

As God is my witness,
I thought turkeys could fly.



Flipside

2!96



PHOTO BY STAN BUNEVICH

Whistling Past the Graveyard

Flipside Talks with George Plimpton

Interview by Kathleen Vail

"Wait," said Dave. "That was him, going into the rest room."

I turned, squinting at the orange door marked "Men's Room," but saw only the anonymous backs of brown and black business suits wriggling through the door. "How do you know it was him?"

Dave smiled as though he were Houdini and had just been asked how he had managed to escape from a locked trunk. "I have an eye for that sort of thing."

Since Dave was sure George Plimpton had indeed scurried into the rest-room before we had arrived at the gate, we waited expectantly by the door. Travelers crowded the USAir terminal, bumping and shouldering into us as we tried to hold our ground. A midday flight, mostly somber-suited businessmen toting leather brief cases, was boarding. While we waited, I prayed silently and uneasily that my mind would not go blank, that I would not turn into a babbling mushbrain when I met Plimpton. This interview was important. Plimpton was one of the high priests of New Journalism. *Paper Lion*, the account of his stint as quarterback for the Detroit Lions, was on my sports-crazed brothers' bookshelves for as long as I could remember. The paperback had a picture of Alan Alda, who played Plimpton in the movie, in football gear. In my mind, George Plimpton was Alan Alda.

After a couple of minutes, Plimpton emerged, looking quite un-like Alan Alda. He plodded, tired, slouching and scuffing his loafers on the carpet. Much to my consternation, his tanned face was grim and weary. Grim and weary people do not often take kindly to being interviewed. He clasped a burgundy leather satchel in one bronzed hand and had a cumbersome black wool overcoat slung over his arm. He looked like someone's old, tired, very expensive, coddled housepet.

Before we could get to him, a dumpy, dark man with greasy, slicked-back hair scuttled up to Plimpton and held out his hand confidently.

"Hey, George, nice to see you. Don't you remember me? We met in New Orleans?"

I expected Plimpton to react with either distaste or alarm. But he was apparently used to such annoyances. He calmly, politely and distantly shook the man's hand. "I'm sorry, I don't remember meeting you, Plimpton said in a slow New England/William F. Buckley drawl. The man seemed crestfallen, but didn't press the issue. He walked off quickly.

Dave darted up to Plimpton. "Mr. Plimpton, I'm Dave Smith from California University. Welcome to Pittsburgh."

If Plimpton were relieved to see us, he didn't show it. He regarded us with the same calm detachment that he had the greaseball. "I'm afraid I don't pay much attention to where I'm going so when I got to Pittsburgh, I was rather surprised. I'd thought I was going to the state of California."

Dave introduced Todd and me to Plimpton. I wasn't sure why Todd was there. Earlier that morning while I was waiting for Dave to get the silver Mercedes to pick Plimpton up in, Todd had arrived, spirited and little bewildered. He looked at me uncertainly.

"Dave asked me to come along to the airport with you guys."

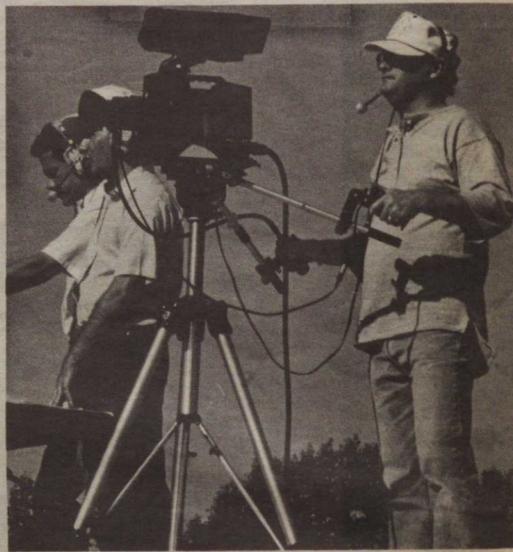
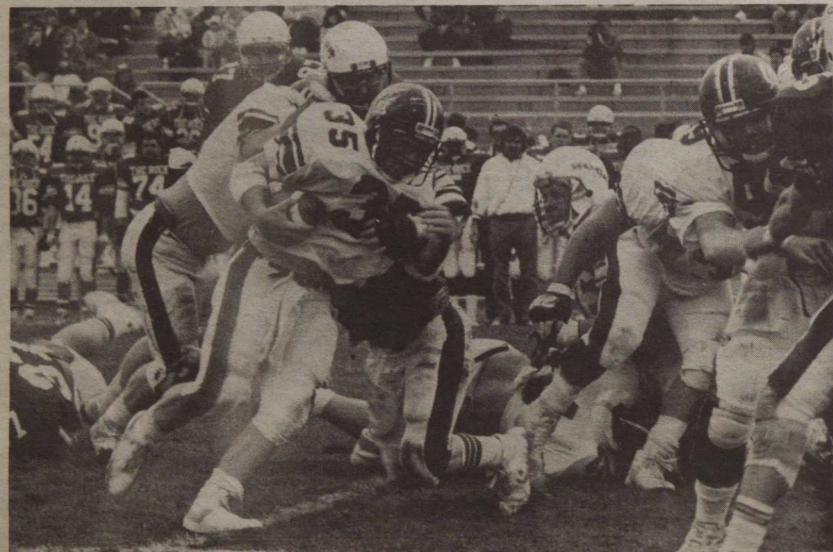
"Oh, really?" I wondered if he was going to try to interview Plimpton, too.

"Yeah, but I'm not sure why."

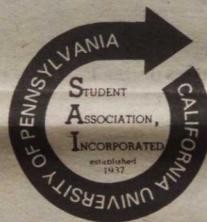
Now Todd was lugging Plimpton's red satchel as we hurried through the airport. I figured that's why Dave wanted him along - in case Plimpton were carrying heavy luggage.

Cont. on Page 34...

STUDENT ASSOCIATION INC.



50TH ANNIVERSARY



1937-1987



FIFTY YEARS OF SERVICE

A VIEW FROM THE FLIPSIDE

Flipside, like MacArthur, a child's boomerang and nachos with extra jalapeno peppers, has returned, a fact that will please some people and, no doubt, makes some others red-faced with anger. But back it is, for better or worse.

The second issue of a magazine is often more significant than the first. The second issue must fulfill the fanfare and the promise of the first. The second issue must prove that the first was not a one-hit wonder, a freak of nature or of luck. We hope that the second issue of Flipside does all of this, and more.

Flipside No. 2 certainly has a tough act to follow. The premier issue of Flipside prompted reactions --favorable and otherwise--from students, instructors, administrators, special interest organizations, religious groups, animal lovers, sorority sisters, rugby players, drug addicts, poetry buffs, longshoremen, track runners, rum runners, rag dealers and Clint Eastwood fans. In fact, Flipside managed to anger, incite or excite just about everyone who picked it up. For a new magazine, or any magazine for that matter, that kind of attention is rewarding. We were proud, not because we purposely meant to offend or outrage, but because we published a magazine that was not so bland that everyone liked--and approved of--it.

Despite Wimsatt and Beardsley's cautions about

the "intentional fallacy," we must repeat that Flipside is not a public relations magazine, obliged to put subjects in their best possible light and, indeed, to speak only of those subjects that please our readers.

Flipside publishes stories that have strong personal voices and points of view. These voices may sometimes be overpowering or even distasteful. But we did not publish them just to shock our audience. We published them because we thought they were eloquent and honest.

In Flipside No. 2, we hope to again present well-written stories with a strong personal voices. In "Storm Warnin'," Arthur Knight pays a visit to a local Ku Klux Klan rally. We have an exclusive interview with George Plimpton, New Journalism innovator and talk-show circuit conversationalist. David McGlaughlin spends a violent and disquieting night in the New Wave world in "Hardcore." Bill Rice explores a Philadelphia drag racing tradition in "Fast Times On Front Street."

Again, you will likely find in Flipside things that don't make you chortle with glee or swell with pride. What you will also find, however, are thoughtful, earnest and well-written stories.

--Kathleen Vail

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Flipside 2!96



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TALES from the FLIPSIDE

FACE MASK, PLEASE

Homely people unite! An essay in the *Harvard Law Review* argues that it should be illegal to discriminate on the basis of physical attractiveness. "Facial discrimination," the essays asserts, might already be illegal under laws forbidding discrimination against the handicapped. "It seems like an arbitrary distinction to say that an employer cannot refuse to hire a person who has a disfiguring scar, for example, but can refuse to hire someone whose chin is jutting or unusually shaped." The essay calls for the end of ugliness discrimination. Power to the people.

AMISH ON THE MARCH

Some 1,500 Lancaster County residents, two-thirds of them Amish--the largest crowd of Amish ever gathered--came together to protest the construction of a three-lane highway right through the Pennsylvania Amish farmers' land. The Amish fear an increase in tourism will ruin their secluded and peaceful way of life. One Amish farmer quipped, "This could cut down on the tourist element. First, they ruin the community; then the tourists won't come."

SHARKS EAT REFUGEES

A boatload of illegal Dominican refugees capsized in the shark-infested Mona Channel off the coast of Santo Domingo. The doomed refugees, who paid from \$300 to \$500 to be smuggled to Puerto Rico, thrashed wildly in the bloody water to fend off more than 40 frenzied sharks, but officials flying overhead could do nothing to save them. More than a hundred people sank with the boat.

Luis Rolon Nevarez, civil defense director of Puerto Rico, flying over the scene, said he saw several dozens of bodies in the water, "some alive, others apparently dead, and sharks of 600 to 800 pounds with bodies in their mouths. When I saw the overturned hull, there were survivors on top of it and swimming next to it. A few minutes later we could see the sharks attacking them. There were several schools of about 15 sharks each, just attacking the refugees in the water. The sea was red around them. I've never seen anything more horrible in 22 years of civil defense."

Survivor Eddy Ventura said the wooden boat began to leak as soon as it left Death's Head Beach in Nagua.

POTENT HEROIN BATCH CAUSES RASH OF OVERDOSES

"Blue Thunder," a potent batch of heroin that made its way from New York City, is blamed for the recent increase in drug overdoses in the city of Pittsburgh. Sgt. John McMahon, head of the Pittsburgh Narcotics Squad, said the heroin is apparently very pure and has not been diluted.

"Some one didn't cut it enough and made doses that are far too strong,"

said McMahon. "It's far too strong for users in this area."

STRIP-SEARCHING STUDENTS PROTESTED

Elementary school students were ordered to partially disrobe while the school nurse searched for an heirloom gold watch belonging to another student. Midland School Board President Daniel Zuppe responded to parents who objected to this, said that searches in which students are asked to undress will no longer be permitted in the district.

The girls were asked to undress to their slips and the boys to their shorts to look for the watch, which had disappeared from the school library. The mass search failed to reveal the watch.

SPCA SEEKS DOG'S TORTURER

Jake, a toy fox terrier, was placed in a heated kitchen oven by intruders in his owner's, Olla Daschbach, home while Daschbach was away. Daschbach's possessions had been rifled. She found her ten-pound dog in her oven. The dog was very close to death.

Bea Foster, president of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, announced later that a \$1,000 reward would be offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators.

MOM GUILTY OF CHILD ABUSE IN TEEN DANCER'S SUICIDE

A Fort Lauderdale woman who forced her daughter to work as a nude dancer and then lived off her earnings, which some weeks totaled more than \$1,000, was found guilty of child abuse when the girl killed herself.

Theresa Jackson, 40, also was found guilty of procuring a sexual performance by a child, and forgery. Dr. Douglas Jacobs, a Harvard psychologist, said the exploitive relationship between the girl and her mother was a significant contributing factor in the suicide.

FOR THE BIRDS

A man who ran his pleasure boat through a flock of ducks on the Ohio river was fined \$300, the maximum fine for cruelty to animals, and was ordered to help feed the wild ducks or spend time in the Allegheny County Jail.

David Arsevich was identified by John Sopovchak, a retired steel worker known on the river as "Porky the Duck." Sopovchak said he saw Arsevich's boat, the "Wahoo" plow upriver through a flock of 300 to 600 ducks as they were crossing the Ohio River. Sopovchak said that the birds could not escape because they were molting and were unable to fly. He said he pulled one dead bird out of the water and it had been cut almost in half.

POISON PAPER

The Environmental Protection Agency announced recently that tiny amounts of dioxin, a potent cause of cancer in lab animals, are found in many paper products, such as coffee filters, napkins and tampons-bleached by chlorine in the "kraft process." But the agency said it believes there is no health hazard from using this product.

Some environmentalists say that dioxins cause birth defects, miscarriages and damage to the liver and immune system, but these conclusions are hotly debated.

John T. Moore, assistant administrator for pesticides and toxic substances for the EPA, called to release a nationwide study of dioxin contamination ordered by Congress in 1984. Some of the results have been coming out for months--the agency reported high dioxin concentration in fish in and around the Great Lakes during the summer. Moore said the EPA found these fish in rivers used by kraft paper mills. The kraft process uses chlorine as a bleach, and the agency believes this is the origin of the dioxins.

Moore said the worst risk would be from coffee filters. This could mean an extra risk of cancer to a coffee drinker of about one in 10,000, but the calculation assumes that all of the dioxin in the filter is transferred to the coffee and "that's probably too conservative."

BANANA RAMA

A truck, loaded down with bananas, en route to the Giant Eagle Warehouse in the Strip District lost its brakes on the Greentree Hill stretch of the Parkway. The runaway rig smashed into three cars and two parked PennDOT trucks and came to a stop inside the garage, which is in the Fort Pitt Tunnels between the inbound and outbound lanes. The truck sprayed burnt bananas all over the roadway, causing a traffic tie-up for miles.

NO THANKS

When Marcia Bennett, a food editor for the Pittsburgh *Post Gazette*, returned from China, she reported on a Chinese delicacy that Americans might have been unaware of: balu--fertile duck egg, which is sucked raw--feathers, feet and all--from the shell. Bennett passed on the dish when it was offered to her.

POP ROCKS POP BACK AFTER MIKEY SCARE

Pop Rocks, the crackling candy that swept the junior-high set in the 1970's is making a comeback after rumors that Mikey, the Life cereal boy, died of a Krakatoa-like stomach explosion after swallowing a handful of Pop Rocks carbonated candy and washing it down with a fizzy soft drink. These same rumors helped drive the Pop Rocks off the shelves in 1980.

Pop Rock's company, Carbonated Candy Ventures, hopes to tap the market of a generation of children who have never experienced the explosive candy.

WANNA-BE DOLLS

No, it's not Madonna. These dolls are designed to inspire children who want to be doctors, executives, pilots, firefighters, football players or cheerleaders. It's a doll that doubles as a role model. Except for the football player and cheerleader, fields where sexism still reigns, the dolls come in male and female versions. The little male executive is clad in pinstripes vest and pants and tie, wears eyeglasses and carries a black imitation leather briefcase. The female executive wears a similar outfit with a dress-for-success skirt substituted for the trousers.

WARHOL STOLEN

Seven art students and another youth stole part of a four-section portrait tribute to artist Andy Warhol from a billboard in Pittsburgh to protest "Pittsburghers who ignored Warhol and shunned him." Two of the students climbed onto a nearby roof and then to the billboard. Bolts were removed and the section was unhooked and lowered to the others waiting below. The students said they did not intend to keep or damage the portrait and that they wanted it to be recovered.

GUNMAN TAKES FORMER GIRLFRIEND HOSTAGE

A Pittsburgh man who wanted to spend more time with his former girl took her hostage at the Allegheny East Developmental Center in Oakmont.

Jane Shaw, a secretary at the center, recently ended a year-long relationship with Chester Burda. Burda was paroled the day before after serving a four month sentence in the Allegheny County Jail. Burda walked into the building and used a shotgun to force Shaw into an office. Burda said he wanted to spend 24 hours with Shaw. Allegheny County Police Superintendent Robert Kroner said, "If he wants to spend time with her, I don't see why we can't accommodate him. He's got a loaded shotgun."

SURROGATE MOTHER AND TEST-TUBE GRANDCHILDREN DOING WELL

The Associated Press reported that a 48-year-old woman gave birth to her daughter's test-tube triplets, becoming the world's first surrogate mother of her own grandchildren.

The triplets, two boys and a girl, were delivered by their grandmother, Pat Anthony, by Caesarean section at Johannesburg's Park Lane Clinic.

Mrs. Anthony agreed to bear the children of her daughter, Karen Ferreira-Jorge, whose uterus was removed after complications from the birth of her first child three years ago.

Eggs from Mrs. Ferreira-Jorge were fertilized with sperm from her husband, Alcino, in a laboratory process known as in vitro fertilization. Four eggs were implanted into Mrs. Anthony's womb.

THE SOUND AND THE QUERY

I READ, I HATED, I WROTE

The other day I picked up a copy of *Flipside* and began to flip through it. The cover story immediately caught my attention. It was an article on the Special Olympics, and, being that I am active in the Special Olympics here at Cal U., I read the story. I expected to read a heartwarming account of some athlete's triumph. Instead, I read a disgusting, insulting account of those less fortunate than ourselves. Case and point: "... more than 3000 mentally retarded athletes, aged 12-80, picked their noses, scratched their genitals, drooled or shaded their eyes from the afternoon sun..." and "... Melinda took her place beside the director... 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." I continued to read and was further enraged at the professionalism of the article.

How in the hell can you people print such material and still have a consciousness? Where's your heart? These people are probably the warmest, friendliest, most loving individuals I have ever known. These people didn't wish to be this way. It's not their fault, and you're making fun of them. You people are ridiculous. How would you feel if you were in their shoes? I have been active in the Special Olympic programs for about five years and in that time period I have seen the worst and the best these people are capable of. These people (and I stress PEOPLE, not animals or hideous monstrosities) have others think and feel about them. One of the kids that I had for a ski trip still calls me and occasionally comes to visit me here at school. He thinks the world of visiting the brothers and just hanging around with us. From time to time he reads the college publications and understands what he reads. I would be ashamed if he read your article. How do you think he would feel?

Your article was in extremely poor taste and I feel that it discredits you as a journalist. I am positive that you could have written the same article in better taste. Better yet, you could have taken a good hard look at the Special Olympics programs.

Scott David Fowler
P.S. Please note that I signed my name--unlike the writer of the column.

Editor's note: The name of the author of "Special Olympics: The Flipside," Tyra Braden, is listed both on the front cover and in the by-line beside the article on page 1.

SO DID I

Dear Sirs,
A few weeks ago a copy of "Special Olympics: The Flipside" fell into my hands. I read it with interest.

I now question the purpose of such an article. What, if anything did you expect to accomplish with such a totally negative article? Did the authoress use her correct name? Was this a voluntary assignment or one she did not want to do?

How if you could, would you change the "Special Olympics"? Maybe you would prefer these people to be kept out of sight. It sounds like the authoress brother is "Burned Out." I have worked with this population for 17 years--It is very frustrating at times, but the Special Olympics is usually a very happy and rewarding experience for both staff and clients.

They do practice and work out prior to the day of competition. I have seen them.

I really feel it is a shame to devote any space to articles such as this. If the writer and her family are so fed-up with these different people, then I think they would do the world a favor by not doing penance, by attending these functions! You shouldn't print such a negative article, unless you know how to work with these people and organize an event of such impossible proportions better than they do.

Dolores Laabs, R.N.
Vice-President of Open Doors for the Handicapped

Editor's note: Unless otherwise indicated, all of the authors' names are real.

AS DID I

Gentlemen:
I am writing to you today on behalf of the entire membership of the Westmoreland County Chapter of the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Citizens. The ARC is shocked and outraged by

the lead article published in the Spring 1987 *Flipside*. We are fully aware that *Flipside* is a forum for students of California University of Pennsylvania to voice their opinions. However, the ARC feels strongly that publication of the article, "Special Olympics: The Flipside," was inappropriate, crass, and unprofessional. It is particularly discouraging that an article which denigrates handicapped people, misinforms the public regarding valued programs and perpetuates outdated myths and misconceptions is published through a state supported university.

There are at least five issues which need to be addressed with respect to this article, the most important one being that persons with disabilities constitute a protected class under federal anti-discrimination statutes. As such, it is unethical and grossly inappropriate to publish an article with strong prejudicial overtones about people with disabilities. It is no less inappropriate than the publication of a similar article about a particular race of people, one's gender, nationality, age group or religious beliefs, which we assume you would never publish.

It is understood that the protection of this class is purposeful insofar as they, at a minimum, constitute a group of individuals who, because of the nature of their disability, are unable to defend themselves against such actions, statements or characterization as those you recently published.

Second, as editors, you are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that your writers do not violate the civil rights of private citizens. In addition to conveying the very personal and unpleasant experience of one Special Olympics participant, your writer also reported private information about the same participant. The participant's address should not have appeared in the article. The participant is not an elected official and did nothing to place himself/herself in the public eye.

Third, making a mockery of disabilities is something the ARC cannot ignore. Persons with speech and language difficulties should be applauded for their personal courage to speak in public. As an editor, do you really think that it is fair to quote a participant by printing, "Emmi-win-icanno-bravitem"?

Fourth, there is no Western Center Psychiatric Hospital in Western Pennsylvania. Western Center is a state operated, residential facility for persons with mental retardation. Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic is a community-based program which provides a variety of assessment and mental health services.

Fifth, I feel it important for you to know that if any staff person in a state-funded program ever said to a client, "Did you shit yourself?", it would constitute verbal abuse. Now, we cannot verify the incident, nor the quote, but because the author identified herself as part of that participant's group, and because she reported the address of that participant and gave details about the events in which he/she competed, reporting and publishing this information served no purpose other than repeating the alleged verbal abuse.

The written word is perhaps the most powerful tool available to persons who wish to effect change in public attitudes. In the future I urge you and your staff to take the time to properly research all of the articles that you intend to publish. It is quite clear that the author of "Special Olympics: The Flipside," needs more information about mental retardation, neurological disorders and handicapping conditions.

Unfortunately, there is very little anyone can do to compensate the many participants, families, volunteers and private citizens who are so personally offended by the inappropriate and crass description of the Special Olympics as reported by your staff writer. It is equally unfortunate that *Flipside* chose as its subject a group of individuals who, again by the very nature of their disability, are unable to defend themselves or respond in any way.

Again, I cannot overemphasize our dismay and disappointment in the article. It is our hope that in the future you will exercise more prudent and sensitive judgment in the publication of articles about persons with disabilities.

Sincerely,
Fay Grandy, President
ARC, Westmoreland

Editor's note: The names and the addresses of the participants mentioned were changed, as indicated at the beginning of the article.

OH YE OF LITTLE FAITH

Dear Editors:
Re your first issue of *Flipside*, Vol. 1, No. 1. Much to be commended here. May I interject, however, a serious note of my own. Anti-Godliness is in vogue now, I know, but scurrilous attacks on the maimed and unfortunate is not, I pray, "in." Nor will it ever be, God willing. This is not "new" journalism, I fear, but on the main weak and sophomoric attacks attributable to the very young and not so smart.

Good luck to you and all you meet.
Sincerely,
Bill Howell

A CHARACTER IN SEARCH OF A NAME

Dear Sir or Madam,
In response to your first issue. I did not under any circumstances "beg" to have my name removed from anything. I merely dove-coated to the said "writer of the piece, Mr. ?" that I would not now or ever have my name linked with what I could not else but perceive as blatant "lies."

Sir, I am anti-pathetic to lies. Especially of the mis-constructed and made up kind.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. ?

THE FUNNIES

Dear Journalism Majors,
Was that cartoon of God's finger on the back issue of *Flipside* No. One supposed to be humorous? Thanks for telling me. Ha, Ha, I forgot to laugh.
Fly in hell,
Realty Wheatstraw.

ANIMAL LOVERS UNITE

Dear Flippers:
Well, take stock and be proud! Quite an achievement, I'd say if I say so myself. It was colorful, yes, it had many things to delight the eye and ear, yes, mucho pictures, yes, but one thing stuck in my gullet, if you will excuse my French. That is, namely, totally uncalled for, meaningless poking of fun at small woodland creatures. To many in this world, Nature (and I use the great Thoreau's phrase) "is unnoticed." Needless to say, many of God's creature's are killed and shot by hunters and anglers alike in this the only world the Good Lord gave us. I hate to spout off at the mouth, but do you really find it "funny" to isolate and in other ways "defile" God's creatures with tasteless words and pictures?

I hope not in the future. If we have any.
Peace,
Rennie Smiley

A BLUE THUMB

Dear Shits,
Fine first issue. Fine. Fine. I picked the thing up two weeks ago and I still got blue ink on my fingers! Can't you fiddle loose a few more florin from the vest of that fat cat over in President's Hall? For better ink? Or you just too pussy?
Eat it.

ANOTHER DULLARD HEARD FROM

HEY ALI
FUCK YOUSE AND ALL YOU STAND FOR(?) IT WENT OVER LIKE A FAKT IN CHURCH!!
FRIENDS IN THE BUCKEYE
STATE

A NOTE FROM SOMEONE'S DAD

Kids:
Jesus H. Christ and all the angels and saints! I thought I'd seen it all. I've been around for many years you know but never have I came across such a thing as this. I mean Flip, natch! It's good. So good in fact it defies praise.
Keep it up!

A NEEDEY FRIEND WRITES

Dear *Flipside*:
How I wish there had been such a thing going on when I was a student at Harvard-On-the-Moon! Yes, you guessed it! As an alumnus of that fair institution, I have naught but bountiful praise to heap

on your laureled heads--it was a fine read. And free! Being that I've been unemployed these past nine years (class of '79) the word FREE means much to me.

Again, my sincere pledge of trust and hope for the future.
Sam Teets
Graduate of the professional writing program

JOCKITCH

Dear Alan:
What you running, anyway. Sports Illustrated? I thought we were up for some Lit-Crit of the "New Journalism" school. What do I see but article after article of runners, footballers and what not! You talk Hemingway and Faulkner in class but it's cold turd city when you get in print. Wow!

Name withheld

WATCH YOUR MOUTH, PLEASE

Dear Editors:
It's good to see young children at college "selling their wares," but may I append a note of caution? Foul language has its merits, I'm sure, but not in tasteless exhibitionism. It has its place in Tolstoy or the Bible but not, I fear, in Washington County!
Miss Addison

A SUBTLE WARNING

DEAR DAUGHTER OF SATAN:
PRINT ANY MORE LIES AND YOUR BLONDE BUTT IS MUDD
CHILD OF GOD

ADVICE FROM A KIND READER

Dear Writing Majors:
Some thoughts and suggestions for your next issue. How about bestiality? Or maybe a nice two-toned cover of Hitler or Stalin on the front? Send Bill Rice to interview the patrons of a cathouse and Jennifer what's her name to do an in-depth profile of an AIDS victim WHO SHALL REMAIN NAMELESS AND QUITE FICTITIOUS!

A CONCERNED FACULTY MEMBER

A QUERY, WE THINK

Dear Editor:
Would you, or could you possibly, review the enclosed herein materials for possible publication in your new (albeit) unissued and as yet unissued publication. I am a starting out writer of doggerel, or if you like, poetry, and am mainly influenced as I am by such American greats as James Wheatcome Riley and Siddey Lanneier. I heard about you from my class with J.P. Manarek and, yes you guessed it, I am currently an Inmate In Residence at West Penn Workshop. What I've done, what I've strived for and possibly obtained, is my own work. Nobody helped me.

Sincerely Sir, I remain
N.T.

EDITOR'S NOTE: ALL LETTERS ARE PRINTED EXACTLY AS THEY ARE RECEIVED.

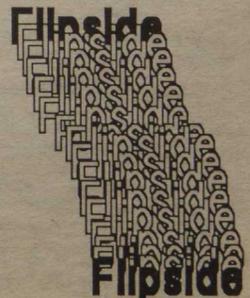




ILLUSTRATION BY SUSAN STASICHA

STORY BY **DAVE MCGLAUGHLIN**

"You go places, bad places, to fulfill some gnawing need, and you do ugly things to yourself and other people not because of the ugliness -- well, sometimes because of the ugliness, I guess -- but usually because there's something else there and you'd do it no matter what. There are people who do. No matter what. They fuck their children, for shit's sake."

--- Big Black, liner notes to "Jordan, Minnesota"



Smoke fills the Devil's Playground. There are no lights, except the overheads focused on the stage, the cheap pine slats that raise the band a few inches from the floor. Half Life is about to start their set. Random notes and drumbeats add to the noise of the crowd. I'm still pushing through to the stage when Mike starts a strong bass riff, the opening to "Something's Missing." We begin to respond to the music. Everyone turns and presses to the stage. In ragged jeans, combat boots or sneakers, denim jackets or leather, slogan t-shirts, buttons and jewelry and tattoos, hair shaggy, spiked, dyed, shaved clean away, or even neatly combed. We stomp the floor, clench fists, grit our teeth and nod to the beat. We are poised like actors waiting for a cue, but MTV would never hire such a scruffy bunch. The rest of the band joins in.

The crowd in front of me explodes. Everyone within 20 feet of the stage is slamming, as if playing a pickup game of parking lot football with no rules. Punks charge into each other, bounce off on a new course to another collision. The circling bodies haven't settled out yet, but the dancers are shaking the walls. I've nearly reached the edge of the pit when someone shoves me hard in the back. I stumble headfirst into the melee. Spectators can do that. It's okay. I came here to slam.

Trying to catch my balance, I feel a shoulder brushing past my head, breathe in the scent of smoke and old leather. A shirtless skinhead plows into me from the side. Several people trip over us before grinning stranger-spick up the lot of us, put us on our feet and hurl us along with the stomping, grinning, sweating crowd. I ignore the blows of boots and fists protecting ribs. I'm here to slamdance, to work off energy in the furious music, to hear my favorite Pittsburgh band make some noise. I submerge myself in the action, blowing out the words to the song when I have enough breath.

Half Life goes straight into "Deathtrap," a speedthrash song that puts everyone in high gear. I join some of the punks skanking around the edge. I swing my fists high, one-two, as if mocking a runner. I am bent forward, head down, but I bring my feet up high in front and kick down, trying to stomp through the floor. Muscles flexed. I batter through snapshot glimpses of punks. Some collapse on my legs from behind, like boiling surf trying to drag me down, and I hurl myself straight ahead into the half of the crowd that prefers to watch the bruising spectacle up close; one falls, and the "Aleister Crowley, 666" on his t-shirt disappears in the tangle of jeans and boots. His companions grab, lift, turn me, hurl me out into the spiral dance again.

The circling, destructive energy rises higher with the beginning of a new song. "Don't tell me how the world is / Don't give me the bad news / I sit and watch the shit pile up / I got a first hand view!" I struggle up from my hands and knees, rising from another pileup to find myself in front of the stage. The singer snarls words over the sound of guitars, and when he offers us the mike, a dozen of us howl the chorus: "I may not know what I want / But I know it's not what you've got / Revile - revile - your world's decayed / Revile - revile - your lies betrayed!" I pogo in place for the rest of the song, helping to overload the speakers on the chorus, then reel away to stomp around the overpowering sound of alienation and disgust.

I crash into a tall skinhead in regulation uniform; clean white t-shirt, suspenders, blue jeans, shiny black combat boots. Fighting is a favorite amusement for skinheads. This one looks big enough to play pro football. We hang on each other to keep our feet.

"You asshole!" he yells. Slammers thrash by us. I don't know what he's so upset about. We're out here to bounce off each other. That's the point.

"Fuck you too," I suggest with a smile. Immediately, I know I should have kept my mouth shut.

He throws the first punch, but I've got a hard chin and pay no more attention to that than to the slamming. I hope he broke his hand (I did it that way once) and wonder if my death-head ring is leaving bite-sized skull impressions on his face when I strike.

We flail, our blows hard and wild. The metal plate over the front of my motorcycle boots turns a kick from my shin, giving me an idea -- I'm starting a foul blow of my own when the volunteers arrive to stop the fight.



There are no bouncers at the Playground, but there are plenty of punks who don't want the local cops to shut down the club. I'm glad they're breaking us up, but I try for a parting shot as we are separated picked up and carried away. The music roars. The slamdance has hardly slowed.

On my feet again, I turn to look for the big guy with the attitude problem. He's already disappeared. Anger and adrenalin churn up my guts, but the

volunteers smile, slap me on the back, tell me "Cool it," "Chill out, cuz," and "Not here, not now, okay?" I don't see him anywhere.

"Yeah," I say, "thanks." I relax somewhat. "It's okay, I'm cool now. S'allright. Fuckin' skinheads." I smile, wipe sweat from my face. I don't really want a rematch, but a tough front can save trouble later.

"Never met a skinhead who wasn't a Nazi," says one punk. He's a skinny black kid with hair as short as mine, the one who told me to cool it. I recognize him. He could have been torn in half by my sparring partner.

"That's why they shave their heads," I say. Anything to clear my mind. "Support the Reich. Solidarity. Reagan Youth."

"No, it's because they hate the hippies," he replies with a shrug and a smile. I can't remember his name but I know we've talked politics before.

"The skinheads hate everyone," I tell him.

"Yeah, but everybody hates the hippies. Shit. The Love Generation chased out Nixon and now look who's the boss. Ronnie fucking Raygun. America is back, crawling tall in the saddle. Some change, huh."

"Where'd he go?" We lean against a wall and watch the crowd.

"Ah, I don't see... Maybe he's hiding behind those girls' hairdos."

I laugh. "High school freshmen. Posers. One can of hair mousse each. Every day. They buy their clothes from Rolling Stone fashion ads." He gives that sour grin. The Stone's time has passed. Their editor supports employee drug tests. They speak of alternative music in terms of future marketability. To Rolling Stone, youth and energy are old advertising gimmicks. We refuse to be fooled.

"Which one of their boyfriends has the Suicidal Tendencies logo on his 200 dollar leather jacket? Sell-out. And the 65 dollar combat boots, on sale now at Theftway for only 50 bucks!" He parodies a whining child voice. "Shit, mom, I left my skateboard in the Corvette!"

"I guess they're just too, too bad for me. All punked out, as they say." He leans forward and his face contorts as he screams. "I hate you! Fucking posers!" at the little group hanging onto the opposite wall. There's no way they can hear him. Too bad.

"Uh-huh," I nod. "That kind of bullshit just goes to show...Hollywood rules America."

"It sucks. Punk shouldn't be just a hairstyle. I hate posers. They'll get home by midnight so daddy doesn't take their phone away..."

"Yeah, and ground them for a week unless you get a better grade in social studies, Princess!" We laugh at each other. "Do you remember rock 'n roll?" I have a poster with that title somewhere. It shows this good little Fifties teenager, this girl in bobbysox with Elvis and Frankie Avalon pictures on her walls, and she's watching this punk smashing through her window with his guitar. That's cool! Rock 'n roll! I happily consider the "shatter-your-world" image in my mind.

This skinny, intense punk nods his head continuously. I can't tell if he's agreeing with me or keeping time with Half Life. What does he call himself? Otto?

"Listen, Otto, I'll catch you later." I point my thumb at the door. "Need some fresh pollution," I say, heading that way as Otto chops the air with one hand. His manic grin says "Later, man." He's still watching the chaotic dance.



The crowd is thickest around the edges of the pit. Most punks won't move out of the way. At the door I show my stamped hand to the fat girl guarding the cashbox. She holds a short, heavychunk of pipe in one paw. She nods, and I go out. I lean against the spraypainted walls and watch the skate punks practice their moves, twirling on back wheels, doing handstands, bouncing off the wall, leaping on and off the curb with the boards, laughing. It's a way to release intense energy, they say. I nod and blow menthol smoke. I can feel the wall at my back pulsating with the music. I lean back and enjoy it. Then a linebacker-size skinhead steps in front of me. The same guy, with a mean smile on his sliced face. "Got a cigarette?" he says.

I look around. He doesn't have friends with him. I give him a cigarette. I light it for him, too. I figure his face looks bad enough that I can afford the gesture.

The skinhead leans back on a car, drags in smoke, and sends it out in a long stream. We watch each other through slitted eyes until he sticks out a huge hand. "Name's Glenn," he says. Now the shadows hide his eyes.

I shake his hand cautiously, quickly. "Well they call me the Butcher," I tell him in a poor imitation of John Wayne. He looks away, but I watch closely.

"You always fight like that?" His voice is an animal growl.

"Like what?" He makes me nervous. His looming bulk threatening from the shadows.

"You know. Just jump right in and swing." His eyebrows go up and he smiles again. It's a nasty, tightlipped smile. "Could've got your ass kicked off."

That's true. He's twice my size and I'm going to hurt in the morning. I know, but still I say, "Not by you," in descending tones.

Glenn straightens. He steps forward to put his face just inches from mine, stands there grinning tightly, a yellow, bug-spattered streetlight giving him a sort of corrupt halo. He has bad breath.

What can I do to get out of this one? I stare him in the eye to say I'm not intimidated, and I trickle out smoke to let it drift into his face. Would a smile help? No, I don't think so. I grow lightheaded, imagining the approaching violence. I stop breathing as I coil up.

Glenn grunts. "Huh. You're a tough little punk. Relax, man. We beat each other. So we're blood brothers for life, right?" His grin shows more

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Benevolent, Misanthropic, Erudite,
Loutish, Creative,
Ruthless, Scholarly, Caring,
Egocentric, Gruff,
Profane, Charming, Childish,

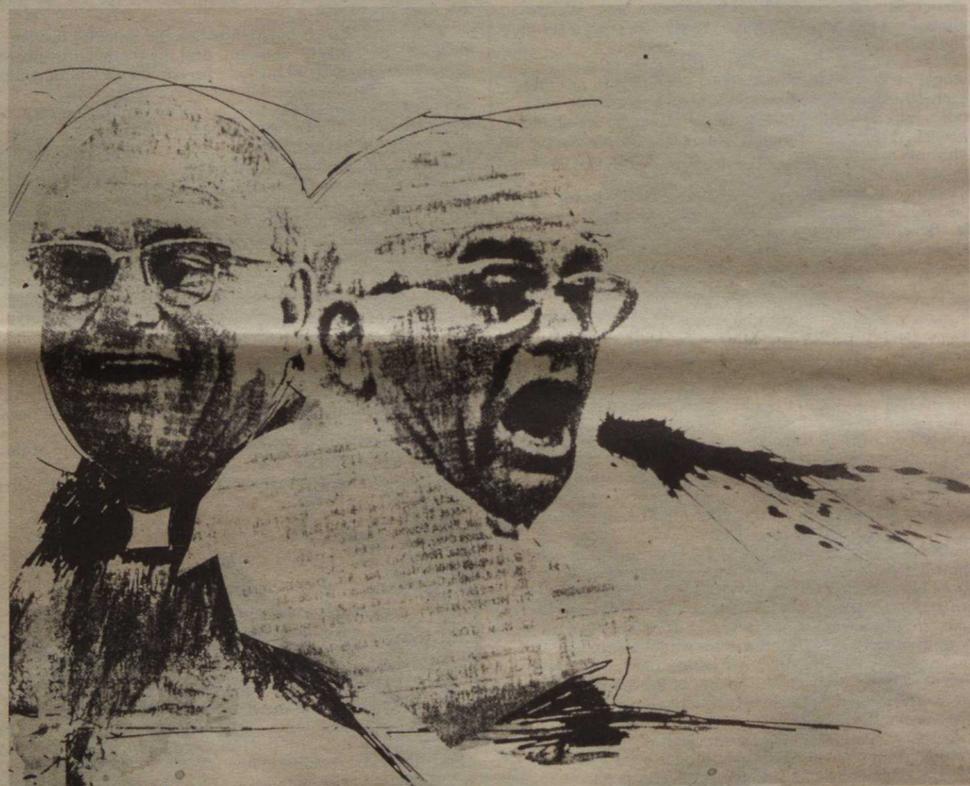


ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN BASKIN

Scornful, Boorish, Contentious,
Willful, Frank, Bold,
Guileless, Daring, Fearless,
Dynamic and Antiquated

WOODY AND THE FALL OF SAIGON

ESSAY BY ALAN NATALI

A DIFFERENT VERSION OF THIS STORY WAS PUBLISHED IN THE MAY, 1987 ISSUE OF OHIO MAGAZINE.

ALTHOUGH HE SEEMED ALWAYS TO have been the head coach at Ohio State University, it isn't true that Wayne Woodrow Hayes sprouted, fully garbed in sweat clothes and football cleats, from a dragon's tooth sown in the soil of Noble County. Hayes had already been a football coach for 16 years when he came to Columbus in 1951. He'd won 75 percent of his games at Miami and Denison Universities, skippered a destroyer escort in the Pacific and bested a field of impressive candidates for the job at Ohio State.

Scowling, jut-jawed, coarse-featured Woody arrived in a remote era that he would describe years later as "when the air was clean and sex was dirty." It was a time suited to his essentially simplistic view of the world, and the problem he faced was also simple: satisfy the Ohio State football fans, who were, as always, rabid for a championship team.

Lacking a winning tradition, those fans envied great rival teams such as Michigan's under Fritz Crisler and "Hurry Up" Yost, Minnesota's under Bernie Bierman and Illinois' under Bob Zuppke. Hayes became the Buckeyes' sixth coach in 11 years. His predecessor, Wes Fesler, lasted only three seasons, leaving on the brink of nervous collapse. Fesler had replaced Paul Bixler, who survived only one year. Bixler had succeeded Carroll Widdoes, also a casualty after a single season.

A year after winning the national championship, Paul Brown joined the Navy. Fired from OSU in 1940, Francis Schmidt put in two losing seasons at Idaho before his death, caused, some say, by Schmidt's heartbreak over his failure to win in Columbus.

Only someone as cussedly brazen as Woody Hayes would prove to be could proclaim that he'd come to "the Graveyard of Coaches," as Ohio State was known, "primarily for opportunity, not security."

Despite his bluster, Hayes was not an instant success. A ditty during his first tempestuous, mediocre season urged: "Come let's sing Ohio's praise. Say goodbye to Woody Hayes." The Buckeyes won only four of nine games. Hayes' severe discipline and rigorous practices prompted several incipient uprisings. He admitted drilling the squad so hard that they sometimes had barely enough energy left to play on Saturday. After a meagre two-point victory over winless Pittsburgh, he chided several players as "clowns" and "muscleheads." Illinois earned the Rose Bowl, and Ohio State finished fifth in the conference, despite the talents of Vic Janowicz, recipient of the previous year's Heisman Trophy. Hayes' \$12,500 salary and full-professor's post appeared to be ill-advised investments.

The grumbling ended on Oct. 23, 1954, when "Hopalong" Cassidy returned an interception 88 yards for a touchdown against second-ranked Wisconsin, a twist of fortune that

sparked a three-touchdown outburst from the Buckeyes, made Ohio State number one in the country and seated an emperor. At 42, Woody Hayes had secured the throne he would hold against insubordination, insurrection and invasion for the next 24 years.

During those two-dozen seasons, Hayes did the only thing he believed worth doing--what he knew he must do--win. Time and again, he explained his actions, words or decisions by declaring, "My record speaks for itself."

Winning requires no explanation, is its own interpretation, is the very definition of "honor." Hayes won 205 games at Ohio State, nearly five times as many as any other Buckeye coach. When he met other Big Ten teams, he won over 79% of the time, including a record 17 straight. He won or shared 13 conference and four national championships.

Fifteen times his Buckeyes finished among the top 10 teams in the country. He coached 58 All-Americans and won four Rose Bowls. Only Amos Alonzo Stagg, "Pop" Warner and "Bear" Bryant won more games.

WOODY HAYES CHERISHED VICTORY as a sacred spiritual possession, dominating often and without apology, winning those 205 games by an average score of 24-12. He believed, along with the ancient Greeks and most of Calvinistic Western civilization, in the dogma of the deserving sufferer. Prosperity correlates directly with righteousness; failure is judgement for weakness or sloth. Divine decree institutes the contest only as an ordeal through which combatants are weighed in the balance. Hayes ignored liberal society's contention that losers should have a share of the spoils.

"Football," he told Robert Vare, author of a controversial book about Hayes and Ohio State football, "is about the only unifying force left in America Today (1973). It is certainly one of the few places in our society where teamwork, mental discipline and the value of hard work still mean anything. We stick to the old-fashioned virtues, and if the rest of the country had stuck to them, it would have been a different story in Vietnam."

Convinced that the world consists only of winners and those unworthy to win, Woody Hayes never considered negotiation. Even so noble a foe as the Michigan Wolverines, should they come tainted to the trial by combat, could expect no quarter. In 1961, Hayes, his regulars still on the field with 34 seconds remaining, led Michigan 42-20. Before the indignant Ann Arbor crowd, Joe Sparma hit Paul Warfield with a 70-yard pass, then tossed a touchdown. With five seconds left and holding a 28-point lead, Hayes had Sparma throw a two-point conversion. Boos thundered; fans brawled on the field. After exchanging unpleasantities with Michigan coach Bump Elliot, Woody rode from the field on his players' shoulders, triumphantly, contemptuously waving his cap at the crowd.

Ohio State rooters had their champion. And for a city and a state so anxious for a winner, Woody Hayes did more than win. Through the social morality play that modern football has become, he verified the superiority of an entire way of life.

FOOTBALL IS CODIFIED WARFARE for a people nauseated by actual war, a nation expressing its aggressive instincts through isolated, non-fatal clashes. When Hayes, the rugged son of a Newcomerstown school superintendent, led his legions of native sons against rivals, he represented far more than a university. Before Hayes arrived, Ohio State had lost nearly three-quarters of the games it had played against Michigan.

Woody, by contrast, beat the Wolverines nearly six in every ten tries. Hayes quickly assumed the status of a feudal baron, spawning a horde of imitators and satraps eager to serve him. The Woody Hayes legend developed, and as it did, devotees brought gifts to enrich it, more than 87,000 spectators filled Ohio Stadium each Saturday to cheer it, acolytes learned from it and strong, swift young men fought for it.

Hayes did often seem bigger than life. Year-around, he worked 19-hour days, refusing to accept pay raises. Immured even against nature, he ignored its vagaries. "If it's 30 degrees, Woody will wear one t-shirt. If it's zero, he'll wear two," Jim Parker, the great tackle, once said.

"Feeling cold is psychological," Hayes said. When he suffered a heart attack in 1974, Hayes didn't flinch. The day after he entered the hospital, he dictated a letter to his team, assuring them he would be their coach that fall. "After my heart attack the doctor said I had to turn over more of the work to my assistants," Hayes said before that season began. "Hell, that lasted about 10 minutes. I don't worry about my heart attack because as Napoleon said, I'd rather die a winner than live a loser."

Though embarrassed by the evidence of his mortality, he accepted encouragement from Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and Bo Schmebeler, acquiesced to wear a windbreaker on freezing days and won another Big Ten title by beating Michigan by two points when the Wolverine placekicker missed a field goal with 18 seconds left.

EVERY SATURDAY, HAYES'S PURITANIC republican, "high-button shoe" brand of football made a personal and political statement. That statement struck a sympathetic chord among conservatives, who were reassured by the elemental sight of Woody's "Patton" offense, the basis of which was a powerful fullback "grinding meat" through the middle of an opposing defense. More than any of his contemporaries--more than any

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FAST TIMES ON FRONT STREET

ARTICLE BY BILL RICE

The acrid smell of burned rubber assaulted our nostrils as we pulled into the parking lot of JFK Stadium, Philadelphia. At the other end of the quarter-mile-long blacktop, an electric-blue Dodge Charger was spinning in circles inside a ring of jacked up hot rods, like a frustrated bull caught in an arena. Its front quarterpanels proclaimed in white letters, "Maximum Overdrive." Gleaming garage rods, tame family cars, proud classic cars, and battered basket cases littered the lighted lot, none bothering to park in the prescribed spaces. Feeling like a daschund in a cagefull of pit bulls, I backed my primer-red '76 Maverick up close to the hulking stadium, facing Pattison Avenue, which lay about 100 yards across the blacktop. Phil, Jeff and I had found our way there by following the roar of far-off engines.

In front of us, identical Kawasaki racing bikes purred head-on towards each other—leather-clad knights on steel steeds about to joust. The

riders spotted one another, and the one on our right downshifted, throttled hard, wheeled. The challenge had been issued. Both sped off toward Pattison.

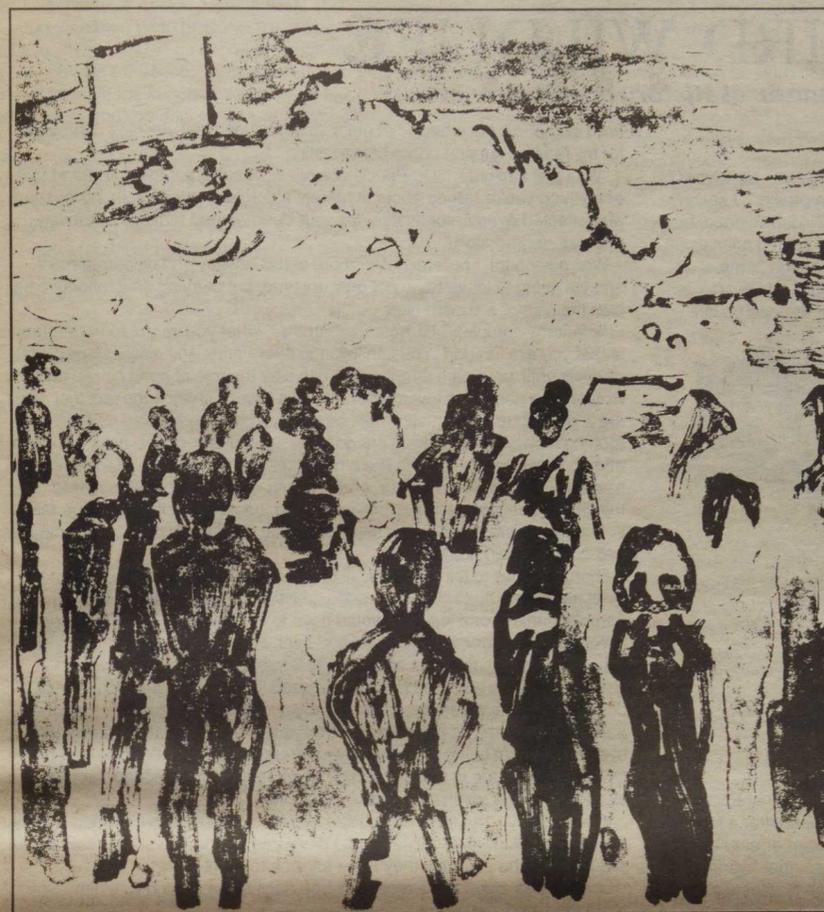
"Think they'll race?" I asked Phil, who was riding shotgun.

"That's what they do here," he said, fixing dark sunglasses on his pale face. Somehow, sunglasses were appropriate for this place, even at night. "Well, gentlemen, let's not just sit here," quipped Jeff from the back seat, as he loaded the enormous pockets of his Army trenchcoat with cans of six-dollar-a-case Meister Brau.

We threaded our way through the chrome and steel jungle, towards Pattison. Knots of teenagers—some cleancut, driving late-model Trans Ams their parents bought for them; some headbangers, wearing ripped concert t-shirts and bandannas; some motorheads, leaning over the engines of iron predators; and some pot-heads, their eyes bloodshot behind half-closed

lids—drank beer around the open trunks of gleaming beasts, smoked cigarettes while lounging on polished hoods, and played hacky sack in the areas between cars. Girls in leather miniskirts and guys in cutoff shirts appraised each other in passing. Hands grasping crumpled bills reached into darkened car windows and emerged palming small plastic bags. Heavy metal pulsed from four-speaker stereos, in time to the chug of powerful engines unaccustomed to running at a mere idle. Grizzled Harley veterans pawed female flesh half their age and sprawled across fire-breathing praying mantises. Bruce Springsteen meets Mad Max.

Pattison Avenue is a six-lane street running along two sides of JFK stadium. It's bordered on one side by the 90,000-seat stadium parking lot, and on the other by a 10-yard-wide grass strip sandwiched between it and one of the many warehouses located in the Philadelphia sports complex. JFK made brief history when the



Live-Aid concert was hosted there. This night, however, as every summer Friday and Saturday night since the mid-sixties, it was witness to events less tame, more volatile, than a mere 120,000 charitable rock fans.

The tradition is simply called "Front Street," after the street on which the illegal drag racing began. It spread to include not only Front, but also Pattison, Delaware Avenue and the Auto-mall. Despite the efforts of several mayors and countless police, the tradition refuses to die. It is as old as the first V-8 musclecars, as strong as every young Philadelphia man's obsession with horsepower, and as enduring as the venerable Detroit iron that reigns there.

"Jesus, will you listen to that engine," said Phil, shouldering his broad frame through the crowd gathered around two cars that sat in the street side-by-side, like twitchy Olympic printers waiting for the gun. A metallic gray Nova, twin carburetors jutting through its hood, sat challenging a lipstick-red '85 Corvette. The Nova's engine screamed, its rear wheels spun in place, and thick smoke engulfed the machines and spectators that crowded around them. The Vette sat idling, cool.

A beefy, brown-haired boy in a Vo-Tech Auto

Mechanics t-shirt waved back the line of people that crowded the quarter-mile strip. He pointed his right hand—the Nova's engine revved, the driver took a pull of his beer; left hand—the Vette growled low, its Fiberglas body rocked side-to-side from the torque. Both hands came back and the cars shot off the line, throwing back chunks of melted rubber and oily exhaust. The crowd closed in behind them. By the time the cars hit second gear, the Nova was a full length ahead.

"Bikes, bikes, gimme bikes," a teenaged bleach-blonde in a white stretch miniskirt, black fishnet stockings, and a "Party Naked" t-shirt screamed in my ear. She seemed on the edge of hysteria. She turned to Phil: "Hey, you got any papers?"

"Nah, fresh out," Phil answered. Jeff laughed. I started wondering what I was doing there.

"She must be winging her ass off," said Phil.

"Huh?"

"Crank, Bill."

I gave him a blank stare.

"She's on speed. You know, methamphetamine."

"Oh," I said.

The twin Kawasakies—red, white, and black land-based missiles—pulled up to the line.

"I bet two drinks on the left lane," said Jeff.

"You're on," said Phil.

The bikes leaped ahead, their riders leaning out over the handlebars to keep the front ends down, their engines yowling hysterically as they hurtled down the gray asphalt strip. Jeff's lane lost, and he drank. Their betting continued the rest of the night.

The sweet smell of burning sinssemelia wafted over from the parking lot. I turned and saw the blonde had found her papers. From behind me came the crash of a beer bottle shattering against the side of the warehouse. In the parking lot, a crowd formed around two drivers who had nearly collided, and now were pushing against each other, spurred on by the circle of people and the beer and the noise of screaming engines and squealing tires. Behind me another race went off, so close that I could feel the heat of the exhaust through the press of bodies around us.

This isn't real, I thought. We've stumbled onto the set of an MTV video, and all these sweating, drinking, swearing, drifting teenagers and sixties-throwbacks are extras. Any minute now, I thought, an effeminate, bearded man in a beret will come walking through the crowd yelling, "We need more smoke!" I looked for the cameras, but there were none.

The whole scene had the feeling of unreality. It could have sprung straight from the mind of a Hollywood whiz-kid. Sell a few thousand teenagers on fast cars, sex, drugs and loud music. Add a police department that, until a few years ago, went by the title of "Rizzo's Raiders." Blend with heavy doses of adolescent rebellion, frustration and catharsis. Put it in an asphalt oven on a hot summer night and let it cook. When it starts to burn, call in the dogs.

Our provisions of beer ran low, so we headed back to my Maverick, weaving in and out of moving cars and around parked ones. I turned to ask Jeff how much we had left, but he was gone.

"Shit, no!" said Phil, running after Jeff. A look of drunken determination on his face, Jeff was walking towards a girl in red Spandex tights, who was leaning over, talking to the driver of a black Camaro. Jeff tapped her on the shoulder and she spun around.

"Excuse me," Jeff slurred, "but if you keep bending over like that you're going to create a scene."

"He didn't mean it!" Phil screamed, as Jeff ducked a furious backhand blow. Phil grabbed him and hauled him across the parking lot.

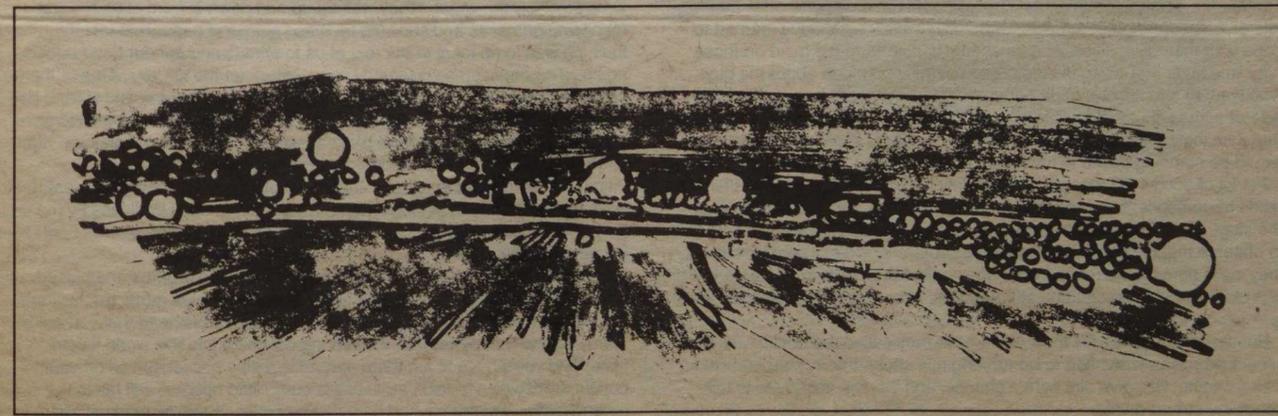
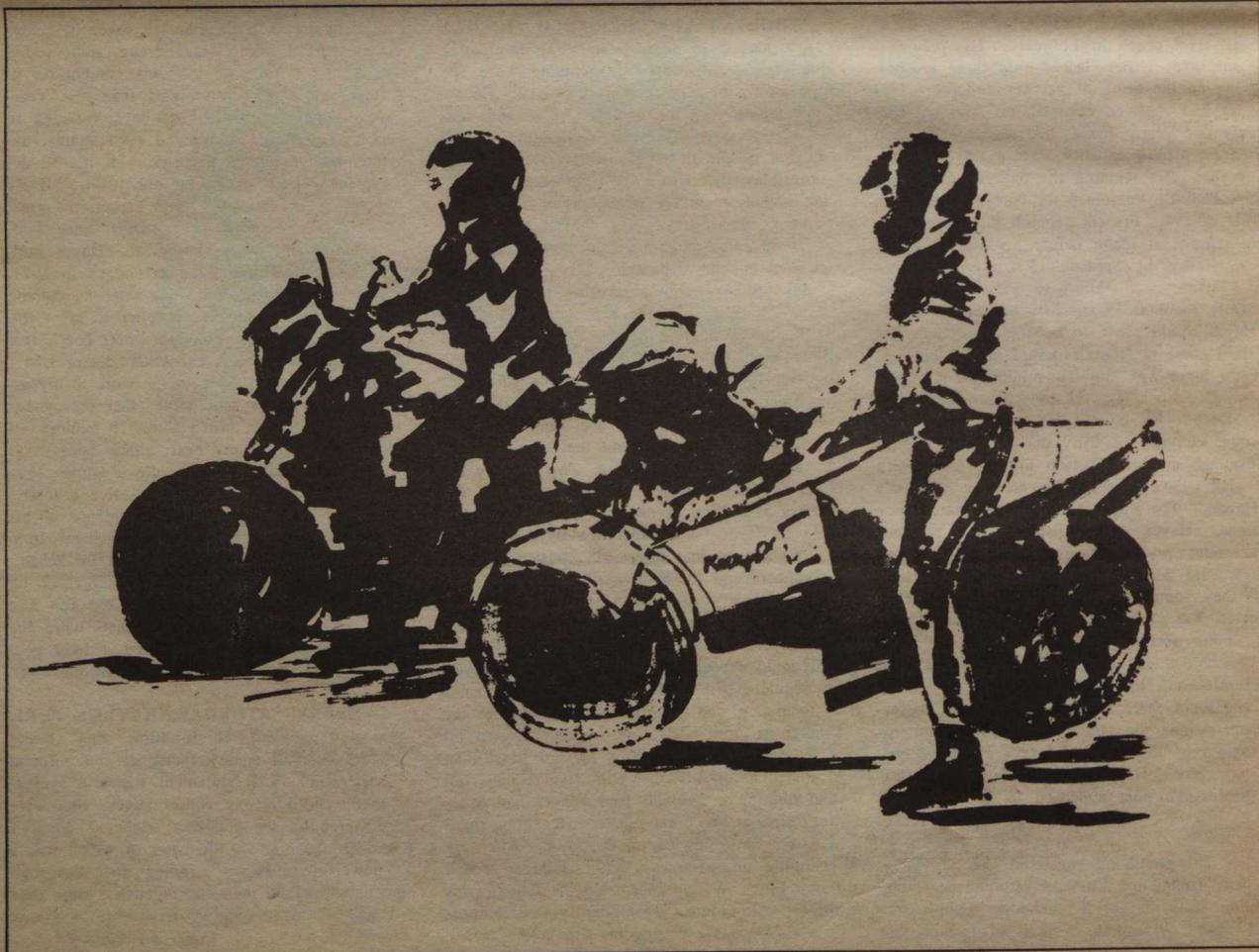
"What's your problem, asshole! I oughta run you over!" the driver screamed. I didn't know whether to laugh or run for cover.

"No problem, man, no problem, he's drunk. Forget it," said Phil, dragging Jeff all the way to the car.

"I was only trying to warn her," said Jeff. He straightened his lanky frame, looked me severely in the eye: "Next time, watch who I'm talking to."

The sports complex is served by the Fourth District Operations of the Philadelphia Police Department, and is commanded by Captain Campbell. His disclaimer of the weekend racing is practically a confession of impotence: "I will not help someone spread a story, true or otherwise, to attract more people to alleged drag racing activities." Campbell spoke in angry, clipped tones one Friday afternoon late in July. "... The more publicity something negative gets, the more people it attracts. I have no comment."

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WEIRD WILDLIFE

Unnatural History by Bill Bennett

JIM THE HYENA

Hey man, ain't it the truth: nobody but nobody loves a hyena. No wizard of animation has ever created a Harry the Hyena Saturday morning TV series. You won't find any high school football team called the Golden Hyenas, and you can go into a toy store and search among the rafts of stuffed animals until your eyes fall out and not one of those critters—even though some of them will be repulsive monsters like alligators and dinosaurs, which are gawdamn reptiles, for chrissake--will be a snugly little hyena dressed up in a



plaid vest and cute little hat with a feather on it.

I could go on, but you get my drift. We are utterly friendless characters. Even other hyenas don't like hyenas. I can be sitting at home after a long day of gorging myself on carrion, trying to relax with a concert or panel show or serious play on public television (you thought, of course, that hyenas, being hyenas and all, did their tubing out in front of the antics of dithering sitcom negroes or the Reverend Billy Jim Jeeter), and I hear the wife fetch a sigh, which means, of course, that she wants me to stop doing whatever I'm doing and engage in meaningful conversation, for which you may read her dreary recital of everyday grievances.

"I coulda had a career," she says. "I coulda married a dingo or aardwolf and had some standing in this community, but oh no, I had to take up with a hyena. I was shopping the other day, and this wombat, a perfect stranger, had the nerve to say, right to my face, 'Hey honey, sunk your teeth into any good fetid intestines lately?' I coulda died."

So I go to the kitchen, where maybe I can be alone and listen to a string quartet on the Walkman, and there's my daughter, she wants to have a heart-to-heart talk. Does she have to grow up to be a hyena? She's read in this magazine where a leading doctor claims he can cure hyenas, something about sawing off their hunchy shoulders and operating on their voice boxes, and then they can pass as dalmatians or whippets and even their best friends won't know.

So, I ask her, what's wrong with being a hyena? Didn't you learn anything from all those Marlo Thomas books I bought you?

Well, just like her mother, she sighs and rolls her eyes and says something about she should have known what to expect from a hyena. Folks, about then I felt really low, like someone had just blown their nose on me and was looking for somewhere to toss me away.

In the end, I did what any civilized creature does when his self image is shot full of holes and sinking fast. I signed up for some group therapy sessions, and one evening found myself sitting in a circle with a bunch of other misfit animals talking out my problems in an attempt to resolve them. I even contributed some good insights, like telling this mopey crocodile that hey, lots of loathsome, greedy reptiles with nasty yellow eyes have learned to cope with their disabilities, and he should concentrate his mind on those nifty little birds that clean his teeth and not think so much about the guys who want to turn him into a pair of shoes or an overnight bag for the porky wife of some scumbucket Third World potentate. I even suggested to a slug that if he took a few bucks and invested in a shell, a thousand Frenchmen would be standing in line to invite him to dinner.

Fat lot of good it did me. When it was my turn to speak, my fellow theropods blew raspberries and made fart noises in their armpits, and the slug--the slug! that slimy little gobblet of mobile snot!--had the overweening gall to observe that the commies might be gawdamn gawdless bastards, but they were right on the money when they called their enemies Hiterite hyenas of industrial sabotage and stuff like that, because, boy, a hyena--well, look at you, Carrion Face.

But then the facilitator--I think that's what they called the bucktoothed pencilneck who was supposed to be running this show--interrupted and said wait a minute, let's give Jim here a chance, and then he asked me to talk about my strong points.

Well, I said I vote in every election, even when I've got nothing to choose

from except a lot of wheyfaced geldings and superficial weenies. I provide for my family. I support public broadcasting. I--

"Wait just a minute," Dr. Pencilneck cries. "You've got to understand that everything you're talking about is merely a defense mechanism, purposeful and affected overcompensating for your deep-seated feelings of anxiety and self-degradation."

Wait a second! I hollered. Any more of this obliquy and disparagement, and I'm going to leave here not only uncured, but carrying an inferiority complex the size of a supertanker.

"Inferiority complex!" he hooted. "Brother, what you've got to understand is that you are inferior! You can listen to opera arias and discussions on the oil crisis until your ears atrophy, you can play the role of good citizen until the Rotary Club names an award after you, but it won't change the fact that you are a grotesque, ugly, malformed, beady-eyed, bunch-backed, carrion-rootling monster that looks like a dog that's been rear-ended once too often and sounds when he speaks like a homicidal maniac on acid. If evolution made any sense, you'd be out on the dump with those big blobby frog things you see in museum exhibits showing the world as it was before Mother Nature got her act together and turned that pile of ugly plants and animals into coal and petroleum."

Friends, I'd like to tell you I took all of this crap calmly. I'd like to tell you I went away from that little gab session satisfied in the knowledge that I was nature's number-one jerk and would have to live with that fact. But I didn't.

You see, if anyone in that crowd had ever watched a little public television instead of gaping at shows about randy lawyers and nodding their thick heads when the Reverend Billy Jim assured them that by sending him fifty dollars they'd have a front seat in the rollercoaster in the big Jesus theme park in the sky, they'd have learned from one of several nature shows that hyenas, far from being the cowardly skulkers and garbage gobblers of popular imagination, are in fact frightening and deadly beasts indeed, feared even by those shaggy, overrated sissies, the lions.

Yes, indeed. The slug, the facilitator and some wimpy owl worried that he might be coming down Alzheimer's I devoured on the spot. The rest I've got sitting out in the sun until they ripen enough to be fit to eat.

Like the late, great Jim Croce said, you don't mess around with Jim. Not more than a couple of times, at any rate.

CRAIG THE OPOSSUM

As most of you know, toward the end of creation week God made all of the animals and other stuff that creeps about the earth, from elephants right down to teeny critters you stomp on before you've bothered to learn their names. But I'm willing to bet that you didn't know that the very same day, He sent out an announcement telling us all to show up at His office early the next morning to check out this big bulletin board He had, where we'd find our job descriptions posted.

At the appointed time, there we all were, crowded around the bulletin board like a beast fair out of Barnum and Bailey. I'm sorry to say that in the pandemonium--billions and billions of beasts pushing and shoving to get ahead in line is bound to get a little frantic, isn't it?--a whole lot of smaller creatures went extinct before

they'd ever found a place for themselves in the Great Scheme of Things, except as history's first road kills.

Nature being nature, the big guys went first, and those of us near the end of the line got to watch their reactions afterwards. The lions and the tigers were probably the worst. They walked up and down in front of us making menacing grimaces and showing us these pieces of paper that told them their job was to rip most of the rest of us to shreds and eat our dead bodies, ho ho. The rhinoceros wasn't any prize, either, let me tell you. One of them came snorting up to this antelope a few places ahead of me and started hollering that, by golly, the Almighty wasn't just whistling "Dixie" when He gave him this humungous horn, and proceeded to knock Brother Antelope right off the Known Species list for keeps right on the spot.

I guess I don't have to tell you that those of us among the lesser creatures were feeling a little ambiguous about the whole creation business by the time our turn came around. Even so, I wasn't prepared for the news I got. My note read like this:

"Dear Mr./Ms. Opposum: Congratulations on being created and placed on the Great Chain of Being, albeit your place thereon is rather unexcitingly low. Go forth, be fruitful and multiply. Notice under this head that you are a marsupial, which means that your young will come into this world incomplete, and you'll have to lug them around in a little pocket sewed on your bodies, from which pocket most of the dumb little buggers will fall to the ground to die of exposure and be eaten by crows. Frankly, marsupialism is one of My early drafts for the reproduction process, and flawed in more ways



than I want to think about. Nonetheless, I find the whole concept rather amusing, and thought to preserve it in a few species. If you look at it the right way, this is kind of an honor, although the only creature whose marisupialoid makeup will become famous, and then only as the subject of endless cartoon gags, is the kangaroo who, being much bigger than you, got here first. If your condition depresses you (and being omniscient, I know it does), I suggest you form a support group, at which you and other biological malcontents can talk out your problems and find creative uses for your anger.

"As to what you are supposed to do during your long and boring tenure on earth: looking as you do like a large rat, you will never be very popular, except among hunters whose poor taste or lack of opportunity to bag better game allows them to believe that you are edible and that setting their dogs upon you constitutes sport. Sorry about that. On the other hand, you will be pleased to know (at least you'd better be, because it's all you're going to get) that your habit of feigning death when attacked--a matter more of cowardice than cleverness--will give birth to the phrase 'playing possum.'

"P.S.. Despite what you might hear from the ignorant or see in cartoons, you can't hang from branches by your tail, and unless you want to break your neck, I'd suggest you not try it. And one more thing: Except among school-teachers and other withered perfectionist cranks, the O at the beginning of your name is silent. If you're wondering why I bothered to put it there, don't. I just wanted to, the same way I wanted a silent P in 'pneumonia.'

"Have a nice day."
Wait a minute, I thought. My mind aspires to higher things. Don't I have feelings? Don't I dream of a day when my children's children will seek the benefits of higher education? Don't I yearn to read paperbacks the plain covers of which, unadorned by swastikas, skulls or shrieking women in negligees, portend serious reading inside? I determined to appeal my fate, and made my way to God's office.

At the desk outside I ran into a management trainee angel who--mighty rudely for an angel--told me that the bottom line was that all beast roles were engraved in stone, and even if they weren't, God wasn't in. He was resting. When I started to protest, the angel waggled a pair of limp-wristed hands and said, "Listen, buddy, you might as well know that the central law of the universe is this: Life isn't fair. If we make an exception for you, then--pardon the expression--all hell would break loose here. Your sparrows would show up asking for gaudy feathers or giant predatory talons, your mice would want death rays to use on cats, your amoebas would want to know why they couldn't have great trumpeting voices and grow to the size of Palm Beach condos. Take my advice. Learn to live with it."

I can't tell you how depressed I was. So depressed, in fact, that I didn't look where I was going when I crossed the road, and a car full of beer-sodden teenagers smashed me flat.

CHARLOTTE THE HIPPO

Honey, I gotta tell you, the old times were the best times. I grew up fat as a hippo, and why not? I could eat as much as I wanted (and on any given day I could knock off enough cabbage to keep the Germans supplied with sauerkraut for a century) and each and every blessed bit would show. Fat's where it's at, my old man used to say, swatting my continent-sized rump with his meaty paw and letting me know tonight would be the night we'd literally make the earth move. God, we were as happy as pigs in clover.

Things started to take a subtle turn for the worse when my old man said he wanted a TV--no big thing, he said, just a small set so he could watch re-runs of Cannon, a couple of Kate Smith specials or Elvis shaking his chubbies for his henna-haired fans in Vegas. Okay, let him have a TV, if that'll make him happy. Lord knows it'd occupy his spare time, of which he had quite a lot, since we hippos don't go in much for strenuous activities unless someone's dumped a couple dozen pecks of potatoes into our cage. I mean, the only jogging we do is inside our own skins, if you get my point.

Well, TV gets like candy. You put away a little bit, then you want some more. First thing you know, he's setting aside whole evenings so he won't miss Wheel of Fortune or L.A. Law, and all day Friday he's got this anticipatory gleam in his eye, because tonight's Vice Night. Every night before bedtime I tried the old turn-ons, like slicking myself up with mud or gaping my mouth so he could see my odd-angled teeth, but no go. He had to see some second-hand David Letterman show with Liberace on it. Three in the morning I come back downstairs and he's snoring like a steam engine, accompanied by the hissing static from his damn TV.

Worse was to come. It seems his beloved Miami Vice is sponsored by a fitness spa, the commercials for which feature Cher or Sheena Easton dressed up in whore suits and grunting with sexual ecstasy while they play with dumbelst and ride machines that look like they might have been made by Darth Vader's secret police. It didn't take me long to realize he liked the commercials a whole lot better than the show--he started coming up with crude hints about using our Christmas silage savings to get a VCR so he could tape them--and actually admired these muscle-bellied, sweating chickadees created by some whip-and-leather gink who'd seen too many Charles Atlas ads in the comics.

Where did that leave me, I ask you. The pats on the rump grew fewer and fewer, and when he called me Hippo-hips, he said it in a nasty tone of voice. At suppertime he'd get this poochy look of disapproval on his face if I took more than 18 helpings of hay, and even--the nerve!--started leaving articles next to my plate, articles with headlines on them like "Obesity Linked to Coronary Congestion" and "Inside Every Hippo There's a Gazelle Screaming to

Get Out." and "Cabbage: Smells like Ordure, Tastes Like Sewage, Kills without Warning."

Naturally, this newly hatched fitness freak wasn't even remotely interested in removing any lard from his waistline.

When I mentioned that little fact to him, he just smirked and started talking about Orson Wells and King Farouk. "Great lovers have great love handles," he said, and started switching channels on his TV 90 miles a minute, hoping he'd find that show where some slutpuppy gym teacher dances around to rock and roll music and barks at her victims like the Bitch of Belsen. I wanted to tell him it'd been a long time since I'd gotten any of his great loving, but I figured it wouldn't do me any good. For all of my girth, I might as well have been invisible.

In my misery, I took up binge eating. If I couldn't sleep, I'd go down to the kitchen and pig out on 30 or 40 loaves of bread. When I got depressed in the afternoon, I'd order up a dumpster of chocolate bars and finish them off in a half hour. Even for a hippo, I was getting overweight, and wouldn't have been surprised if I'd woke up one morning to find my skin had split and dumped my innards all over the bedroom floor.

Then one afternoon while I was in the kitchen bolting down soup like there was no tomorrow, my old man bellows from the living room to come in quick there's something I gotta see. It turns out he'd tuned in one of those shows where a halfwit in tortoiseshell specs interviews ordinary American women, letting them spill their innermost thoughts into a microphone while he jumps around babbling like a brain-scrambled social worker demanding more embarrassing secrets, and the dummies start boo-hooing and talking in slogans while the scene fades to an ad in which a soft-focus mother introduces her infant daughter to the joys of a douche that smells like pine trees.

"What in God's name are you watching now?" I asked, "and why do you imagine I give a rat's ass about the utopian motives of the Unwed Appalachian Mothers Jesus Collective, driven to urban violence by patriarchal, sexist power structure's refusal to arm them at the taxpayers' expense?"

"Calm down, Hippo-hips," he said. "What I want you to see'll be on right after these important messages."

Well, after I'd learned that a chocolate-flavored ersatz coffee made out of chaff and sugar was the latest thing in continental chic and that an equally ersatz sandwich meat consisting of compressed coconut oil and turkey scraps brought back those good old days when Grandma and Grandpa doddered about a depression-era kitchen talking in New England accents and that a child's best friend is a battery-operated bear that sings "Here Comes Santa Claus" over and over and over, the show came back on, and this time the Tortoiseshell Driver's guests were a pack of women that might have been stick figures brought to life.

They were, it turned out, victims of anorexia nervosa and bulimia, ailments which afflict women who've been brainwashed by a sexist, patriarchal power structure into believing they've got to be thin to be in, and thus either starve themselves to death or puke up everything they do eat. While they were blubbering about their wretched state and the host was bouncing up and down and squalling "Let's share this! Do you want to talk about it?" I was insensitive enough to tell my old man that these beanpoles struck me as a pretty sorry lot, who could improve their lives a hundred percent by canceling their subscriptions to Gilded Bimbo magazine and paying less attention to the submorinoic rot spewing from their TV sets, hint, hint.

"You've got it all wrong!" he bellowed. "These here starvelings oughta be your role models. Thanks to the miracle of daytime television, these apparent ninnies have attained the heroic statues of drunk drivers and child abusers just by telling the world--"

I honestly don't know where my poor old man's fuddled chain of thought might have led him, because at that very moment a stroke punched out his



lights for keeps and he toppled dead from his chair. By a cruel irony that couldn't help but amuse me, his snout hit his remote-control device and jerked to the channel over to a commercial in which Sheena Easton was rotating her pelvis and hollering like a hundred-dollar harlot determined that her all-night john should get his money's worth, all in behalf of a beer made mostly of celery water. He'd have loved it.

Since then, the TV hasn't been on much. Mostly I'll tune in late mornings and watch this fellow in a sweater and tennis shoes who points to me and says, "I like you just the way you are."

So do I, Fred. So do I. Flipside

two

by charles bukowski

Editor's Note: *Barfly*, the film about Charles Bukowski's life, starring Mickey Rourke, was recently released.

horseshoe hangover

forgot I had a dental appointment next day
drank until the early a.m..
to be awakened via telephone by the office
receptionist
with a reminder to be in the chair by
2 p.m.

got there on time
a mould was needed for a partial upper
bridge.

"open wide," said the dentist who then slid
this horseshoe effect
into
my mouth.

the horseshoe was loaded with a
stinking grey substance
which was pushed against my teeth and the
spaces of no teeth.

then
the dentist left the room.

don't gag, I thought, oh don't gag, don't
puke, don't even think of puking. . .

I looked out the window and there were
large dark trees out there
and the shade was great
and all of that
looked decent and gentle and
peaceful.

after what seemed a long time to
me
the dentist returned
a nice lady dentist
and she said, "open
wide!" and
yanked at the horseshoe
but
the grey substance had
hardened and nothing
gave.

I'm going to die with a foot in my mouth,
I thought

"open wider!" she said and I did and
she gave an extra good yank
and the horseshoe came out
with its grey
mould.

she left the room with
it.

well, I thought, I lived through that,
fooled them
again. . .

the dentist returned: "I'm not
satisfied with that mould, we are going to
have to
take another. . .open wide!"

she put the new horseshoe in my mouth
then left the room
only to come back for a
moment: "don't forget to
breathe. . ."

"oouul," I said.

I turned again to the large dark
tree, thinking, doesn't it ever
end?: all those things that happen
that one is
never ever ready
for?
no, said the tree, waving in a slight
wind, it never ends until it truly
ends. . .

but I'm going to puke! I
answered.

ah, waved the trees, ha ha
ha!

as far to the south the ocean
roared
and far to the south
the mountains didn't
care

off and on

at times I still consider coughing it up: gas pipe, 19th floor
window, 3 fifths of whiskey in 4 hours or
slamming it at 85 mph into a slab of
concrete.

my first thought of suicide came at age 13 and it has
been with me ever since
through all the botched failures:
sometimes just rather playing at it, little minor
rehearsals.
other times
really trying like hell to
kill myself.

yet, it's never totally intense, it's more like
considering whether to go to a movie or
not or whether to buy a new pair of
shoes.

actually, years go by and the suicidal thoughts
almost completely
abate.
then
suddenly
they return, like:
look here, baby, let's give it another
shot.

and when it returns it's fairly
strong
but not so much in the mind (as in the old
days) but strangely, suicide sits in little places
on the back of your neck or
at a spot just under the chin
or along the arms like the sleeves of a
sweater. . .
it used to hit the gut, now it's almost like
catching a
rash. . .

I will be driving along in my car with the radio
on and it will leap at me and I will smile at
it
remembering the old days
when those I knew thought that

my daring crazy acts stemmed from
bravery. . .

I will drive for several hours
up and down strange streets in
strange neighborhoods
at times
slowing down carefully
where children are playing in the
road.

I will park
go into cafes
drink coffee
read newspapers.
I will hear voices speaking of
ridiculous and dull
things.

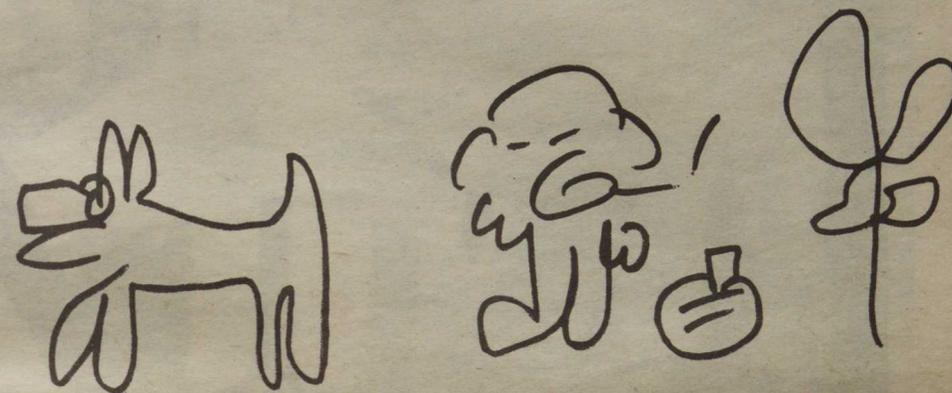
I will be back in the car
driving along
and at once
everything will lift:
we all live in the same world:
I will have to pay my gas bill, get a
set of new reading glasses, I will need a
new tire

left rear
and I think I've been using my neighbor's
garbage can.

it is fine to be normal again and
as I pull into the driveway
a large white buddha smiles at me
through the windshield of
evening.

I will brake, get out, close the car
door, centuries of sadness, gladness and
equilibrium will walk with me up to the door
as I put in the key
unlock it
walk into the place

once again having escaped the
inescapable, I will move toward the
kitchen cabinet for the
bottle
to celebrate
us
that
or
whatever there is
isn't,
will be,
won't
be--
like
now.



ON TURNING MY DOG OVER TO THE HUMANE SOCIETY AFTER HE BIT HIS TENTH CHILD

3

1
Whether it's due to my legendary,
no doubt mythical, Indian grandfather
or to some forgotten boyhood story,
probably western, of boy and dog,
all that long beastly hot day (dog day)
I stifle the urge or neglect the duty,
whichever you will,
to kill the poor beggar myself.

I won't.

(Picture me slitting his throat
with one deft stroke
of a glittering serrated bread knife.)

Picture, instead, him riding away
from the home he bit himself out of
all unsuspecting, eager and proud,
in the back seat of the family stationwagon
(chrome-studded suburban tumbler)
his dish, his chain, and a half-eaten box of
biscuits
all taken along as part of the lie.

2
But you won't come back,
And my little son,
whom you never bit--
who called you "gorg,"
pulled your tail stump,
rode your furry back,
jammed toys up your hole,
and loved you--
cried your name and searched the house
for a day or two
then forgot what I cannot
(but how long did they keep you--
without a prayer that anyone would adopt
a dog who bit ten children--
yapping, whining, waiting
for the master who agreed to turn you in
to the dog gassers?).

Dog,
you were too free a spirit
to live in a civilized community,
though once mascot to an entire college,
you proved at high noon--
hardly more than a pup then,
ringed by hundreds of cheering students--
you were no virgin;
you appeared as if by cue
to at least three classes
just as the black poodle
encountered Doctor Faust;
you muzzled up co-ed's skirts,
ate their cafeteria meals,
bathed in the showers of their dorms,
and won their greenaged love.

But you bit ten kids in the ass.

4

I'll not mourn your going--
though I'd rather another had sent you--
not because you filled my house with fleas,
barfed on the rug,
dug up my horseradish,
and pissed three trees to death,
nor because you chewed my books
and humped your cat in front of guests,
not even because you never obeyed
a single command once out of range
of my angry fists--

God
damned
dog

--but that you lacked good sense
to justify the faith or requite the love
which allowed you to sink your stupid fangs
into one soft child after another.

--Fred Lapisardi

Port Of Call

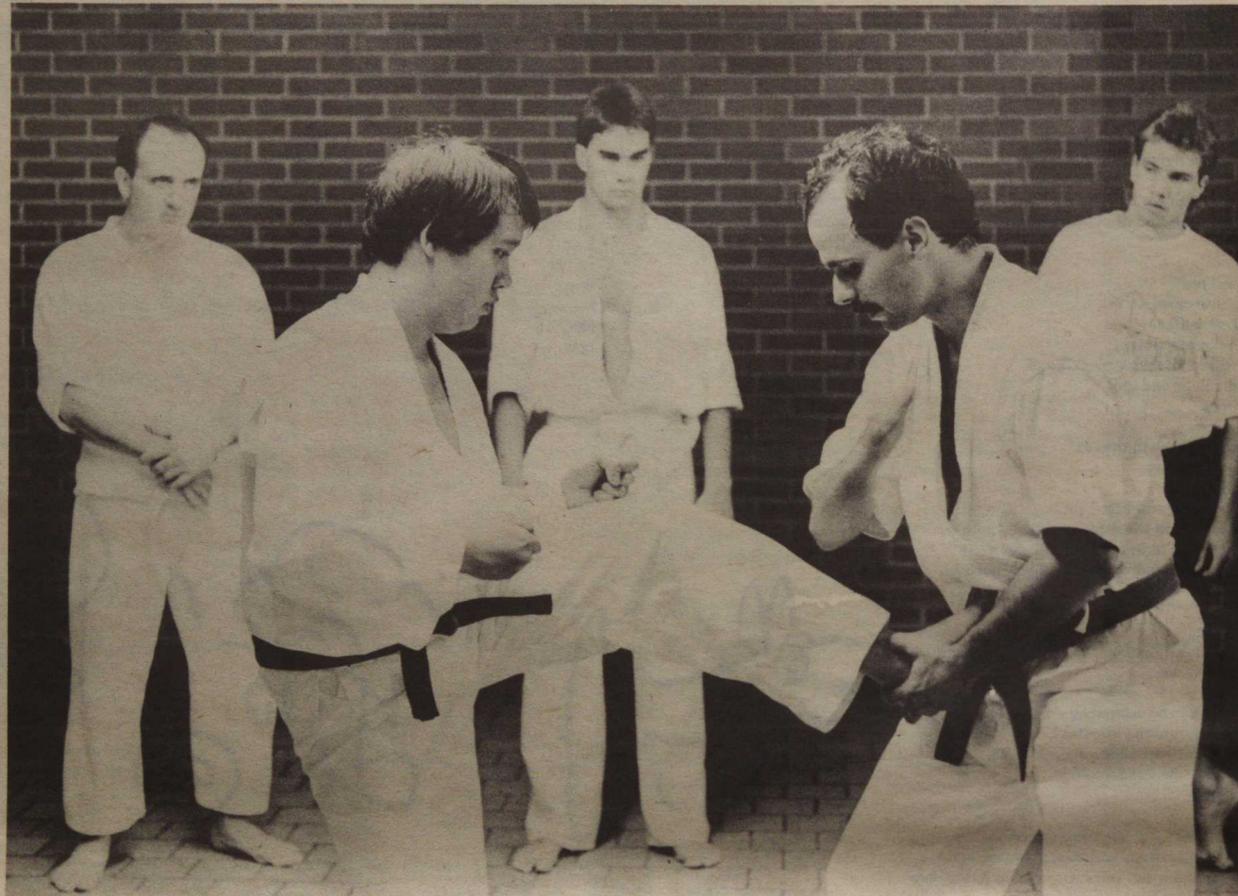
My dark, diminutive (5'1") wife
sits up in bed in a white
nightshirt as big as Al Hirt's
with a box of Ritz Crackers
and a can of Diet Pepsi.
Earlier tonight, a phone call
from her mother in St. Paul
brought back a memory my wife
wanted to share with me.

She was five or six years old.
The drapes had been taken down
to be washed and long blocks
of sunlight filled the house.
Her mother had moved the chairs
and couch away from the walls
in the front room and pushed
the old Electra vacuum cleaner
around in every corner.
Art Linkletter's House Party was on.

My wife remembers she was wearing
a sleeveless, cotton shift
with blue and pink seahorses
swimming across the chest.
She played in the middle of the floor
until The Secret Storm came on
and her mother lay down beside her.
"That was when Mr. Potato Head
was really a potato," my wife says.

Later, when I wake up, it's almost light.
My wife's eyes are wide open
and she's smiling. We're both lying
on our stomachs and say nothing.
She draws pictures on my back
with her fingers of people
with faces I can't recognize.

--George Swaney



KICKS

ARTICLE BY JAMIE COFFMAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY STAN BUNEVICH

Heian'

The scream echoed through the *dojo*, the karate training place. Startled, I looked around at the scattered group of people. They wore exotic white robes held up by cotton belts of varied colors. For a moment, the scene seemed comical: four dozen college students wearing cheap pajamas and battling invisible opponents in the lobby of the college dining hall. But the intensity in their eyes quickly showed me they were serious.

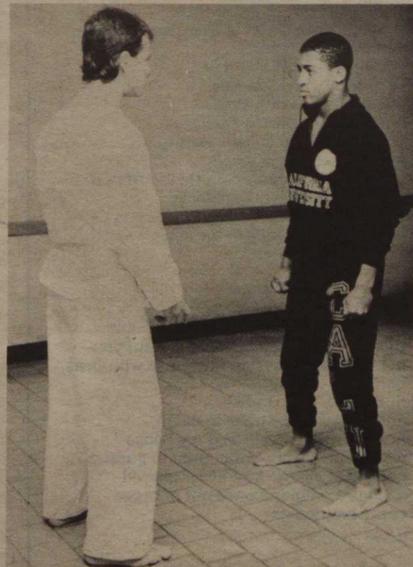
Except for a month of training some weeks before, this was my first experience with the martial arts. Besides me, 10 others, dressed in sweat pants and crude shirts, waited barefoot, under a dim light, for class to begin.

I felt out of place. I had to do something. Standing up, I began to awkwardly imitate the other students' stretching routine. A sleek, well-built man wearing a black belt walked near the advanced Karate students, the *Karatekas*. His composure was flawless. He was the ultimate, what I wanted to be.

"Line up," Bob said.
The group divided into two lines which formed a 90 degree angle. We lined up according to rank. Students of equal rank lined up by seniority. Then we kneeled, always waiting for the person on the right to kneel before we did. After fifteen seconds or so, pain began to surge through my legs and ankles. Bob gave the command *moskuso* and we closed our eyes to meditate. At first I felt ridiculous. I kept opening my eyes to see if everyone was still meditating. They were.

Finally, Bob gave the command *Yame*, return to natural stance. Right after that, he gave the command *rei*, bow.

We spread out across the floor to do a stretching routine. Sky Komalahiranya, one of the brown belts, led the exercise.



"*Ich, ni, san, shi, go, roku, shichi, hachi, ku, ju,*" he said, counting from one to 10 in Japanese. I wondered why they couldn't just speak in English. Just a way of training, I supposed.

The routine was grueling and most of the *karatekas* moaned and grunted as they stretched

muscles to new unfamiliar limits. To keep my mind off the pain, I concentrated on a cute girl just in front of me.

Half an hour later, the stretching exercises were over. I was exhausted, and we hadn't even started to learn *Karate*. I had erroneously assumed that I—"Mr. Coordination"—was going to breeze right through this.

Bob Bakos, the 34-year-old instructor, is a 3rd degree black belt in *Shotokan Karate*. His technique created in me a strong desire to master the discipline of the *Shotokan*. Bob, who has studied and taught *Karate* for nearly 20 years, is a true example of the *Shotokan Tiger*.

Our group was divided into two sections, the advanced students and the beginners. The other beginners and I stood next to Bob, trying to look casual as we waited for his instructions.

My bare feet were frozen against the granite floor; I began to jump for awhile to warm them up. We lined up in preparation for our lesson. Bob showed us various basic, but difficult, techniques that became only slightly easier after hours of practice.

The class ended and my heart was beating rapidly. My sweat-soaked shirt accentuated my thin frame, outlining each of my ribs. I padded with blackened feet to the bathroom to change, the breeze drying my sweat-soaked skin. When I got home, I fell into bed. When I woke up later I had little energy and my muscles ached.

The following Tuesday, class was held in another *dojo*, a wrestling gym. The room itself was smaller than the dining hall, but at least here we had mats. Before the usual pre-class routine, Bob told us that it was proper to bow at the entranceway of the door in honor of the *dojo*.

I loosened up awhile, trying to release my tensions. It was only the second class, but I was already more comfortable with the routine. I

felt less tired when we finished. I could feel my inner energy, as well as my physical energy, increasing. I decided that I had to have a *gi*, a training robe. I mentioned it to Bob, and he made a list of those who wanted a *gi*.

After about a month, the *gi's* came. It was amazing how confident I felt when I wore that cotton robe. Images of Chuck Norris and Bruce Lee danced in my brain. Actually, what I should have known was that I was the lowest rank in the class. It's not cool to show off what you don't have.

Some weeks later, it was time for the ranking test, when we could advance to a higher degree in our belts. The test consisted of basic techniques, *kata*, and sparring. We had already learned all of the basic techniques, and we usually practiced these routines with the advanced students at the beginning of class.

So far, we had learned down-block, outside forearm block, inside forearm block, knife hand block, up block, punching, snap kick, side snap kick, side stomp kick, side thrust kick, crescent kick, roundhouse kick, front stance, back stance and various sparring techniques.

We each practiced the *kata* that we were to take the test on. I was to perform the *Heian Shodan*—the easiest *kata*. It involved a number of blocks and kicks that didn't take long to learn.

We had some good workouts the last weeks before the test. I began to develop a deeper understanding of the art. At first, I just wanted to learn how to defend myself. But through instruction and practice I realized that self-defense was only one aspect of *Karate*.

The last class before the test, our workout was a mixture of basic techniques and *kata*. Bob worked out with Sky on some difficult techniques.

Every so often, part way through my *kata*, I would hear someone slam to mat, and I knew it was Sky. After I watched Sky be foot swept, pulled down, and flipped over several times, I would laugh and wonder what he was thinking. Then I tried to concentrate on my own reactions and *Heian Shodan*.

The class ended. I left and asked myself if I was ready. My mind was totally fixed on my *kata*. When I found myself back in my room, I realized I had walked the whole way without remembering a single thing.

Saturday

I woke up at 9:15 and jumped out of bed, thinking I was late for class. Dazed, I realized it was Saturday. After a light breakfast, I packed my *gi* in my sports bag, grabbed an umbrella and headed for Herron Hall where I would take the test. The rain was cold and slow, but the sound of it falling onto my umbrella was calming. Drops pattered as my thoughts gathered.

I arrived at the gym in Herron Hall. The hard wooden floor felt better on my feet than the granite in the dining hall. Looking at the basketball hoops, I remembered when I used to shoot some baskets in here. But I couldn't shake that feeling that I'd never been here before.



My perception was restored by the other *Karatekas* gathered on one side of the court. We stretched and stretched, consumed by thoughts of the test. Time passed, unnoticed.

Bob, Sky and Blanche, another Brown Belt, sat at a small table. I performed my basics well. Several moments later, I was called to do my *kata*. I rose and took position. With concentration, I exploded. I WAS Chuck Norris. I WAS Bruce Lee. Sweating, I sat down to await my final test: three attack sparring. Soon I was called again. This time the opponent wasn't invisible—he was real. We bowed and got into ready position. On the command *kumite*, I attacked. Three punches and a counter punch, back and forth. The sparring ended suddenly and my ferocity was gone.

As soon as the tests were complete, we gathered next to the table.

"Go take a shower and get dressed. We'll have the results for you when you get back," Bob said. I hurriedly threw my *gi* in my bag and dressed. When everyone returned, Bob motioned for us to gather around the table. He peered at us without expression.

Bob gave us each our rank. If I passed, I would be at eighth *kyu*, or first level in white belt. My impatience was suddenly gone when he announced my name.

"Jamie Coffman, eighth *kyu*." Flipside



SEX and the SINGLE CRITIC

ESSAY BY L.A. SMITH

*Sexual intercourse began
In nineteen sixty-three
(Which was rather late for me)
Between the end of the Chatterly ban
And the Beatles' first LP.*

*Up till then there'd only been
A sort of Bargaining,
A wrangle for a ring,
A shame that started at sixteen
And spread to everything.*

Philip Larkin
"Annus Mirabilis"
1974

During any discussion of literary criticism, I am reminded of a variation on an axiom: "Those who can, write; those who cannot become critics." While this witticism may not always ring true, it seems a foregone conclusion in the case of those critics who have been proven wrong in their indictments of so called "obscene" literature.

More often than not, such critics receive historical anonymity as a just reward for their narrowmindedness. Indeed, one can easily find in modern criticism a hundred refutations for every indictment, yet the original criticisms are nowhere to be found. An examination of the collective *faux pas* of these censors presents a seemingly insurmountable challenge to the faint-hearted scholar. Not wishing to be placed in such an odious category, I persevered in my quest for the worst of these censors. The result is no Holy Grail, but it may suffice as a sort of Impious Dixie Cup.

A logical beginning for any discussion of notorious literary censors is with perhaps the earliest proscription known to us, Plato's rather pedagogical view of the institution of censorship in "Book II" of the *Republic*. His characteristic belief that literature should be morally edifying is evidenced in the following passage, part of a dialogue between Socrates and Adeimantus:

Then the first thing will be to establish a censorship of writers of fiction, and let the censors permit any tale of fiction which is good, and reject the bad; and we will desire mothers and nurses to tell their children the authorized ones only. . . . The doings of Kronos, and the suffering which in turn his son inflicted upon him, even if they were true, ought certainly not be lightly told to young and thoughtless persons; if possible, they had better be buried in silence.

While Plato's protective intentions may have been most honorable, their application would have nullified nearly all the world's great literature. His staunch belief that literature, in order to be of value, must be true and must not promote false ideas leads one to imagine him in some ancient precursor of the Antiquarian Grill, grousing, "The only good writer is a didactic writer."

Plato's belief that literature has an obligation to provide a good example to a society's youth was probably the driving force behind the man who might well be considered the most notorious bad critic of all time. Indeed, rather than being relegated to the list of anonymous censors, Thomas Bowdler has transcended his expurgating colleagues and has been immortalized in the coinage of a somewhat derogatory verb, "bowdlerize." Yet, even this dubious distinction has not won for Bowdler the renown he no doubt believed he richly deserved. His legendary modification of Shakespeare's plays, published as *The Family Shakespeare* in 1818, is peculiarly legendary, for in a vast number of Shakespearean tomes published since the nineteenth century, Bowdler's work receives little if any attention. In fact, one might even say that he has been (Yes, I'm going to say it) "bowdlerized" from much of Shakespearean history and criticism.

When, on very rare occasion, his expurgated Shakespeare is mentioned, it is usually done so only to point out that Bowdler wasn't even very good at being a censor. Grose and Oxley point that shortcoming:

(he) published his Family Shakespeare, purged of all indecency and profanity—or so he thought; but the joke is that he did not himself understand all the indecent references, with the result that some very rude ones were left in. . . .

Thus, Bowdler emerges not only as one of the great bad critics of obscene literature, but also as their Rat-King, the ultimate image of narrowminded

criticism bent in the unseemly contortion of having his head up his ("hindparts"?).

While little ado is made of Bowdler in serious literary circles, much ado is made about one of his Victorian chums, Robert Buchanan. A follower of Sydney Dobell and member of the "Spasmodic School" of poets, Buchanan is best remembered not for his poetry, but for his diatribe against the Pre-Raphaelite poets, "The Fleshly School of Poetry" (1871). In his indictment, Buchanan attacked the Pre-Raphaelites (Rossetti and Swinburne, in particular) with a didactic sentimentalism unparalleled in literary criticism. Buchanan's complaint against Rossetti's work was the it "might be dangerous to society" by reason of its "inherent quality of animalism". He compounded his attack by creating an argument *ad hominum* against Rossetti, whom he referred to as:

a fleshy person, with nothing in particular to teach us. . . (a man) fleshy all over, from the roots of his hair to the tip of his toes. . . never spiritual, never tender; always self-conscious and aesthetic.

Buchanan's argument with the "art for art's sake" poets emerges as a particularly pretty page in the annals of literary criticism, but rather as a portrait of the evil that some men can do in the name of decency. Jerome Buckley, in his comprehensive study, *The Victorian Temper*, points out what is most obvious about Buchanan's indictment of the Pre-Raphaelites: that it is the product of "a mind itself diseased, obsessed with deep inhibitions, unnaturally familiar with a long tradition of scatological literature."

Perhaps the most fitting comment on Buchanan's position in literary history is that he was ridiculed in his own time by the dilettantish social critic and novelist, W.H. Mallock. In 1873, Mallock published his recipe, "How to Make a Spasmodic Poem like Mr. Robert Buchanan," which immediately displays the ease with which Buchanan's poetry can be dismissed. It reads:

Take ten verses full of star-dew, twenty-five verses full of the tides at night, fifteen of passion-pale proud women, . . . fifteen of aching solitude, and twenty of frost-silvered mountain peaks. . . .

Into these put the moon, with stars ad libitum; and sprinkle the whole over with broken panes of Grub-street garret window. . . . Then take and infinite yearning to be a poet, and a profound conviction that you never can be one, and try to stifle the latter. This you will not be able to do. The aim of the endeavor is to make the conviction restive. . . . Then put the two together into yourself; and the conviction will immediately begin to splutter, and disturb you. This you will mistake for the struggles of genius, and you will shortly after be thrown into the most violent convulsions.

As Mallock's mockery serves as a fitting epitaph for Buchanan's poetry, so does Buchanan's reconsideration of Rossetti's poetry in 1887 serve for his original indictment. In his "final and revised opinion," Buchanan asserted his belief that Rossetti had never been a fleshy poet at all, and that "those who assert that he loved (his) Art 'for its own sake' knew nothing of his method." Needless to say, it was too late for Buchanan to change his spots: "The Fleshly School of Poetry" had already won him a spot in the Bad Criticism Hall of Fame.

If it is true that much bad and indifferent criticism arises when a work is labelled "obscene," there can be no doubt that James Joyce's *Ulysses* spurred a great deal of just this kind of criticism. In fact, the number of critics—social and literary—who attacked Joyce's use of those infamous Anglo-Saxon monosyllables is quite remarkable. Among their number, I believe one of the worst to be Rebecca West, whose Freudian indictment of Joyce's use of "dirty words" defies her reputation as both an intellectual and a left-wing writer. (Allow me at this point to make a confession: I deplore Freudian analysis and consider its application as a form of literary criticism about as useful as a pecker on a priest.)

West raises her objections to Joyce's obscenity by stating that it is symptomatic of what she calls:

Mr. Joyce's habit of using his writing as a means of gratifying certain compulsions under which he labors without making the first effort towards lifting them over the threshold that divides life from art.

Adding insult to injury, West goes on to state her belief that some artist in some context might find it necessary to use these Anglo-Saxon monosyllables, but that Joyce is not that artist and that "his use of obscene words is altogether outside the esthetic process is proven by that spurt of satisfaction. . . which marks the pages whenever he uses them."

One can but hope that Miss West had her tongue planted firmly in her cheek when she wrote this passage, but further reading reveals the horrible truth: She is serious! She asserts that Joyce's use of these expletives is simply rooted in his subconscious desire to rebel against the repressive influences of his childhood. Her denial of Joyce's conscious decision to use what he obviously knew were objectionable words is in effect a denial of his role as a creative artist. My argument with West is my argument with all Freudian critics: Unless Joyce was writing *Ulysses* in his sleep, he knew what he was doing, and his subconscious had very little to do with his creation of art.

Equally as notorious as *Ulysses* for stirring bad and indifferent criticism is D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover*. Though arguments can certainly be made that it is not Lawrence's best, there can be no question that it is his most controversial. Admittedly, I had not wanted to sink to the depths of Bible-thumping, flag-waving social reactionaries; however, my senses of immoral outrage and humor impel me to include one such critic in this study: John Benedict. Perhaps the most outrageous bad criticism of *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, his indictment appeared as a reaction to the lifting of the U.S. Postal Service's ban of the book. In his article, Benedict declares that the publication of the unexpurgated version of the then 31-year-old novel was one of a series of actions "undertaken by hidden forces whose identity has been screened from the victimized public."

Yes, it's true; Benedict wrote in 1960 from the viewpoint of an unshaken witch hunter. In addition to indicting the book itself, he also provided "incontrovertable" evidence of the Communist conspiracy created by the former Librarian of Congress Archibald MacLeish and Mark Schorer and Alfred Kazin. MacLeish, who prefaced the Grove edition of *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, had, according to Benedict, 46 Communist-front citations under his name in Rosalie M. Gordon's book *Nine Men Against America*.

Schorer, whose introduction also appeared in the Grove edition, was "listed as having signed an open letter for the Communist-front National Federation for Constitutional Liberties." Kazin, whose expert testimony was undoubtedly influential, was the child of immigrant Jews, a distinction which needed no substantiation to establish Communist sympathies.

Not content with committing libel against these venerable gentlemen, Benedict also questioned the methods and motives of Judge Frederick van Pely Bryan, who lifted the ban. Benedict takes exception to twelve paragraphs in which Judge Bryan "resorts to personal literary criticism to support his reasoning that *Chatterly* should be published." Benedict also exposes Judge Bryan's obvious Communist sympathies by pointing out that he served as personal counsel for H. Strube Hensel who "was accused of being the 'mastermind' behind the smear of the McCarthy Committee."

"Wow! Who'd 'a' think it possible in a great country like ours?!" Needless to say, Benedict's ravings eventually come around to his opinion of *Lady Chatterly's Lover* and the impact of its publication on society. He writes:

. . . the effects of such a book. . . on the non-critical, but nevertheless sensitive and naturally curious youth are incalculable. Lack of widespread resistance to such salacious works is a major victory in the hidden forces' campaign to destroy Christianity and enslave all humanity.

Need I say more?

At this point, I believe my study has encompassed an arc of bad critical attitudes toward "obscene" literature. However lighthearted my approach may have seemed, I cannot fully express my own abhorrence of the kinds of blind censorship I have presented. Were all books to be purged of the obscenities seen by these and other critics, our literature would be non-existent, our libraries as small as Rosebud matchboxes. More to the point, their contents would most probably not be worth reading, for there is truth in Havelock Ellis's observation that "without an element of the obscene there can be no true and deep aesthetic or moral conception of life." Flipside

SOLITARY PRINCESS

Aunt Ruth used to paint
her toenails bright red,
then sit out on the front steps
lanquidly sipping a Coke.

Attired in flimsy, flowered dresses,
V necked splendor flaunting full bosomed
bounty, she viewed the world passing by
through thickly lashed black eyes.

Grandma called her poor white trash
who never did a lick of work but
wasted her days reading Harlequin Romances
and brushing her raven wing hair.

I always imagined she was a gypsy princess,
especially when she whirled barefoot
down the sidewalk and Uncle Clarence
swept her into his welcoming arms.

--Linda Kissler

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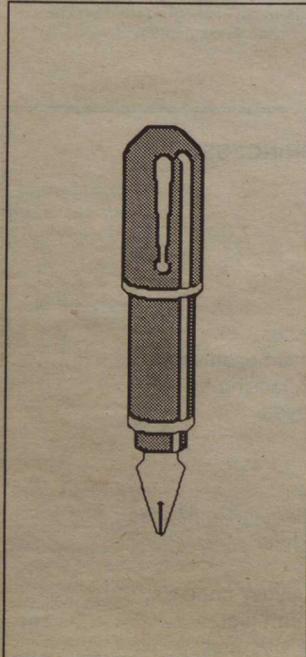
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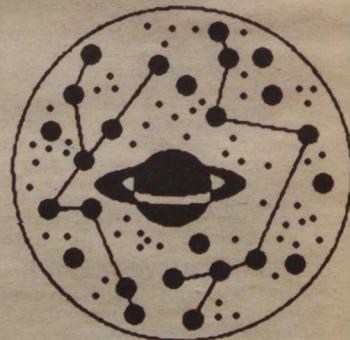
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STORM

WARNIN'

ARTICLE
BY ARTHUR WINFIELD KNIGHT
PHOTOGRAPHY
BY JACK GORDON

George tucks his Smith&Wesson snub-nosed .38 pistol beneath his shirt as we approach the site of the Klan Rally. Ready for anything. I've seen *Storm Warning* with Ronald Reagan and Doris Day and I've read articles about the Ku Klux Klan, but I don't know what to expect. I never trust media reporting.

A Klansman wearing his robe and dark glasses stands at the entrance to the field where the rally is being held. It's a sultry Saturday night in southwestern Pennsylvania, and the yokels here haven't had this much fun since they went to their last square dance.

The meeting is being held on Roger Sapp's farm. Kit thinks his name is appropriate for a Grand Dragon of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

Everyone here should love her, though. She's five feet tall, blonde and fragile-looking--no one will mistake her for an NAACP member or a Jew.

George also fits in. He's over six feet tall, red-faced, loud and weighs 280 pounds. He looks like he's spent his life doing manual labor, and he could probably knock most people out with one punch. That's why we brought him along.

Sapp's Klavern isn't directly affiliated with the national Klan, but Sapp is obviously sympathetic to other Klanspeople. We learn there's even a Klanslady of the Month, but Mrs. Darline Carver, who's a Great Kaliff and a "go-getter" according



to the Klan paper, isn't pictured in the nude, like other centerfolds. There are probably two dozen men and two women suited up in their sheets, their faces visible. They aren't afraid to be identified since they have a sense of mission, of moral purpose. (They don't smoke marijuana in Muskogee.) Next week they'll probably be boycotting the nearest 7-11 because of all the magazines with "dirty" pictures on the shelves.

Klan members dislike "niggers," Jews, Communists and "queers," and as we discovered, most of them belong to the National Rifle Association, although the reverse corollary isn't necessarily true; we assume that most National Rifle Association members don't belong to the Klan, but who knows? Klansmen are friendly when we ask them questions about their garb, their organization, although they're secretive about how many members they have. Mr. Sapp, who's needed to shave for two days, smiles when he hands Kit some membership applications.

If anyone asks why I want to know something, I've resolved to tell the truth--I'm a writer and a college professor--but no one has asked. So far. Obviously, these people don't have inquiring minds.

George and I are drinking Budweiser in cans--that's about as American as you can get. Klansmen consider them-



selves super-patriots and super-Christians; they must swear that they believe in the Christian Faith when they apply for membership. When one of the Klan members sees us drinking, he politely informs us that no drinking is allowed on the premises. People attending the rally are also forbidden to use drugs or profanity--these guys wear white sheets for a reason. No guns allowed, either, but George says, "What they don't know won't hurt them."

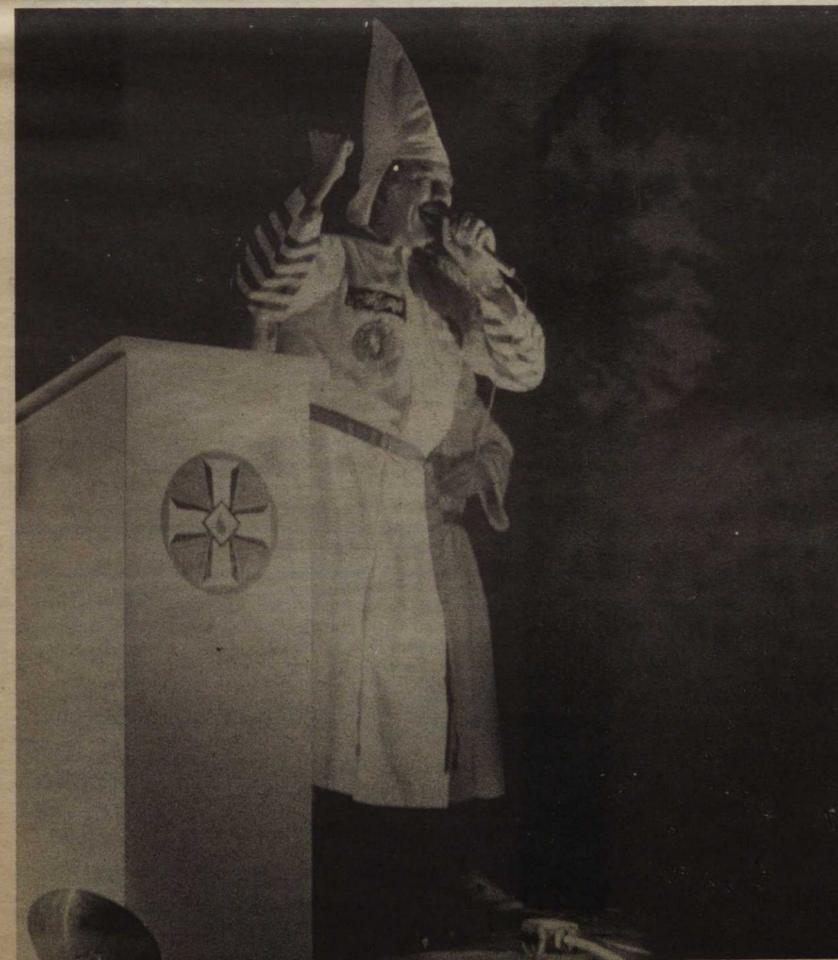
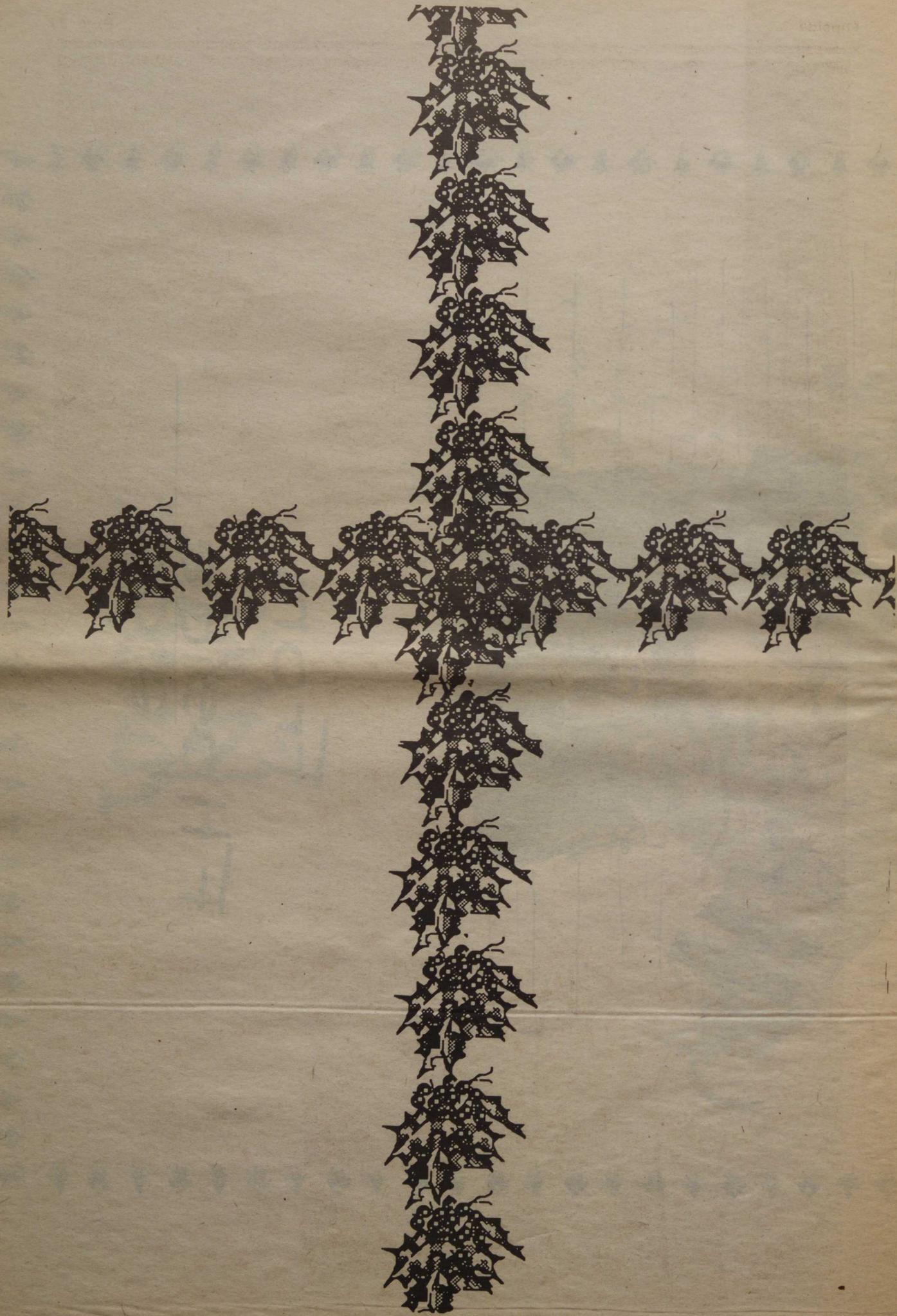
A woman from WASP radio station in Brownsville asks me if I'd like to be interviewed. I tell her I don't want to talk on the air but, off the record, I say, "I've



MOOSE
QUESTIONS



From
Flipside
side



come because I think writers and sociologists and media people have an obligation to find out what an organization like this is really all about. We should try to capture the reality of the event, its ambience, not just reporting catch phrases that seem significant, but that are usually a lot of sound and fury signifying. . . what? How does it feel to be standing here? What, really, is going on?" She asks if I'd say that on the air, but I tell her most people in this area-who'd listen to us wouldn't be able to distinguish between someone coming here out of curiosity and someone coming here because he believes in what the Klan represents.

The average age of the people here is probably around 40; they've been alive long enough to know they are losers. I suppose hating "niggers" and Jews makes them feel more comfortable with who they are. One fat kid in his late teens leans against his grandpap's pickup and says, "I'm going to get me a good job at the local feed store for four-fifty an hour," and he seems genuinely pleased with himself.

Media people focus their cameras on a man and a woman who are wearing Nazi t-shirts, although one of the members says Klanspeople aren't friendly towards Nazis. One should never forget that the Klan members consider themselves the saviors of "Communist" America. They may be disenfranchised los-

ers, but they are losers who want to give the country back to "the people." Willie Nelson could write a song about them.

The rally was scheduled to begin at seven, but it's almost nine when the speeches actually begin. The Klan predicted a turnout of 1000 people, and there are about 250 present, so perhaps they've waited for more people to arrive.

Most of the speakers introduce themselves by saying something like this: "My name is Farmer Alfalfa, and I'm here to tell you I don't like niggers." Almost all of the speakers have a cigar clenched between their teeth and each time the speaker tells the crowd how proud he is to be white, the crowd responds by yelling, "White on."

Three mugs and a sun visor with the Klan insignia are raffled off and, for a moment, one can picture these men and women sitting in the front pews of their local churches tomorrow morning.

It rained heavily during the late afternoon, so people attending the rally had to park along the edge of the Smithfield-Masontown Road, rather than pull into the field. Maybe that hurt the attendance, but I think a lot of people, even blatant bigots, are afraid to be seen here.

When it's time to light the 30-foot cross that's set up in the center of the field, Klan members form a circle around it; the new members will be sworn in here. The cross is wrapped in pink insulation and has been doused in kerosene, but, try as they might, only the bottom couple of feet on the cross catch fire. Their grand finale fizzles out.

As Kit, George and I move down the hill toward the road, Kit says, "I don't think the blacks and Jews have much to worry about." I feel as if I've witnessed a scene from a Three Stooges' movie, rather than one from *Birth of A Nation*.

I've told one reporter I don't think Klan members are as dangerous as many of the right wing religious groups that are headed by people like Jerry Falwell or Bob Jones because these groups are more sophisticated; they know how to use the media. Guaranteed, Jerry Falwell would get his cross lit if

he had to bring Jesus back to do it.

I take a last look at the cross, "where Christian patriots unite," silhouetted against the burnished moon, then we hurry up the road to our car. We want to get out of here. **Flipside**



FOLLOWING THE WITCH

Last night, I followed a witch.
She led me through silver darkness,
Down the twisting black back of a stone serpent,
Past faces of fire that flickered in shadowed crevices.
I followed her through a strange night
Haunted by singular creatures, as
The old dead world of legend washed over another world
No less dark.

She was a tiny witch floating on black robes
Whose wheeling stars and
Slash of bloody new moon
Heaved as she moved.
In an unnatural undulation of heavens,
And hypnotized me.

The witch chanted.
I saw a service station become a great squatting toad
That slowly blinked its yellow eyes
And lifted its vaporous pebbled head.
She waved her tiny arms.
A sycamore turned its bare limbs into sails,
Tore loose from its moorings and
Wafted off like black smoke into the milky night,
Where another moon grinned overhead.

Ignoring me, bones of the dead scurried
Over perfect geometrical fields.
Fanged demons, beasts that drank the blood of babies
And cats that laughed in giddy dry cackles
Rose up in the dark.
Princesses and warriors collected
Jewels in human skulls.

The witch clove the chill suspension of night.
Cold she didn't feel in her wild rush cut me.
She paused to demand tribute
At ancient houses uprooted
From Kansas cornfields and English countrysides
And set down, rebuilt, on silent black cul-de-sacs.

Pain sagged my legs,
But the witch drew me on,
And I followed, terrified in the certainty
That what I saw I would never see again,
That the witch would crease my memory
With my own dread, my own joy, my own past
And what future she would allow me to have.

When she had collected so much
From those happy to give
That she could not carry it,
The witch slumped and
Ordered me to lift her.

Despite the ache and the fear and the old sorrow,
I gathered her in my arms and put her on my shoulder.
The soft brim of her black hat brushed my cheek, and
Her cape dangled in my eyes

I carried her, feeling her blood beat in my
Body like a fever,
Hearing her speak in a voice she
Had stolen from my throat.

'It's time for the years to begin,' she said.
'The years start tonight.'

She told me, 'Witches don't have parents.
They birth themselves.'

Yet, ten years before, less one day,
A hump-backed priest performed an incantation
From an altar
And wed me to the mother of the witch.

But we don't live together anymore.

--Alan Natali

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Arriba! Ultima

Not Henry Morgan
not even Captain Kidd,
better deserved
the epithet you shared.
Pirates, indeed,
who stole
so many bases,
robbed of hits
and captured hearts.
Extraordinary corsair! who
led baseball's
skull and cross-bone crew
in sinking foes--
why even giants
walked the plank
for you.

SAN JUAN 1973

Shop windows, souvenir stands, restaurant walls
Display your portrait or your photograph--
The light and silent laughter of your smile,
Sheer confidence and rare humility.
And we regard the numeral "21"
You gave a high and rare excitement to,
And those bold letters there across your chest
Proclaim in fact and metaphor
What you uniquely were.

And yet despite poised bat and uniform
There's something all too static and too posed:
Icon of hero and saint to these your people,
Reduced to fixed and silent countenance.
Still, paper and painted likeness can evoke
For memories eye a host of images
(Iridescent in the brilliance which you lend them)
That from stasis release,
From repose deliver you.

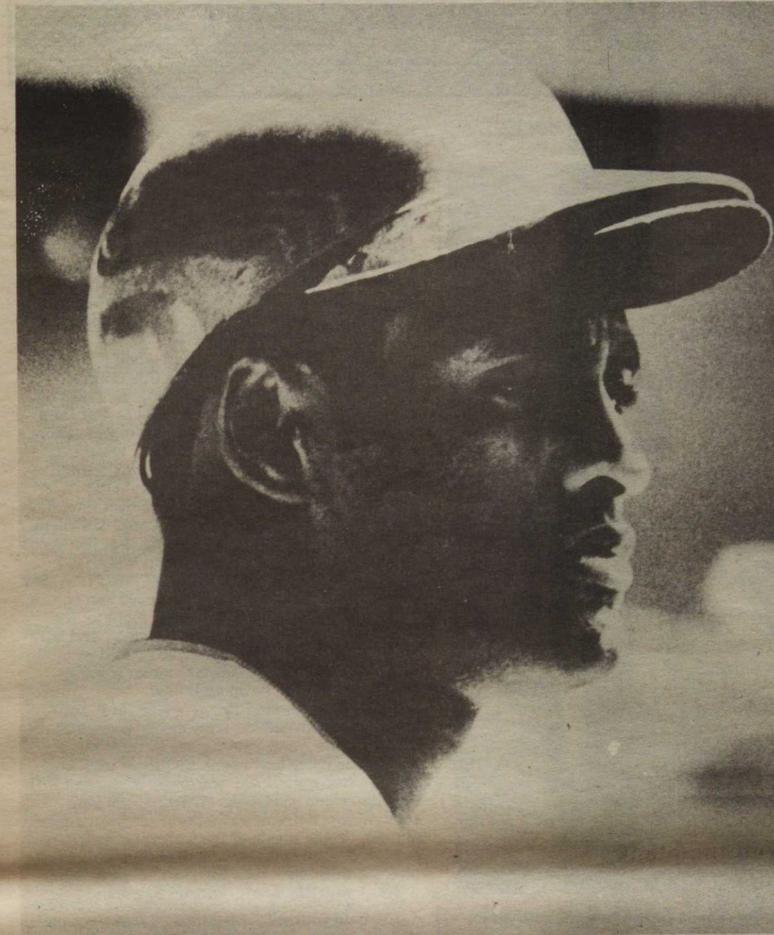
On that interior landscape of the mind,
Where everywhere and all the days and ways
We've ever been are always here and now,
Forbes Field, exact in each detail, endures,
Still resonates tumultuous shouts and cheers--
Wake of your exploits, peerless buccaneer,
The volume of that clamor always swelled
By cries of one forever relishing

Among youth's perfect joys
An athlete's skill.

Again we live the graceful pirouette,
That deftly carried you just out of range
Of a pitcher's cutlass, fastball high and tight;
And all those lunging, slashing drives--
Eighteen year long cannonade against
Moats and forts of distant warning tracks and walls;
The flintlock arm that gunned down flying feet
That dared to claim your pirate's right to steal;
The body bowed and backward glancing slide--
Swashbucklings of a sort
Beyond a Fairbanks' daring.

Like matador's or dancer's grace and skill,
Your prowess existed phoenix-like within
The fierce immediacy of body's motion
The luminous moments exercise of will.
No artifact remains.
No rendering independent of yourself.
Denied such permanence as sculptor's stone
You'll live at least until your last fan dies--
Until that last mind's
Last replay is shown.

Too soon thereafter hero's certain fate:
Aspiring schoolboys who can only gaze
At lithographs of one their fathers praise.

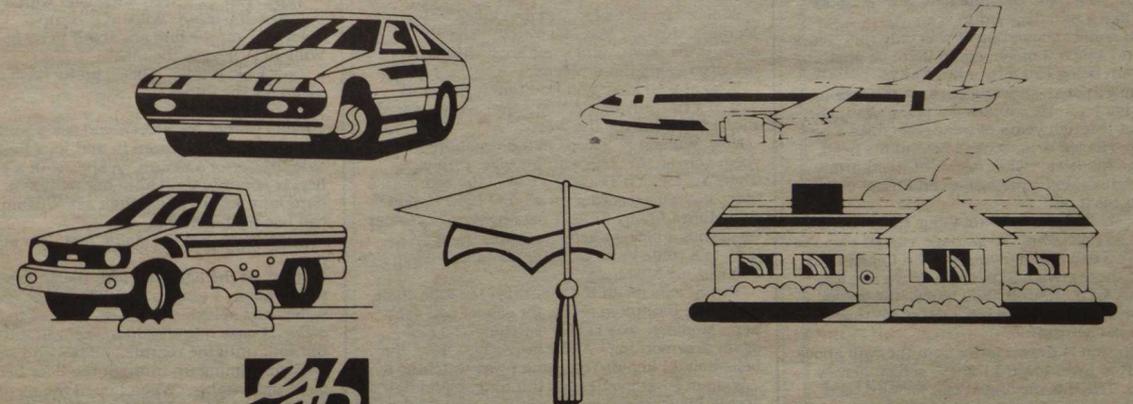


CARIBBEAN CATAFALQUE

You sailed a sky, blue mirror of
The sea those earlier corsairs ploughed,
Until your airborne galleon foundered
On hidden reefs and shoals of cloud.

Strange pirate to carry under ocean
No treasure of ill-gotten gain,
But freighted cargo you designed
For surcease of another's pain.

We Like To Say "Yes" To Loans



 **Gallatin Bank**

TEROR BY NIGHT

ARTICLE BY GEORGE SWANNEY



"Things either are what they appear to be; or they neither are, nor appear to be; or they are, and do not appear to be; or they are not, and yet appear to be."

-Epictetus

Pope John Paul II unclasps his ivory hands and reaches out for you. A faint smile of patriarchal approval crosses his lips, and his deep set liquid blues twinkle in a mild bemusement that almost makes you blush. To his left, the Madonna raises her hands in a yellowish shaft of light. Her features are wan and waxy; her willow neck curves up into an oval expression of hollow eyed nullity. A neon band of white light hovers above her veil like a Star Trek brain scan.

"THEM really spooked me. I was only nine years old when I saw it. I mean, could there be anything worse than being eaten by a huge ant?"

William P. Venar Jr. leans back on the sofa and crosses his legs. He's wearing a plaid, flannel shirt that through years of wear resembles a pajama top. His left arm, cocked behind his head, massages his neck, while his right hand firmly grasps the pointed corner of an end table. He's ready for blast off.

"Most sci-fi flicks are anything but scary. They're so ridiculous. A garbage can lid on a string. You call that a flying saucer! I can't imagine what these guys had in mind--guys like Ed Wood and Art J. Nelson. You know, the greats! I often wonder to myself, what's the point they're trying to get across?"

My attention is drawn away from the wall above William P's head toward the TV. screen across the room. THEM is moving at fast forward, and some ants are quickly eating what looks like Cleveland. The TV. is on the middle shelf of an "entertainment center," which also contains a turntable, stereo speakers, record albums, VHS cassettes, and a seven volume edition of Gibbons' Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. The face of a wooden Christ, nailed to a cross on the green

wall above the center, points upward with an expression of unbearable torture, but I think his eyes are closed.

"Here's the part that spooked me."

William P. picks up a remote control from the coffee table and thumbs a button. THEM slows to normal speed and the sound track comes alive with screeching sci-fi music and the sounds of people who don't want to be eaten. Because William P. is a little hard of hearing ("There's wax in my ears the size of golf balls"), the volume is set at teeth gnashing level. I never knew ants to be so noisy. Or hungry.

"My dad took me and my kid sister to the drive-in to see this," William P. shouts above the ants. "It was a hot summer night. Everything was fine until we got home and I was in bed with the lights out. We lived in the middle of nowhere and there was an abandoned strip mine beside our house. I could see all these bulldozers and broken down cranes through my window. Well, you can imagine how they looked in the moonlight!"

William P. leans forward and takes a slurp of foaming, Instant Maxwell House. The ant sounds die down, and some good citizen types are discussing the problem.

"I slept with Mom and Dad that night, and THEM's the only movie that's ever really scared me. It still gives me the creeps."

Now William P. sleeps in a downstairs bedroom across the hall with his wife, Penny. There's a 19 inch TV. at the foot of the bed, with a video cassette recorder on a table right beside it. Sometimes Penny finds it necessary to cover her head with a pillow when she wakes up at 4:00 a.m. to a white beam from the TV. and William P.'s bed rattling hysterics.

"Penny tells me in the mornings the kids come out of the bathroom ready for school and ask her, 'Mommy, was Daddy watching The Blob again this morning?' And Penny says, 'How the hell should I know? You think I was watching it?'"

William P. smooths his thinning, blond hair across his forehead with careful fingers, and explodes in a belly laugh of seismic proportions. John Paul II looks down benignly from the wall. The Maxwell House is still foaming, and the ants are still coming.

I have finally met someone who has more holes in his socks than I have.

"Art. J. Nelson held takes longer than Ed Wood ever dreamed possible."

William P. removes his uppers and deposits them in the left breast pocket of his shirt. Penny brings each of us a paper towel with three rock-shaped pieces of Weaver chicken. After she leaves the room I lift my towel by the ends and set my dinner on the coffee table, waiting to see if it moves. William G. picks at his bones and discusses *The Creeping Terror*.

"There's one scene at the end when the hero--I think that's what he is--enters this cramped little space ship and starts beating hell out of the control board. The scene must last at least five minutes and the camera never moves. There's no cuts, no nothing."

"Static camera," I interject, watching a thigh twitch.

"Yeah, right. There's some voice-over narration like in Ed Wood, but not in this scene. It's silent except for the steam pipes hissing that the hero's destroying, and the clang clang... Willy, GET DOWN HERE AND TAKE THIS TAPE OUT!" A few minutes later William P.'s 16 year old son comes down the stairs and crosses the room to the VCR. He's blond, blue-eyed, barefoot, and bare-chested. He's wearing tighter 501's and his stomach is as smooth and hairless as an ironing board. He used to be an altar boy.

"Find *The Creeping Terror*," William P. commands between bites. Willy ejects them and returns it to its case. He carries it three steps across the room and opens the doors on a large antique wardrobe. The wardrobe is stocked with over 250 video cassettes. Willy pauses long enough to glance at a computer read out sheet pinned to the inside of the wardrobe door, whispers "K Q 13"--or something like that--and starts plowing through tapes for *The Creeping Terror*. "Want your chicken?" William P. asks.

"No, help yourself," I tell him. "I had a couple green burritos at SweetPeas on my way over."

William P. gingerly places his paper towel of bones on the coffee table, drains his cup, then slowly plucks my chicken, piece by piece, from my towel. Willy finds *The Creeping Terror* and pops it in the recorder.

"Get us some coffee, will ya, Willy?"

Willy straightens from his crouch and walks over to the sofa. When he leans over to pick up our cups, he bends with such a jerk that the St. Stephen medal around his neck begins to spin like a wind chime. He carries our cups into the kitchen like his feet have been sunburned.

"Here's where the Terror crashes a dance hall and starts eating people."

William P. slows the tape to normal and together we watch the Terror, who looks like a discarded Christmas tree brought to life and going berserk, devour one dance hall patron after another.

"Have you ever seen a monster with a mouth between its legs?" William P. erupts. I think back over my life and am about to respond when William P. freezes the tape.

"Now look at this. This is pretty risque, huh? I mean for the Fifties?"

I look over at the screen and see a young woman's nyloned legs frozen in mid-kick half way inside the Terror's mouth. A shoe with a stiletto heel is about to drop from her right foot. I stare hard for a few seconds, then ask William P. if I can use his bathroom.

"Yeah, sure. Up the stairs, first door on the right."

I turn on the light and lock the bathroom door with a hook. I turn to the sink, fill the basin with water, and splash enough on my face to drown a sailor. I gaze into the fluorescent lit mirror above the sink until the roaring guffaws and screaming dancers coming up through the floor become almost unbearable. When I open the medicine chest for aspirin, I find three shelves stacked with prescription bottles two rows deep. As I turn a bottle to read the label, I heard someone tap the bathroom door softly with his knuckles. "Your coffee's getting cold."

I shut the medicine chest quietly and wait until I can't hear anymore screaming. **Flipside**

TWENTY-SIX IS MY FIX

Article by Kathy Koenig

miles. At the first two, I drank barely more than a sip, for I feared the dreaded stomach cramps, the bane of runners.

After five miles, I was on Wantagh Parkway, the long, boring stretch of gravel that leads to Jones Beach, the half marathon destination and my turnaround. The beard dropped behind me and I eased my pace hoping he would move back up. But then I realized that he had dropped back even further.

I felt as though I wasn't getting anywhere on that road. Trees and exits passed me by and I was running alone now, with people about 30 yards ahead of me and 20 yards behind. For the first time I noticed my irregular breathing pattern and drew in a few long breaths of air as I shook out my arms to release the tension.

The wall. I seem to be running through water in slow motion, but my feet sting as they hit the pavement. I wish I could quit right here, but I can't. I wish I hadn't started. I could hear my fa-

"Only six more miles to go!" shouted the small pony-tailed girl as she thrust a Dixie cup full of water into my hand. "You can do it!" I tried to smile, but I couldn't. Six more miles seemed like an eternity. My legs were numb and tight and seemingly moving on their own. I felt as though I couldn't take another step. "Damn," I thought. "This is the wall they told me about. I hit the 'marathon wall.'"

I woke up early that morning in May with a strange knot in my stomach. It was Marathon Sunday.

I had been anticipating this day for two months, ever since I sent my application to the Newsday Long Island Marathon. Now was my chance to accomplish a goal I had set for myself ever since I was 13 years old.

Unable to eat anything except a piece of toast, I dressed in my room, listening to the radio. As I put on my homemade T-shirt, an old light blue shirt cut jaggedly on the bottom with "No Pain, No Gain" written in black magic marker on the back and "Twenty Six Is My Fix" on the front, I began to have doubts that I could really make it. My father called me into the living room.

"Now remember Kat, you're only to run the half because you're not prepared for the whole." The half was 13.1 miles.

I nodded, yet I knew in my heart I was running the full marathon.

The wall. Six miles to go. I'm past feeling warm. Now I'm clammy. I can feel salt drying on my arms and face. My legs feel like they're swimming in syrup, but they don't seem to be a part of me anymore.

It's not as though I hadn't been running at all. I competed on the cross country team in the fall and even won some races. I ran two to five miles every day for six months. But a marathon is 26 miles, not two to five. And Dad was right and oh-so-logical. He was always logical when it came to me. But my heart said, "You can do it."

I arrived at the marathon starting point in Eisenhower Park one hour before race time. Thousands of runners swarmed the area, stretching, jogging and laughing. I chose an open spot of grass and sat down to stretch, my father beside me, taking pictures and explaining the course.

"You start here, Kat, and go down Wantagh Parkway and finish at the Jones Beach tower. You know, that huge pointy building with the traffic circle?"

"Yeah, Dad, I know." Little did he know that at that point I was turning around with the rest of the full marathoners to go back to Eisenhower Park to complete the marathon. He'd find out later, I told myself.

Next thing I knew I was standing in an enormous line among veteran runners and people who looked they would only last for one mile. We were lined up according to our pace per mile, so the faster runners were in the front and I was somewhere around the 10-minute per mile group. Around me there were old women, young kids, a skinny guy with pimples, two guys who looked like weight lifters. None of them looked like runners. Some of them didn't even look healthy. These were people I could definitely beat. But could I finish?

All of the sudden I realized the race must have started. I saw the runners about 600 yards in front of me moving forward, their heads bobbing. It took me about four minutes to reach the starting line and by the time I did, I had already begun talking to a young bearded man running beside me.

"This is my first," he said.

"Mine, too."

"Nice shirt."

He was attractive and had a pleasant voice. I had a vision of us running the whole race together.

The first five miles were a blur to me. I was running on schedule, 10 minutes per mile. The beard and I joked and laughed. To me, it seemed like a daily practice run with the exception of a few thousand people around me. After the first mile, we weren't crowded together, but there were still lots of people, and the mix always changed. The water stops were located every couple of

For some reason, I regained some energy and I felt good for the next four miles or so. Once again, I was running alone. The only sounds were heavy breathing and my Nike Air running shoes shuffling on the paved parkway. At the next water stop, I grabbed a yellow sponge and squeezed it down my neck, cherishing the cool water as it ran down my back.

At the 20 mile mark, I hit the wall. I was exhausted and could barely manage to lift my feet off the ground. As any marathoner will tell you, I felt as though I had run into a barrier and it was holding me back from going another step.

I stared at the ground as I ran to make sure my feet were still moving. I thought my legs were going to fall off.

Finally, up ahead I saw the red flags that would take me off the parkway and into the town of Westbury, where the finish line was.

I should have known there had to be a hill. I hadn't even noticed it at the start and now I crawled up it, practically on my hands and knees. I followed the colored flags through the streets and entered the park, with less than a mile to go and the finish line in view. I broke into stride with a spurt of energy.

I was over the wall now. Or maybe I had burst through. I knew I could make it. I ran to the line, only my parents and a few stragglers left watching the race. As I crossed, I saw my time--5:26.34, then collapsed on the grass.

"Oh my God I made it and I didn't even train for it." Those were my first and last words. Mom was leaning over me, saying, "Is she all right? Should we get a doctor?" Dad said, "Kat, I told you not to do it," but he sounded a little bit proud.

I didn't know that the next two weeks would be filled with learning how to walk again and regaining strength in my torn muscles. I didn't know that I would be drained for a month and so tired that I would actually turn down a date. I had learned about eternity, and I would learn all about blisters and aching knees and a stiff back. It was worth it. **Flipside**



RESTAURANT VIOLINISTS

Every night in their tuxes amid the chateaubriand and the surfandturf

they play: "Shadow Of Your Smile," "Moon River," "Somewhere Over The Rainbow."

They're sick of it.

They're not penguins; they're distinguished musicians

thrown out of prestigious symphony orchestras for drinking.

They are geniuses. They have gray hair and style.

Ask them:

ask them to play "Paganini's Variations On A Theme By Weslowski."

They'll love you. It will make it all

somehow worthwhile.

--Michael Wurster

GLITTER and **GRIT**
 Photographs and story
 by Stan Bunevich



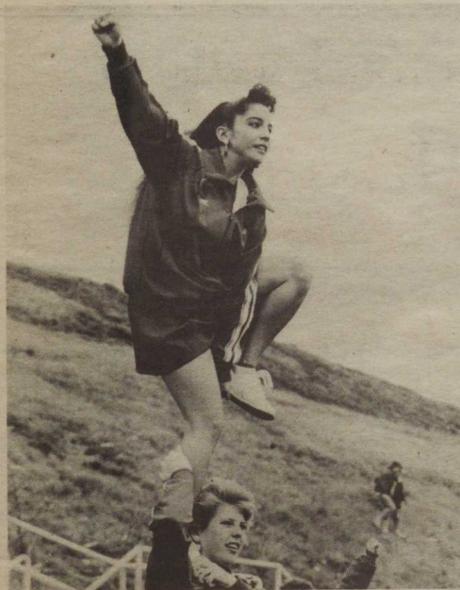
"The tryouts were scary. You tried out in pairs in the gym in Hamer Hall. Two went into the gym, but you did the chants and the cheers individually in front of Joy, who stood in the middle of the gym videotaping you about two feet away. The four cheerleaders already on the team and the three judges, all of them women, and all of them from the outside to eliminate bias--you didn't know them and they didn't know you--sat at a table about eight or nine feet away and stared at you while you did the chants and the cheers."

"We jump once or twice when we do a cheer that uses a jump, and we rehearse that cheer 10- to-12 times. By the end of the day, we jumped at least 60 times and did several partner stunts and several other cheers and chants. I was exhausted and had sore muscles."



"We left California at seven o'clock Friday night and arrived in Baltimore at one o'clock Saturday morning . . ."

". . . some of us sleep, some of us listen to Walkmen, some of sleep and listen to Walkmen, and some of us talk."



"Cheerleading is a sport, a pretty sport, a glamorous sport. Your hair doesn't get all messed up and you don't have sweat pouring out of you, and you get to wear lipstick and eye makeup. It looks more feminine than it is, and it's harder than it looks. Many women try out for the team and don't make it."

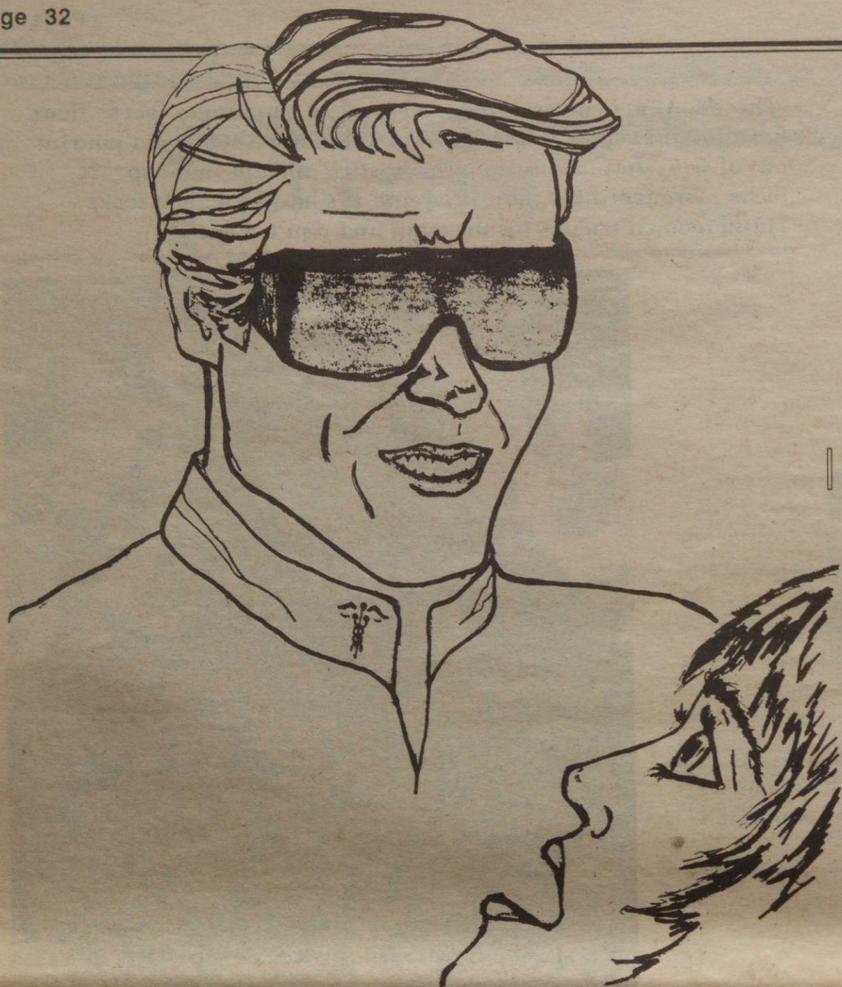
"I broke my wrist cheering. I fell. There was a spotter, but I hit the ground in such a way that I broke my wrist."



"My hobby is dancing, and cheering is like dancing to me. That's why I cheer. . . . I'm hyper. I have a lot of energy. To use up this energy, or to solve a problem, or to calm me down, or to reduce nervousness, I cheer. I can eat a lot and not feel guilty because I know that the exercise that I'll get from cheering will burn up calories. Yet, I'm into cheerleading for myself, not for the players. Me first, then the team."



"People see us as prima donnas and think that what we do is easy. But cheerleading is a skill. Not everyone can do it. It's a gift. A pro football player is good at football. College cheerleaders are good at what they do. I think it's just as hard as playing a sport--there's time-consuming work behind it, to the point that cheering must almost become the number one priority. It's a skill and a sport."



INDENTATIONS

Fiction by Joe Schall
Illustrations by Tammy Davis

Donald David Sandborn read that twelve million Americans feared him so completely that they never came to visit. So he decided to beautify his apartment to attract tourists, to show the world he was a regular guy. Impression trays, he knew, should be the basic decor. Since everyone had a mouth, he reasoned, everyone would respond with enthusiasm to impression trays. He had been taught that you had to appeal to all five of the senses if you hoped to create something beautiful and alive. If handled properly, impression trays activated all five of the senses, and they were set in a perpetual smile.

First, Dr. Sandborn bought forty-six sheets of four-by-eight pegboard at Claster's and 97 packs of curtain hooks at K-Mart. He secured the sheets of pegboard to the walls of the rooms in his apartment with six-penny nails. Then he gathered up his collection of impression trays, both disposable and nondisposable, and hung them from the curtain hooks in the pegboard. He arranged the attractive Temrex Bite trays and Caulk Rim-Lock non-perforated watercooled trays on the bathroom walls. Naturally he hung the standard Super-Dent impression trays with retention rims in the living room, because they were the most pleasing to look at while you sat leisurely. He realized, though, that tourists were just as likely to be sitting while in the bathroom, so he had an aesthetic decision to make. Finally, he decided on the entire sanit-tray assortment of Getz plastic disposables and the newest line of D-P Traten perforated plastic trays, and arranged them strategically across from the toilet at eye level, since they were both pleasing to the eye and had a more sanitary look than aluminum. From varying lengths of unwaxed floss, he tied a seemingly random assortment of F. G. P., Lactona, and Crown and Bridge trays, and attached these to hooks screwed into the ceiling tiles. They served as wind chimes when he opened all the windows or turned on all the fans. He realized that few of his tourists would be into impression trays on such an esoteric level as he, but he aspired to educate them gradually in a sublime manner.

Nine years earlier, Dr. Riddle had taught Sandborn not to take impressions lightly.

"Look at this, Sandborn," Dr. Riddle said, throwing down the May Issue of JADA at his feet. The journal was open to a two-page ad: "Good Impressions: Making Them and Taking Them."

"This," said Dr. Riddle, "is your future battle. Taking and making good impressions. Come." Sandborn followed Dr. Riddle into his office and Dr. Riddle instructed him to sit back in the Belmont chair with the double-padded headrest.

"Open your mouth and pull your upper lip away from your teeth," Dr. Riddle said.

Dr. Riddle opened a jar of Jeltrate, scooped some powder into a wooden bowl, measured and mixed in 1/4 cup of boiling water, spooned the solution into a Baker's Edge-Lok impression tray, and jammed the tray into Sandborn's mouth.

"Ehhstst stoooo hooott," Sandborn said.

"Don't squirm, just watch," Dr. Riddle said, handing him a mirror.

Sandborn held the mirror in his right hand and kept the impression tray in place with his left hand. The mirror fogged up from the mist coming out of his mouth.

"What's wrong, Sandborn?" Dr. Riddle asked.

"Ah cunhh seah woth happena tumme, Dokka Real," he said.

Then close your eyes and picture it. It's beautiful. You are taking your own impression. For the first time in your life you are taking charge of your own mouth. No one else's instruments are needed. No one else's fingers probing your privacy, no plastic gloves, no ultraviolet lights, no cotton swabs, no salivation, just your own, pure, steaming impression being taken by you.

"When cun aha shhtop?" Sandborn asked.

"Look Sandborn," Dr. Riddle said, shoving another mirror in front of him. "This is your future. This is the staple of dentistry."

In the mirror, Sandborn's gums bled so badly that he could not see his impression.

"Now, let's do your lowers," Dr. Riddle said, reaching into Sandborn's mouth.

So it was that Dr. Sandborn realized the value of visual aids. Knowing that mouth mirrors were a dentist's most basic visual aids, he reasoned that he could sensitize the 12 million Americans who never came to visit to automatically respond favorably to the sight of mouth mirrors if they got used to seeing them in a homey environment. Therefore, he purchased two gross Autoclavable Reusable Glass Mouth Mirrors with rhodium coated lenses, removed the Fiberglas handles with a soldering iron, then cemented the tiny, round reflectors in rows over all the mirrors in his apartment. The bedroom mirror, shaped like an upside-down fan, was tricky, but he conquered this by cementing a small arc of mouth mirrors to the top of the fan and underlining it with ever-widening cemented smiles. Now, he thought excitedly, when any tourist looked into the bedroom mirrors, he would see a jagged replica of his own smiling face, and, stepping closer, would watch his face break into dozens of separate happy faces. Then, pressing his temple and cheekbone against the glass, he could inspect the image of his own reflection in his eyeball. After just one tour, mouth mirrors became funhouse mirrors.

He thought of everything. He always thought of everything. He performed beyond the normal tour guides's duties. For instance, he placed a can of Dee Fog Spray on the bathroom and kitchen sinks. In case any tourists showered, shaved, or did the dishes. He supplied empty Starlite and Shofu boxes in the bathroom and bedroom so tourists could deposit their cosmetics, keys, and change in case of an overnight stay. He scattered unmailed letters and Christmas cards addressed to patients on the coffee table, covering them with dentistry stamps, including the famous one depicting Henri Moissan and the two recent sets issued by Kuwait. And finally, for the coup de maître, he casually left Atlas of the Mouth opened to the pages on

Cont. on Page 40 . . .

NO LESS THAN THEY DESERVE

STORY BY TYRA BRADEN
ILLUSTRATION BY PAT SMALLWOOD

"Sooner or later, we all sit down to a banquet of consequences."—Robert Louis Stevenson

AND IT CAME TO PASS THAT THE SUN set on Happy Valley at the exact moment when Pete and Stush set down their second Iron City drafts at Bruno's Tavern.

Pete and Stush were real men-- and they had the pot bellies and pock marks to prove it. Both were in their mid-twenties but to their respective credits looked substantially older.

Stush's hairline had receded to expose a hefty slab of angry pink skin stretching a full two inches on either temple, so that his chestnut-brown mane hung to a devilish point stopping just above the bridge of his nose.

Pete had shaved his head, just for fun, during his senior year at Roosevelt High School. Though his hair grew rapidly, Pete could never quite tolerate the itching so he took the Atra to it daily. He had overslept this morning, and in his haste to be on time at the mill had forgone the lathering--gave just a few cursory swipes in the shower. He'd nicked his frontal lobe quite severely, and because the toilet paper he'd pressed into the small crater hadn't stanch the flow of blood, he was, this evening, still sporting a Curad Ouchless that bobbed ever so slightly every time he swallowed.

The men had been bosom buddies since junior high, a grand time, they insisted, for both had had the good fortune to fail seventh grade, thereby giving them another 180 days to sneak peeks up hot Miss Volkson's dress. If she just hadn't worn that girdle....

Tonight was different. Tonight there would be no jovial reminiscing. Stush signaled the barkeep

"A pitcher and two mugs," he mumbled.

"Hey, Stush," Pete said, adjusting the bothersome Curad, "let's talk about it. Ain't healthy to keep it inside."

Stush turned toward his friend, filled the two mugs, took a mammoth slug and burped. "Not bad for a white boy," Pete offered, smiling. But Stush just grinned weakly. Pete knew that if his brilliant wit couldn't jolt his friend out of the doldrums nothing could.

"She left me, Pete. She just up and left me."

"I know, buddy." Pete slapped Stush awkwardly on the back. "I'm sorry."

"Why? Why'd she go and do it?" A sort of helpless desperation crept into Stush's usually boisterous bass.

"Hell if I know."

"I was good to her. I was damn good to her. Nine years outta my life shot to hell." Stush was talking into his mug. Pete had to concentrate hard, knitting his eyebrows, leaning close.

"Nine years? Was it really that long?"

"Sure was," Stush said. "Nine freakin' years." He banged the empty mug onto the stained formica for emphasis. Good friend that he was,

Pete refilled the mug and ordered another pitcher. "Take it easy, buddy."

"It was good at first," Stush said, shaking his head left to right. "Remember the wedding? Marylou looked so damned good in that white dress. Hell, she wasn't hardly showin' at all. If Ma hadn't told everybody she was knocked up they'd a never knowned."

"Yeah, it's a blessing she had a wide ass to start with."

Neither spoke for a few minutes. Pete broke the silence.

it to her every time I got the itch. Money to pay the bills. One of them lightweight irons for her birthday. A sweeper--one of them 200 dollar jobs from Sears--for Christmas last year."

"I know, buddy, I seen that sweeper. It's a beaut."

"Damned right! Sucks up dog hair and everything."

"You was good to her. Yessir, you was real good to her."

"And I took her out to eat almost every--"

And I let her have the truck to take li to the dentist every time he had to go

even babysat shit that time was in the in. Remember that?

"Sure de the night s s'posed to go the tractor pull over at Scenery Hill."

"I sacrificed my fun for that woman. And what did it get me?"

"The short end of the stick."

"And how often did I hit her?"

"Just them couple times when she bitched at you for spending so much time in the bar."

"Damn right. Ain't no two ways about it. I was good to her. What the hell's wrong with that woman? Don't she realize how good she had it with me?"

Pete sat bolt upright, as though someone had rammed a broomstick up his backside. "Hey," he said, trying to snap his thumb and forefinger but failing in his drunkenness. "I got it. I know what her problem is."

"What?"

"That stuff I seen about on the news the other night."

"What stuff?"

Excited now, Pete ran his right hand over his smooth head, rubbing the Curad off to expose a dime-size black scab. "Oh, hell, what's it called? P something or other?"

"What the hell you talking about?"

"Wait, it's comin' to me. . .P. . .M. . .S! That's it, PMS!"

"Yeah! I hearda that! Ain't it where women go crazy right before they go on the rag?"

"Yep. Stush, I'll bet that's it. I'll bet that's what wrong with Marylou. PMS."

"You spect she'll come back to her senses?"

"I ain't sure."

"Well, I'll give her a couple days to snap out of it, and if she don't, I'm gonna go knock it outta her."

And so it came to pass that darkness gave way to light. Pete and Stush made a final trip to the head, splashed water onto their faces and stepped into the foggy dawn.

Sister Mary Beth McAllister, tired after having driven the biggest part of the night from the convent for her first visit home since 1981, didn't see the still-drunk men stumble off the curb. But she did serve communion at the double Requiem High Mass at St. Anthony's a few days later.

No charges were preferred. Flipside



"Would you a married her if she didn't have a bun in the oven?"

"Course not," Stush said forcefully, taken aback by his friend's stupidity. "Don't you remember Beth Ann McAllister?"

Stush looked like a man just awakened from a nightmare. He lowered his chin to his chest. "Don't matter anyhow. She went off to be a nun right after graduation."

Pete wanted to question his friend's strange reply, but instead said only "Guess you're right."

Stush shot a half mug. "You're a smart man, Pete, staying a bachelor like you did."

"S'pose so. But I gotta tell you, sometimes it gets lonely. Especially when I'm watching a football game and want a baloney sammitch or something."

"Yeah, guess I'll have to learn to make sammitches for myself now." Stush sighed. "Either that or watch the games at Ma's house."

Another silence. Another pitcher. A trip apiece to the head.

"I'm drunk." Stush slurred badly now. "I'm drunk and I'm alone."

For a terrified moment, Pete, equally sloshed, feared that his friend might cry. "It's okay," he said quickly. "You'll get over it."

"Like hell I will! It ain't fair, I tell you. I gave that bitch everything she wanted. Good sex. Gave

Cont. from Page 1 . . .

"Where did you fly in from?" I asked Plimpton, gasping from both nerves and exertion, as we got to the main doors and walked outside.

"I was in Chicago, addressing a French American group about international friendship," he said slowly and carefully.

Plimpton, the founder and editor of the *Paris Review*, lived in France for almost three years. "You must speak French fluently," I said.

"Actually, I don't. Even after all that time, I still have trouble with the language."

I couldn't believe that. How could you live in a country for three years and not be able to speak the language? Plimpton must not have mingled much with the French rabble.

We approached the silver Mercedes. I wondered why Dave had borrowed it. Surely he didn't think it would impress Plimpton, for whom silver Mercedes were probably as unremarkable as fried eggs in the morning—or Beluga caviar anytime he felt like nibbling on it. He had become, after all, a kind of spokesman for the American upper-middle class concept of consume or die. If he weren't lounging in some sumptuous livingroom, expounding the virtues of a popcorn maker or a magazine devoted to kitchens of the rich and famous, he was hosting a cable television show about strange commercials from foreign lands.

"Could I sit in the front, since my legs are so long?" Plimpton asked Dave.

Plimpton settled himself in the front seat, adjusting his legs until they fit under the dashboard. Dave had warned me on the ride up that some of the speakers he has dealt with simply fall asleep in the car. I wasn't going to give Plimpton the chance to so much as blink his eyes. I leaned forward.

"Why did you start the *Paris Review*?"

"Well, I had graduated from college and I really didn't have anything else to do, so I decided to go to abroad. My parents gave me some money to start a magazine, and that's when I founded the *Paris Review*. As a matter of fact, in that satchel I was carrying are manuscripts that I need to work on."

How easily he had managed to slip into the literary world, with a bus-pass purchased by wealthy parents. How better to start your own magazine. He had gone from college senior to the literary world's William Randolph Hearst in one fell swoop.

"Which do you find easier, writing or editing?" I asked.

"Oh, editing. Writing is much harder."

Talking to the back of his head—directly into a thatch of that sort of Kennedy hair that looked as though he just gotten out of bed—and run his fingers through it—made conversation difficult and uncomfortable. I raised my voice.

"So it wasn't hard for you to get into the writing business?"

"No, not at all." He turned his head slowly and deliberately and looked at me. "What kind of writing are you interested in getting into?"

"I want to freelance," I said. I didn't want to talk about my writing; I wanted to talk about his writing. Plimpton was obviously used to interviewing people and was trying to turn the conversation around.

"Which would you rather do, interview or be interviewed?"

"Oh, I'd much rather be interviewed. It's so much harder to be the interviewer. The interviewer has to know exactly what questions to

ask—he has to call the shots and control the conversation. The interviewee can sit back and relax. I was on *The Larry King Show* recently and I had to interview Linda Ellerbee. The interview went terribly—every question I asked just fell flat. I knew Miss Ellerbee had a reputation of being rather surly but this was ridiculous. Then she did a strange thing—she said she would help me out. As it happens, she had interviewed me when she was a fledgling reporter in Texas, and the interview had gone less than satisfactory in her view. So now she was getting her revenge by giving me a hard time. It was a pretty nasty thing to do, considering I didn't even remember the incident."

I couldn't image Plimpton being anything but courteous. From the first, he had been nothing but polite, but of course, we were paying him a fat fee to speak.

"What sort of school is California University?" Plimpton asked.

"It's a small, state-run school. There's about 6,000 undergraduate and graduate," Dave said.

"Well, the landscape is very beautiful."

"When Neil Armstrong came to speak last year he said the same thing," Dave said excitedly. "I knew it couldn't be easy to impress someone who had walked on the moon."

"Neil Armstrong came to speak at California?" Plimpton asked, sitting straight in his seat, discarding his slouch and his blasé manner. "That's very unusual. He's kind of a recluse now. He's an agronomist."

I wondered what an agronomist was.

"Yeah, Neil Armstrong came to speak last year at homecoming. We were very honored," Dave repeated.

"How very unusual. I interviewed Armstrong for a story I was going to do about famous words of discovery. You know the controversy about his words 'One small step for man; one giant step for mankind.' Some people say he made it up, some say it was written for him. He told me that he made it up in the half hour they had before they landed. His reason for not making anything up before was predictably utilitarian. He said that they only had a fifty-fifty chance of landing and he didn't want to spend a lot of time figuring out what to say until he was pretty sure they would land. However, there's some people at NASA who said that the words 'One small step for a man, one giant step for mankind' were written on a black board. This made more sense that the other because 'one small step for man, one giant step for mankind' is redundant. But that's what Armstrong said, not a man. So it's possible that Armstrong didn't make it up. But anyway, I'm still surprised that he came to speak. I was under the impression that he didn't do any more public speaking."

Dave looked confused. "He was a little guy. I guess they have to be to fit in the space capsule. He spoke about how he was involved with the underwater exploration. . ."

"You couldn't mean Armstrong, then. He retired from the service early and I know he was never involved in any underwater exploration," Plimpton interrupted.

"Armstrong is an agronomist."

There was that word again.

Dave conceded, "I guess it wasn't Armstrong then. It must have been some other astronaut." I jumped into the sudden silence.

"How did you become involved in 'participatory journalism'?"

"Sports Illustrated asked me if I wanted to pitch once for the Yankees. It was their idea that it would make a great story. So I did it for

them. 'Participatory journalism' isn't really new. There was one reporter in New York in the early 1900s who boxed to find out what fighting was like. He was a pretty good boxer himself. What he didn't know was that his city editor was paying off all the boxers so that they would knock this reporter out in the first round."

"What do you think of 'New Journalism'?"

"How would you define 'New Journalism'?" he turned and asked me. Uh oh. He had turned the tables on me. I quickly listed some representative New Journalists.

"Hunter Thompson, Tom Wolfe, Joan Didion . . . that kind of journalism."

He was quiet for awhile; I thought he hadn't heard me, or that I had said something unbearably stupid and he wasn't going to answer me. Then he said:

"Have you ever read Tom Wolfe's anthology of *New Journalism*?"

I told him we had used it as a text in one of my writing classes.

"Tom Wolfe and I are very good friends. We correspond quite frequently. I recently read his new book, but I don't think it was very good."

"Why?" I said, surprised that Plimpton would be so candid.

"Wolfe uses all of his little gimmicks like onomatopoeia and visual words, but they seem very contrived because the book is fiction. They worked when Wolfe was talking about real people, like Leonard Bernstein plunking the piano, but not in fiction."

I was excited now at the turn in the conversation. If I were lucky, Plimpton would have more anecdotes.

"Have you ever met Hunter Thompson?"

"Yes. As a matter of fact, I went to stay with him in Colorado about a year ago. I wanted to interview him but he was fairly incoherent from various chemicals. He gets up to play golf at 5 in the morning. He loves to golf but he's a terrible player. He has newspaper clippings hung up all over his house. Everywhere, on every wall. All kinds of strange, violent clippings, like 'Bear mauls girl camper to death.' When he writes his column, he just takes a clipping off the wall and writes about it."

I had a hard time imagining Plimpton and Thompson together. I was disappointed, too, that Plimpton didn't have any insights into Thompson's character.

"Do you correspond with him, also?"

"Yes, but his letters are rather more like threats than anything else."

I wondered if Plimpton were kidding.

"Threats?"

"They're not very pleasant."

I crossed my fingers.

"Have you ever met Joan Didion?"

"I've met her but I've never really been able to talk to her. She's very shy. Her husband (John Gregory Dunne) is very dominating. He answers for her when someone asks her a question. I have to interview Dunne next week, so I'm trying right now to read all of his books."

Joan Didion was my hero. I'd hoped he'd have more to say about her.

"Do you do that for everyone you interview?"

"Oh, yes, I always make sure I know my subject before I interview anyone. By the way, I think the astronaut who also worked with undersea exploration was Scott Carpenter."

"That's who it was," Dave said. "Scott Carpenter. I guess I have him

and Neil Armstrong confused." I asked another question.

"The first 'participatory journalism' piece you did wasn't your idea, then?"

"No, it was *Sports Illustrated*'s. 'Have you always had magazines asking you to write pieces or them? You've never had to write a query letter?'"

"What is a query letter?"

"You write to a magazine when you have a story idea. If they like it, they might write back and tell you to write the story. Then again, they might use your story idea and assign it to one of their staff writers. It's pretty risky."

"No, I've never heard of a query letter before now."

Wow. This, more than anything else we had talked about, revealed what Plimpton's life has been like. He never had to impress some two-bit magazine with a story idea and beg for the chance to write it. Hell, he didn't even have to come up with story ideas; magazines came to him with them, not just now but throughout his career. If I'd hoped for any insight into or guidance about life as a struggling writer, I'd come to the wrong place.

We were approaching California, and I hadn't asked him half of the questions I wanted to ask. It was noon and the campus was overrun with students changing classes. Lots of them stopped and stared at the silver Mercedes—students are not as blasé as George Plimpton when it comes to a Mercedes.

"Do you have some quiet place that I could go and get some work done?" Plimpton asked Dave.

"Yeah, I know just the place."

Disappointed, I leaned back in my seat. I wanted to go to lunch with him or have drinks or something, anything to continue interviewing him. Now I wasn't going to get the chance.

We got out of the car at the Student Union, Todd still hauling Plimpton's satchel. At the door I held out my hand and said, "Thank you for talking with me, Mr. Plimpton."

He shook my hand vigorously and for the first time since I'd met him, he smiled gently. "I think you'll enjoy my talk tonight." Then he and Dave went up the stairs in search of a quiet office.

As I walked back through campus, I remembered someone told me once that he never wanted to meet any "famous" people. He said it was because becoming famous meant becoming diseased in some way and he was convinced that it was contagious. I looked at the hand that Plimpton shook with his cool, tanned one. I thought about the ease with which Plimpton moved in his literary world. I thought about his privileged beginnings and his year-round tan. I thought about how easily opportunities to write about exciting, ingenious subjects came to him. I hoped that disease was contagious. **Flipside**

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Cont. from Page 7

teeth now. He punches me affectionately on the shoulder and steps past into the entrance of the Devil's Playground. Out of the corner of my eye I watch him slide away. Things seem resolved to his satisfaction. Does he really believe that shit?

I mumble to myself, "I'm not your brother, you fucking cro-mag," and I light another smoke. My fists won't uncurl.

Two of the skaters watched us through this ritual, and they drift over to me now on their Fiberglas babies. In spite of the cool night air they both wear shorts.

"Thought you were gonna get your ass kicked," the taller of the two ventures. They seem to be a few years older than their friends, maybe 15 or 16 with spiky bleached hair.

"Thought so too," I shrug. "He's some hardcore badass."

"No, dude," the short punk responds. "He ain't hardcore, he's just a skinhead. They always start fights."

"I dunno," I shrug again. "Guy sounded like he wanted to be friendly for a minute there."

"That's shit," the tall skater says pleasantly. "Like, when I moved into a new school here, everyone wanted to fight, all these tough guys, but if they can't scare you, man, they try to psyche you out, but then they're all like, 'Hey, you're real cool, dude, come on hang out with us.' Like now you're their number one, right? Fightin' friends."

His buddy nods. Half the time I don't understand skate punks, but these guys are telling me what I already know, and I appreciate it.

I smile. "Ain't about to shave my head," I say. "See this pin with the A. That used to be an Army pin, but now it stands for Anarchy. I don't belong to anybody's army! I don't wear a uniform either. Not like him. Fuck 'em, you know?" I kick the vibrating wall. "I don't need that rompin' stompin' shit. Not my scene."

They laugh. "Cool, dude," says the tall one. "Listen, I'm Chris, he's Standard." They await my name, smiling.

"Butch. The Butcher." We shake hands. Solidarity.

"Cool, catch you later, right?"

"Yeah, see you inside." I watch the skaters wheel down the street to their group, strange light flashing off their hair.

Smiling, I turn and plunge back into the Devil's Playground, sail past the cashbox watchdog, and start digging through the crowds of leather jackets and hairstyles to reach the pit before the end of Half Life's set.

The drums are throbbing, working out on Agnostic Front's "With Time." By the end of the song, I'm sweating again. Probably growing new bruises too. I realize how much of the set I've missed when the drums begin the characteristic signature of Half Life's closing song. I forget the bruises and fling myself along with the other dancers for the instrumental intro and wind up in front of the stage just in time to join the line of punks with arms across each other's shoulders, ready to sing along: "Fucked up world, nothing's right, people hating one another, seems like there's no hope, but we've got each other!" Now it's our turn to roar into the offered milk: "United! And strong! We can't go wrong!" The whole like holds on tight, though we bounce up and down and side to side, and in some spots break momentarily to let in someone new who has leaped on top of us all. We are a noisy wall of scuffed black leather and ragged denim. Before the song screams to a deafening stop, I see

even Glenn is there, sweating and still wearing his tight little grin. Does this mean we really are blood brothers?

I hope not. I use violence as an occasional practical necessity, like I use work. Glenn likes it. When his eyes lock on mine and his grin widens, I feel a surprise that spoils the edge of my happy exhaustion. The euphoria of action suddenly seems simple and childish. Already I wonder why I enjoyed it.

Punk rock doesn't often feature happy endings. Otto has a tattoo I admire: "If you don't kill us, we'll kill you," with the "you" crossed out and replaced by "ourselves." That says a lot.

Eventually Half Life manages to clear the stage. I mill around with the rest of the crowd and drift outside with it, but while I trade nods and handshakes with punks I recognize from the pit, I carefully avoid Glenn. Anonymous in the night air and background noise, I move away from the others and light a cigarette, blowing the smoke in the direction of our usual police presence—a blue-and-white car parked at the far end of the block. I try hard to relax.

Too soon I hear the rumble of the Morticians tuning up. The crowd drains through the door and I follow, reluctantly, with the stragglers.

I stand with the spectators but apart from the clutches of friends tossing code phrases around. The Morticians are great. I've known them since they started playing around Philadelphia. I belong closer to the stage. Somehow the crowd seems too packed to let me through, and the haze of blue smoke makes it hard to breathe. I stand still.

Rick steps up to the microphone carrying her bass in one hand. Her hoarse scream stops conversation. Two guitars slide up the scale and come crashing down like an executioner's ax; the Morticians lean into the pit jump in every direction at once. I take one step forward, enough to get me included in a semi-organized surge to the left that carries me along and into the wall in front of too many people.

"Shit!" I'm buried. I climb out of the pile, a sharp pain in my side. Blood stains my Dead Kennedys shirt from a cut inflicted by somebody's spikes. Already the sweat stings. "Shit!" I scream it this time and start forcing a path through people and into the pit. Teeth bared, I ignore dirty looks. I am going to work off this sudden rage, thrash it out, but first I have to shove out into the maelstrom of boots and flying bodies.

I stomp around the circle again and again, striking out and breathing hard. Though the Morticians jam faster and louder through every song—"P.L.O.," "I Burn For You," "Horrorshow" and 10 minutes of instrumental frenzy on

"MotorManicMan" at the end of each one, I find myself still choking with anger. Twice I pass Glenn in the crowd and shoulder him aside, and once I hear him laugh. I am blinded by his grin.

Furious, I leave the pit and shove out to the door while the band is checking their song list. I want to feel cool air on my skin.

I step outside with every muscle taut. My heart is pounding. I try to slow my breathing with deep draughts of night air.

But I hear Glenn's snarl. He followed me. If he wants to start another fight, I'm in the mood this time. I'm full of energy and anger, looking for an object to focus on. He's it.

"Hey, Hard guy!" Mocking me, as before. That's what I want to hear.

I turn and leap, driving one boot into his stomach as both my fists smash into his grinning face. I land on top when we fall and get one knee on his chest. Then I start pounding his face. Trying to wipe away his sneering grin. Can Glenn laugh through split lips? I guess we'll find out. My fists grind him against the pavement. Never before have I enjoyed the crunch and sudden pain in my knuckles. I like it now, though. I want to feel it again and again.

Irresistible force hurls me into the air and against a police car I'd forgotten about. The metal is very cold on my face. At last, I relax completely, sagging against the cool blue hood. A moment later the cop lets me stand up and turn around.

He's a tall blue shadow keeping one eye on me and the other on his partner, who's helping Glenn to his feet. He says, "What do you punks think you doing?" sounding genuinely puzzled. His tone is mild, and I need a second to realize that the words were aimed at me. My sense of urgency is gone.

I haven't been arrested. That's a hopeful sign. If they're not here to hassle the club, I might walk out of this with a stern don't-do-it-again-boys-will-be-boys lecture. If they don't want the paperwork on a chickenshit arrest. If they don't get pissed off at us.

If, if, if.

The cops are our enemies. They understand this at least as well as I do, but I won't force them to make an example of me.

No point in that. **Flipside**

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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.

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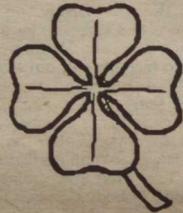
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--John Taylor

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Today those same crowds are washed and dressed, tied and pressed, walking solemnly into the early service. The men glance at one another with an unspoken longing for the empty streams where the trout lurk in deep pools and fly across the pebbled shallows.

It's about nine o' clock. The wife and baby Tanya- in her first Easter ensemble complete with black patent leather shoes- are singing Hymn 24 from the blue Glory and Praise book, just as I pulled the first rainbow of the day from under a gnarled deadfall near a cut bank. He rose to a muddler, presented in the current, slightly upstream.

--Tom Reynolds.

Cont. from Page 11 . . .

The night of the Captain's interview, the races lasted until 4 a.m. Many of the policemen themselves may have prowled Front Street as teenagers, like the cop who pulled us over that night.

"I used to come here myself," he said, "but I still have to ticket you for that illegal U-turn. Oh, and pour that beer out you're trying to hide." Police routinely stop cars on their way to and from Pattison Avenue, to make sure the driver's view isn't obstructed by the carburetors that jut out of so many of the rod's hoods. That doesn't stop some drivers from bringing their non-street legal hot rods down on flat-bed trucks, however.

A yellow Toyota pulled in next to us, two girls wearing community college sweatshirts got out, sat crosslegged on the hood. They paid no attention to the steady stream of guys urinating on the stadium wall behind us. The driver bent over something in her lap, her long, curly hair almost obscuring a mouth set firm in concentration as she strived to roll that perfect joint. Her passenger watched, entranced. From across the parking lot, a single siren pierced in the air.

"Let's get out of here," I said, rattled. The girls sat calmly on their hood, the driver's fingers skillfully working the fragile rolling paper.

"If you were a lone cop, would you try to arrest a thousand teenagers in a parking lot at night?" reasoned Phil. I was panicked beyond logic.

By now, the cop was 40 yards away and closing. I jumped in the car, started frantically stuffing beer cans under the seat, leaving my own unfinished beer on the floor. Phil laughed; Jeff meandered off to the stadium wall. The driver was rolling her joint in a dollar bill, smoothing the crumpled paper.

"Bill, stop being a pussy for a minute and watch," said Phil, pointing across the lot. The grey Nova that had dusted the Corvette pulled in front of the slowing moving cop, lit up his tires, and sped off at a suicidal speed. The cop took off in pursuit.

"That was stupid," I gasped. "No, it wasn't," Phil said. "He'll keep the cop busy for awhile, lose him, and we can race again." The community college girls were still sitting on their hood, undisturbed, taking the first hit of their artfully-rolled joint.

"Hey, where'd that cop go?" asked Jeff, staggering back from the wall. We headed back down to the starting line, and got there just in time to see a black Hearse and a Greyhound tourbus sitting trapped at

the line. They had tried to drive through, but were now surrounded by teenagers who were chanting "Race! Race!" and waving beers. The driver of the tourbus smiled, shook his head, and shrugged at the driver of the Hearse. The Hearse's engine revved. The crowd parted, and the starter's hand came down. The tourbus held the lead through first gear, and a cheer went up from the crowd.

Five minutes and twice that many races later, a Philadelphia police van pulled onto Pattison and started slowly down the street, finally stopping in the middle of the drag strip. The races stopped. The line of cars behind the starting line sat idling. Teenagers froze in mid-drink. A guilty hush descended over the entire street, broken only by the ominous rumble of the cars. Nothing moved.

From out of nowhere, a beer bottled exploded against the side of the van. Another bottle followed, and another after that. Then dozens of bottles pelted the van in a shower of broken glass and beer and whiskey. The mass raised a war cry, over the howl of the van's siren. The police inside radioed for help and barreled their way down the street, escaping the angry mob.

The races were finally broken up by Philadelphia Police K-9 Units. While the police stood nervously in the street, holding back German Shepherds keyed up for the kill, the mass of teenagers slowly evacuated the drag strip. Another K-9 unit patrolled the parking lot, stopping to shine its spotlight inside any cars that weren't clearing out fast enough. Other units parked at both ends of Pattison. A few diehard greasers stood by the side of the road, challenging the cop there to let his dog go. The cop knew better.

An hour later we were plummeting down the Skuykill Expressway, on our way back to our safe, suburban homes. Jeff was passed out in the back seat, his brush with injury at the hands of an angry driver lost in a stupor of alcohol-induced numbness. Phil rode shotgun, as usual, lazily blowing cigarette smoke at the roof, its smell mixing with that of the burnt rubber, oil, gas, beer, and sweat in my shirt. I drove, my heart pounding faster than a high-compression piston, images of a chrome and glass rubber jungle swimming in my head, populated with aimless teenagers, sixties-throwbacks, and marauding police cars. I could hardly wait until next weekend. **Flipside**

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Cont. from Page 32...

"Growth and Calcification Patterns of Enamel and Dentin," and propped it up in front of the television screen.

Seven years earlier, Sandborn had sat comfortably in Dr. Riddle's office chair.

"Listen to me, Sandbo. In one year you will be practicing. In one year I will have to call you Doctor."

"Yes," Sandborn said. "So you think you know it all? Now that you've heard about fissured tongues and sublingual caruncles you think you're a hot property, right?"

"So they tell me." "Listen to me you snotty punk, who wrote The Talking Tooth?" "We didn't study that."

"And I'll tell you why you didn't study it. Because it's about pain. The real thing. Pain. All you young bucks don't want to know about pain. Only money. I'll tell you who wrote it: Dr. Jim Cranshaw."

"The Jim Cranshaw?" "His first book, a novel. The only real book he ever wrote. Before he sold out and started that chain of roto-dentists in shopping malls."

"Sounds like a good idea," Sandborn said.

"Exactly. You think it's a good idea because you still don't understand what it's all about. Listen to this passage from The Talking Tooth. It's from the perspective of a mandibular lateral incisor:

The lesion began as a small blister, but soon fine white lacy lines were radiating from the margin. They closed around me like a pillow and whispered promises into the night. Like a vain fool I believed them, ignoring the violaceous papules that subtly crept over my body. I slept most of the day, and

drank most of the night. Finally I realized what was really happening to me. I screamed to have my entire area indurated."

"Induration!" I demanded. "Induration or death!"

"That's easy," said Sandborn. "Wickham's disease. The lacy lines represent—"

"I'm not asking for a diagnosis, Sandhead! I'm talking about the real thing! The lacy lines represent the fingers closing around your throat every time you go into somebody's mouth! The screams you'll hear at night! The patient's pain you'll never hear about. Don't you hear what I'm telling you, boy?"

"No," Sandborn said. To appeal to the auditory sense, Dr. Sandborn provided a subtle alternative to elevator music—tapes that would be played suggestively in the background during the tour.

The first tape required a few hours of television watching per day. He recorded some of the more popular TV shows with his VCR on the chance that they might make dental references, then rerecorded selected bits from the VCR tape onto a cassette tape, then remixed live from the cassette tape onto another cassette tape, dubbing in his own comments where appropriate, with a low-speed intraflex lux drill running serenely in the background. He began the tape with Fascinating Facts They Don't Tell You On TV. For instance, when Johnny Carson ridiculed Dr. Mendelsohn's letter asking for kinder treatment of the dental profession, NBC failed to acknowledge that Johnny's second wife divorced him because he ground his teeth at night. Alex P. Keaton's comment that he preferred an evening of mime to an evening of dentistry posed problems until Dr. Sandborn simply switched the words "mime"

and "dentistry." Surprisingly, some comments needed no editing, such as those by the dentist on M*A*S*H, who avoided the latrine for eighteen hours and refused to kiss a nurse because of the germs. Of course, Dr. Sandborn wisely excluded some material, such as when Dick York's son bore the butterknife through a piece of toast to mimic the process of drilling, and Dick sat on the merry-go-round horse instead of in a proper dentist's chair, with the dentist wearing a purple cape and dressed like David Copperfield.

Some tourists, Dr. Sandborn knew, would misinterpret such information if it were included, and his tape would become counterproductive. For the more hip kids and teenagers, he used Thomas McGuire's book, The Tooth Trip, reading aloud into a microphone from select sections of the book such as "A Day in the Life of a Germ," "The Bad Acid Trip," "Stimulents," "Your First Encounter with Chief White Coat," "Cavitron," and "How to tell when you have One."

Dr. Sandborn listened to the tapes over and over until they became white noise. Six years earlier, Sandborn had sat in Dr. Riddle's dining room, eating the largest meal he had had in years. "Taste this Sandy," Dr. Riddle said, showing a forkful of bouillabaisse in front of Sandborn's mouth. The bouillabaisse tasted like rice with margarine. In fact, everything tasted like rice with margarine, but there was no rice with margarine on the table.

"Please dear, Mr. Sandborn looks full enough already," Mrs. Riddle said.

"So you think he's fat, do you?" Dr. Riddle said, poking towards Sandborn's belly. "The wife here thinks you're too fat."

"Thanks, I really am full," Sandborn said. "You could stand to lose a few pounds," Mrs. Riddle said.

"Now let's treat our guest with some respect, dear. Tomorrow this boy graduates and goes into private practice with me."

"Oh, yes," said Mrs. Riddle, "the great dental profession. Have you told him yet that you're manning a sinking ship? About the bile taste of bad breath? How you're going to create him in your own image?"

"Just the ticket Sandy, you and I opening our own office. Like a father and son."

"Do you know," Mrs. Riddle said to Sandborn, "why we don't have any children?"

"Did you know, Sandy, that Mrs. Riddle made this entire meal in the microwave?"

"That's very impressive," said Sandborn. "That's why it all tastes like rice with margarine," Dr. Riddle said. Mrs. Riddle picked up her soup spoon.

"She's a microwave queen," Dr. Riddle said. Mrs. Riddle scooped her soup spoon into a casserole dish and aimed carefully for her husband's mouth.

"Have some asparagus puff pie," she said gaily, sending it across the table and onto his forehead.

"Maybe I'd better be going," Sandborn said.

"For after dinner treats we have pumpkin bars and asparanuts," Mrs. Riddle told Sandborn.

Dr. Riddle pushed his chair back, squatted down, and lifted his end of the table, trying to slide the entire meal onto his wife's lap.

In the dining room of his apartment, Dr. Sandborn worked for 37 evenings in a row, making informal

placemats for the dining room table that the tourists could enjoy while they ate lunch together. He laminated them himself. His plan was to serve the tourists in shifts of four to preserve that family feel without crowding anyone at the table. First, he reproduced a pencil sketch of Rembrandt's The Charlatan, depicting a market busker in sweeping criss-crossed and curved lines holding up a crude medicine with which to ease toothaches. This placemat was reserved, of course, for the artsy tourist.

The second placemat catered to the superstitious and neurotic tourist. It was a pen and ink drawing of Goya's Hunting for Teeth, with a woman on tiptoe averting her face and holding a scarf over it while trying to remove teeth from a man who had recently been hanged. Some women, Dr. Sandborn knew, still retained equally ridiculous superstitions about how to relieve toothache pain. One patient said that her mother used to make her eat a banana whenever she had a toothache. Invariably the girl would eat the banana and lose the tooth in the process. Any female tourist who might have had similar painful childhood experiences could sit at the Goya placemat and concentrate on the superstitious look on the woman's face, while sipping a hot soup completely unlike a banana, such as spicy tomato or mushroom bisque.

However, to show he was giving the ladies a fair shake, and in anticipation of the inevitable feminist tourist, he made a water color of Daumier's She Stands Her Ground for the third placemat, coasting a burly female dentist with her entire hand hidden in a patient's mouth, five overly sized molars and a tooth-key at her feet. He added just a touch of ruffle to the woman's dress at the shoulders, elbows, wrists, and waist to suggest a softer look than Daumier had.

And, for the fourth placemat, geared to the particularly witty and analytical tourist, he pastelled a copy of the controversial 1956 painting by Solot, The Revolt of the Molars, using additive colors for the two adult forceps and subtractive colors for the two baby forceps. The forcep family huddled together on their handles behind the wall, terrified of being caught up in the bloody revolt outside, where a mob of molars hoisted some nuclear family members of the forceps' up on the gallows, the molars dancing mirthfully. This placemat would be particularly relevant when serving a bologna and cheese sandwich to a tourist who needed a root canal.

He thought of everything. He had graciously decided against reproducing Elgstrom's 1945 water color, The Widow, depicting an old lady sitting in an office armchair and grinning reminiscently at her dead husband's false teeth in her left hand. He even denied himself the urge to reproduce Pieter Breughel's 1556 Christ Casting Out the Money-changers, completely resisting the temptation to circle the often-ignored dentist on Jesus' right with red crayon. The religious implications, he thought, would be too controversial. Also, he kept Paul Bunyans, sweet and sour pork, chili, sauerkraut, and pigs in a blanket strictly off the menu, because he knew what they would do to his tourist's teeth.

Three years earlier, Dr. Riddle and Dr. Sandborn had worked side by side in the same office.

"Smell this, Dr. Sandborn," Dr. Riddle said, sneaking up behind him and covering his chin with a nitrous mask.



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"Not me, your patient," Dr. Sandborn said, trying to stay calm and guiding Dr. Riddle's wrist to his patient's face.

"I'd rather be having a baby than a root canal," Dr. Riddle's patient said.

"Well here, Gladys, let me adjust this chair a little," Dr. Riddle said. Gladys laughed and breathed calmly with the mask over her nose.

Dr. Sandborn returned to the mouth of his patient, twiddling his instruments like chopsticks, trying to scrape some plaque off a molar without frowning. The patient's breath smelled like yellow ammonia. The patient swallowed suddenly and Dr. Sandborn caught a whiff of sour orange juice as the patient exhaled.

"Do you use mouthwash regularly?" Dr. Sandborn asked. "No," the patient said.

"How long since you've had your teeth cleaned?" Dr. Sandborn asked. "About five years," the patient said.

"No wonder you had little hairs stuck in there," Dr. Riddle said. Gladys laughed.

"This gas is great," she said. "I'm on a cloud. Floating down the highway with Frank Sinatra. He's singing 'Ring-A-Ding Ding.' On a cloud." "What flavor is it?" Dr. Riddle asked.

"Vanilla, silly, all clouds are vanilla."

Dr. Sandborn led his patient into the hallway. "Your mouth will taste funny for a while," he told the patient, "but start using Listermint twice a day and the smell will go away."

"Okay," said the patient. "Now," said Gladys, "the cloud is angle hair. Like at Christmas. And I'm taking a nap and eating an orange."

"What does it smell like?" Dr. Riddle asked. "A lemon," she said, delighted. "The orange smells like a lemon!"

In the bathroom Dr. Sandborn took special care, since he knew it was the most common room for household accidents. He placed a large plastic spray bottle of Campho-Phenique next to the band-aids and cotton balls and tongue depressors on the aluminum stand.

Above the Campho-Phenique, he taped a sign: "Hey Kids! (and grownups too) This special solution smells remarkably like Chloraseptic, but do not spray it down the back of your throat or you will have to vomit and be rushed to the hospital. Do put it on cuts and bruises with cotton balls, then bring the dirty cotton balls to me. Enjoy the tour, Dr. Sandborn."

In the medicine cabinet, within handy reach of the sink, he planted a jar of orange sherbet-flavored Ultra-One for the kids, and unflavored Sensodyne toothpaste for the adults.

On the bottle of Banticide on the bottom shelf, he wrote with a felt-tip: "For those who want to avoid spreading hepatitis, herpes, AIDS and tuberculosis, gargle with this solution at least once every visit as soon as you enter the apartment."

In the living and dining areas, he perfumed the environment with open jars of Polyjel impression material and mint flavored Propy Paste. Few dentists realized that Polyjel, once opened and aged for a few days, retained the scent of various fine cheeses, or that mint flavored Propy Paste seemed much more spearmint than peppermint when one concentrated on the fragrance.

One year earlier, Dr. Sandborn begged Dr. Riddle to reconsider his

decision. "Just hang around the office and be my teacher again," he pleaded. "I'll pay you."

"No Sandstorm," Dr. Riddle said quietly. "I've taught you all I can. If I retire now, me and the Mrs. can enjoy the money while we're still young enough."

"But you were right. I still don't understand pain. I don't know how to deal with it. My patients will stop coming if you don't stay."

Dr. Riddle touched Dr. Sandborn's shoulder. He spoke gently. "There's something I've never told you. Remember the year I took the sabbatical? I was ready to crack up. I spent three months just pacing around in a church."

Dr. Riddle had walked the south aisle of the Wells Cathedral in Somerset with his eyes closed every day. When he could sense that no one was around, he ran to the sculpture that he had read about with such fascination in the office and shimmied up it. He stroked his fingertips over the capital of the stone column with his eyes shut, memorizing every feature.

"It looks like a gargoyle with a toothache," a woman had said, startling Dr. Riddle and knocking him five feet to the floor.

"I bought a picture postcard of it for two pence at the front desk," she said, trying to put her hand into the

sculpture's mouth. Dr. Riddle had turned to her violently, thrust out his chin, and yanked the side of his mouth as close to his left ear as possible, closing his right eye viciously and flaring his nostrils like a dragon, looking, for an instant, exactly like the sculpture.

"How cute," the woman had said, snapping his picture. "My husband will love it."

According to the free tour brochure the woman had in her pocketbook, your pain would disappear if you touched Bishop William By-ton II's epitaph, engraved in the floor of the cathedral, and thought of the sculpture at the same time.

"So what happened?" Dr. Sandborn said excitedly. "I was arrested for sleeping on top of the epitaph," Dr. Riddle said. "Now goodbye."

"But I don't know how to act on my own."

Sandborn entered the empty spare bedroom of his apartment without flicking on the light. This was the room in which his tourists were not allowed. In the middle of the dark floor, he practiced spinning around with his eyes closed without moving his feet, rolling his eyeshells within the perimeters of his head until they were soft as marbles. He clamped his teeth over his tongue so that he could cleanly taste the inside of a green inkpen. With a wallpaper paste brush and without moving his arms, he coated his body with red Eucerin and Neutrogena in the dark. Lacing his fingertips behind his head, he peeled on one finger at a time, a pair of ambidextrous unisize disposable latex examination gloves, and decided he would never take them off. Then he lowered his body, from the neck down, onto a freshly ironed Kay-

Apollonia is the patron saint of dentists. The Romans pulled all her teeth one at a time because she refused to renounce her faith. They broke her teeth with iron points, extracted the roots with tongs, and crushed her jawbones into chalk.

In the middle of the dark floor of the bedroom, Dr. Sandborn lay a rag that had been soaked in chloroform draped around his face. He waited patiently for the tourists to arrive, breathing peacefully

Apollonia, Apollonia Holy Saint in Heaven Free me from evil pain For my ache may torture me to death.

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After I return you say, "Only a dream or something you ate."

I pull the covers over me to lie awake until dawn.

Those mornings you smirk, telling me there's nothing to worry about, or I worry too much about nothing. Joking, you say I am losing my mind. But we know better.

You know I am serious when I tell you each time I climb the stairs I feel a distant warning, something has been undone and I must change.

You say "insecurity, something trivial."

I say fear. You say I behave like a little girl.

Each night I am a scared little girl, afraid that in her past, or during her sleep something has happened she cannot remember.

I lie awake, waiting and afraid, that in the morning I will find it gone.

--Gerry Musinsky



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CLOSE ENCOUNTER: STAN LAUREL



by Arthur Winfield Knight

He told me I couldn't bring a camera or tape recorder when I came to see him. I could understand why Stan Laurel wouldn't want me to bring the camera; he was an old man and he probably wanted his fans to remember him the way he had been on the screen--he had already looked old in his last film, *Utopia*, 12 years earlier--but I couldn't understand why he wouldn't want me to bring a tape recorder. When I heard him speak, I would have known who I was talking to if I'd been blindfolded; his voice hadn't changed.

Laurel lived on the second floor of an apartment house that fronted the ocean in Santa Monica; it was a modest place, probably with one bedroom, and the furnishings were almost spartan. The only memento of his screen days was a framed sketch of him with Oliver Hardy, which hung on the wall.

I was surprised when Laurel told me that he and Hardy had just been in the business for the money although they both enjoyed acting, enjoyed working together, but when he said they'd quit making films because their later pictures weren't as good as the early ones, I knew he'd lied. If he and Hardy had only been interested in money, what difference would it have made if the pictures were bad? Laurel was too modest.

He had learned his trade in England, where his family was in show business; he said, "They were all dramatic actors, so I was the black sheep of the family, going into comedy." His training, however, included singing, dancing, acrobatics and drama, and he was taught the use of exaggeration, his trade-mark in the films with Hardy. As Stan put it, everything in their movies was "logical but exaggerated."

Laurel came to America in 1910 as the understudy of Charlie Chaplin, and Stan made more than 60 pictures, acting and directing, before he and Hardy became a team. They were the first comedians to use their own names on the screen, and Laurel said much of their actual character went into their roles. In life, Hardy had been astonishingly like his screen counterpart.

They were also the first comedians to use delayed reactions. Prior to 1926, when they made their first film together, comedians had responded

immediately to any situation they were in. If one were hit in the face with a pie, for instance, he would immediately toss a pie back. Laurel and Hardy, however, would look toward the camera--Stan lifting his eyebrows in bewilderment and Hardy fingering his chin--while they pondered what to do. This technique was utilized in a number of films, *Tit For Tat* being a famous one.

When I asked Laurel how difficult it was to make the change from silent films to talkies, he said the transition was easy because they didn't talk much. Initially, sound was primarily used for special effects. Most actors made a mistake. Stan believed, by feeling obliged to talk; they threw out what they knew for something they didn't.

When Laurel had told me not to bring the camera or tape recorder, I'd expected him to be difficult but he'd answered all my questions easily, thoughtfully, until I asked him about Jerry Lewis. I'd heard that Lewis had contributed to Laurel's support after he'd gone through the money he'd made and, since I'd always considered Lewis a jerk, it pleased me to think that he might have some hidden sensitivity--pleased me to think Lewis could recognize genius in others. Laurel said, "Do I look like I'm broke? Do I look like I need charity?" And he made a few unkind remarks about reporters, although he never swore, never raised his voice. He was anguished. And I'd hurt him unintentionally. And I was sorry. He almost made me feel that I'd betrayed his confidence. Almost. I'd only been trying to do my job, perhaps not as tactfully as I might have, and if he'd been offended, well, what could I say? I felt lousy.

Trying to explain why I'd asked the question, I could see it was hopeless--hopeless--so I left him standing in the doorway to the kitchen, where we'd been talking. Now he could go back to his memories and his wife, who'd stayed in the other room while we were talking, and I could go back to San Francisco and write my story. It was an early lesson for me: The writer is always the enemy.

For Laurel: It was the last interview he ever gave. Flipside

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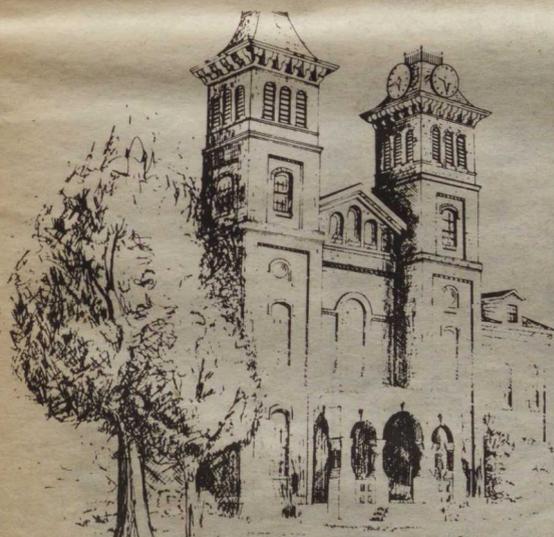
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LIKE WHAT?

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