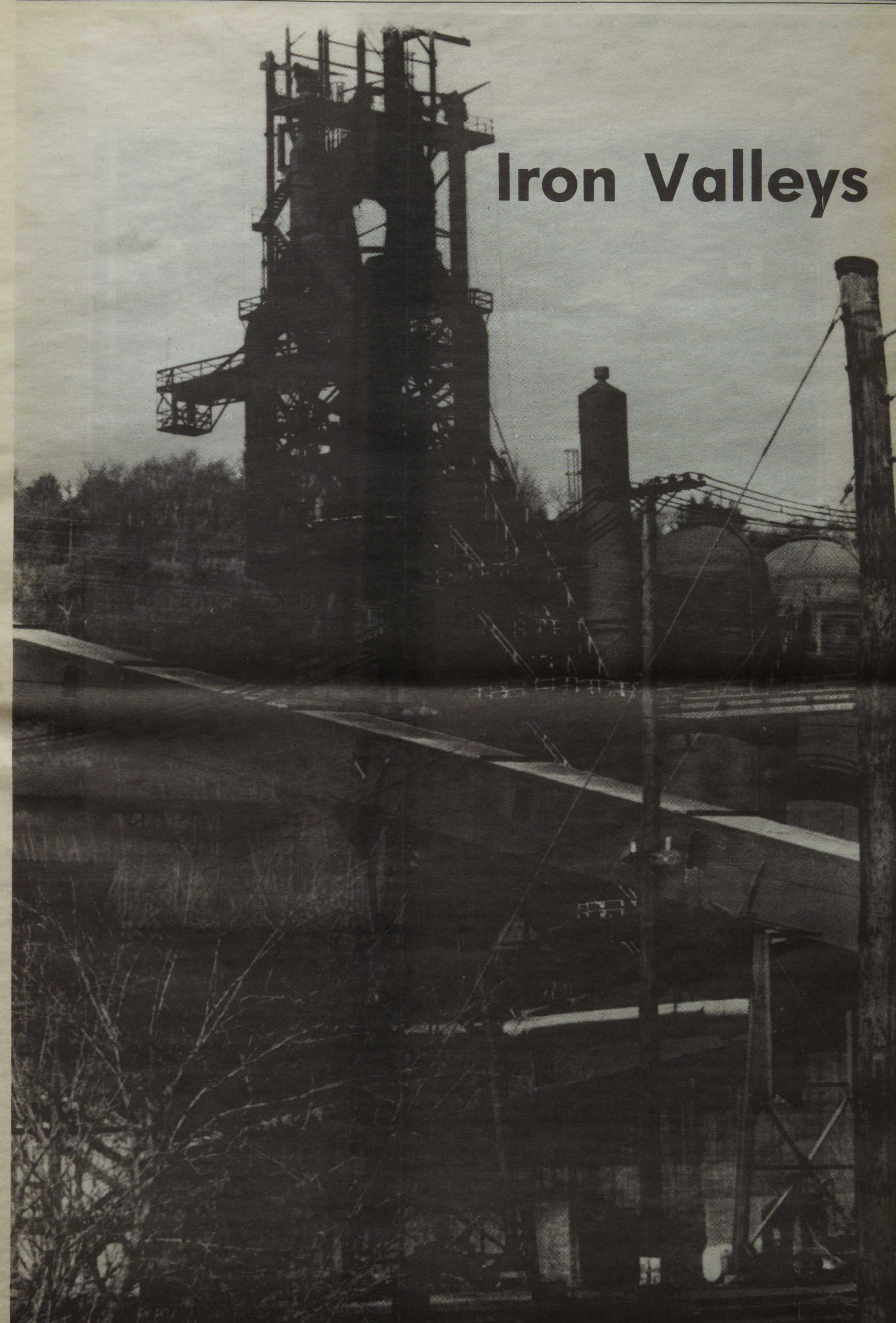
The organ hummed "We've Only Just Begun." I floated down the aisle, pulling grumbling Dad along.

The reception was held in his aunt's vacant store; he argued, "Hey, it doesn't matter where a party's held. It's still a party." Things went well until he drank half a bottle of Yukon Jack, immediately after chugging a fifth of cheap champagne. He threw up on our four-tiered cake just as we were about to cut it. My kid brother, Larry, filmed this ignominious act on 8 mm. He still shows it at reunions.

Four of his brothers carried him pallbearer-fashion and threw him in the bed of the truck. I packed a suitcase, changed my clothes and drove to Niagara Falls, stopping once to get gas and to hose the vomit out of the truck bed. He slept.

When we got to the motel, I half carried him over the threshold where he collapsed in a crumbled, stinking heap. My bubble had burst. All my illusions, hopes and dreams went over the Falls. Disgusted and depressed, I left him lying on the floor and went sightseeing alone for the next week. I had more fun without him. **Flipside**

Iron Valleys



Minute of body and of spirit, we hunker in the shadows of great dead beasts.

we are what you were. pray that you don't become what we are.

LANDSCAPE: EXTERIOR

ONE

We lived so close I could've thrown a chunk of red-dog from our front porch and hit its scabrous corrugated steel sides, but rarely did I hear the mill. Even as I sat in the elementary school, a few hundred yards from the 15-foot chainlink fence topped by concertina, which wound around the mill, I knew that inside, men worked all day—three shifts—turning huge bars of flat-steel, grey slabs of toffee, into industrial springs and axles. Yet I no more heard the clangor of their labor than I did the coursing of my blood. But on some nights, for whatever reason, I would come awake, sweating in the heavy folds of a quilt my grandmother had made, to hear the terrible straining of a loaded train hauling raw steel into the mill.

Shuddering, the big freight would heave through the dark, wheels screeching against rails. Tiny ceramic squirrels, rabbits and doves clattered on shelves above my bed. My paint-by-number rendering of surf splashing against the rocky seacoast beneath a lighthouse swayed, scraping the wallpaper. On the river, a barge weighted to its sheer lines with coal would bleat, rutting and fecund. A searchlight would slash the sky—a tug captain fixing a beam on the shore, wheeling his boat around the compass leg of light. And I would hear the primal, hollow booming of the mill in its time of making. Outside my window, the sky glowed lurid. I would burrow into the quilt, dream of subterranean elves heating blocks of witched metal, forming with hammer and forge halberds and pikes, battle-axes and slender daggers, honing broadswords on sandstone sharpening wheels.

The next morning, I'd wake to hazy sunlight softened by fine steel dust that we would gather from the playground with magnets and store in cigar boxes, as if it were something precious.

TWO

Relatives from Florida occasionally visited. My uncle would sit on the porchsteps, nipping at a can of beer, gesture scornfully at the valley and ask my father, "How can you live here? With all this around you?"

And I would see, only briefly, a more fantastic landscape: ridges of shale brooding over crumbling brick mouths of abandoned coke ovens; striations of hillside, cloaked in scrub maples and diseased locusts, shoving us toward railroad tracks creeping along the riverbank; the mill squatting in its veil of yellow smoke, attended by locomotives, scorpion forklifts, and giant cranes so much more ponderous and threatening than any marshbird.

Whether incredulous or just obstinate, my father would never answer the question. His silence reassured me that we weren't leaving our home, becoming faithless migrants.

It has always seemed to me that my uncle was somehow blaming us for letting such vulgar things live so near, as if we had chosen to dwell in snake's breath. You are what you breathe.

Not until years later did I realize he had it backwards. He had confused the arrangement. We didn't keep these incredible beasts tethered in our backyards; they allowed us to hunker in their shadows. We were dwarfed, made minute of body, then of expectation. They created us. When they decided to nest elsewhere, our approval wasn't asked.

THREE

Without maps, charts, we rediscover our landscape, this alien place whose air becomes cleaner as we who stay become more foul, whose water runs purer as we are more infected, whose forests reclaim as we divest. Used to be, you'd wash your car in the morning, and by lunchtime, you could write your name on it in the milldust. No such problem these days with cleanliness; nature shows empathy in inverse proportion.

Unsettling quiet—we went weekends to our cabins in the mountains for that, but didn't stay—low pressure system boiling up from down South, winds turning counterclockwise. Now, all seasons are of discontent: foreclosure, divorce, well-whiskey shooters and slow afternoon beers; our ozone layer has burned away. Mocked by eager March thaws, humbled by July's butterchurn of sunlight, we are explicated by November, defended by February.

FOUR

I have thought to check the spring and axle mill for signs of life. I picture myself: cutting a branch of oak, sharpening its end, hardening it in fire, like some ancient hunter. I ease through a tear in the chainlink, crouch and sneak across the overgrown railroad tracks, remembering it is always the dead ones that rise and kill you. I poke at its scaly hide, looking for flicker of ear, twitch of tail. But the cast has long since come over the eyes. Inside, I see that men named their blastfurnaces and marked the great ovens' passing in spraypainted epitaphs: "Aunt Agnes Died, 7-23-83"; "The Eagle Died, 10-30-84."

D.O.A. (DEAD ON ACCOUNT).

Weight the eyelids with coins.

Notify next of kin.

Who's on the hook for debts incurred?

Flesh...rusts?

FIVE

Sometimes when I walk downtown, I feel like a museum exhibit, in need of dusting, to be kept from direct sunlight, both what I am and what I was. The Five-and-Dime went under last year. They covered the long plateglass windows with half-inch plywood painted by school children. The boards are spectral cartoon memories, in primary temperas, of burly, sooted miners, pickaxes slung over their shoulders, lunchpails swinging at their sides; of knock-kneed, pop-eyed mules dragging overloaded carts of bituminous; of fragile coal tipples teetering on giraffe legs; of strange mills as incongrously sedate as Georgian mansions. Crude prehistoric cave paintings. I whisper, and shiver at echoes.

Government funding—a "Facade Project," somebody told me it's called—has remade our town. They laid new sidewalks, planted spindly maple seedlings in cement boxes, hammered cedarshakes on the fronts of empty buildings. The town wears makeup—flashy blush, gaudy eyeshadow. Should we be seen keeping company with such a floozy?

But we've always lived on leftovers. We got the Daisytowns, Coal Centers, Grindstones, Polish Hills, Little Africas, popseamed and patched, long in the sleeve and short in the cuff. They kept the Heights and Mounts for themselves. Realtors' signs sprout on overgrown lawns like toadstools.

Our horizons crowd us. There is not land enough to till here. Nothing beckons.

What separates us from the Lower Beasts? We, alone, create nothing from something.

Essay by Alan Natali

This story first appeared in the February issue of Ohio magazine.

LANDSCAPE: INTERIOR

ONE

To Live = To Adjust.

That's the equation I keep hearing.

Everything has gone goofy on us. Does it follow, then, that we too should go goofy?

We must learn new rules of etiquette. Never let your host see the soles of your shoes. Don't make direct eye contact with elders. Don't ever speak in the first person. Esoteric adjustments. Upon parting, "Take care" is more appropriate than "See you later."

I'm still not familiar with these foreign customs, though. What was once a hale greeting between friends—"How you doin?"—has within it now the insidious potential for insult.

One night not long ago, I made this error at a high school football game. Paying more attention to a screen pass than to my manners, I spoke to an old teammate: "How you doin?"

Time was when that question was an invitation to innocent boasting: "Finally got the hunting camp remodeled"; "You gotta see my new boat. We'll go out on it some time"; "I think we're gonna move, probably build. I'm tired of that old place."

These days, the question can hang over a conversation like a truncheon.

My friend, the tough, stocky, bow-legged little linebacker, scraped a Nike in the gravel, jammed hands in jacket pockets.

"I just lost my job yesterday. Me and Guy and Tom. They shut our section down and flooded it. There was only 121 men left working in there anyway."

Like a bat, my foolishness fluttered around my head. I wanted to wave it away.

"Guess I gotta go back to school or something. Get some retraining or something. Other'n that, I'm doing okay."

A hell of a note.

I went embarrassed to get hot chocolate, not shaming him further by asking of he'd like a cup.

I am an infidel.

TWO

Fine-tuning the Success Ethic, we move along unfamiliar angles. We are no longer a vertical society; we live in a horizontal world. To climb is a pipedream; to cling is reality. A good Christmas is something the kids don't have to wear to school. "I still got a job. That's better'n most guys can say, you know?" We make choices—car payment or house payment? You can sleep in a car, you can't drive a house. Therefore.

It's as if we had registered under assumed names.

Checkout time is whenever management says it is.

Please return your key to the front desk.

Management is not responsible for personal items left in rooms.

We've been mustered out. Off the gravy train is one thing, tied to rails in front of it another. The first notion is to high-tail it, become the new Frontiersmen. "I hear they're hirin like crazy down by D.C. All kinds of construction goin on down there." Don't hang around for the cold-meat party. Chuck it, cut your losses, get a roadstake together. Haul ass. Hit the road. Hot foot it. Head over the hill. Heat up some breeze.

But our skills are arcane. Gandy-dancers, arc-welders, crane-jockeys. We are alchemists. And we live here.

Mow lawns without looking up at passing cars. Slip on a falseface when someone you know stops in the Gas-Mart for morning coffee and cigarettes. Pound pavement and wait for legislative remedy, negotiated salve, judicial physic. Deals dangled before us on the sly, as if they were printed on the fronts of French post cards. Wait long enough, and someone will square the beef.

THREE

Lacking rules we live by codes. Still, we always had heads of smoke, smokes of jobs, smokes of dreams. Dreamboxes on our shoulders, puffs of thought. Slap our wrists, and we'll fight like rabid wolverines. Cut off our arms, and we'll try to read our watches.

At best, we are treated paternally, indulged as spoiled children whose desire for baubles must be tempered with penury. At worst, we are loathed and feared as slackers, Communists, welfare-bums, anarchists. They don't have to worry over our revolution, though. We haven't had much truck with ideologues. We've never thought of ourselves as they thought of us—as a "class." We aren't necessarily friends, neighbors, the same color or even bound for the same heaven or hell. We believed as we were told we should: Through Privation Comes Salvation. Sweat, Save, Love God and Country. Get Ahead.

Revisitations. At the new non-union mines, if you're late to work, they call your wife and give her an alarm-clock. The shopping mall is our new company store, the credit manager our new strawboss. We take what is handed us.

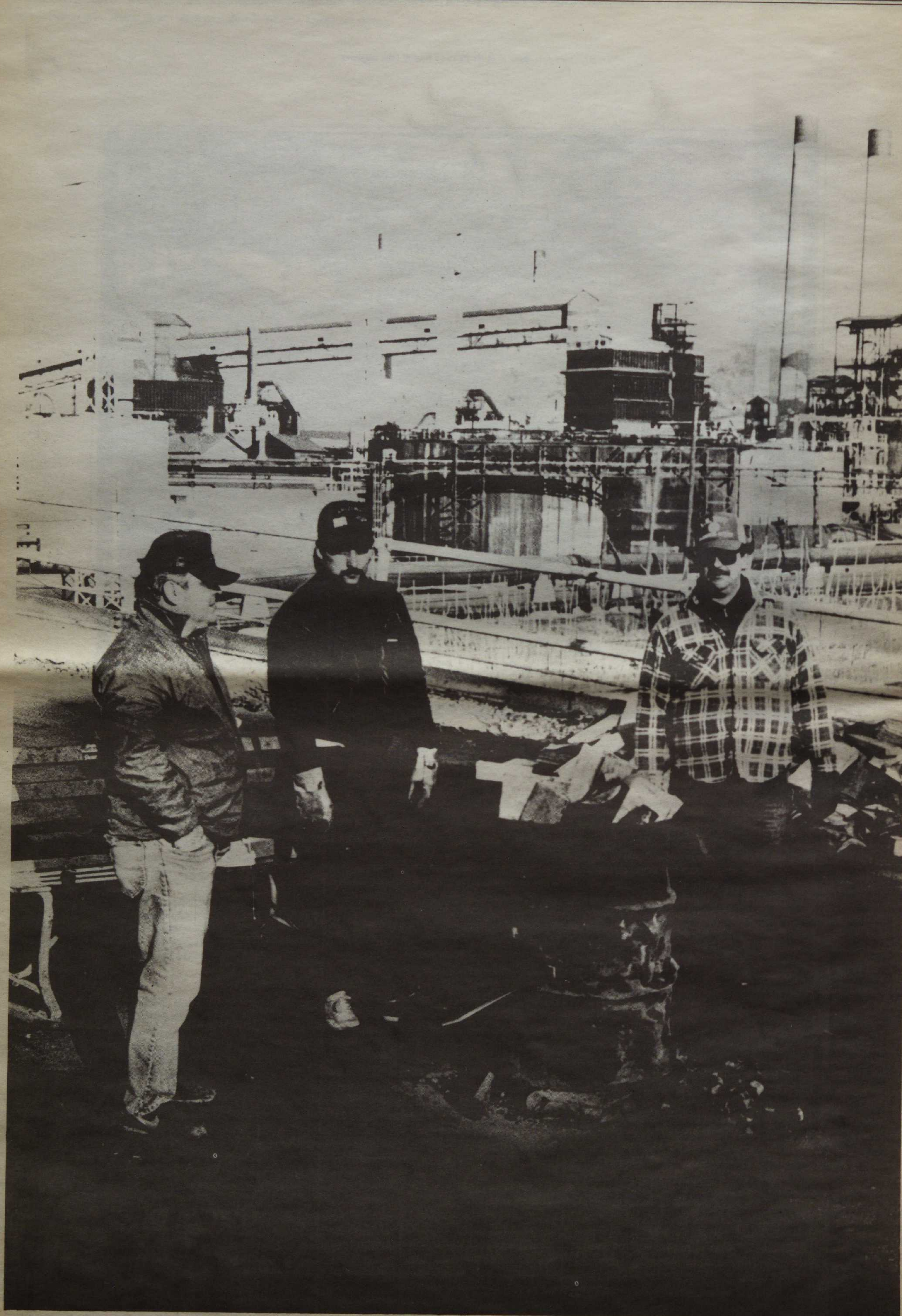
FOUR

Time past was: smokestacks and cashboxes, Wobblies and hod-guys, kidney-bustin and secured pensions, Fat City.

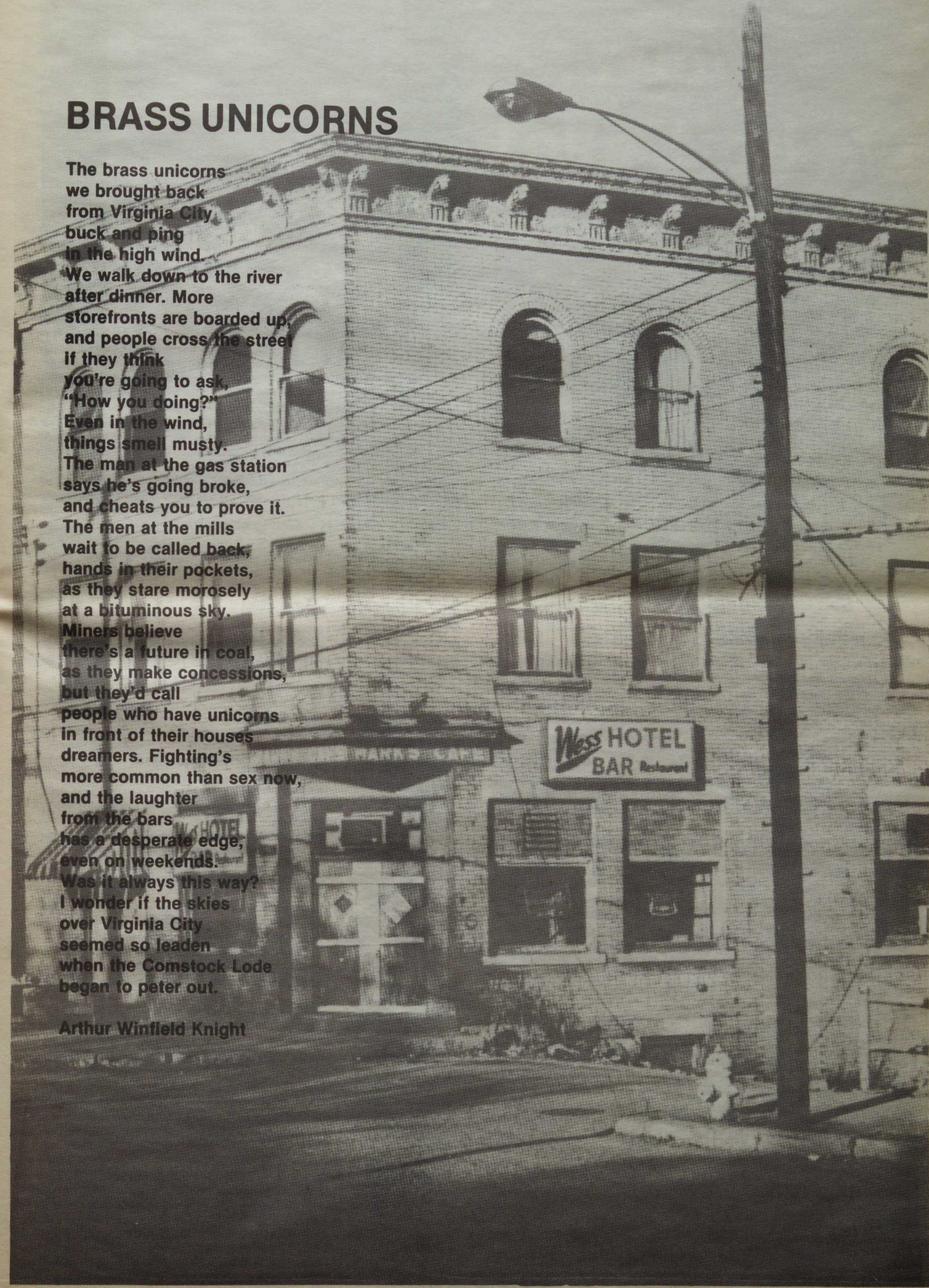
Time present is: the subtle terror of abstractions, trade deficits, GNPs, employee buy-out plans, food banks, robotics, retraining, resume services, strikes against nothing for nothing by nothing, like firing at creatures imagined in the night.

Time future must be: Re solve. **Flipside**

Photography by Mike Kunsa



Like Firing at Creatures Imagined in the Night: USX workers on strike



BRASS UNICORNS

The brass unicorns
we brought back
from Virginia City
buck and ping
in the high wind.
We walk down to the river
after dinner. More
storefronts are boarded up,
and people cross the street
if they think
you're going to ask,
"How you doing?"
Even in the wind,
things smell musty.
The man at the gas station
says he's going broke,
and cheats you to prove it.
The men at the mills
wait to be called back,
hands in their pockets,
as they stare morosely
at a bituminous sky.
Miners believe
there's a future in coal,
as they make concessions,
but they'd call
people who have unicorns
in front of their houses
dreamers. Fighting's
more common than sex now,
and the laughter
from the bars
has a desperate edge,
even on weekends.
Was it always this way?
I wonder if the skies
over Virginia City
seemed so leaden
when the Comstock Lode
began to peter out.

Arthur Winfield Knight

MIKE KUNSA

Brother Hugh's Serpent

The python hide both intrigued and repulsed me. Until I was fifteen, when I successfully staged an adolescent rebellion against boring duty visits that were supposed to enrich my religious faith, I spent more hours concentrating on that snake than on the Almighty. Maybe it's because a 20-foot snake, living or dead, is flashier than a cross, hands folded in humility and quiet reverence; maybe my phobic fascination with the species cancelled any chance of loftier thoughts during those hours. The black and tan strip of skin spanned an entire wall and extended its marbled scales onto a quarter of both adjoining walls in the tearoom at St. Paul's Monastery. The skin was quite brittle. The heat in the close, little room and the time elapsed since the great snake propelled himself toward his last bit of mischief caused the edges created when his skin was cut away from his body to curl and pucker. When no one was looking, I stood on the shabby black sofa and saw that he was attached to the wall with wires and cobwebs.

Beelzebub, as the monks called the python, was a relic brought back from their Liberian mission by Brother Hugh Francis when his tenure as prior there ended. The monks keep small livestock—goats and chickens, mainly—to fill the basic food needs of the order. Occasionally, a predator wriggles his way into the Lord's larder and snatches a snack. When a young goat disappeared, one of the brothers noticed the tapered end of a python glide silently across the border of the compound, into the jungle. Beelzebub made two more successful forays into the pen, before Brother Hugh conquered the devil. The prior glanced out of his office window just as the snake knotted himself around a ball of feathers. Brother Hugh sped out of the office, loading his gun as he ran, the hem of his white habit swirling above his ankles. With one shot, he blasted the snake's head, spraying it in all directions. Hugh thought the python a vivid symbol of monastic work in Africa and convinced his superior to make Beelzebub into a wallhanging.

As a child, I was afraid of Beezle and always took the seat—a bulky wing chair with a baggy slipcover—farthest from him. I sat with my coloring book or my Barbie, pretending to ignore him. I have my grandmother's morbid dread of snakes. She once ate several canapes made of rattlesnake meat at a party hosted by her cousin, Bayard Griggs, a madcap practical joker, or, as Granny says, "that miserable old so-and-so," and was unable to ingest solid food for the next three days. At five, I was bitten on my thumb by a black racer sunning himself on the edge of my sandbox. Granny's canape incident, my own snake confrontation and my mother's explanation of the name Beelzebub—the Devil—made me terrified to sit in the same room with the python skin. I feared he would fall off the wall and block my way to the squatty oak door to the main hall, my only means of escape, or worse, re-animate and slide over to snap at my toes while I changed Barbie's evening gown. I used to suspend my feet above the floor until my legs, heavy as lead, were forced down by the pull of gravity.

Four times a year my mother took me to visit our distant cousin, Father Bede James Andrews. He was 30 years older than Mom, and was her spiritual director (or "guru," I said when I grew older). We were the only family he had, so it was impossible to avoid visiting him. Mom always visited Father James on the Saturdays when Daddy went to the Raskin Rifle Range in Stamford to aim at airborne clay pigeons before they dropped into the Housatonic River. Because skeetshooting is not what my mother would consider a proper occupation for children, I couldn't even weasel out of listening to Mom and Father James discuss Thomas Merton or plan retreat schedules, by saying, "I want to go with Daddy."

I was always parked in the tearoom, while Father James heard Mom's confession. The room was furnished with the semi-antique potpourri that forms the predominant decor in many religious houses. Patrons often give castoffs, at attic cleaning time, believing the monks will appreciate utility without objecting to a lack of comfort or esthetic appeal. The best example of this utility was the Victorian sofa under the snakeskin. The couch typified every stylistic excess of the period. Its frame was laden with scrolls, notches, twisted carvings and sharp edges that sent a tingle up my arm if I bumped my elbow across one. The couch was brutal to sit on—miserably hard and covered with slick horsehair which caused the sitter to slip, slide and assume awkward positions to maintain his seat.

Approximately 40 minutes into the visit, the toes of a black leather shoe would push the door open, and Father James would bring in the teatray. As he leaned down to place the tray on the coffee table, the black wooden cross around his neck invariably clanked against the little round teapot. Mom and Father James sat on the sofa. I was usually cajoled into leaving the safety of the corner chair for one of the Morris chairs with squishy tan cushions that flanked either side of the sofa. I balanced a glass of milk and a sugar cookie on the paddleshaped arms of the chair while Father James performed the obligatory magic trick for me. His long, boney fingers would pull a quarter from the wide sleeves of his vestment. He always asked me a few questions about school and Sunday school, then he and Mom talked until Vespers.

This routine was interrupted, by Beezle, of all things, when I was about seven. During this visit, I was more than usually bored and fidgety because I knew my mother was enjoying herself. This was always a bad sign because it meant that she planned to stay for Vespers. The corners of my mouth drooped as she told me to finish my milk before the service. Father James was telling my mother, in his raspy voice, about a new novice who had been a cook in the Marines. From the refectory across the hall we could hear the clanks and pings of china and glassware, and the smell of onions drifted into the tearoom.

"He seems to believe that more is more. Why don't you stay and help us eat it? Our dinner reading is from Brother Hugh's new book." Brother Hugh had just published **An Abundance of Prayer: Reflections on the Episcopal Church in Africa**; Mom was a devoted admirer of his works.

"Lovely," she said as the bells rang to call the community to Vespers. She bent down to pull out her **Book of Common Prayer** from the side pocket of her purse. During service, she always let me hold one end of the red leather cover. It had thin, gilt-edged pages that wrinkled easily and thin satin ribbons that felt as smooth as Barbie's regal red ballgown. I sighed and took a sip of milk. Just then, cobwebs, dust and the left end of Beelzebub fell down and wrapped around my mother's shoulders. My teeth clenched the glass, and I heard a funny, popping noise as its smooth side crumbled and my mouth filled with shards.

Mom was trying to delicately extricate herself from Beezle's hold with the tips of two fingernails when she heard the glass snap. Two rivulets of blood slid from my upper lip, down my chin and neck; the white collar of my second-best dress absorbed the drainage. The dramatic effect of the rapidly growing red stain on the white collar made Mom forget her snake-squeamishness, and she flung Beezle on the floor. She ran over to me, banging into the coffee table and upsetting the half-full cream pitcher and a thick plate of sugar cubes. Her fingers clutched my face and pried my jaws open.

"Don't swallow, Missy. Spit it out."

I spat the glass into her hand.

"My tongue hurts."

The cuts in my mouth throbbed with little stinging pains, and I could taste the metallic flavor of my blood.

Father James, who had come back into the tearoom just after the accident, held a cup of cool tea to my lips.

"Rinse."

It tasted bitter, and I spat it out quickly. He blotted some of the runoff with the cuff of his sleeve. He made me do this twice.

When my mouth was clear of glass, tea and sleeve, Mom picked me up and placed me on the sofa. The light was better, and the Victorian monstrosity was big enough for her to sit on with me. Unfortunately, she sat me on top of Beelzebub. I squirmed and wriggled, but she still had my mouth clenched between her fingers. I inched backward, twisting my head toward her thumb.

"Be still, sweetie. Don't swallow."

She dabbed at the cut on my lip with a tissue.

One more twist and my head was free.

"Get Beezle away from me. I don't want Beezle to get me."

At that instant, Beelzebub, taking great offense at my insults and the rubbing of my rump upon his back, slid his other side down the wall and hit me on the shoulder. I screeched and flew into Mom's arms.

"It's only a piece of dried skin."

"You said he was the Devil."

"Named for the Devil."

She had a smear of blood on her cheek and splotches of dust and blood spotted her white blouse.

"Brother Hugh called him that as a joke."

Father James drove us to the emergency room. I calmed down once we left the tearoom. The doctor cleaned out the cuts on my lip and tongue with a bitter antiseptic that made my mouth feel hot and dry. He wrote some instructions on a card for Mom and then tweaked my chin.

"No more glass chasers, young lady."

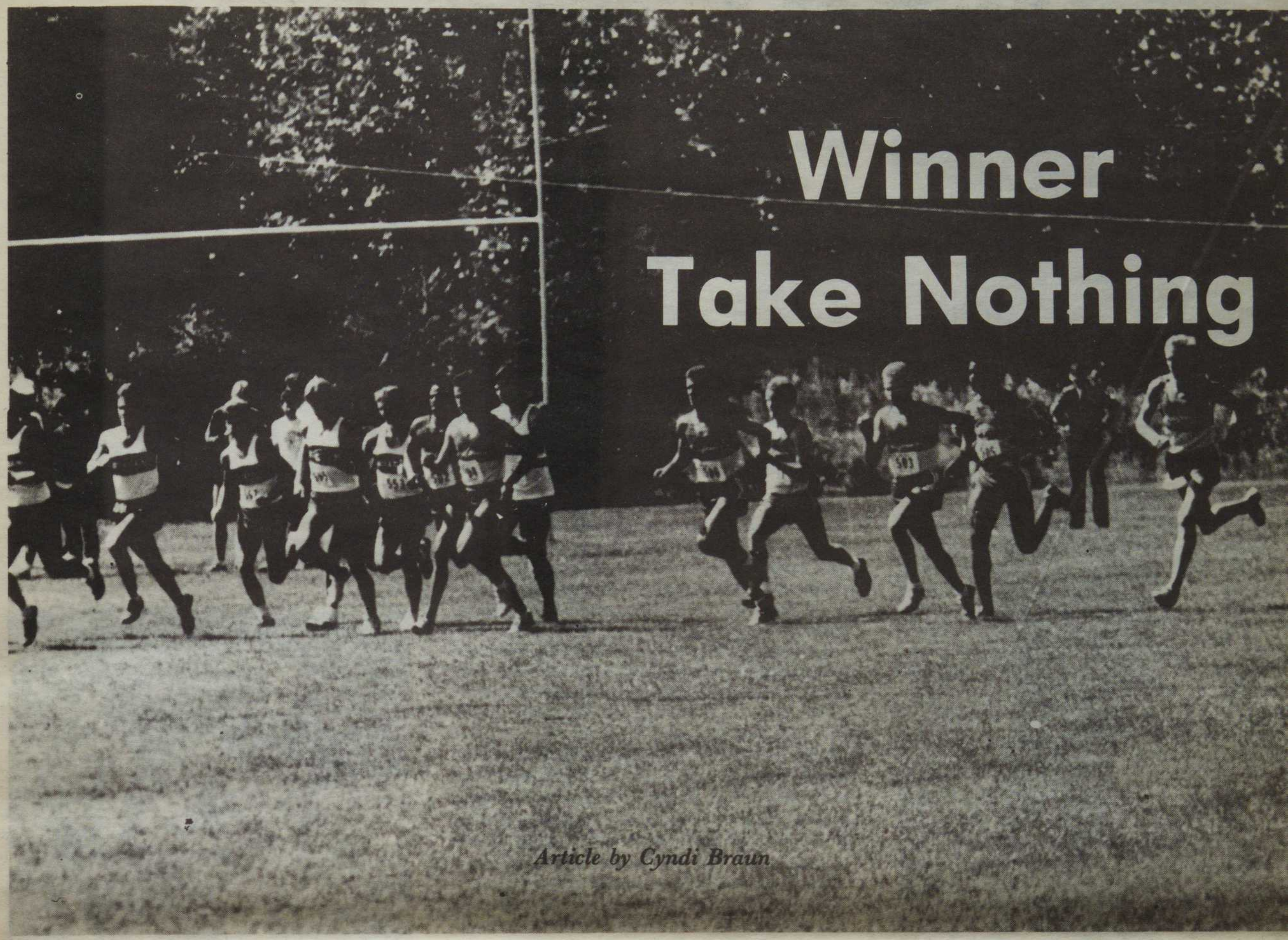
I didn't understand what he meant. When Mom and Father James smiled, I realized it was a joke. I hoped it had nothing to do with snakes or devils.

We had missed Vespers, Brother Marine's stew and **An Abundance of Prayer.** The jostled tea dishes were cleared away, and Beelzebub placed back on the wall before we left that night. Whenever we visited St. Paul's after that, I checked Beezle's wires before I sat down in the wing chair to wait.

Fiction by Mary Carolyn Morgan

the race doesn't always go to the swiftest, and the cruelest score of all reads...

Winner Take Nothing



Article by Cyndi Braun

"Now, Paul, we're going to review your race stragegy.

"When you get to the one-mile mark, where are you going to be?"

"Five seconds behind the leader."

"O.K. Now, when you get to the second mile mark, where are you going to be?"

"Ahh, five seconds behind the leader, but what about Bryan?"

"What about him?"

"Umm, well, what if he passes me?"

"Doesn't matter. He's on our side. He's a good guy, Paul. Now, where are you going to be at the three-mile mark?"

"Five seconds behind the leader, but if Bryan passes me..."

The sun darts in and out of the clouds, burning off the fog that covers California near the Monongahela River. High above the river, a soft autumn breeze reaches Roadman Park, where the California University Cross Country Invitational meet is being held. The breeze tousles the particolored autumn trees, causing some leaves to fall, to scatter, to rustle behind the runners; other leaves cling to branches—survivors, but with little hope of surviving the day.

High school boys lounge together in the dying grass, stretching muscles that are sore, weakened, tightened, abused by a grueling 5K race, enjoying the exhilaration one gets from exhausting a physically sound body. Solitary runners jog at a slow, contemplative pace, thinking of that last mile when they should have sprinted or that first mile when they should have paced themselves. The sweat of competition has not yet dried, and nylon uniforms cling to youthful bodies.

College men jog, faces down, in slow, purposeful steps, ignoring the women's race in progress. Some stretch methodically, jogging as little as possible, saving energy for their five-mile race. Some "short-step" sprint, warming their muscles for the first, insane 200-meter dash of the race.

College women glide up and down dusty, windy slopes, run around soccer, rugby and football fields, trudge through the fallen leaves and rotting apples beneath clusters of trees. Some stumble, some fall, but all are determined, especially at the finish, where they sprint, with different degrees of speed and grace, through an invisible barrier. Most of the men, however, do not see the finish. They are tense, their stomachs tightening and turning as the men ready themselves for their own race.

"Runners to the line. Runners to the line."

Seven California runners, coming from various directions at various speeds, join in one small portion of the 60-yard-long starting line. Standing center front is Paul Jost, a 31-year-old who took up running just as many take up alcohol—living for little or nothing else. "Hooked," Jost rises early every morning for his daily dose of mileage, just as an alcoholic rises for an eye-opening shot of J.D. When Coach Marty Uher tells him to cut down his mileage and not to run additional races, Jost shrugs, peers at Uher with his sparkling blue eyes, shakes his head and smiles the shy smile that says, 'But I know you understand. Don't you?'

Because Jost is California's top runner, six teammates surround him, preventing competitors' elbows from jabbing into his chest and spikes from stabbing his feet. He has been protected this way since 1985, when he began to dominate the team. The Saturday before the California Invitational, Jost won a dual meet against the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, securing his exclusive position, at least temporarily. However, newly-arrived transfer student Paul Bryan, a 20-year-old Jamaican from Central Arizona Community College who runs 1:51 half-miles with all the confidence of Carl Lewis, finished only seven seconds behind Jost against Pitt-Johnstown. Today, Bryan would again challenge Jost.

The gun sounds, and 100 runners dash for a trail 200 meters ahead. Arms swinging side to side, perhaps a little wider than normal, spikes digging, digging for just a little more leverage to get ahead of that tremendous pack, Jost emerges in front of Bryan, who sprints out just as strongly but a little more conservatively, laying back to watch what the leaders do.

Jost runs neck-and-neck with the leader for half a mile. Remembering the race strategy, he slows and allows the leader a five-second margin. As he passes the first, second and third mile marks, his usual concentration wanes. Whenever he has the chance, Jost glances behind him, wasting valuable energy—something even beginning runners know not to do.

What he sees is Bryan, steadily closing in on him, like a falcon gaining on a pigeon.

Bryan passes Jost. Jost's form becomes even more graceless. His face is contorted with disgust, and his movements, once as rhythmic as a pendulum's—right leg, left arm; left leg, right arm; breath in for two short counts, breath out for two long counts—are now so irregular that his body seems about to spasm. He moves too quickly one minute, too slowly the next, gasping, stride ragged.

Jost knows the race is lost. With each step, he gives up more. His five seconds behind the leader become five seconds behind Bryan, then ten seconds, then 30.

Bryan, on the other hand, is a pleasure to watch. He does not run rhythmically. His form is far from faultless. He slithers. He flows. He glides. He knows where he stands. He knows where he's going. He maintains his relaxed gait—dark thin legs bending and extending so smoothly that they seem to blend with the background, face serene, as if running—and, perhaps, passing Jost—were some sort of religious ecstasy that only a select few ever know.

In second place, Bryan nears the finish line. He quickens his pace with each long step, gradually increasing his speed, never forcing his slight frame to run too hard or too fast. He drives his arms through the finish, appearing neither satisfied nor disappointed.

Jost, in the meantime, climbs the final hill, placing one foot shakily in front of the other. His legs now seem too long for his body, his knees too bulky. His arms, much too short, don't move fluidly. It looks as if he will trip over his own feet at any second, but he doesn't—face proud, even though his pride is gone, Jost crosses the line 40 seconds behind Bryan, in fourth place.

Jamaica. Picture-postcard white beaches along warm, clear, blue Caribbean water. Deep, twisting valleys carved by 120 rushing rivers. A botanical garden of exotic flowers, shrubs, trees, cacti, bamboo stalks, giant ferns and illegal marijuana. World famous rum fermented smooth near sugar estates that provide jobs for seven months a year. Blue-green mountains wrapped in lush forests.


Frontrunner: Paul Bryant sets sail.

Atop one such mountain, in the parish of Manchester, in the town of Spurtree, Bryan was born a twin, one of seven children. Although both parents worked, the Bryan family still had a hard time making ends meet, but they survived. All Jamaicans are survivors. They learn this from one of their folk heroes, Anacy, the spider. Anacy fights against a tough world with intelligence, wit and firm, devious, even fierce self-interest. Anacy survives. All Jamaicans survive. From the Arawak Indians who called the island "Xamayca," to discoverer Christopher Columbus, to Spanish then British control, and finally to August 6, 1962, the end of 307 years as Britain's possession, Jamaica has survived.

In the public school system, education is free. But schools are usually overcrowded and understaffed. At St. Elizabeth Technical School, Bryan showed talent for running. He competed, with his high school team, in the Caribbean, Barbados, Miami and in the Philadelphia Penn Relays.

"In 1983, I was top high school competitor in the whole Caribbean. I was pretty good," Bryan says. "I went to the 1984 Olympic tryout, but I didn't make it. They blew me away, you know. I wasn't used to running that much, only after school."

In 1985, Bryan was a sophomore at Central Arizona Community College, competing on the collegiate cross country and track teams for his second year and learning to accept the discipline of the sport: "Since I came over here, I think I become tougher. I used to stop when it hurt. But coach say it's all in my mind."

But even though running in America made Bryan tougher, Arizona is still a desert. It has no beaches. And the weather is very warm. Bryan was used to an entirely different climate.

"It was like 150 degrees. I couldn't handle it. I mean, I was dehydrated and stuff like that. I didn't like it that much," says Bryan.

First a phone call to Uher, then several return calls, promising the needed money and hinting at the glory he might attain at California.

He has since found both.

A blue-grey haze envelopes the industrial city of Newark, spreading rankness over the bay into New York City, forcing its residents, mostly blue-collar families, to breathe the chemical fumes. Day after monotonous day. Just outside the industrial backdrop formed by American Leather Manufacturing Company, where patent leather was first produced; Anheuser-Busch; Archer Daniels Midland Compmany, where industrial chemicals are produced; and Fisher Baking Company, commercial bakers and packagers, is Union High School.

The 1970s. Reefer and long hair. A time of revolution. Gonzo. But Paul Jost was laid back, shy. He worked up the courage to go out for his high school track team but quit two weeks later. The other guys were so much "skinnier and faster." His only previous experience with track was winning a grade school "Best High Jumper" award.

Through high school, Jost spent half the day working as a machinst with his father, a foreman at E & M Tool Company in Irvington, a short ride down the road from Newark. After graduating in 1973, or 1974—he can't remember which—Jost continued working at E & M, making $9.40 an hour, studying karate, and just having a good time.

Jost started running again to get in shape for karate, and one day, while working out, he saw a runner ahead of him. Out of habit, he picked up his pace to pass, but reaching the runner, decided to stop and talk. The two runners talked so much that they became fast friends. Jost's new friend, Eric Lentz, invited him to dinner and to a road race. Jost was easily talked into both, and a few days later, he beat Lentz in the race. A little later, he ran in another race, this one along the coast, but he cannot remember the name, the date, or even the distance of the race. He does remember, however, that he placed seventh and won his first road race trophy.

"Seven years ago, I guess, after I got this little tiny trophy down the shore, you know. I was, like, really proud of that thing, so I went out and almost killed myself. I figured, you know, the more you run, the better you are. And then I learned the hard way, you know. I got injured—ah, hamstring, ah, calf, ah, siatic nerve—but I haven't been injured for a long time. I was mad I couldn't go out and run so much for a while."

He joined the Sneaker Factory Running Club and continued racing.

In 1980, Jost came to Pennsylvania to find a different job and eventually met Tom Bell, Washington High School track coach, who talked him into going to California University. By then, it was the winter of 1983, and Jost was 28 and thought himself too old. But Mike Bradley was a runner at California, Mike Bradley was good, and Mike Bradley was 28 years old.

Jost had just run an impressive 14:24 three-mile in Wellsburg, prompting Uher to talk him into immediately registering for the spring term. Jost would be an asset to the California team sooner than he dreamed.

Mountains. Woods. Open fields. Fresh air. West Virginia. Slow country life about to speed up. West Liberty University's annual cross country meet.

The sun has not shown itself since the California team left Pennsylvania, nor will it through the rest of the day. Instead, it hides behind clouds, giving the hills a foreboding look. It is a typical late fall day: 50 degrees or so, perfect for cross country. The wind, usually rough in this elevation, is gentle, also ideal for running.

Jost, in black, mud-stained California warm-ups that look as if they have not been washed in weeks, and Bryan, in black seersuckers and layers of sweatshirts, jog together around the starting area, warming up for another challenge between them. Just before the race, they separate, sprinting in opposite directions, thinking of the race at hand.

"O.K. men, there will be only one command before the gun sounds. Got that? One command." Stepping back, the starter raises his gun... "Runners sehtt..."—strange silence as the runners look intently at the space in front of them..."BANG!" Runners sprint like a herd of race horses, smoke floats out of the gun, coaches start their watches, ticking the finish...ticking the score...ticking the victory...tick, tick, tick.

This, a much smaller meet than the California University Invitational, makes the competition between Jost and Bryan seem all the more fierce. Jost shoots out and takes an early lead that everyone expects him to keep. He considers this his course. He's run and won on it. He knows the flat fields that make the beginning of the course so deceptively easy, the curves and uneven terrain that twist and tear even the strongest of ankles, the hills that make the last two miles so torturous. But Jost knows the secret to winning this race—pacing himself at the flat beginning in preparation for the hills at the end. He should keep his lead; he should win the race.

Bryan once again runs a more conservative first mile, but steadily gains on Jost. His expression shows no sign of increased effort, nor does his body show strain. He just keeps plugging, closing the gap. Running with a kitten's meekness, Jost can feel Bryan's presence just as a person can sense that someone unseen is staring at him. It is the runner's instinct, and it is both a gift and a curse. Jost has that instinct, but he does not trust it. He looks back—just to be sure.

It will be the last time he looks back that day. Bryan pounces by, ignoring Jost's struggles.

A click in Jost's brain. Back to the clumsy, gawky runner. Forget all strategies. Forget the pace. Forget a victory. His form, obviously so carefully calculated and assembled, falls to pieces. He's like the tin man in need of oil, trying to move his rusty joints in the same easy motion they just had, but the more he tries, the more he wears the joints and needs the oil.


What Paul Jost caught wasn't what he pursued.

Two more runners pass, wondering, "is the legend dying?" Once again, the race ends with Bryan the winner.

They warm down together, Jost discussing his poor race with his rival, then make their way to a red-brick golf lodge that serves as the race's headquarters. Inside, a fireplace warms the tired, sweaty runners sprawled over the floor, chairs and tables. Homemade cookies in great pizza sized boxes. A snack bar smelling of burnt hot dogs and hot chocolate. And a West Liberty coach shoving cookie after cookie through his Jimmy Carter smile..."nice race, real nice race, hope to see you next year..."

Jost and Bryan skip the fireplace and the cookies, smile at the West Liberty coach and station themselves in the circle of California runners.

"Hey, Robin, that was a nice race," says Jost, walking over to teammate Robin Campbell. His shoes, the team-issued red and black Adidas with insoles that wear out within two weeks and outer soles that wear even faster, squish when he walks. Once again, he has forgotten to

cont. on pg. 39...

Photography by Frank Miklos

Solomon, I Ain't

Humor by Jean Newell

I strode into the kitchen, curious about my son's plaintive cry, "She got more than me!" Rachel, my eldest, tumultuous daughter, had poured the last of the milk unequally into two glasses—hers full, his, less than half.

With deepest wisdom, I bellowed, "Even those out! Then give your brother first choice!"

Obligingly, she lifted the full glass and drank half, set it down, and presented Niko with first choice. Niko snatched both and strolled out of the room.

Still mulling over my next course of action, I was interrupted by the sound of glass breaking. I dashed toward the noise in the den and found Baby Aaron behind the bar sampling some leftover Christmas cheer. Only two years old, Aaron as yet had no self-imposed limits on liquor. While I stood watching with numbed disbelief, he tipped the bottle and poured a double onto the carpet.

Crossing the room as fluidly as O.J. Simpson, I scooped him up and deposited him on the couch. As I knelt to blot the spill, I heard a hiccup. Behind me teetered a tiny, greenish, curly-haired cherub who promptly heaved several highballs worth of bourbon down my silk blouse.

After a quick wash job and a milk bottle for the junior guzzler, Aaron was sentenced to bed. My reward, I decided, was to be a steaming bath and a frosty beer.

Eager as Lindbergh five miles from Paris, I headed for the bathroom, brew and radio in hand. But my dream was shattered. Charlie, my lackadaisical four-year-old, sat on his potty chair, center stage, in front of the tub. One summer, I shoveled manure on my uncle's farm, but that aroma will never make my list of top ten fragrances. I beat a hasty retreat.

Ah, yes! The waterbed, my last haven, was still available upstairs. Spiderman couldn't have climbed those stairs quicker. A girl's waterbed—with quadraphonic Stevie Nicks—is her castle. But Shocker, the resident 150 pound labrador, lay sprawled across the sheets with all the arrogant slovenliness of Henry VIII.

"Can I have four dollars for a magazine?" Rachel demanded, nimbly darting past me to rummage through my cookie jar full of makeup.

"Are you allowed in my make-up without permission?" I asked, throttling Shocker with both hands. "And no, you may not! Four dollars is too much for any magazine."

"OK. Then can I have six dollars for a book on Cynd[i] Lauper's life?"

"Mom, Mommmm! Charlie fed my fish!" Niko wailed.

"Niko, it's good for Charlie to learn to care for the pets also. Don't holler at him," I explained above Shocker's increasing groans at being evicted.

"But Mom," Niko moaned, "he fed my fish to the cat!"

Through the chaos I heard a car door slam. Salvation! My husband was home from work. I could escape. It was 5 p.m. and I was free. I picked up my books and headed out the front door to class.

Hours later, exhausted from laboring over texts of forgotten lore, aimless and forlorn, I staggered through my front door. Cast about the room was clutter: coloring books, dirty clothes, crumbled toast smeared with butter. From the kitchen came the cries I dread: "She did it!" "It's mine!" Then, "Go to bed!" Above the din rose one voice alone: "Just you wait till Mom gets home!" **Flipside**

in our confusion, we often travel what roads we see, rather than taking the one that leads where we want to go.

Revival at a Wrong Turn

Story by George Swaney

After reading a draft of this story, its subject begged to have his real name left out.

Nine a.m. An ungodly hour for church, but there I stood in pressed slacks and my father's Arrow shirt, mouthing the words to "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" from **Hymns of the Living Faith**, a book 300 years in the making and as thick as **War and Peace.** The voices of the congregation behind me (all eight of them) rose in unison. There was no accompaniment, but the waving hand of the man behind the pulpit kept time to the music, like a mute metronome.

Outside the windows and one flight down, rain-splashed traffic swished along West Main Street, heading home from uptown Westport. Happy motorists, digesting Sunday breakfasts from Denny's, loosened their belts a few notches and breathed easily. A lazy afternoon of beer and football awaited them. My stomach rumbled, and I closed my eyes.

All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall.
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him—Lord of all...

I opened my eyes and looked around. The room was cramped and a little draughty. The pews consisted of four horseshoe rows of folding chairs with their backs against the windows, facing a tiny podium at the front of the room. To the right, a narrow fire escape stairway led to the street.

Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him—Lord of all.

The hymn singing ended, and the man behind the pulpit asked us, "please be seated." A discussion followed which, as far as I could make out, had something to do with the book of Ephesians; at least the phrases "As it's written in Ephesians..." and "if we read in Ephesians..." were bandied around enough. I decided I would stare with deadly earnest at the pulpit, knit my brow appropriately at certain ponderous passages and not utter a sound.

The pulpit itself was striking. Constructed of plywood and varnished to a peanut-brittle perfection, it stood high enough for a six-foot Christian like our song leader, who was discussing Ephesians, to lean on with his elbows and not appear to be bending forward. A four-foot by two-foot cross, attached to the front of the pulpit, seemed to exist for purely decorative purposes until it was revealed, on closer examination, to be something more—a wire mesh covering for three speaker holes that had been carved into circles in the wood behind it. Two square Ross amplifiers, squatting on either side of the pulpit as if to brace it from tipping over sideways, were apparently hooked up to the cross and on standby until that moment when the decibels could be raised to metamorphasize a low-pitched reader of the gospels into a tent-billowing bellower of God's Holy word. In either case, the question was academic; the songleader was spreading the gospel without the benefit of a microphone.

"Can we live in a material world and still lead Christian lives?" The songleader folded his hands in front of him, waiting for the congregation to respond. As he waited, the cuffs of his sleeves rose slightly, exposing a gold watch as big as a silver dollar. "In the America that we live in today, do you think it's possible?"

I cast a surreptitious glance at my fellow worshippers. Every head was bowed; no one moved. A blond-haired parishioner in a two-toned suit, looking like he just stepped out of a J.C. Penney's Spring Summer Catalogue, slowly turned the pages of a Bible on his knees. I noticed the men (all five of them) were in jackets and ties, and all of the women were wearing full dresses—no skirts or blouses. All of their clothing, conservative and somewhat stiff, had the look of things stepped into for a few hours, only to be stepped out of again and quickly hung back up.

Finally, a dialogue of sorts ensued, with the songleader as referee. The majority of the Fellowship seemed to hold that a Christian lifestyle involved, first, prayer on a daily basis; second, a stable family life; third, leading an exemplary Christian life by testifying and bearing witness to others. The songleader seemed satisfied with these concepts but wanted to point out the most common obstacle to Christian living.

"Worry. That's what it is. Day to day worries. It happens to all of us, but a real Christian has an advantage over everyone else. Am I right?" Heads nodding all around. "AM I RIGHT?"

The blond shot up his hand. "With prayer, worries don't mean the same thing. I mean, worries don't mean the same...thing."

"Right, exactly. Prayer makes us whole. Prayer washes our worries and fears away."

Back and forth it went until the songleader checked his watch, announced it was 10 o'clock and had us all stand for a "prefatory" prayer. Ten o'clock was the designated hour for Morning Worship, and after the songleader's prayer a door behind him opened, as if on cue, and out stepped the pastor.

Frankie Cavarotti, a friend I hadn't laid eyes on in fifteen years (not counting the few minutes we met this past summer when he told me of his "chosen path"), was shepherding this flock of God's elect in this rented room in West Virginia. I had promised him I would attend a service as soon as he was settled in.

And, by God, I had kept my word.

At first glance, Pastor Frankie doesn't appear the fundamentalist type. A broad and burly 5-8, he would seem more in character as a hosiery-headed bandito shaking down a poor sinner for his last peso in a blind alley. Of course his heritage is Italian Catholic, but his neatly trimmed black beard and flashing, toothfilled smile give him the look of someone stepping right out of a painted desert horizon on the MGM backlot, glowering into the camera: "BADGES! WE DON'T NEED NO STINKING BADGES!" But when he opens his mouth, he's the All-American preacher man.

"And how are we all this fine morning?"

Muffled mumbling, my mumbling more muffled than anyone's.

"Are we here to praise the Lord and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ?"

Mumbled "amens" now. I didn't mumble anything.

"Well, that's good. I'm glad to see all of you here this morning. I'm especially glad to see an old friend sitting here. That's George, everyone. You all met George?" Muffled mumbles again... it was becoming a chant. "George and I go way back, oh, about twenty years. We were pals when we were kids."

At this point, Pastor Frankie launched into an account of our first meeting, when we were five. I guessed he must have had this in mind all along, from the time I phoned him the night before to ask directions to Westport. He moved nimbly around the front of the room, raising his arms and poking the air with imaginary blows to my face and sides in illustration of our first fight, which, according to Pastor Frankie, occurred a few minutes after we met.

"I'm ashamed to say this now, but George ended up on his back in the crick and I ran home and hid under my porch. His father had to come down to fish him out."

The fellowship found this anecdote extremely amusing, especially when considered in the light of Pastor Frankie's eventual rise to his present hallowed height. It was all good, clean fun, but it struck me that maybe Pastor Frankie was feeling a little guilty over this drubbing I took at his hands some 20 years ago. I had the feeling that even a little guilt, however silly or insignificant, isn't good for a pastor.

As for the alleged beating itself, I don't believe a word of it.

Pastor Frankie and I had been pals, all right. Our houses faced each other across a gray, dusty road in a hollow hidden away at the foot of the Laurel Mountains, a few miles north of the West Virginia border. There were thirteen elm and sycamore trees in my father's yard. The front of Frankie's house was hidden by needle pines that towered over his roof.

A mountain creek, three-feet deep, ran down between our houses, ending up inside a concrete culvert at the end of our lane. Above the culvert was a two-lane blacktop—the highway Frankie and I were never permitted near, even after we owned bicycles.

One summer, my mother drove us to the old Grant's department store in Uniontown and bought each of us our first pair of P.F. Flyers. We spent the rest of that day, and many days after, standing face-to-face in my backyard, seeing who could jump the highest. On the television commercials, the cartoon boy in the crewcut sat down on his porch steps, tied on his new P.F. Flyers, and was somehow miraculously propelled, feet first, through a white picket fence, spun skidding around a corner where he outran a rolling Greyhound, and rallied in the sky, treading cloud scuds beneath his smoking P.F. Flyer sneakers as the planet whirled and revolved beneath him, finally zooming out of sight behind streaking meteors and weblike galaxies.

Frankie and I never really seemed to leave the ground.

Following the sermon and handshakes all around (three members of the congregation asked me home to dinner), Pastor Frankie permitted me a quick once over of the place and filled the cracks in his biography since I had seen him last.

After graduating from Robert Wesleyan College with a degree in music in 1985, Pastor Frankie continued on as assistant pastor to the faithful flock of the East Aurora Free Methodist Church in East Aurora, New York—a position he had accepted in 1983 as on-the-job training and an honest way to pay school expenses. His wife, Connie, whom he had married in 1981, had been working part-time as a dental assistant until the birth of their daughter, Francie, in 1984. Without Connie's extra income, money became scarce, and Pastor Frankie began scouting around for a fatter flock to feed. When the call came in that the Westport Free Methodist Fellowship needed a shepherd—needed a stable, in fact—Pastor Frankie packed up his wife and children (a second child, a son, was born this year) and headed for the open pastures of Westport, West Virginia—The Town That God Forgot.

Well, not really. There are seven churches in Westport, all different denominations, and the Westport Free Methodist Fellowship will make it eight. When it becomes a church. That thankless task, as a layman might see it, now belongs in the yet-to-be proven hands of Pastor Frankie.

As we headed down the fire escape toward the sidewalk, I felt a strange admiration for my old friend, and not a little fear. Why, I wondered, would anyone take on such a burden? Married, only 26, and with two children. As impractical and foolhardy as I am, even I knew that finding new members, raising money, breaking ground, raising money, building a new church, raising money... well, that's an awfully tall order to fill.

"Prayer. That's what does it." Pastor Frankie locked the door behind us, whirled around and caught my hand in a nutcracker vise.

"It was good seeing you, Bud. Tell me you'll be down next Saturday and we'll talk over old times. Call for directions. I gave you my number!"

I nodded.

While Frankie had busied himself in Westport, attending classes like Psalmody 101 and attaining heaven, I was keeping active in Uniontown, moving from one dead-end job to another, running my family into debt and driving my wife crazy. I had made the error of choosing a job driving a delivery truck for Uniontown Furniture when I was eighteen, and it slowly became apparent to me, as I shuttled from one truck to another, that my experience as as "truck driver" was to be my calling card in every unemployment line and assistant manager's office. This life didn't lead to fortune on the road or peace in the home, so while I dumpclutched by day, I played Andy Capp by night, never really succeeding at either task. I didn't have Andy Capp's wife, for one thing; I had a longsuffering but determined companion who was intent on putting me through college, as soon as I would let her. And my abilities as a driver... well, I hate to drive. I was always too long finding customer's houses, no matter how well-pronounced the directions.

I only missed the turn to Pastor Frankie's house once. I knew I had to pass the church, go straight to the light, cross the tracks, bear right over the bridge and make my first left, but the first turn to my left after crossing the bridge looked more like an overgrown turkey path. The second turn was steep: a sharp, narrow street between two sloping sidewalks that seemed to curve around into a dense forest. Pastor Frankie hadn't mentioned any death-defying hills on his street, so I drove on. After a minute or so, I realized I had driven too far and decided to make my next left whether it looked inviting or not.

As it turned out, the next left led me straight into the parking lot of a 7-11 that was honoring the season with a hundred or more pumpkins, strategically placed on long, screen-bottomed tables alongside its doors. I parked, got out, opened my umbrella and walked past the dripping pumpkins to a dripping pay phone on the side of the building. Expecting the pastor's line to be busy, and not being disappointed, I gave up and entered the store. After 20 minutes of rubbing elbows with the Saturday morning patrons of the Westport 7-11 around the coffee and donut counter, and wasting another five minutes outside wandering around the pumpkins, I decided to drive back down the street and take the turn up the steep hill to my right. It was really the only residential-type street I had seen; the turkey path beside the bridge was definitely out of the question.

It turned out to be the right street, of course, and I realized I had been stalling all along. I really was in no hurry for an old-timey tete a tete with Pastor Frankie. He had been gracious, kind and exuberant enough in our meeting at the church that Sunday before, but I'm really not in the mood at 10 o'clock on a Saturday morning to talk to a preacher. My Saturday mornings always follow my Friday nights, and the last thing I should be facing on such occasions is a Man of God. Even if the Man of God is a childhood chum.

People change.

I pulled into the first steep, cement-cracked driveway to my left. Pastor Frankie's new house is a long, narrow, green bungalow and looked pretty much like all the other long, narrow bungalows on his street. True to form, Pastor Frankie was waiting for me at the screen door. He flung the door open for me and planted one foot down heavily on the porch. "Say, boy! Have any trouble?"

No, I told him. None whatsoever.

Since we were about the same age and the only two boys in the neighborhood, Frankie and I spent a lot of time together. Most of the important events of my childhood (important because I remember them so clearly), directly involved Frankie in one way or another. I remember being sent home from school the day President Kennedy was shot, and excitedly knocking at Frankie's door to ask if he could come out to play. I was furious when he told me he was staying in to mourn. Some months later, we sat on the floor together and watched The Beatles on the "Ed Sullivan Show" (after I cried and pleaded with my parents for two weeks to let me stay home from church that night... a decision my mother still regrets). A few years later we twined dandelions around our ears, tried to keep our hair parted in the middle, and taught ourselves Transcendental Meditation from a two-page instruction insert in **Datebook** magazine: Briar Creek Lane in the Summer of Love.

We had our first smoke together, puffing two bent, wrinkled Lucky Strikes on my grandfather's backporch, and shared, sequestered beneath the sweltering, sun-soaked leaves behind Frankie's tinroofed coal house, our first beer, a bottle of Black Label.

There's more, of course, but in respect to Pastor Frankie's now-holy office, I'm leaving out all the dirty parts.

I sank into the sofa while Pastor Frankie brewed coffee. The automatic dishwasher splashed and rumbled. It had been dragged into the center of the kitchen floor, and its black rubber hoses stretched like tentacles across the room. The dishwasher strained and shook as if a demon were inside and refused to come clean. Pastor Frankie shouted something about clean cups as he opened and slammed one cabinet after another. I nodded, glancing over at Francie, who was seated in a baby-bear rocking chair in front of the television. Her hair was cut Dutch Boy style, and she wore blue-framed sunglasses with a white skull and crossbones on the corner of each lens. "Pound Puppies" was almost over, a totally incoherent cartoon show that was fine-tuned on the pastor's television to a fuzzy orange smear. Francie rocked back and forth a foot from the screen, turning in her rocker to stare at me; the shrieking dishwasher reduced the puppies' conversation to a barking drone. I pretended not to notice her and looked at the walls.

The curtains were drawn open on the large bay window, and the drab skies crept in, throwing shadowy, twilight haze over the room. Raindrops beaded and bled down the glass. In the corner of the window, I could see the reflection of the television screen, a little orange blob that blinked on and off, obliterated as it was every few seconds by Francie's rocking head. Near the ceiling, at the top of each pane of glass, someone had taped a colorful cardboard scarecrow, skeleton and witch. Their crepe-paper accordion legs stretched down the window.

In the kitchen, the dishwasher moaned and coughed, reaching its final cycle. Pastor Frankie leaned in the archway and watched the final minutes of "Pound Puppies" with us. He told me we would have clean cups and spoons in a bit. He rolled up the sleeves of his white crewneck sweater and crossed his Popeye forearms over his chest. His bulk was impressive; his gray twill pants clung snugly to his legs as if he were a contestant in a Wet Dress Slacks contest. He looked tired, and when I mentioned this, he threw back his head and roared a baritone laugh.

"I have to learn to go to bed at a godly hour—because I have to get up at an ungodly hour!"

The dishwasher finally gasped and clunked off. Pastor Frankie asked me how I took my coffee. I told him and pulled up a chair at the kitchen table.

"Connie sleeps late on Saturday, y'know. It's her only day to sleep in—what with watching the kids and all. Francie's no trouble now—she minds good. But Chris... that's a different story. He's only six months old. And me, I'm never around. I'm down at the church tinkering around, or in my office studying, reading up for Sunday." Pastor Frankie paused long enough for a sip of strong coffee. The dinette table was set up for a background photograph in a recipe ad for **Ladies Home Journal**. Two oblong, plastic yellow place mats, yellow cloth

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Olympics
cont. from pg. 1

minimally retarded—to the staging area for the softball-throw. A slightly-built volunteer in tight red coaching shorts, mirrored sunglasses and a t-shirt emblazoned with "Special Olympics—A Celebration of Love" stood behind a line 20 feet from the athletes, speaking into a bullhorn.

"When I call your name, sit on the first bench. When I call your name, sit on the first bench."

Two Olympians rushed toward him, crossed the line and reached for the bullhorn.

"COACHES, KEEP YOUR ATHLETES **BEHIND** THE LINE!" the stager yelled.

Darting back and forth, fending off the two curious athletes, the stager looked like a human dodge ball.

"HEY," I yelled. "IT'S NOT CONTAGIOUS."

Apparently, my words didn't reassure him, because he continued to evade the two athletes.

Fred took a silver in the event, Henry a bronze. Betty won first place in her division and Cynthia earned a sixth-place ribbon.

"See, Chuckie, see what I got," Cynthia said, waving the pale-green ribbon. "Ain't it pretty?"

"Yeah, Cynthia, it's very pretty—what's that shiny spot?"

"Snot," Fred said. "She blew her nose on it."

With an hour to spare before lunch, we took our athletes to a model airplane exhibition in an open field adjacent to the stadium.

We sat beside chaperone Kevin Ripper and his athlete, Joe, a full-time resident of Western Center. A fixed smile highlighted Joe's little-boy face. His eyes, as dark as the black crew-cut that sprouted from his head, were fixed on the remote control, one-eighth scale model plane doing death spirals.

Kevin sniffed.

"Joe, did you shit yourself?"

Joe didn't respond.

"Joe, Joe, JOE!"

"Huh?"

"Joe, stand up. Stand up, Joe."

Joe stood, still looking at the airplane.

"Turn around."

Joe turned around. Seeping through the back of his blue and green plaid two-sizes-too-big walking shorts was a brown stain.

"Joe, that's the third time today. You're gonna run out of shorts pretty soon." Kevin took Joe's arm. "Come on; I gotta clean you up."

Kevin steered Joe through the crowd, toward the restroom.

Joe never took his eyes off the airplane.

We went back to the track.

"What's the next event?" I asked Chuck.

"The Lucky 47 One-Mile Stumble."

Seven children, four boys and three girls, all victims of Downes' Syndrome (one more than the normal 46 chromosomes, hence the race's nickname,) lined up, arms folded across their chests, on the east side of the asphalt track. The starter raised his pistol and fired. The startled milers covered their ears.

No uniform break from the starting line. One of the girls took two steps forward, stopped, turned around, yelled at the others. One by one, they started the four-lap event.

On the west side of the track, I watched the group struggle around the first turn. Bunched, they didn't exhibit that drive and determination I had read about in my Special Olympic Official Program, nor were they smiling like the kids in the program—they were sweating and gasping.

"Chuck, those kids look like they're gonna die, like they can't breathe."

"How much do you know about Downes' Syndrome?"

"Not much—why?"

"Kids with Downes' Syndrome are prone to upper-respiratory problems."

"So?"

"**So?** So it's what, 85-90 degrees out here?"

"Yeah, but these kids have been in training."

Chuck rolled his eyes, shook his head and exhaled forcefully. "Training? I'll tell you how much training they've had—none, zilch. Hell, of the seven specimens out there, I'd say at least five are from institutions. Not counting today, they probably haven't been outside for months."

"Aw, come on, aren't you stretching it just a bit—"

"I'll tell you what. Next time you're home from school for a weekend, I'll take you to view the inmates at Nightmare zoo, a.k.a. Western Center Psychiatric Hospital."

"It can't be **that** bad."

"Just watch the race, though I'm sure Sebastian Coe's record is safe for another year."

I turned back to the track. The milers were still bunched, crowded into two lanes, alone. Not one parent shouted instructions or encouragement from the infield. Seated in the aluminum bleachers, they fanned themselves with programs, mopped perspiration from their foreheads and drank Coke.

Six of the seven entrants dropped out after three laps. The lone miler needed only to cross the finish line. She turned, saw no one behind her and stopped.

"GO! GO! GO!"

She sprinted—short, fat legs pumping like pistons out of synch, arms flailing, chin nearly touching her chest. On the final turn—100 yards to go—body two steps ahead of legs, she collapsed, lay heaving on the hot asphalt.

I stood. Chuck grabbed my arm. "Where do you think you're going?"

"To help that kid."

"Sit down."

"But--"

"But, hell. Who do you think you are? Florence Nightingale on the battlefield?"

"She's been lying there like a beached whale for at least three minutes. Maybe she's hurt."

Chuck pulled me down beside him; our faces were inches apart.

"Open your eyes, little sister. Do you see any of the 'officials' rushing out there to help her? Parents?"

"I don't give a damn what they—"

"Just watch. You might learn something."

Slowly at first, like popcorn in a microwave, applause started in the bleachers. I watched the miler. She rolled onto her back, grabbed her knees, pulled herself to a sitting position, wiped her nose with her forearm, rolled over again onto her hands and knees, pushed herself to standing and shuffled off the field.

"There's a winner for you." **Flipside**

Special Olympics

Rites
cont. from pg. 9

minutes. The games are played in two halves, with no breaks in play except an occasional time out and a halftime break of no more than five minutes. Only two substitutions are allowed. Going into a Rugby game is like going behind enemy lines: you don't have time to rest and you only get limited support.

The one bastion of sanity on the field is the referee. Ruggers view the ref with almost the same mixture of hate, respect and fear with which new recruits view their drill sergeants. Never argue with the ref, don't let him see you when you nail someone just a little after he's gotten rid of the ball, and always, always, call the ref "Sir," even when it hurts to say it. Rugger's strict attention to authority on the playing field is exceeded only by their abandon at the traditional—no, mandatory—post-game parties.

Our postgame party was held in the basement of the off-campus Rugby house. Seventy sweaty, black-eyed, fat-lipped, shin-scraped Ruggers crowded into the low-ceilinged basement, still in their uniforms, and sucked down plastic cups of cheap beer. A single, bare red bulb illuminated the two teams as they took up opposite sides of the basement. A ring of partiers and hangers-on surrounded the two teams like spectators at an arena. The basement smelled of stale beer and human grease. Another kind of game was about to begin.

A State player stepped into the space between the two teams. It was their fullback: short, black hair a disheveled rat's nest, deep-set dark eyes under Cro-Magnon eyebrows, a slight, drunken swagger. He started to sing, accompanied by the cackle of a live rooster, kept in a wire cage behind the bar.

"We call on Roosterheads to sing us a song, sing us a song." The rest of State joined in. "We call on you to sing us a song, so SING, motherfuckers, SING, motherfuckers, SING!" They sounded like drunk Marines calling an irregular candence. Andy turned to Chiselhead and said, "They beat us in that game, I'm damned if they're gonna beat us at our own party, too." He stepped to center, a beer in hand.

"There once was a man who had a wife..."

"Rum titty rum titty rumtittyrum," the Roosterheads sang in chorus.

"And she just couldn't be satisfied..."

"Rum titty rum titty rum..."

"So he built a great big fucking machine..."

"Rum titty rum titty rum..."

"It was fired by coal and powered by steam..."

"Rum titty rum titty rum titty rum..."

Andy drank between verses. Ten minutes and four beers later, he had finished telling the tale of a machinist's quest to satisfy his wife, and with typical Rugbeian humor, that great big fucking machine turned on its creator while most of the girls in the basement turned red. Both teams judged it a fine performance, and a community chug was declared. I went to refill my cup.

When I came back, both sides had just finished recruiting first-time players for the "ten man lift." Shouts of "don't be a pussy" and "everybody's gotta do it at least once" urged the rookies into a pile on the floor. They wove their arms and legs together, making themselves into a ten-man spider. Twenty Ruggers surrounded the knot of rookies, ready to lift them. I leaned against the steps and tried to become another one of the shadows.

"Are you READY, rookies!"

"YES, SIR!"

"Ready, set, GO!" Fifty beers washed over the ten helplessly entangled players. The laughter shook the stairs I was leaning against. They celebrated with another song, sung to the tune of "The Candy Man": "Who can take a kitten, nail it to a post, spin it around like a game show host?" Chorus: "The S and M man, cause he mixes it with love and makes the hurt feel good..."

State's fullback stepped to center and attempted a verse: "Who can take a chainsaw... cut it in... aw, shit, I forgot."

The rebuttal was swift and unanimous, sung to the tune of "Frere Jacques:" "You're an asshole, yes you are, yes you are, you're a fucking asshole, yes you are... Sooo... Shoot that boot ooh ah shootthatboot ooh ah..." A high-top cleat full of beer was thrust in his face. He wrinkled his nose at it—a bulldog scowling at a bowl of day-old Gravy Train. He chugged it.

"Redeem yourself!"

He started the verse over again. I sought refuge in a dark corner by the bar. John Paul was talking to a Fay Wray look-alike. She turned to get a refill from the bar. John Paul looked her up and down, fixing his gaze briefly on her behind. He gave me a look as if to say, "Isn't it grand, being a Rugger?"

"Why do you call yourselves Roosterheads?" Fay Wray asked him.

"Because a couple of years ago someone brought a live rooster out on the field before a game and bit its head off."

"Why?"

"He was getting psyched up."

"Who was it?"

"No one remembers."

The next Monday I met Chiselhead on the sidewalk, while I was limping up the steps to our college library. I had been spiked in the back of my leg, but had gotten too drunk to feel it until the next morning.

"How are you feeling, Bill?"

"O.K." I had slept on my right side all weekend, and would continue to do so for two weeks.

"You gonna play again next week?"

What I meant to say through my almost-healed split lip was: "No way."

"Hell yeah," I said. **Flipside**

Hero
cont. from pg. 18

eight yards and rushed for three.

"Tom is a credit to the university and this study of specialization," said Dr. William Benedetti, Dean of the College of Education. "When Tom started to take classes here, I thought that he would be the stereotype of the college athlete. Football first, studies second. Not Tom. He is always prepared for classes. He reads the assignments and always does his homework. He will go far."

Ulizio has impressed not only the College of Education, but also the athletic administration.

"Mr. Ulizio is a fine credit to the school. He shows that all athletes here or at any institution can be good students as well as fine athletes," said Janice McConnell, Athletic Director. "I wish Tom the best of luck and the whole athletic administration here at California hopes that his teammates will follow his example in the academic sphere."

"It is a real credit to the university to see a kid from nowhere emerge and play football and be as academically sound as Tom Ulizio," said Norman Hasbrouck, Dean of Admissions. "He's a great recruiting tool."

But the academic life, despite his accomplishments, doesn't satisfy Ulizio: "I just don't want to be known as a good student. I want to be known as a quarterback who can make it both ways. I'm glad to know that I'm accepted for my academics, but I always want people to know that I am a football player and a good one at that."

In the summer, Ulizio works with special children at Camp Willow, a camp for slow and special children. He says the camp is a chance to put his talent and patience to work.

"Tom fit right in from the first moment he stepped through the door," said Ms. Toni Franschetti, director of Camp Willow. "He did all of the work for this summer free. He donated his time, and he never asked for anything in return. He has real heart and makes the kids feel good about themselves. He must have learned that from football. He made every kid something on craft days. He helped them along as if they were his own."

In the summer, Tom would come home from Camp Willow at 5:30 and begin to throw the football. He would play steady quarterback for the kids from his street when the boys from Cherry Avenue would invade his yard to play a game of touch football.

"The kids like to have someone throw to them. It kept them happy and out of trouble for awhile. It also helped my arm. I would tell them to go deep and toss it high and arc the sucker," he said. "The little rug rats would snatch them up. We both enjoyed ourselves."

In the August training camp, Ulizio started to develop a touch on his passes. Coach Petrucci instructed Ulizio to hold the ball farther back in his hand and keep pressure on the end of the ball so that he could better control the pass.

"Tom seemed to have trouble keeping the ball in a spiral, so I told him that if he holds the ball closer to the end, the ball will roll off his hand easier," said Petrucci. "He also worked on his drop-back and his execution of the hand-off. He is coming along at a good rate."

About his own play, Ulizio says, "I like to think of myself as a Pat Haden type of quarterback, one of those kinds that aren't tall and quick, but can use what they have to get the job done. Sure, I wish I were a Terry Bradshaw or a Danny Marino, full of athletic talent. I do the best I can with what I have, like Haden—he was not a flashy superstar. He used his smarts and abilities to become a winner. I hope that this season I can finally put all of my talents together to gain some playing time and lead the Vulcans to a win."

SEPTEMBER, the third game of the 1986 season

Tom Ulizio gets his chance to prove to the crowd, media and the coaches that he is ready to play football at California.

The sky threatens rain. The Parents' Day crowd cheers as California wins the toss. After only three plays, the Vulcans fumble the ball away to Salem College.

On the next series, though, Folmar starts the offense rolling. He jolts life back into the team. When his receivers are covered, Folmar pulls the ball down and runs with it like a deer in full gallop, taking the corners like a skater cutting around the pylons. When he throws the ball, he is as accurate as a Marine sharpshooter on the rifle range.

"Brendan," screams Ulizio. He raises his right arm and mouths "East," then points to his right eye—brown, so brown that the pupil is barely visible, sliced by a line of blood, a broken vessel that came from a shot he took in the head during practice—then makes a fist and jams it into his ribs, mouthing, "Strong." He has run this play in his mind for four years—four years of sitting, watching and waiting.

The call is a pass to the flanker in the flat, a play that has worked all day against the Salem secondary. Folmar throws the ball to Dave Lease, usually a sure-handed wideout, but Lease drops the pass.

Second and ten.

"Frankie, Brown, 24 blast, on two," whispers Petrucci into wideout Frank Sacco's facemask.

"Brendan," Ulizio yells to Folmar, who glares at Ulizio defiantly, head tilted toward the sky. Folmar needs only a cape and a red, white and blue shield.

"East," Ulizio raises his right arm, then puts out his hands in front of him—praying hands, parallel to his waist. He opens and closes them, then calls, "Open! Open!"

The Vulcans break the huddle and come to the line. Folmar calls out the cadence and the play goes off like a rocket exploding and scattering bits of shrapnel. Bodies crunch. A hole opens on the right side. Fullback Steve Brown drives through the gap. "Run, Stevie, run. Go get them sticks. Run," Ulizio screams.

He peers over Petrucci's shoulder to get the next play call.

"Eighteen-option right, Twins," says Petrucci to Lease.

"Brendan, East, I, Twins." Ulizio uses the same signals play after play. Monotonous, but he seems oblivious to the tedium.

The Vulcans trot to the line, and Folmar again begins the signals—in a fading Southern accent—gives the final hut, and the play begins. The offensive line opens a hole in the Tiger defensive front. Folmar moves down the line looking to see if the pitchman is in position. He fakes the pitch and cuts away from the contain man. He takes off upfield—a wolf chased by hunters.

The Tiger pursuit is swift and fierce. They catch Folmar in a sandwich collision. He takes a helmet to the right side of his chin, another to the bottom of the jaw. Petrucci is shocked to see his creation supine on the field—HAMLET SEES HIS FATHER'S GHOST. Captain Ameri - has been dropped by the Red Skull.

Petrucci explodes.

"ULIZIO, ULIZIO, WHERE IN THE HELL IS ULIZIO?"

Petrucci rips the headphones from his ears and searches for his back-up quarterback.

Ulizio, the Minuteman, is scrambling. He runs to the place where he thinks he has left his helmet. He rushes around, looking between players' feet and calves for his damned helmet.

"Someone find his helmet."

"It ain't here."

"Tommy, Tommy," says sophomore linebacker Mike Stephany. "Here's your helmet. Do something with this chance. Go get yourself a big gainer."

Cheers from the bench urge Ulizio on.

He straps on the immaculate, unscarred helmet and begins to run onto the field. Something is missing—he has forgotten to get the play from Petrucci. He races back to the sideline.

"Son," whispers Petrucci. "Keep it simple. Twenty-three dive right."

Ulizio nods quickly. For this play, Jimmy Olson has become Superman.

He arrives in the huddle and starts to whisper the play.

"Okay, fellas, here we go. Twenty-three dive right on two. Ready, BREAK."

Ulizio walks to the line. He turns his black knee brace—the brace that supports the knee damaged in high school—and settles in a crouch under center. The stand-in guy is now a convenient target for snarling defensive ends.

"Billy, you have to remember that I haven't taken a snap from center since warm-ups," said Ulizio to Crowell.

"Don't you worry about a thing. I'll lay the ball right in them golden mitts of yours," said Crowell.

The Vulcans are again set, and Ulizio starts the cadence: "Brown, 157, Brown, 157. Hut, hut."

The play explodes in front of Ulizio. Bodies mesh, helmets butt against one another, shoulder pads crack. Strength against strength. An irresistible force against an immovable object. Brown gains three yards.

Ulizio glances to the sideline, looking to see the signal for the next play. He sees Folmar and Petrucci talking. Petrucci points at Ulizio and motions for him to come over to the sideline.

Ulizio jogs half-heartedly off the field. Folmar starts to run toward the huddle. A roar goes up—not for Jimmy Olson, but for Captain America, who, again, has come to the rescue.

They cross each other's path and almost stop.

"You all in one piece?" asks Ulizio.

"Yeah, I'm fine. Just a few stitches," says Folmar.

"Good job, son," says Petrucci as he pats Ulizio on the rear.

"Brendan," says Ulizio, "West, I, Strong."

Folmar nods and assures Ulizio that he understands the call.

Folmar tosses a bomb to wide out Eddie Alford for 35 yards. The play gives the Vulcans a shot for placekicker Greg Schuessler to put three more points on the board.

Tom Ulizio walks over to the Gatorade cooler and pours himself a drink and stares into the cheering crowd. **Flipside**

Winner
cont. from pg. 30

bring an extra pair. These are the shoes that Jost wore to warm up in on the wet course. They are now soggy and chafing his feet, blistered from years of running without caring for them, and toenails, bruised from wearing poor-fitting shoes. Jost's feet shocked even the team's trainer, who asked Jost why he doesn't take better care of them. "Well, I just noticed them hurting yesterday," he had answered, hesitant, dazed, peering off into the space he is so fond of.

"Yeah, I really think you ran a nice race, " Jost says again. "Especially the finish. That was a nice, strong finish."

"It was all right, I guess," Campbell answers.

"Oh, I ran terrible. I can't believe I ran so bad. I just died at the end there. I'm so tired. I think I need a rest," Jost says, unhappy, looking for sympathy.

"You got a rest last week," laughs Campbell, remembering that because Jost had slept in, Uher had gone to a meet without him.

"Yeah, but I'm still tired. I'm just real tired."

But Campbell's attention has wandered from the rambling Jost. The smiling West Liberty coach is announcing Campbell's name. He will receive a trophy for his tenth place finish. Trying to act as if this is no big deal, he can hardly suppress a smile as the coach hands him a beautiful ten-inch trophy.

Jost disdainfully holds his fourth-place trophy as if it were infected, examining the inscription and complaining about his race. Bryan gets the biggest trophy of all, never reads it, but holds it up high so that all his teammates can see it and applaud him.

"Hey, Paul and Paul, both of you go up for the team trophy," Uher says, turning from his seat, concerned that there may be a confusion as to who should receive the trophy. He was right to insist. Jost has different ideas. He looks at Uher and shakes his head, moving his hands side-to-side, nervous.

"I'm not going up," he tells no one in particular. "Paul can go up. I ran terrible today. I don't deserve to."

"Come on, Paul," says Bryan. "Let's go."

But Jost will not budge. As the West Liberty coach waits, Bryan tells him a second time to come, but Jost refuses.

Bryan does not mind going alone. He's proud of his performance and the team's performance. He comes back, toting the trophy high in one hand and raising a finger of his other hand in a number-one gesture.

The room is neat, very neat, but Jost is quick to point out that it is his roommate's doing, not his own. The room also smells. It smells like a workout, a particularly tough workout, a sweaty workout. The odor is Jost's doing. His closet has no doors, no hangers, few clothes. In the bottom is a box, a plain brown cubical box, one-and-a-half feet, by one-and-a-half, by one-and-a-half. Jost keeps his running clothes in the box until he's ready to wear them again, usually the next day and the next day and several more days after that. Jost has few possessions other than what can be seen in the closet: a pair of jeans hung over the bar, two pairs of shoes, and two coats. What he doesn't have, he borrows, or doesn't use at all.

Jost, scraggly hair uncombed, making his thin, fine hair appear even thinner and leaving his receding hairline exposed, sits behind the desk, his roommate's lamp shining on a disorganized mess of books and notes. The oldest runner on the team, Jost wears faded Levis, the bottom of one leg seamless, the knee of the other torn. The trousers look as if they had been crunched into a ball, squashed underneath a pile of clothes and placed in the corner of Jost's box. The jeans are topped by an even older T-shirt, stretched, faded, the print barely legible.

In search of something, he opens his desk drawer and pulls out a newspaper called the **Outdoor Runners Gazette.**

"Look what I got the other day. It has an article in here about that race I was telling you about." He flips through the pages, excited. "Here."

The Laurel Highlands Trail Run. 70 miles. "The Ultra Challenge." Of 27 starters, 13 finished. Jost was third in 15 hours, one minute, 52 seconds.

"When Coach found out, he just shook his head and said, 'He'll never learn. He'll never learn.'" says Jost. "I get a kick out of it though.

"You know, it seems the less I run, the faster I run, though that's the thing. I want to run more. I'm addicted to it. It's a drug. I know I'm addicted to it. It feels good when I do it. I could go out and run three or four miles and just feel good."

He has forgotten about studying. His attention has wandered, and now, as he reads the paper, his eyes get that distant look.

"In one part of the course, there are these really high ferns, like this tall," he says, stretching a hand way above his head. "I felt like Alice in Wonderland. It was fun."

Once again, his attention wanders to other, less pleasant, things.

"I may have to work next semester. I need money. I'm sick of being poor. I'm sick of not having things. I'm sick of always having to ask people for things. I used to make $9.40 an hour, now I'm not even making minimum wage at the cafeteria. I'm just tired of it. I need a break.

"If I quit, I don't think Coach will really care. He's got Paul and Robin, and Paul will be exceptional in the 1500, and Robin should do just as well in the 800. He's just as fast as Paul, maybe faster, if he'd only put the mileage in."

A poster of the Jamaican shoreline with the words, "Come to Jamaica," greets every visitor to Paul Bryan's room. He comes into the room, takes his coat off, hangs it on his chair and sits on his sloppily made bed. Impeccable, every short curly black lock combed, greased and in its place, Bryan seems in a hurry. Still he sits, head tilted back, cool; thin legs stretched, comfortable; face serene, contemplative, listening to his favorite music: reggae.

"There were always dances. We didn't go home at night. We stay till morning on the beaches. We'd ride the speedboats and stuff," recalls Bryan of Jamaica.

"I like it here, you know, but I think it is boring, yeah, it is boring especially on the weekends. There is nothing to do."

Cold, he curls up his narrow frame—a frame that is narrow even among runners.

"I couldn't get used to, ah, the heat in Arizona. I wasn't running, you know, I wasn't running the way I can. Here it's kinda all night, the weather is all right with me, but everybody I've seen talking to keep on telling me that it's going to get COLD and I'll be FREEZING and stuff like that. I can, I guess I can get used to it, you know, quick. But I like it here."

As he talks, he turns his head, glancing around the room, always moving, always thinking...

"I think, like, I don't know sometimes, like, if I don't get up in the morning and run, then I feel so bad just because I didn't run. I feel bad all day just because I didn't run. It's great, man, it's great.

"It's probably because I like the competition, that's why I like it so much. I like to win, I like to be at the top. Because, I mean, to be at the top, you got to work HARD and that's why, you know, I like it so much. I mean, you know, after... after I win a race, it feels great, great, that's the greatest feeling. I get a great feeling. That's what I like mostly. After you finish, it feels great, man, it feels great."

Bryan knows the key to winning, and he's willing to share it with anyone: "You just got to work hard, that's the key. You got to work hard. It's like, you got to work hard to, to run, to run cross country, you got to hurt, that's the key. I mean, I've, I've run, I've run some fast races and I've hurt and I've got to keep going, man. You may say, 'you're crazy,' but I don't know, it's great.

"I'm better at track than cross country. Yeah I'm pretty good at track. I like track better than cross country. I don't know, it's faster, it's more, ah, I think it's more competitive, you know. People recognize you more than cross country. Yeah, I like that.

"I don't want to brag, but you know. I think, you know, I thought a lot about running and hurting, and, you know, I thought a lot about the team, you know, they be running and hurting, you know they quit running quick, but that's got to go, man. It's got to hurt a little bit. I be saying, no pain, no gain. You know, I always think about that."

A philosophy book lies open on the desk. Robin Campbell tries to decipher it, face to the wall, concentrating. He looks up, reveals eyes so large that they could belong to a cartoon character, looks around, smiles, uncovering a mouthful of large, gleaming teeth.

"This meet, I will run a super race. A real super race. And just fly by Paul Bryan," he laughs, shaking his head, topped with coarse, curly hair. As one of only three freshmen runners in the fall of 1985, Campbell was already a rarity. As a Jamaican freshman, he was one of a kind. However, with the arrival of Paul Bryan, the team had both another star runner and another Jamaican.

Earlier in the 1986 season, Campbell would wake at night to do sit-ups and push-ups, sit-ups and push-ups that demonstrated his secret desire to beat Bryan, sit-ups and push-ups so ferocious that they wakened his roommate.

"People were saying, 'Aw man, he's going to blow you away!' Paul Bryan is good, but I think I'm good too," Campbell says. Perhaps if he could have Jost's body, he suggests with a laugh, then he would have all that endurance, coupled with his speed. The two of them would make one great runner.

"Sometimes, like, I have to run at night. It's not fun running out there with those cars and you can't see cause it's like black," he says. "It's hard, you know. I really want to do well, I really do, you never know, I might go to Nationals in track.

"I want to beat Paul Bryan in track. I know he is good, but I think I am good too."

His eyes are smaller, darker and far less friendly-looking than they were before. He gazes in the distance: "I do not know how he runs so much. It is so boring. I try to run ten miles, but I get bored."

He looks at his fingers, studying this perplexity, then looks up, eyes brighter, face cheerful once again: "But maybe I can beat him in track. Yeah. Maybe I can."

Later, when Campbell's sister, who is also a runner at California, and Bryan get along increasingly well, and Bryan spends Thanksgiving with the Campbells, and Campbell lends Bryan his old winter coat, Campbell entertains different thoughts on Bryan. He has decided that rather than worrying about beating Bryan, he should concentrate on getting better.

"I kind of like Paul Bryan being here. He can help me a lot in the 800," Campbell says.

It rained last night. The Philadelphia race course has become a marsh.

The rain has stopped, but the air is still dismal and cool. Runners prepare for the biggest race of the season. Thirty-five teams, including the nation's top five, over 200 runners. The Eastern Regional Division II cross country meet. Qualify here, and you get a free trip to the West Coast for the Division II Nationals, the goal of every serious runner.

This is the time to worry, and the runners do. They worry that if they do not warm up enough, their bodies will tighten in the first mile of the race; they worry that if they warm up too much, their bodies will tire at the beginning of the race; they worry that they will run poorly; they worry that they will run well; they worry.

The starter tries to calm them.

"There will be only one command. I don't want to do this twice. There will be only one command. Relax."

Heartbeats quicken, breathing slows. Take one deep breath, get that oxygen, you're going to need it. Calm down. Calm down.

"Runners sehtt..." and the gun goes off.

Bryan takes off with the leaders. Three of them tear through a 200-meter field, sprinting with all they have, then charge up a 300-meter hill, leaving little left, in Bryan's case, for the rest of the race.

"Maybe he thought since he ran so well the week before he could keep up with them," Jost says later. "It's common sense when you see somebody go out like that. I don't know. I don't know, he went out with the top five, and he was like up there, but he kept getting closer and closer to me."

Jost takes off conservatively, weaving through the mass of runners, patiently aiming for the leaders, allowing himself to stay in 40th place while his teammate is in third, but as the race progresses, Bryan moves back closer to Jost.

"Yeah, Paul kept getting closer and closer, but so were a lot of other people. I was just running good. I run fast downhill. I'm really good at downhill. But, I guess, that's not saying too much. My car works good downhill too. It's going up that's the problem."

Jost passes Bryan around the four-mile mark.

"I wasn't only passing him, I was passing a lot of people. That's the way I run," Jost says.

Now in fifteenth place—good enough to qualify for Nationals—Jost speeds up more and puts himself in eleventh, just before the course winds down into the woods.

This is the runners' second trip into the woods. The course circles a field twice, then slopes down a bridle lane into the woods, then comes back out onto the field, and from there, slopes back into the woods a second, shorter time. This time, the runners are to turn right about a quarter of a mile down the hill, instead of going straight.

With only a mile to run, the pace quickens, and Jost quickens with it. He knows that the leaders aren't too far ahead of him, and he knows, too, that there are people right behind him, struggling to make up lost time, to pass one or two or even three more runners so that they can place at least fifteenth and make it to the Nationals. Jost knows this, but he is not giving anything. He is secure in eleventh place, but he wants to be more secure. He runs as if he were in sixteenth place. Concentrating on improving his position, he does not notice that at the bottom of the wooded hill, the runners do not turn right, as they should, but head straight, following the directions of a race official.

"I knew that something was strange. You see, I knew something was there, but I didn't worry 'cause they said I was in eleventh," says Jost. "So I was just like concentrating. You know, don't get passed, stay right there."

The first 30 runners disappear deeper into the woods, lost, but not realizing it. In the meantime, a coach, expecting to see his star runner emerge from the woods at any second, realizes that something is wrong, dreadfully wrong. He runs down the same bridle path in time to see a man misdirecting the runners.

Confusion. Runners who were ready to go straight were told to turn right. Race officials wonder where the runners have gone. All is as well as it could be, though, when Campbell and the rest of the California team race by.

Assistant Coach Phil Coleman is excited about the prospect of two California runners qualifying for Nationals. He knows it is possible. He also knows that it is possible that the whole team will qualify if everyone finishes as strongly as they ran the first part of the race. He hurries to the finish, oblivious to the mess that one man has created.

Wait. That's Campbell. Where's Jost? Where's Bryan? Baffled, Coleman and Uher look at each other, holding watches that have suddenly become useless.

What? Here they come. Behind Campbell. Behind everyone. Last. The leaders are last. The leaders are last. Last.

Somehow, the results of the race just do not sink in. Bryan had been robbed. California had been robbed. But, most of all, Jost had been robbed. He had been winning. He had been beating Bryan. He would have qualified for Nationals.

"How could this have happened?" everyone asks, over and over and over again. "How?"

It was a strange trip home for the California team. Everyone was quiet, except for occasional angry comments about the meet. "How could this have happened?"

"I was bummed out. Really, I mean, I was ready to cry," says Jost, later, pointing to his gut, his eyes watery, shaking his head slowly. "I don't know. I got mad. I was looking for somebody to blame. I wasn't mad at Paul. I don't know, I guess I was mad at Coach. No reason. I don't know why. I was bummed out. I was just looking for an answer. But I knew down here I would have gone. I knew in here I would have gone."

Paul Bryan is every bit as unhappy as his rival: "I was crying. You see, I was running, like, see, I wasn't going to be, I wasn't going to make Nationals. I knew I wouldn't make Nationals. My legs, they hurt."

In the end, a decision had to be made by the National Collegiate Athletic Association about the botched race. Paul Jost ran an outstanding race and would have qualified for Nationals if the race had not gone so wrong, but the NCAA officials decided to cancel the results of the Philadelphia meet and choose those runners who ran best at previous races. The winner lost; the loser won. Bryan was chosen. Bryan went to Nationals. Jost was not chosen. Jost stayed home. His only sympathy was a letter from an Edinboro coach, saying that he deserved to go after such a great race.

Shortly after the season, Paul Jost found a job as a tree trimmer in New Jersey. He is taking the spring semester off, missing the track season. Robin Campbell is happy that cross country season is finally over and is looking forward to track, hoping to improve his half-mile time, to break records, to qualify for Nationals, all with Bryan's help. And Bryan... well, Bryan is probably off somewhere playing a video game with Campbell's sister, remembering, fondly, his success at Nationals and thinking, always thinking, of the next race.

Anacy survives. **Flipside**

Revival
cont. from pg. 34

napkins, two silver spoons, two cups and two saucers, and in the middle of the table, a small basket covered with cloth and filled with eight blueberry muffins still warm from the oven.

Pastor Frankie ate five of them.

"It's rough on her. I mean, she has the house, the kids, the cooking..." The pastor patted his sweater-swollen belly and grinned. "You can see full well she can cook! But it's hard. People expect the pastor's wife to fill the same role the pastor fills. I mean always being there for anyone at anytime. Always punctual and well-dressed. There's many a time Connie sees something for herself or the house but won't get it because, well, people might think it's flashy or costs too much. You're always thinking about setting an example."

From down the hall, I thought I heard the beginning whines of a baby siren. I hadn't met the pastor's six-month-old son Chris but I could smell him as soon as I set foot in the house. That strangely calming nursery odor of baby oil and powder and warm milk.

"More coffee?" asked the pastor. I nodded and held up a jittery saucer with an empty cup. The pastor poured the coffee from a thermal insulated carafe ("$29.95... from Sears"), placed it on the table between us, sat down and crossed his legs. The wailing sounded far away and seemed to be dying down.

"So it's hard living up to people's expectations. Why, I knew a preacher in East Aurora who got called on the carpet during a board meeting because someone had seen him mowing his lawn without a shirt on! Can you believe it! 'Naked from the waist up' was how he put it."

Pastor Frankie shook his head and chuckled. He rolled his eyes in disbelief. I pictured a barechested Sumo wrestler in cutoff Levis mowing his front lawn. "Luckily, Connie takes care of the house... thank the Lord!" The pastor yawned and began to reveal the particulars of the next day's sermon. I heard a door open in the hallway and the sound of a baby getting his neck smooched grew closer and closer.

Like most kids, I suppose, we invented a lot of games, many of them influenced by television and movies. We spent almost a whole summer tearing barefoot through the mountains and swinging our plastic swords at netherworld demons in an imitation of **Jason and the Argonauts.** We would take turns tying each other loosely with clothes line in the locust-drilled posts in my father's grape arbor, only to break loose in a grimacing, muscle-ballooning impersonation of Steve Reeves unchained, scattering to the four winds a hundred invisible thronging Trojans, hurtling them across the creek and over the neighbors' fences and garage roofs. Sundown would find us slumped against the cool concrete blocks of the new bathroom addition to my father's house, smelling the Jiffy Pop shaking on the stove in the kitchen and toasting each other with Dixie cups of Kool-Aid over battles waged and warriors slain. Kool-Aid... Nectar of the Gods.

"There's my boy!"

Pastor Frankie swiveled in his chair with his arms outstretched toward his son. Connie proudly entered the kitchen with Chris wrapped in swaddling clothes, and deposited the baby in his father's arms. Pastor Frankie faced me, propping Chris in the cozy nook of his arm. Chris tossed his fists and flailed the air in an appropriate baby manner while his father coochie-cooed with a professional expertise I found discomforting. Babies never fail to terrify me, and when someone starts jostling and bouncing them around, I inevitably start squinting, waiting for a head to fly off. But Chris seemed to be enjoying himself, as was the pastor, so I decided to open my eyes and roll with it.

Connie, dressed in trim Lee jeans and a pink sweater, didn't seem very anxious to sit around and chew the fat with us. She poured herself coffee at the counter, darting glances in my direction. Like most wives who wake up to find one of her husband's buddies she's never met, slung across a chair in her kitchen, nervously chainsmoking, gulping coffee and scarfing blueberry muffins, she seemed a little

leery. I assumed Pastor Frankie had warned her of my arrival, but God knows what else he told her.

"These muffins are really delicious, Connie," I intoned in my best not-a-bad-guy-after-all voice. The syllables fairly dripped with honey.

"They came out of a box," she snapped. The curt reply seemed more exasperated at my presumptive tone—when could she have time to bake?—and not directed at my innocently worded overstatement. But then she smiled, perhaps remembering, after all, she was a minister's wife. Or maybe because she's a decent person who can still be put out momentarily by a sniveling stranger blowing smoke rings in her week-old kitchen. I chose to believe the latter. So much for honey dripping.

Pastor Frankie handed Chris back to Connie as she walked past, into the living room. Their daughter Francie was still rocking in front of the television.

"Finish your coffee and we'll head down to the church. It's a nice day. We'll walk." We dropped our cups into the sink, said goodbye to the family, pulled our coats on and headed for the door. It was still raining. I could hardly wait to walk in it.

"I'll tell you everything there is to know about me. Remember, a minister never lies."

We both laughed loudly, Pastor Frankie louder than I.

Why was I here and what did I want to know?

While Pastor Frankie leaned forward in his leather-upholstered chair and shuffled papers on his desk, I nosed around his office, skimming leaflets and thumbing through dusty volumes of Methodist dogma. Pastor Frankie had a few business calls to make—discussing with a local printer copies of some Advent calendars, nailing down a price with a Clarksville firm for a sign to be hung outside—so I found a chair, a dusty book and settled down for a good read.

One thing I found out was where the Free Methodists got their name. With their unwritten, but still binding, ban on such activities as drinking, smoking, dancing, going to movies, and buying and selling on the Sabbath, the "free" in their title seemed a contradiction. But it turns out that when some ecclesiastical types broke away from the Episcopal church in 1860, one of their main arguments centered around the mother church renting pews during services on Sundays. It seems this was a common, established practice. The wealthiest patrons got the best pews in the house, while the poor or frugal had to be content with a seat in the rear. This smacked of buying one's way into heaven, so a new branch of the church, featuring "free" pews, was established.

Not a bad way to start a schism, I thought.

Still, the dedication of oneself to daily principles of established conduct and upright living, seeking to attain inward holiness and sanctification, abiding by scriptural teachings and applying the wisdom of the ages to one's actions, praying for guidance—not to mention attending all those Sunday School picnics and ingesting endless platefuls of potato salad and baked beans—seems to me to require a superhuman constitution and an endless supply of platitudes: "It was God's will," "Blessed are the meek," "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away," "With this ring, I thee wed." As for myself, I travel light with my own platitudes: "I believe in Chaos," "Chaos believes in me" and "To be human is to suffer."

However, such matters seemed to be beyond the good pastor. Finished with his calls, he leaned back in his chair, sized me up for an instant, and asked me what I thought.

I told him I didn't know what to think, except it seemed he had some insurmountable problems to face.

"Bud, that's where you're wrong. I got no complaints. I'm the luckiest man alive."

I told him I'd seen luckier.

"Maybe you have. Then again, maybe you haven't. I'm not much for the things of this world. Who needs 'em? Living right, that's what's important. And helping others to live right...that's gravy."

A veil of lightning draped the window behind the pastor's desk. Slowly, a peal of distant thunder started rumbling toward us. It was really starting to rain hard.

"I open my eyes in the morning and I thank the Lord for a new day. I know I got a lot to be thankful for. I look over at Connie. I look at my babies. Then I head for the kitchen!"

The pastor leaned over his desk and switched on a lamp.

"What problems? You mean building a church with ten people and no money down? Stranger things have happened. Sure, I get discouraged sometimes, but I'm not alone. It's out of my hands." The pastor gave me a soulful look. "Don't you have a lot to be thankful for, Bud?"

Sure, I told him. I had a loving wife and son. I had friends.

"Sure you do."

I told him I had a future. I was going to be somebody.

"But do you have peace of mind?"

The pastor switched off the lamp on his desk. He walked over to his answering machine in the corner, pushed a button, and a little red light blinked on. Outside his office, we paused long enough in the chapel for the pastor to scoop up some leaflets from under the podium and shove them in my hand.

"You know, Bud, I think it was meant for you and me to meet up this way again."

We headed toward the fire escape. I couldn't hear the rain anymore.

"We played a lot of games when we were kids, huh? Crazy. Well, when you get older, you put away childish things, right?"

We stepped onto the sidewalk. I had left my umbrella in the car, but the rain seemed to be slowing down.

"Don't worry, Bud. You'll find your way home. A long time ago someone told me about love. I had to get me some. I went looking for it until I found it. It's there if you want it. It belongs to you. YOU GOTTA GO FOR IT!"

One game Frankie and I invented stands out from the rest. We called it, for want of a better phrase, "Heaven and Hell." A more appropriate title could hardly be imagined. The game had to be enacted in the dead of winter, and, for special effect, in the dark of night. The streetlight would cast a bluish glow over the snow (snow was imperative), and that glow was all the illumination we needed. The creek ideally would be hard-packed from a week's flurries, raising its surface at least a foot, and if more snow was needed, we'd kick in what we could and stamp it down until it acquired a glistening, tunnel-like track. We'd work for hours along the length of the creek in front of my house, until twilight. The task completed, I would then huddle down in my position in the hole and the game would begin. It consisted simply of me, the damned, attempting to paw my way out of hell while Frankie held off my efforts with carefully aimed bolts of ice brick plucked from conveniently overhanging tree limbs. While I writhed and cursed my fate, leaping and squirming along the walls of the tunnel, Frankie, a quite unforgiving and malevolent god, would shower me with exploding shards of crystal, commanding me to accept my fate and give in to the punishment of eternal damnation. I would respond by lunging at his boots with my water-soaked mittens, only to be booted back, spinning like a dervish, and descend to the frozen marshes of my perpetual damnation.

It was understood that Frankie would always take the role of God and I of Satan. Because of his pudgy build and shorter frame, we judged that Frankie would never be able to scramble his way out of the hole once inside it. The role of Satan was best left to me, with my longer limbs and extra height. At least that's how Frankie argued it for three or four winters running. Those semantics kept me in the cold, hardened Slough of Despond, while. Frankie balanced the weightier matters of just punishment as one of the truly elect.

Some things never change.

As Pastor Frankie and I walked back to his house, the rain continued to fall. The sky was no longer gray, but a churning, smokey black, like the plumes from a campfire when doused with water. Strange clouds.

We shook hands beside my car. Pastor Frankie smiled and wished me a safe ride home. It was an hour and a half to Uniontown, and I was a little anxious to get started. After all, I was in alien country. Just the thought of those strange traffic lights and the turnoff to 79 that I could miss if I wasn't careful (and I'm never careful) filled me with terror. I hopped behind the wheel and gunned the motor. Backing down the drive, I caught the pastor in my crossbeams. His house was dark except for a yellow light in the window of the kitchen. He turned and was gone. The three pint-size pumpkins I had bought for my son that morning rolled from the backseat onto the floor with the force of cannonballs.

I found Route 79.

Although I've had a license for fourteen years, I've always found driving a terrible chore. I think it's because I can't read anything. Invariably, I end up proofreading billboards, signs, and posters, scanning their letters, colors and print for any trace of new information, an idea, or just a laugh.

Bored with that, I move on to inspect my fellow travelers. The radio in my car hasn't worked for years, so on a long drive, I'll ride in silence, watching the other cars whisk past. I can't help wondering where everyone is going. Are they alone in their cars? Do they have a long journey home? Do they dread getting up in the morning?

By the time I stopped dreaming whatever I was dreaming, I realized I had missed my turnoff at 48. It was completely dark by then, and the rain was falling hard. Some cars had pulled over to the side of the road, and twice the red generator light on my dashboard flashed. Everything looked strange and backwards.

I kept going. Finally, I came across a sign: GARARD'S FORT, NEXT EXIT. I was in Pennsylvania, but I couldn't imagine finding Uniontown from Garard's Fort.

I took the next exit. At the stop sign, I should have turned left and doubled back over 79, but I ended up turning right. I was practically hydroplaning across the state. I didn't pass another car for miles. Just endlessly circling, circling, circling. This is how it always is. I take a wrong turn and can't decide to keep going or to turn back—a neverending circle on unfamiliar roads, the rain coming down. I am all alone, waiting for a sign, some lights, praying the next exit will lead me home.

Flipside

Contributors

Bill Bennett began his love affair with wildlife at the age of six when, told that allowing cabbage butterflies in the Victory Garden was like setting up secret landing fields for the Luftwaffe, he took to swatting them from the air with a badminton racket. Now that he's older and more mild-mannered, he emulates Norman Bates, and wouldn't hurt a fly.

Tyra Braden is a senior at California University, where she majors in journalism. She has won several awards and scholarships, and her work has appeared in newspapers, journals and magazines.

Cyndi Braun is an English major at California University. She is editor of the California **Times** and assistant editor of the yearbook **Yesterday's Papers**. She freelances for the Mon Valley/Washington section of the **Tribune Review** and the **Pittsburgh Press**. She is working on a word processing article for the computer magazine **Profiles**.

Charles Bukowski is, in addition to being a novelist and a short story writer, the most translated of living American poets. Some of his recent books include: **Hot Water Music**, **Ham On Rye**, and **You Get So Alone At Times That It Just Makes Sense**, all from Black Sparrow Press.

Cheryl Cantoni is a science and technical writing major at California University, where she is an honor student. She is also secretary of Sigma Tau Delta, the national English honor fraternity.

Gerald Chorba lives in Athens, Ohio, and is managing editor of **Liar's Corner Almanac**.

Frank Correnti has participated in the Pittsburgh Poetry Exchange community writer's workshop for the better part of the past ten years, during which time he has given numerous public readings and produced a series of poetry readings in Pittsburgh. Recent publications include a poem in **The Pennsylvania Review**.

Sheryl Gottlieb is a student at California University, majoring in secondary ed.

Jennifer Kamerer is a senior at California University, majoring in business and commercial writing. While attending California University, she contributed to the California **Times** and was on the staff of **Old Main**.

Arthur Winfield Knight is a professor of English at California University of Pennsylvania. His recent publications include **A Marriage of Poets** (1984), co-authored with his wife Kit; **The Golden Land**, (1985), a non-fiction novel; **King of the Beatniks** (1986), a play; and **The Beat Vision: An Anthology of Beat Writings** (1987).

Mike Kunsa is the product of an unholy coupling between a dyposomaniacal jackass and an extraterrestial. He has attended California University for the past ten years, during which he has missed every deadline imposed on him, bankrupted his family and earned enough credits to become a sophomore.

Dave Malloy is a senior majoring in Creative Writing at California University. He has been writing all of his life.

Anne Minicozzi is a grad student at Penn State University, enrolled in the M.F.A. program. She participated in the 1986 tour of the Connecticut Poetry Circuit.

Mary Carolyn Morgan is working on her MA in fiction writing at Penn State University. She received her undergraduate degree in English literature from Manhattanville College.

Jean Newell is a middle-aged college student. An LPN, she is earning an R.N. through Washington Hospital and a B.S.N. at California University. She is the mother of four wonderful little heathens and is considering a minor in journalism.

Bill Rice is one of five technical writing majors at California University. He has been published twice before and anxiously awaits the day when he'll actually get paid for it. Bill's obsessions are writing, motorcycling and writing.

William J. Rodgers, born in Detroit in 1964, is a senior and an honor student in professional writing at California University.

Butch Ross is a second-semester junior art major at California University. He is the president of Associated Artists of California. He plans to attend the Art Institute of Pittsburgh and wants to be a production artist.

Susan Smith Stasicha graduated from the Ivy School of Professional Art in Pittsburgh. She received a BS in fine arts at California University. She and her husband own the Craft Box, a craft shop in Dunlevy.

George Swaney is a writing major at California University, where he learned that to desire but act not, breeds pestilence.

Kathleen Vail is a journalism major at California University, where she hopes to get a degree someday. Her professional goals are to look like Vanna White and use her English skills on **Wheel of Fortune**.

Fred Vaughn is a graduating senior at California University, majoring in graphic communications. He is production manager for the California **Times**.

Lee White is an industrial arts /computer science major at California University. He is married and has two children. He also coaches wrestling at Carmichaels High School.

Michael Wurster lives in Pittsburgh, and is a founding member of the Pittsburgh Poetry Exchange and coordinator of the Carson Street Gallery Poetry Series. He has other recent or forthcoming work in the **Greenfield Review**, **Religious Humanism**, and **Sunrust**

Amy Yanity is a student at Seton Hill College in Greensburg, PA.

Alan Natoli has finally come to believe that be is never the finale of seem.

Weird Wildlife II

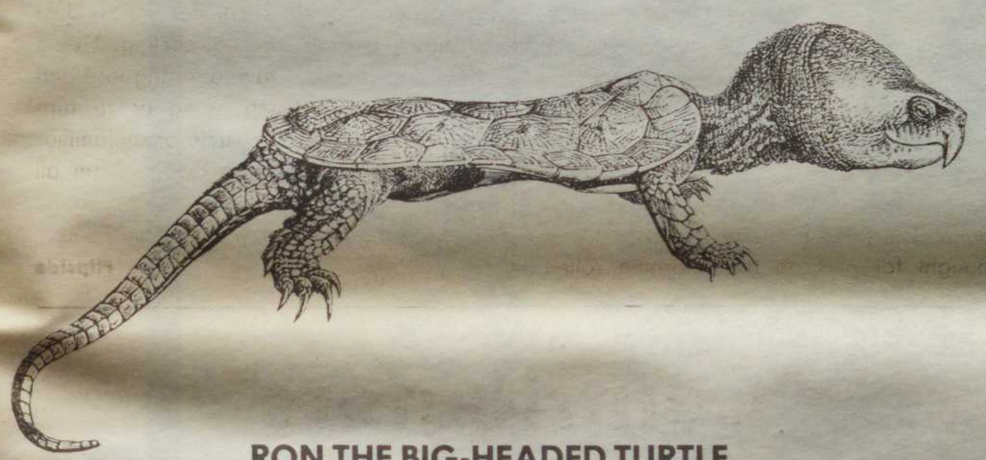
Unnatural History by Bill Bennett

MR. X. THE UNIDENTIFIED INVERTEBRATE

Imagine it. There you are, going about your own business—which in my case is lying in a scummy tidal pool polluted with cigarette filters, gum wrappers and the missing arm from a kid's Killer Ninja action figure, sucking bits of marine life through my not overly attractive star-shaped mouth—and along come these marine biologist types, and one of them picks me up and asks his pal what I am, and the other guy says, "Got me. Looks like some kind of invertebrate, but hey, there's so many of them, who gives a damn?" So the first guy drops me back, a look on his face like his buddy told him I was a cow patty or discarded sanitary napkin or something.

That, such as mine is, is life. An existence without thrills or recognition. No wonder I have so much leisure to inventory the gunk and jetsam I live among. The gum wrappers, for instance, are from that brand where these pie-faced Princess Di lookalike twins are prancing around next to a swimming pool and the wind blows their hats off at the same time, right into the hands of a pair of dummy beefoids and then all four of them giggle like kids playing doctor and swap gum. The cigarette butts are from a generic brand that sells for fifty cents below regular. I suppose if my dinky brain could work along such sophisticated lines, I'd find in that fact a metaphor for my lifestyle.

But before all you guidance counselors out there get your bowels in an uproar over my poor self-image, let me tell you I don't have too many complaints. I once read where Bob Dylan said you should treasure your obscurity, and I've taken it to the little valve jobby that passes for my heart. Anyway, it could be worse. I've got this friend of mine, name of Alan, he's a rotifer or something like that; well, no less a marine Wizard than Jacques Costeau had a look at him once and told his fellow scientists they shouldn't bother collecting stuff like this, it wasn't even organic. Talk about coming down with a bad self-concept. Ever since he got the news, old Alan hasn't said a word, he just lies around in idle silence like the rock he found out he was.



RON THE BIG-HEADED TURTLE

Out in the island chain where I live among the wreckage of the late Japanese Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere—home for me is the cockpit of a Nakajima fighter, a pretty roomy place ever since Mother Nature's cleanup crew did their thing on the Son of the Sun who was unlucky enough to be in that plane without a seatbelt when it hit the ground at 120 miles an hour—the natives tell this story:

It seems there was this turtle named Jack, and he was a turtle of exceeding wealth and power, and pride was great in him. And it came to pass that one day the chief god of the island, whose name was Pazoozoo, Lord of Many Coconuts, came upon Jack, and Jack passed by Pazoozoo without so much as a nod. And Pazoozoo spake unto Jack, saying, "Who art thou, base reptile, that thou fallest not upon thy scute in my presence?"

And Jack, that was filled with pride, and whose mouth spake only the hard words of pride, replied unto Pazoozoo, saying, "Listen, Weirdbeard, I can buy and sell you and all the gods in heaven, and yea, the vasty deep as well, for I am rich beyond the dreams of princes. For all I care, you can go peddle your coconuts to the makers of non-dairy creamer, or whatever you do with those big lumpy things that are no more nuts than my Aunt Fanny's an astronaut."

And Pazoozoo was stung with wrath at this rebuke, and he cursed Jack, saying, "O thou vile chelonian! May thy head be as vast and gross as thy spirit is haughty and egregious!" And of a sudden, Jack saw that his head, once so fair, was grown as large and lumpy as a Hefty bag filled to its twistee tie with tin cans.

A great story, but I've got to tell you, it ain't necessarily so. You see, I'm the turtle who met up with Pazoozoo, and things actually went this way:

Pazoozoo, who was in a generous mood that day, told me he would grant me one wish. Well, like most of my kind, I'm pretty much burdened down by my shell. You try walking around wearing a big china cupboard, and you'll know what I mean. So I said, "O great Pazoozoo, let my shell be somewhat smaller," figuring that what he'd give me was a wee shell, a sort of symbolic one I could carry around in my hip pocket, so I wouldn't forget my roots, as it were, but I'd still be able to live that old turtle dream of coming in first in the Pittsburgh Marathon even when the hare didn't stop for a nap.

Like my ma always said, a fool's prayers are answered. Before I could think of any codicils to my request, my shell shrank down like an angora sweater dropped in boiling water and three-fourths of my guts came squeezing up into my head and shoved my brain down into my sinuses.

"Wait!" I cried. "This wasn't exactly what I had in mind!" But old Pazoozoo just said, "Sorry, no exchanges, no returns," and went about his business.

Which is why, ever since, whenever I go into a restaurant and ask for coffee, cream and sugar, I let them know that unless they want me to carve my initials on their carapace, it'd better be real cream.

SPIKE THE DEATH'S-HEAD MOTH

You needn't remind me that moths don't amount to much in the cosmic scheme of things. Half the world thinks we spend all of our time in closets eating up their precious woolens or just waiting until their backs are turned so we can get into their flour cannisters and wreak webby havoc on the contents; the other half just calls us bugs, and wouldn't be able to tell the difference between a cecropia moth and a S-71 Blackbird.

Take your average kid. He comes across a rhinoceros, he's going to show a little respect, even if he does run home to tell his mother, "I just seen a hippo inna woods." But let that same kid meet up with a moth, and he's going to yell, "Hey, looka da bug!" and stamp it flat or knock it out of the air with an old badminton racket. And later, in the wee hours of the night when his conscience is reviewing for him his day's transgressions, you can bet he isn't going to regret putting out our lights, not the way he would if he'd skewered a canary on a screwdriver or dropped a puppy from a fourth-story window.

I understand that the source of respect is strength, and lots of it. The text from which I took this little bit of wisdom is an ad on the back of a comic book in which a skinny little dude loses all prospects of good times with his lady friend because a bully kicks sand in his face and all he can do is jump up and down like a puppet with rickets and bawl out his impotent rage after the sandkicker is out of earshot. Until, that is, equipped by Charles Atlas with gorilla arms and pecs the size of sides of beef, he hammers the crap out of the bully and the lady thinks bedtime with this particular bonzo may not be such a bad deal after all.

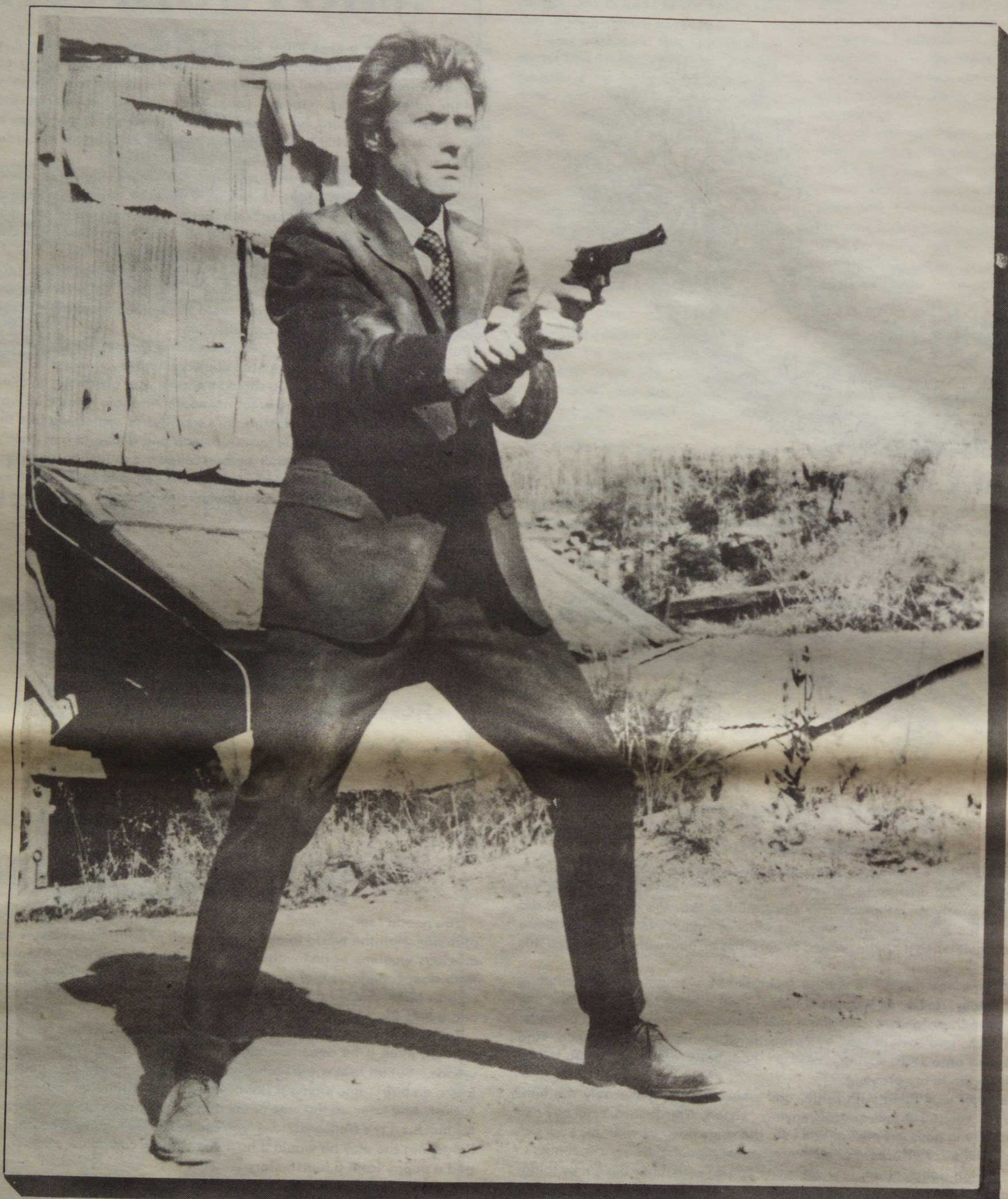
I tried that route, believe me, but all I ended up with for my pains was a postcard—no signature, of course—telling me Mr. Atlas didn't do moths. So I turned to an issue of **Psychology Today**, where this savant wrote that people often fear the symbols of strength as much as its actual manifestation. Which is to say, if some malnourished little rip who'd be hard pressed to smash a styrofoam cup with one hand tricks himself out in a leather jacket festooned with chains and swastikas and death's heads, even the stout-hearted will cross the street when they see him coming.

I figured if I can't have a barrel chest and Popeye arms, at least I can put on terrifying apparel. So I sent off for this sweatshirt that had a skull and crossbones on the back and the motto "Lo, though I walk through the Valley of Death, I shall fear no evil, for I am the meanest sonuvabitch there" on front, and then I went out to lay in wait for some kid and scare him so bad he'd have to bury his boxer shorts.

And sure enough, after a while this kid came sauntering my way, and he yelled to his buddies, "Hey, looka da bug widda skellington on him," and bashed me into rags with an old badminton racket.

ENDGAME

CLOSE ENCOUNTER: CLINT EASTWOOD



by Bob Miller

Bob Miller met Clint Eastwood several years ago, when Miller was working as a waiter on the West Coast.

At 9:30 in the morning, I stepped out of the elevator of the Palm Bay Club towers, a tray laden with a bucket of ice, a fifth of Johnny Walker Red and a single glass balanced on my upturned palm. Straightening the blue lapels of my gold-braided room-service waiter's jacket with my free hand, I glided over the plush green carpet like a gymnast on a polished oak beam.

The doorbell of penthouse apartment number two was answered by a gruff shout: "It ain't locked." As I opened the door, a voice from the shadows at the end of the hall croaked, "Back here."

Approaching the open bedroom door, I saw him perched on the edge of the bed: elbows propped on knobby knees; gnarled hands cradling his face; gray-streaked hair, a bird's nest, as rumbled as the bedclothes. Through the steeple of his forearms I could see that his white athletic T-shirt was spotted with yellow bile, a reeking testimonial of his attempted recovery from the night before. His grizzled scrotum dangled from the gaping leg of his red and white polka-dot boxer shorts.

I placed the tray on the window-front table. He raised his head slowly. Two days' growth of stubble salted and peppered his gaunt cheeks, a backdrop for the icing of white flecks that crusted his cracked lips. Purple-green bruises like over-ripe grapes hung beneath his liver-spotted eyes. He blinked and squinted into the glare of the morning sun streaming through the vertical blinds. His left eye finally focused on the red and black label of the bottle on the table, while his right displayed his trademark—a familiar spasmodic tic.

"Nothing clears the old windpipe like the hair of the dog, eh, buddy?" he said.

Groaning like a stevador, he clutched the bedpost for support and lurched upward to tower over me, a swaying redwood, dying, its roots decayed. Grating his right hand across his jaw and then dragging it across his forehead, he smoothed his tangled hair back from the widow's peak, angling into the weathered creases above his eyes.

He staggered to the table. A wave of nausea crested in the back of my throat as the swamp gas from his stomach assaulted my nose when he leaned in close to pluck my pen from my jacket pocket. Fingers trembling, he signed for the whiskey and handed me my pen and checkpad.

Service concluded, I padded down the hall, only to be brought up short by the sharp knuckle-crack of the Johnny Walker seal and the splash of his first dose of poison.

I closed the door behind me and wondered what it was that women saw in him.

Waiting for the elevator, I glanced at the check, hoping he would make my day. I smiled. He had bequeathed me an additional five percent over the standard gratuity before scrawling C-L-I-N-T E-A-S-T-W-O-O-D. **Flipside**

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PHOTO BY GREG CHRISTIANSON

"SELF-PORTRAIT" BY BUTCH ROSS

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Fiction by Mary Carolyn Morgan

Humor by Lee White and Jean Newell

Jennifer Kamerer's grim tale of a rape, its solution and its awful aftermath

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