

REFLECTOR
Autumn, 1971



The stone found me in bright sunlight
around 9th and Stuyvesant Streets and
found, if not a friend, at
least a traveling companion.

from "The Stone"

—Paul Blackburn

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Bards Have Become Gentle Weighting Prophets

For John Taggart

. . . CRAIG ZUMBRUN

They
 Brought back the
 Religion
 by all the
 rests between the words
 the congregation sits and waits
 the preacher is now
 speaking

Prehistoric and ever vocal
 men of the audience
 middle of life—waiting with their eyes

This is the still congregation now,
 men's eyes also wonder to the young girls in the audience.
 all this is the service.

Speak and pray

 tell us why we
 goddam everyone and
 who's there to put us down here
 goddamns to ourselves to be down and those forces
 in the quiet and pervading words
 the prehistoric preacher the ballad maker
 sings religious songs for the new bards
 to listen to one at a time,
 everyone has their own chorus.



Faded, illegible text located below the photograph, likely a caption or description of the scene.

Haikus

. . . WOODY HARTER

Have you no reason
to be sitting there alone?
Yes, but not for you.

So little they cost—
Christ, marveling at cold corpses.
—only a bullet.

The Looking Glass

. . . CAROL CHANCO

You lie there naked, and vulnerable;
. . . or so you tell me.
And I laugh.
Your transparent window becomes opaque
From the Breath of your uncertainty.
Let me touch you, hurt you, shatter the pieces;
Climb inside, carefully putting you back:
piece
by
piece.

. . . I promise . . . gently.
You sit there, cowering behind the pains,
naked, and yet not.
My laughter turns to tears, as I wait . . . behind
your amniotic glass,
My fingerprints smudging your flawless window.

Driving

. . . DON FUNK

Drivin' in the '48 Dodge
 I see many sights—like you.
 Stopped to see
 If this pen worked
 Remembering VietNam, and the people I love
 Humanity.

The flight officer would tiredly traverse
 Late night, where we drank and roared and waited
 In monsoon daze of death
 Fatigued by duty and responsibility
 After a day's work (you work too) it was
 The Marine chopper pilot's escape club.

Inevitably he'd arrive to ask
 How're you feeling? Are you sober?
 Emergency Medevac for you.
 Can you hack it?

Sure.

(Been busted on a bloodtest sure back in Pennsylvania!)

Landing on a flashlight
 Pinpoint of light, black box of night,
 I felt comradeship for the dead—
 Loaded aboard in black plastic bags or blankets
 Bodies all, who've said it all.
 I took special care of them
 As they would've me.

American traffic, gas-rich
 Passes this point in time
 Passing roadside fruit stands we fought for
 Shading the sun with visors
 Saying, "Look honey—there's a deer!"
 I reiterate, stateless

but not lost (I shall not litter

on you, America)
 "Yes, yes again—and please
 Don't ignore the deer."

I have not the money
 To buy one boxcar on this railroad
 But I'm talkin' for you.
 Ask no more.

Share with me
 The autonomous power of freedom
 Sunday mass of traffic passing
 An outpost Dodge and me . . .
 I stopped along this road to pay my passage
 For the sun, given free.

My pen is down.
 How to survive, Socrates?



Indians, Animals and Spirits

. . . RICHARD STUEMPFLE

Environment often times molds the human, his identity, his views, his life. For the American Indian this is especially true. Here was a people living in a region of bizarre character. Their land ranged from hot dry desert to swampland of the South, the frigid North, and the forests and rivers of the East. Each region was different—each people in it was different. Survival — daily survival — was the game they played. If daily survival is the way of life, you become linked to the soil, the animals, from which you live. This is the story of the American Indian and the why of his religion.

The Indians were a pre-scientific society. Everything that existed (and some nonexistent) was explained through mythology and legends. The Indian's mythology and legends were as diverse as the number of tribes there were.

There were a good many generalities. The gods created the heaven and earth — everything except man-animals: "Man-animals had animal form but human speech and behavior. They appeared on earth in their own right (not necessarily created). They were man's predecessors and sometimes ancestors, not servants and inferiors."¹ In many tales the man-animals set up the concepts of right and wrong. This was done by the trickster-transformer idea.

The trickster-transformer idea can be compared to the animal fables of Aesop. The man-animals through fooling around, gambling, or by being human did create, in different episodes, death, work, sickness, day and night as well as right and wrong. This being—the trickster-transformer in a man-animal represented as a mink to the people of the plateau area and as the noble Nanabozho to the people of the Great Lakes (Longfellow's model for Hiawatha). Generally, the trickster-transformer was the most intelligent animal of the area. All of this happened before there were people.

Gradually the trickster-transformer man-animals destroyed themselves and caused a great flood, that destroyed most man-animals but few, if any, of the concepts they set up. After the waters cleared up the few remaining man-animals created man and destroyed most of the gods.

Man, when created, already had his set of rules and regulations. They were the concepts set up by the trickster-transformers. Man could do nothing but live with them. After man was created, the man-animals retreated to the wilds, but could and would talk to man in dreams and visions.

This left the Indian in a strange position. He had no original sin and no need for redemption: "Their requests were for long life and plenty, not for pardon."² But the Indian needed animals in order to survive. The universal idea then became; treat the animals as you would treat the people in your tribe. Be nice to nature (everything, both animate and inanimate) and it will be nice to you: "For the old-time Indian, the world did not consist of inanimate materials to be used and animals to be butchered and eaten. It was alive and everything in it could help or harm him.

The Sioux, in his sweat bath, prayed to the rocks on which he was pouring water.
 Oh Rocks . . . by receiving your sacred breath
 Our People will be long winded as they walk
 The path of life; your breath
 Is the very breath of life."³

For the Indian there was no separation of beings; all were one and they all lived together, to help each other: "These 'nature persons' were all around the Indian and that he must follow their rules for gaining their co-operation."⁴ The possible reason for this concept was common sense combined with survival.

The Indians saw animals as powerful spirit beings. Thus the animals had souls, feeling, almost human, is the best way to express it. If animals are almost human (in spirit) and one of the taboos of the tribe is not to kill a human, a problem arises. The Indians settled this by giving animals the power of reincarnation (which may explain their yearly fertility rites). Therefore Indians could kill animals without worry of depleting their supply and insulting the animal spirits. There was a catch, however. The animal spirits demanded that the Indians didn't over kill and they must follow certain rituals before and after the kill. If they weren't followed, the animals wouldn't cooperate with the hunter, causing great suffering in the tribe.

How a man received his animal guardian was almost a universal practice among Indians of North America. At puberty a male was instructed by his father, the shaman, or the priest (depending upon tribe) to leave the tribal area for the wilderness. The young man was to remain there and fast until he had a vision. This vision would be in the form of a man-animal (now revealing his true self) coming to help the young man (who may now be starving) both now and in the future. In return for his help the brave was instructed in a certain pattern of ritual and way of life that would benefit both parties. In most cases it now became taboo for the youth to kill any species of his vision spirit. The boy (in many cases, now a man) went back to his tribe and followed the instructions given to him. The majority of times he kept most of the instructions to himself—for greater then was their magic. For the rituals he now joined with others who shared the same vision. These rituals took a good portion of the man's time: "This personal relation of an individual to his mentor is the fundamental concept of New World religion and ritualistic procedure."⁵

Rituals can best be explained this way: "Rituals are formalized narratives of an assumed supernatural revelation from the gods. These ritual plays were found everywhere. Their principal feature was an animal-like monster who was the true hero."⁶

The animal spirits were always greater and more powerful than the Indian. In view of this, most Indians thought themselves fortunate, for only a few spirits were "bad." ("Bad" to the Indian was determined as a too human state—negligence, forgetfulness, apathy). Many times the spirits did extra things for the Indians, but only if they were paid proper respect: "In the sky dwelt the good Ohshadahgea, the Cloud Land Eagle, always ready to rescue the perishing. A dew-pool rested between his shoulders and when the rain did not fall he gave drink to the thirsty plants."⁷

"The Hopi Snake Priests, in eight days preparation before their ceremony, told the neophytes how their clan had once been snakes, carried in a bag at the end of the rainbow, how all snakes were their brothers, and how they would bring rain after having been entertained in a dance."⁸

This is all the surface of the matter. There are few areas of thought that must be aired before the Indian-Animal relationship can be realized.

One of these is the role of the animal himself. Why was he placed above man? Indian mythology can answer these questions.

In Indian mythology, as already stated, the animal (man-animals) after creating all the havoc in the world and after the flood, created man. Man was not created all-knowing perfect. The man-animals created him in steps. Often they created man without fingers or a mouth, and always without any culture. These man-animals then had to form the human mouth, cut apart the fingers and teach man his culture. As each man-animal was different they each taught a different culture. After a period of time man became aware, fully aware—man was now man. At this time, in order to protect themselves, the animals moved to the forest of plains—away from the Indian.

Because the Indian was created by the man-animals he gave them thanks, in forms of sacrifice, dance and offerings; not to the gods responsible for the man-animals. These gods should be clarified for they occupy a peculiar position in Indian life.

The god or gods of Indian religion created everything but man. They were said to be unchanging and all knowing. They were pushed out and/or destroyed by the man-animals. As the Indian could not do anything about the gods but he could about the animal spirits, he left the gods to themselves: "Such was the faith of the Seneca who would not insult his God by commanding Him, or by fearing that he would not care for his people."⁹ It actually came to the point where one should not worry about what can't be changed, but try to change that which could be changed. For the Indians what could be changed was their relation to the animal spirits. Spirits were something the Indians could control, at least partially.

The Indian-Animal relationship was one of give and take. The Animals would give themselves, or be sent to give themselves, to the hunter. In return the hunter must give thanks to the chief animal spirit who sent the lesser animal. Many times there was a ritual to perform after the kill. These rituals would include such things as: only using parts of the animals; puncturing the dead animal's eye, that its spirit might escape to be reborn; careful use of household implements that had anything to do with the animal, and paying strict attention to the message given in visions: "A great source of attrition was the sacrifice of weapons, arrows, dishes, and ornaments to the spirits of the animals whom they had killed for food."¹⁰

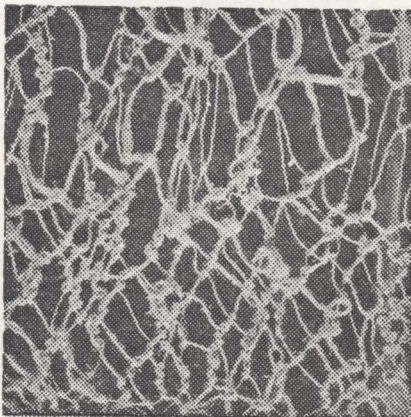
It is interesting to note that the animals' spirits were not killed, but rather they sent lesser (spirit-wise) animals to be killed. The animals killed were not regarded as sacred, just their leader. This leader (called by a given title: "Great White Buffalo," "Great Bear," "Deer Father") was the spirit to whom the Indian prayed. This same spirit received the homage paid by the Indians.

It was the "great spirit" that the Indian bargained with. This "spirit" was the power that judged the Indian. If an Indian did not follow a certain ritual, chances were he might not find the game he was looking for. Spring brought the tribal dances and mass ceremonies. Should a person be irreverent these spirits could cause a year of drought or a huge fire or death. For this reason visions were regarded as most important—for it would not be unlike the spirit to change a part of the ritual or point out the insincere man. Survival was at stake so changes in the ritual were made. Offenders of the sacred rituals were severely punished. (If they were not the whole tribe might suffer.)

A basic point in the Indian-Animal relationship is getting the approval of the spirits. Ceremonies were the most important way of getting approval. Ceremonies were performed by the Indians for the sole purpose of getting in closer agreement with the spirits. Though the ceremonies tend to look and represent different ideas, they all can be related to a single point: "All have a common focus on duty toward the Supernatural, rather than toward fellowmen. In fact, the rituals described here contain nothing at all about kindness, honesty, and forgiving or trespasses."¹¹ In their duty to the supernatural—the spirits, the Indians had to co-operate with each other. One man could not hunt by himself, live by himself. Ceremonies brought men together in harmony with each other and with the "Great Spirit." With this relationship what had one to fear—you had others to help you and you were assured guidance from the "Great Spirit." This was the way the Indian lived.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Ruth M. Underhill, *Red Man's Religion* (Chicago, 1965), p.35.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p.37.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p.40.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p.41.
- 5 Clark Wissler, *The American Indian* (Gloucester, Mass., 1957), p.207.
- 6 *Ibid.*, p.199.
- 7 Arthur C. Parka, *The History of the Seneca Indian* (Port Washington, N.Y., 1926), p.79
- 8 Underhill, p.31.
- 9 Parka, p.89.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p.86.
- 11 Underhill, p.9.



The Shit'll be a flyin' when Ole Betsy hits the dirt

. . . WOODY HARTER

Vaugely familiar and slightly fermented
The Corn Husker's Union is up in the air.
Though its gravely distorted, it's fully foretold,
that the shit'll be a flyin'
when Ole Betsy hits the dirt.

While their slogans are failing it still must pretend.
They're unwittingly causing future despair
to face utter destruction before we remold.
Yes, the shit'll be a flyin'
when Ole Betsy hits the dirt.

Because we are conscious we're dreadfully frightened
and asking forgiveness for what we have done,
so take out a loan to pay off your sins
cause the shit'll be a flyin'
when Ole Betsy hits the dirt.

Pattern

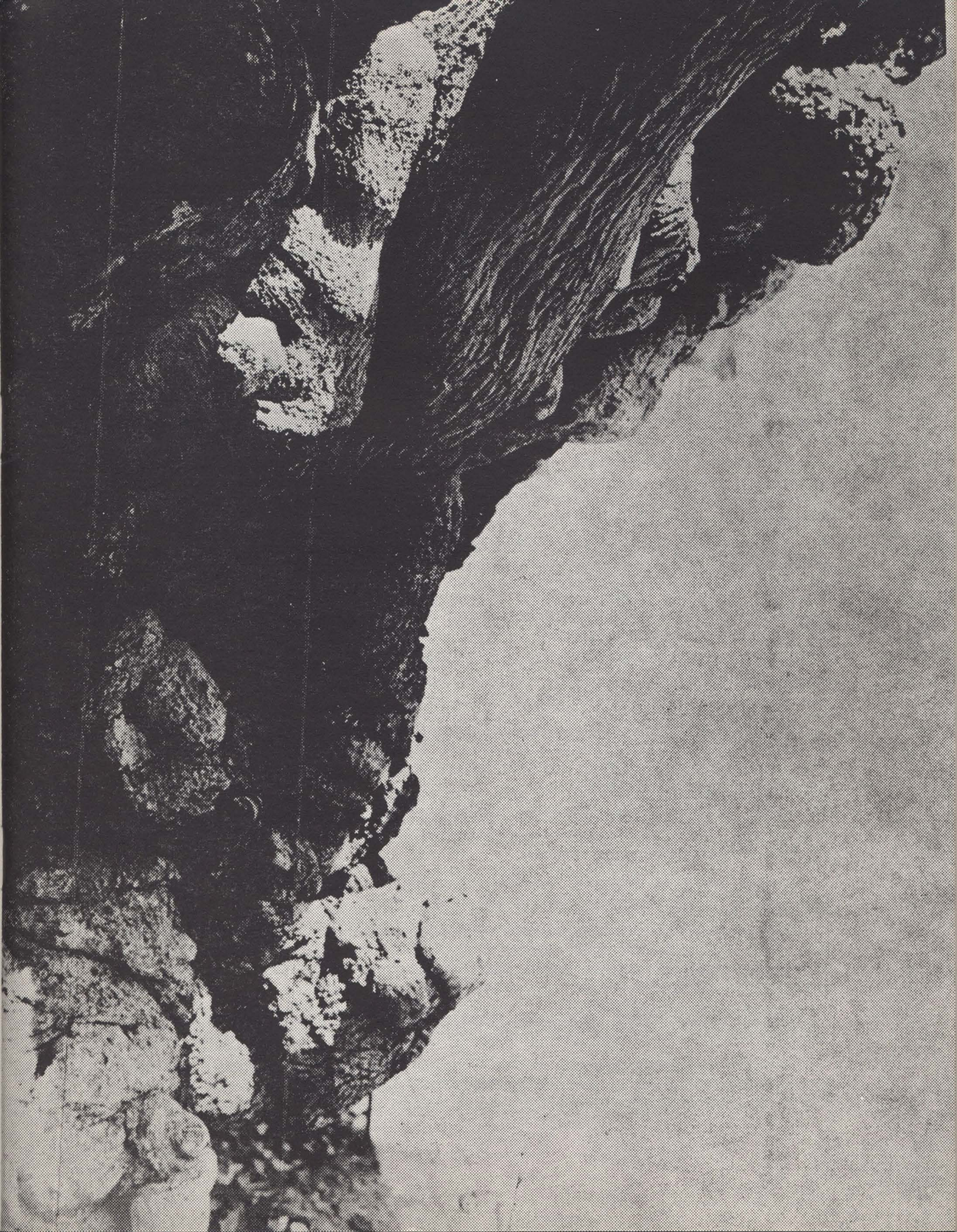
. . . CRAIG ZUMBRUN

Some men choose
to love the
most delicate
patterns which
they sometimes
realize
must be loose
to contain the
delicateness.

they think
delicate
means most
gentle.

These men start when
their eyes are torn
or are scratched
by the intricate
coarse cloth.

Delicate can not be rough they say
they persist in saying and they
die believing, very tired.



No-Hitter

. . . LINDA JONES

Paper towels and orange juice, speed aisle anything but speedy. People exchanging coupons for A&P china. There probably is an A&P in China. All American ladies with their fresh Japanese hymens buy olives before going home. New York is the only yeast I know or café to. Exaggerate pagan custom of placing divider phallus between mine and hers. Misery Compromises: Everything north of this bar belongs to me. Hers number at least 11. Ten's the limit, 10! g-zus lady, buy the store in another aisle. Bother not A&P's singular gesture toward we who dwell alone.

Obviously an over order of Easter flowers. Narcissus or "i" which formerly sold for 2.77 now going at the remarkably low price of .97. What would Narcissus say, being non-union and all?

Onedollartwentycents, thank you, goodteeth. Still raining, glad I walked. Wipers still not working, not again but still. Forgot cigarettes and yogurt. Could live without yogurt but will greet Death with Marlboro in mouth, at least yellow teeth and smoker's breath. Reenter.

Boy in college once told me it tasted nice, bullshit. Provided laughable mental image of boy spending all his free time secretly chewing his father's WWII boots. Saw him several times after that but never let him order for me in a restaurant.

Speed booth this time vacant—also closed. Aisle 2 smiles and asks for money. I'll bet you have your price, young lady.

Out in the elements. What's so elementary about rain? Interesting stuff rain, divorced of scientific thought. Admire Mother Nature for her kiss-off attitude. Should world peace ever come she'd celebrate with a sundry series of earthquakes.

Should have gotten rid of all scientists years ago. Anyone with an IQ over 95 should be used for parts. Recall first semester defense of A-bomb makers. Very pro-science, then, realistic; could see nothing wrong or immoral about defense. I, too, have stuck to my guns or held them at any rate.

J-walk. If killed, I'll be responsible—another unpaid debt, doo-dah, doo-dah. Must be 8 at least. Watch tube, perhaps read, turn off all lights and hide from landlord. Could pay rent if I quit smoking. No chance.

Strange car in my driveway. Now see, hear, just because I am Carless, there's no need to take me for advantage. May all your tires deflate.

Shelter. Would hang my hat but have neither hat nor hangar. Tube that has given me more than one pleasurable hour, veteran of familiar attic and Kate Smith, Thee expanse of you, your snow, your broken picture tube. Fine example of modern technology and craftsmanship, circa 1950.

Naybore's fone ringing. I, too, have possessed a number which everyone has. That was long ago and this two will pass. Wall-to-wall privacy, reclusing as I wanted.

Thoughts re-evolve to boy with smoker's breath fetish. Told him once I was shy. Didn't believe me. Come to think of it, didn't think anything I said was true. Asterisk and file it under don't think about it.

To die, o sleep, to sleep to escape boredom and glance at reality the way one looks at lettuce. Lettuce prey. To die, good move if properly executed. Stream of conscious—flood of flummery. Feed your head. Turn your head; don't talk while I'm talking and never laugh—credo of the public school system—a yawn is clearly a sign of dissent.

What is wrong? Are my teeth upside down? I count the same number of heads and my glassy eyes are a dollar-a-plate. Will you always be looking for a real college or U?

Flummery. Veteran desert boots. Pie or sand depending on spelling and pronunciation. Don't talk to strangers and/or older people. Twenty-five percent of the people or more are older people depending on your age. Depends on which serve the porpoise or ever.

Correct answer. There are no, I repeat, no, correct answers. Life is a big multiple choice test with answers that are adequate though not entirely accurate. Your score is in the hands of the fate machine for a penny. It depends.

Out, out brief candle! Much too expensive burning scented for myself, me and I. Pronouns pronounced dead on arrival. Ego should be so easily disposed of. People, when you get home tonight, turn on the water and put your egoes down the garbage disposal . . . no the john will not do; that's a completely different principal, or teacher at any rate.

The quantity of verbs is not strained. Flow of commands, often confused with neighboring nouns or nuns as the anti-abortion people would have it. All the world's a noun and the verbs are petty players.

9. Flying time. Time now arriving late at Gate No. 5. Proper protests; lack of property. Boardwalk, Park Place, Community Chest (what they used to call a girl in 10th grade). Naive. Then.

Hot. Insufferably. Dante felt his wants. Dan't e?

Grass is green but not always. Cows since the beginning of time have eaten grass and gone. Chateaubriand is made of grass, so don't laugh, not even in jest, Horatio.

To sleep, two sleep as cheaply as one much of the time. It, however, depends. So much for certainty. Flummery, flummery. These are the stuff that fools are made of. The general public and the more Pacific public. Twain shall never meet them. A lot he cares. A lot and a pinch of salt or was it a pillar? A goosefeather pillar. I'll scratch your feather if you'll scratch mine.

So much and so little left. But, it is tired, and no worse for the wear and it will asleep and awake and use a different answer key tomorrow, if tomorrow.

Riffles

. . . WOODY HARTER

warm summer night,
cool breeze.

walking down the tracks,
barefoot.

forgetting the hurts of yesterday.
reflected moonlight makes rails zip along beside us.

3 a.m. stumbling over irregular ties,
laughing.

stop to dig nature awhile
listen, quietly

to the unseen concert
Katydid, Crickets

swirling water splashing, falling over the
dam

under us, keeping the rhythm

while we sit,
an audience,

dangling feet over side of bridge,
. . . . smoking.

never a word of tomorrow, but

watching stars make patterns

renaming constellations

senses distorted. then,

the train rushing by,

so close

so fast

looks so fucking funny.



March 31, 1968

. . . . LARRY GILBERT

A year after the funeral
On a dark, winter Sunday
Talking to my dying grandmother.
Asked how they met,
She turned to me.
Excited
Eyes sparkling.



Triologue

. . . STEVE DIJULIO

My short visit home having, expectedly, exhausted me, I slipped quite slowly through the darkening streets towards the train platform. My introspective mist shattered, therefore, with the unanticipated departure — shrieks of the huge engine: the 8:11 Trans-European was unfortunately on schedule. Cursing myself, I trotted perkily with my bulky clothes case across the brilliant landing and clutched at the railing of the last car. Then, a bony, blue-veined hand vised my wrist, pulling me up into the car.

"Thanks," I panted, half bitterly, and rubbed my throbbing wrist. But the blue-serge back before me had apparently not heard. In fact, the aging conductor stepped quietly along the car, examining the tickets of the dozen assorted passengers. I shrugged and dropped into a seat.

Lacking a better pastime, I studied the sprinkling of people before me. There were the usual satcheled businessmen; near the front of the car, a young, shabbily dressed woman with two dozing infants in her lap; and just behind them, a priest, while beside him, a young soldier nodded, half asleep.

During the course of my trip, the train halted some dozen times, in three different countries. During the longest of these pauses, two men boarded the train without actually entering the car (they stood on the tiny landing). Their conversation began to interest me, until, I confess, I was straining to hear. It focused on politics, particularly the last crowned sovereign of their small kingdom.

Of course, like every young European, I had heard the story of this king: how irresistably he had ruled; how strictly he had devastated his foes, yet lovingly rewarded his Loyalists. Then he had amazingly disappeared with family and inner court. Some had naturally rumored his death. But most believed that he had withdrawn to expose his enemies and would soon return in bloody retribution. His final decree, the Edict, supported the latter assumption.

"And the **Edict**," said the slightly elder of the two men, "begins with 'Your loving and just lord . . .'"

"Of course," the younger shot back, "but what's your point?"

"Well, if he loves his people so, why does he ignore their moans beneath the bickering province chiefs, each of which desires sole power? He coldly sits back and lets the land choke on chaos: children rot in the streets, yet merchants grow fat. We've waited for him too long." His blue eyes flamed, though his voice flowed levelly.

"Oh come on, surely he waits to be sure of the people's loyalty. He wants to rid our land of those law-breakers who so corrupted his old regime."

An older left hand waved impatiently. "But how can a good man not break the law?"

His companion, startled, leaned his head to one side, questioningly.

"I mean," the former continued, "how can you know for sure what's 'right and wrong' when each province chief enforces his own interpretation of the king's words? Some of the differences in the sets of regulations are irreconcilable. That means that the majority of people are guilty of at least one capital offense, even granting that one of the Arch-

dukes is in accord with the king's original intentions (which is dubious). You just said that he plans to destroy all law breakers. Now how can one kill most of one's subjects and still call oneself the Peoples Protector?" He slowly swung his head from left to right, and back again. "I can't see how you can bow to one whom, not only there is no proof of, as far as even being alive, but also, even granting life, contradictions have so enshrouded that one must either lable him Hypocrite or (yes) Fiend, and not worthy helper. How?"

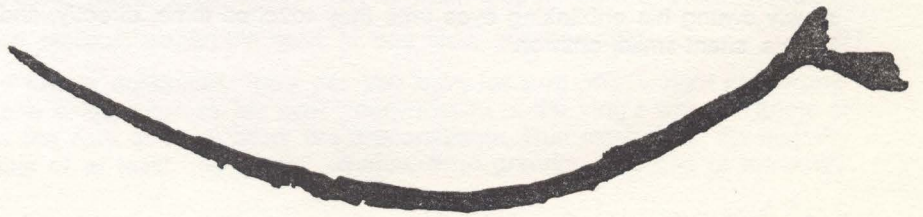
The younger man also shook his head, though grimly. "No,," he said, "it is I who can't understand: how you can vomit such treason. Don't the years that our family has supported his count? And can you, a man, pass judgement on a king? Now here you are, abandoning your young family, your friends and country. I don't like this change which has so clutched you, so numbed your brain." Each man's eyes seemed to magnetize the other's.

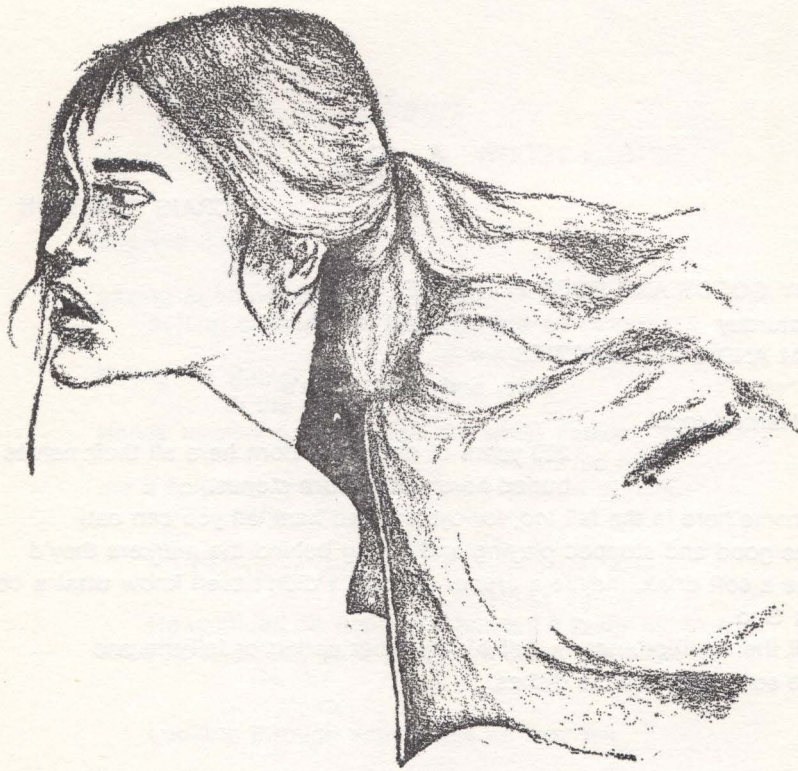
They stood silently for nearly a minute. Then the elder man turned and strode deliberately into the car. The younger watched him frowningly, then likewise turned, disappearing off the train. The former carefully seated himself by the window immediately before mine.

The train began to rock again. Soon the man slipped a slender cigar from his coat pocket, lit it, and, inhaling, stared out into the blackness, as though it were on the other side of the glass. After a few minutes, however, the curling smoke began to nauseate me (for I have always had a bad reaction to that sort of thing). So, at last, I of necessity rose and started to the back of the car.

I immediately noticed the old conductor sitting quietly in the half light of the last seat. He appeared to be gazing sleepily through the window. Yet, as I paused to take the seat before him, the green-glowing concentration of his wrinkled eyes froze mine. For perhaps a minute, I stood silently studying him. Then my straining eyes slid along the line of his vision to the glass. There, an almost invisible, winged insect walked along the edge of the window-frame. It seemed to lust for the freedom on the opposite side, and seemed to have forgotten the inside space, which we all shared. It probed vainly.

Naturally, it amazed me to see such an insignificant object of his intensity. I was unable to resist the desire to touch him and ask, "Pardon me, but are you ill?" He slowly swung his unblinking eyes until they touched mine, directly, and I am still puzzled by his silent-smile answer.





Handwritten signature

A Sign

. . . CRAIG ZUMBRUN

A sign, DRY GOODS AND RUGS FOR SALE.

Saturday

ICE CREAM AND STRAWBERRIES

here, and at St. Luke's

along the Harney road.

200 years of ancestors born here all their names
buried here under worn stones.

We'd come here in the fall too, for oysters and ham, all you can eat!

If I was good and stopped playing and hiding behind the markers they'd
buy me a soft drink, maybe a cream of soda. I didn't even know what a coke
was, thank God.

All the tradition, nearly that of any other spring or fall rite and
now they're serving on plastic dishes.

Cheers

. . . WOODY HARTER

The old man
 alone.
 gazing at snowflakes as they fell
 puffing carefully on his cigarette as though
 it were his last.

Eating his dinner
 in the diner.
 Hands trembling, he spread the white napkin
 on his lap and
 ate a cold turkey sandwich, drank a glass of milk.
 "I'm sorry sir, you must leave;
 we're closing early.
 It's Christmas you know, have to hurry home
 for Christmas dinner."

He unfolded his dollar bill, handed it to the cashier,
 softly spoke, "May God be wid ya more dan eber."
 He left
 alone.
 Looking through snowflakes as they fell.

Outside Reading

. . . FRANK FALCONE

Stealing the magazines wasn't
wrong, just bad to get caught.

Nude women, round flopping breasts
on shiny pages, that was wrong!

Big breasts covered our club's
walls. Glossy nipples took
their turn on the dart board.

The sexy stories were too long—
none of the cartoons seemed funny.

Sister Elizabeth said there were
bad pictures in the National Geographic.

The Maze

. . . CAROL CHANCO

I want to enter, and wander
the labyrinth of your ways.
You are afraid of the Minotaur
I may find within . . . grotesque, and ugly.
I love Minotaurs.
I will bring you ambrosia, if you let your
path be known.
And you will laugh; discover my ambrosia is
but sugar water.
For I am not your goddess, perhaps a lowly
woodland nymph.
Can Minotaurs love nymphs?
No matter. We shall cry, laugh, and hug,
This grotesque Minotaur and Strange nymph
laughing at the ultimate irony: Life.

Parepetia

. . . CAROL CHANCO

"\$3.97 Please."

"3.97 sir."

"Three ninety seven, that will be three dollars and ninety seven cents please SIR. Yes, Italian Hoagies are five cents more. Because of the Hot Peppers. Yes, I know about the pepper pickers being on strike. What sir? Am I a hot pepper?"

Eh, dirty old man. drunk. And aren't they all.

"Yes sir. they're toothpicks."

Actually sir, they're giant splinters, eat it in good health. What can you expect from a part time job when you have to put yourself through college. "Louie's" Louie's truck stop. Scenic Louie's—looks like a mausoleum, and smells like onions, garlic and peppers for miles around. Like working here? love it. Shall I compare it to a summer's day? I have a friend who used to work at Louie's, but quit to work on a garbage truck. Seriously, Dion really did quit, but now he's back at Louie's working nights to get money for a car and . . .

"Yes, sir? Busy, well, I've waited on everybody and . . ."

"Find something to do, Babe," he says and flashes his toothy grin. That's the owner's son, Louie. Dig the motorcycle helmet. In his late thirties. Calls all the waitresses Babe. 4.5 out of all the help at Louie's like him. I'm the .5 and I hate him. Dion hasn't decided yet. Lou's a hypocrite. Wears that greasy kid's stuff in his hair and says "call me Lou." Fake.

"What? No, I didn't charge him five cents extra for the tomato sauce, no I can't remember if you told me or not."

He must have told me forty times. I'm not charging customers for something that's not listed in the menu, and they didn't order. It's wretched stuff, anyway.

There's old, fat Sharon in the corner booth over there. That's the other waitress, I think she's a waitress, she thinks she's a receptionist, or something. I'd better clean up her table before Lou starts "babeing" me again. Fat old Sharon. Been working at Louie's for an eternity. How does she "fulfill herself" at Louie's?" Sharon can outswear any truck driver. Revolting. Has a face like a crumbled up paper bag. Uncrumple the bag and take out crayons. Draw a purple mouth (open) and two black dots for eyes—put two semicolons over the dots. Stick the nose between two bright rouge cherries. Matted red frizz ball for hair. Put that bag on top of a potato sack (that's the body). OK, now you've got a good idea of Sharon. Not really though. Glue the potato sack to the corner booth and put a cigarette in front of it. Don't bother lighting the cigarette. She won't have time to smoke it. Too busy talking. Yea, that's really Sharon.

Ho boy. The eyes and the semicolons are turned this way, the purple gap is opening. . . .

"Dearie, did he leave a tip?" she screeched.

"He left you a quarter Sharon. I put it on the counter." dearie.

She grunted . The purple gap opened and expanded revealing four enameled squares. Two were white. Well two out of four ain't bad.

I heard a car screech to a halt outside—a red convertible with two girls and Dion. All eyes were on Dion as he sauntered in. His dark eyes, long black hair, and copperpenny tan exuded an unearthly radiance that commanded attention.

As I bent down to pick up a fork, Dion grabbed me by the hair.

"Percy, love of my life, run away with me from this wretched hole, my chariot awaits."

"What have you been drinking?" I asked.

". . . Drinkin' ma daddy's wine . . . get happy," he sang in a throaty voice and went into the kitchen.

"Percy, Percy!" an unholy screech came from the kitchen as Mrs. Disinni, Lou's wife walked out, hands on her hips.

"What Mrs. Dis? The peppers/What peppers/Oh, those peppers, that the customer left on his plate. Save them? I always save them. Why did I throw them out if I always save them? Well it looks like I forgot to save them. Yes m'am, I'll go up and get some ketchup."

Save them? Are they nuts? I'm not serving the customers that, just like I'm not serving that stale pie . . . Why don't they fix these steps, somebody carrying ketchup down these steps could trip and. . .

"Awjezchris ah! Dion what are you doing up here?" Yea, I realize that you're attacking me. Whattsa matter Dion, I've got a minute."

"Look Percy, I gotta talk to you. I borrowed twenty bucks from the register to help me with the down payment on the car, I wanna' put it back, will you put it back for me? Louie won't let me use the register—he told me two weeks ago he didn't trust me."

"Dion, Dion?"

"What, Percy?"

"You told me two weeks ago you wouldn't steal anymore."

"I told ya' I didn't steal, I borrowed it, and I'm putting it back."

"Why, Dion, because you're afraid you might get caught?"

"Maybe, but look, that's not he main reason. Will you do it for me Percy?"

"I'm thinking, Dion."

I thought. I'd known Dion since third grade. We went to Saint Simon's grade school together until he got expelled in fifth grade for beating up an eighth grader. I think they were afraid of Dion. Dion's always in trouble. But Dion's got his own code. Like the night

at Louie's when two customers got into a fist fight. Dion jumped up on the counter with a frying pan and called the cops. The cops came and asked for the manager who was down the street having a beer at the time. Dion said that he was the manager and went down to the station to clear things up. He didn't press charges or tell Lou or anything even though he was knocked over the counter and had to get five stitches.

"OK, don't ask me why, but I'll put the money back Dion."

"I love you Percy."

"Yea, yea, will you cut with the love bit and give me the money before I change my mind."

"Here."

"Oh God Dion, it's in quarters."

"Look Percy, it's easier to put it back that way."

"What the hell are you two doing up there, taking inventory? Get your tails down here."

"I'm coming Mrs. Dis."

"Disinni, Disinni," she shrieked.

"Yes Mrs. DisINNI," I echoed.

God bless you Mrs. Disinni, go to hell Mrs. Disinni I thought. Can't stand that woman. She thinks I'm trying to steal her husband. That's really ironic. Louie's already stolen by the blonde that comes in every day at four.

"It doesn't take that long to get ketchup," she remarked snidely. I noticed that her roots were showing.

"We weren't getting ketchup," Dion remarked, snickering.

"Dion!" I exploded.

"That's alright Percy, when two people love each other well . . . Mrs. Disinni understands."

Mrs. Disinni understood—she was glaring at me as if I were a nickel tip.

"Well, you're so hard to resist Dion," she purred coyly.

The pose was unbecoming for an old cat; I felt physically ill. How Dion got along with that witch was beyond my limited scope. I saw Dion jump into the red convertible and speed out of the parking lot. He waved. I remembered the quarters in my pocket.

I came back out front to get away from the bitch-goddess in the kitchen — and to take my lunch break.

There sat fat, old Sharon. Still eating, still talking to Louie who was reading the Daily Smut sheet we sold at "Louie's." Louie was writing down numbers. Lou's laughing. They're both looking at me. Whattsa' matter now? The bandaid on my knee. Rats. I

should have taken it off. It's one of those kiddy ones: green with flowers. Well at least they're not laughing about the time I put all the order slips in my pocket and forgot to hand them into the kitchen.

"What, Mrs. Disinni? Yes, Mr. Dis, I cut it."

Actually a midget jumped up and bit me in the kneecap.

"OK, Lou, I keep forgetting to call you Lou."

Just like I forgot to save the hot peppers. Oh, God, here comes Mr. Dead-Eye. He's a spy; yes really a spy. He sits in the corner with a newspaper raised just below eye-level and watches everything that goes on — and then reports it to Louie. He's the guy that told Lou about the orders in the pocket. Damn. I'll never get that money back into the register now.

I nodded at Dead-Eye. Not just a nod, but a secret nod, a code. That nod means he's ordering the usual: a cheese steak with the works which he will then proceed to dunk into his coffee, before he eats it. Must be some animal instinct. Racoons do that too. Strange Guy.

Normal Customers? Maybe one or two.

I looked at the dirty dish pan, filled to maximum capacity. I know she'll never dump that pan. I think I'll drop a hint.

"Brother, is this pan heavy; I'm going to get a hernia."

She grunted. I don't think she knows what a hernia is. I half expected her to say something like "I'm going to get a Ford." I gave up and picked up the guaranteed hernia pan, started to walk towards the kitchen but remembered old bitch-goddess in there and tried to make an about face. Tried. And slipped on the water from the leaky percolator.

Me, the floor and broken saucers. A captive audience and customers craning their necks. And of course Mrs. Disinni yelling: "Clumsy, watch what you're doing." Then, realizing the spotlight was on her she began screaming, "can't you do a goddam thing right?"

Mrs. Disinni was being rhetorical.

The phone kept ringing.

"I'll get it Babe."

Louie stepped over me, dishes and the green bandaid with the flowers, Damn. My knee was bleeding again.

I heard Louie mutter: "He's always a show off; too bad. Yea, yea."

I didn't catch the rest of the conversation with Mrs. Dis screaming at me and Sharon and Steak-in-the-coffee clucking their tongues.

Louie walked into the kitchen. Sharon and Mrs. D. followed.

I couldn't figure out what was going on but Mrs. D. was crying and Sharon's frizz was shaking and the purple gap kept opening and closing.

I walked through the open door with the dirty dish tray.

"Dearie," Sharon said, "Dion was killed in a car crash about a half hour ago right up the corner here, it was a bloody mess they say, it was the other guys fault but still Dion WAS going seventy, he was dead on arrival and the two girls were in critical condition, can you imagine"

For a moment there was nothing. No dishes no Louie's ablur of images . . . and I could hear Dion . . . laughing. . . and a white T shirt clinging to the bronze body.

"No, no, Dion's not dead he's not," I screamed. "No, he won't die, you can't kill him, no he won't."

I ran out the back door hysterical. Could hear snatches ". . . emotional kid . . . high strung . . . there was something going on with them . . . stock room . . . still, it's a shame . . . hire a new cook."

I ran to an enormous elm tree out back and threw myself down in the grass, under the shade. Dion singing.

"Look babe, don't take it so hard."

It was Louie.

"We all knew and loved Dion; he was one of my favorite kids, one of the best kids I had. . . loved him like a son . . . trusted him like my own kid. . . Here babe, here's a tissue."

"No, I don't want it."

I've got one you goddamn phony. I reached in my pocket to get it and realized that I had Dion's—and inside of it was wrapped twenty dollars in quarters.

"No, I don't have one. I thought I did."

"Here babe, here." Blow your nose and go in and wait on the customers." Pearly toothed grin and pseudo-emphathetic hand on the shoulder.

Mrs. Disinni comes out. "I'm too upset to work Lou, I'm going home." She was crying and her mascara was running. Her roots were showing.

"Oh babe," he said, kissing her on the cheek. I wondered what it was like to be kissed by a python.

I blew my nose in the tissue and handed it to Louie. Pulled open the back door, through the cramped kitchen, and up the center, and only aisle of Louie's.

"Miss, miss, there's a hair in my hoagie." I turned around. It was Louie's blonde. Her roots weren't showing.

"What color is it ma'am?"

"Why it looks like a black hair but . . ."

"I'm sorry lady, but it ain't mine," I snapped.

I walked out. It was cold outside. Colder than a summer day had a right to be. It will be an early fall.

Maybe I could quit Louie's now and never come back. Never. I would forget everything, and Dion too. I rammed my clenched fists into my apron pockets and realized that the money Dion gave me was still there.

Suddenly, I hated Dion for this, hated the lousy money. It was as though Dion put some kind of chain on me so that I would never escape Louie's. The money had to go back, and I had to go back.

It was ridiculous to hate Dion—it wasn't Dion I hated. I'll go back to Louie's but I'll never come back . . . climb to the upper air. . . I walked back in. There was a customer at the register. It was dead-eye. "3.97 Sir."

The Lion Sleeps Tonight

. . . TOM COATES

It is so quiet that
I can hear my eyelashes
blink
As they slide slowly down
My pillow case.
The crisp sheets
Krinkle as I roll
Slowly over.
Half a turn
And then back.
A full turn
And then half back.
Darkness accentuates the quiet.
It moves so slowly that
You wonder how the whole night
Ever manages to make it by.
The night could be
The greatest procrastination—
Of all.
Maybe it is trying to tell us something.
Perhaps a foreboding.
We should learn from the night
That the speed of the flighting day
With all its noise and bustle
Can drive one stone-crazy
But so can the night
For it strikes with the force
of loneliness
And leaves a gaping wound.
Those immortals who have
Learned to suffer the whips and
Scorns of the night have
Come to grips with a most
Pertinent problem—
How to be alone and not be
Lonely
If you fly on through the night
Come to rest on my stoop
And I'll listen to your
Eyelids pat gently
On my pillow.

Creation

. . . WOODY HARTER

Deep within a clearly heavy opium dream, and
equally contending with the task of creating a new beginning
forever

and here after
ALMIGHTY GOD

up and declared

"Hot damn,

I'm gonna have me some fun!"

Truckin' through the nearest self-existing time-space continuum
HE came upon a refreshingly hollow void. It was here HE sat
upon a huge mass of nothingness and thought.

several millenium

later . . . ,

a strange schizophrenic twinkle came to HIS eyes.

GOD put HIS right thumb in HIS left ear,

stuck out HIS tongue,

held HIS breath till HE turned blue . . . and

LO and BEHOLD

HIS head popped off!

and

out flew millions of tiny stars with

occasional misfits later to be named planets.

After recovering from HIS greatest trauma, GOD stood to HIS
fullest erection and spoke.

"It'll do."

After a while GOD became bored with HIS new toys and said,

"I'm gonna toss in the wrench that'll fuck up this
eternity here forth, I'm gonna make me a man."

With that intention, HE took up some mud in HIS left hand

and

winked both eyes

while standing on HIS head,

(a feat that would later earn HIM a

half hour's television time),

and GOD created

man.

HE flung HIS men back down into the mud with his final command
concerning HIS freshly created earth,

"Give 'er hell boys."

Only Yesterday

. . . ED DODSON

Yesterday for me began as the first son of my father and mother. We lived in a small apartment on the second floor of a large house on Climax Street. A tall iron fence around the house kept me from wandering too far or in the street to get killed by those "damned" cars and I was very cute. Everyone said so. Snow white hair all curly like a little girl until my mother had to cut it off when everyone kept asking whether I was a boy or a girl and my father couldn't take it anymore.

My parents were veterans, although I didn't know or care at the time as I can't recall, of the great war that ended all wars. You remember that one don't you. It was about six wars ago when most of us were still in the planning stage or maybe in the oven and dad didn't know about it yet because he was over "there." Father was very handsome in his marine uniform, three stripes on his sleeve. I know 'cause it's up in our attic; but after a while it didn't fit anymore and it was really colorful all blue and red. Sweet sixteen and never been kissed mother was very pretty with blue eyes and brown hair all curly and deep red and she always looked beautiful when she painted her toenails and her fingernails and her mouth all red and put powder on her face so father would love her forever.

Yes, mother sacrificed a great deal while father was over there doing what had to be done because no one else wanted to do it not even father, but he did it 'cause it was his duty to he told me. Mother cheered and waved the flag, when Johnny (whoever he was) came marching home but a lot of poor Johnny's friends got killed and mother cried and some couldn't march with Johnny as they didn't have any legs to march with, but father said they would be alright because our rich Uncle Sam had a lot of money and would give them a pension to live on even though they couldn't walk or run and play anymore and Uncle Sam never gave me any presents so I didn't know who he was. But I know Uncle Sam is good because they told me so when I got to go to first grade and we pledged allegiance to the flag because America is beautiful and righteous and God looks after us when we are in the right or on the left or something like that. But a lot later flags must have gotten real expensive because a lot of people were dying for their flag and I didn't think they were so important because you can buy one at the store for a dollar and who would want to die for one.

I was very happy just playing with myself and my toys and then my brother came from who knows where the stork brought him and dropped him down our chimney so that I'd have someone to play with but I had to hit him a lot because he never put my toys away and always cried when I hit him in the head. I hoped the stork would take him back but I never found our chimney even on Christmas so my brother had to stay and then I had to keep hitting him all the time till he wised up. And mother always dressed my brother and me alike because we looked a lot like twins except he was fatter and I was always skinnier and when we grew up my brother had bigger feet than I did, too.

After my brother came to live with us our apartment must have gotten too small because we left and moved to the project where there was more room and I learned a lot why my father hated niggers because they lived next door to us and we could hear them through the walls in our bedrooms. They always carried on and all of them were drunks and on welfare until the city had to kill them to make room for white people who could

pay thirty dollars a month to live there. But mother liked them and even let the big fat colored lady next door in our house because ours was a lot cleaner and she wanted to use our telephone to call somebody far away across the street, and we could play with the colored kids as long as we didn't go into their house and get sick or something; but I hated them niggers 'cause one of them nigger kids stole my wagon and we never found it out in the woods where my brother left it.

The most fun we had was playing in the desert, and boy did my brother get beat once when my mother thought he got killed or beat up when he forgot to go to school one day and he was playing at the desert when my mother caught him and beat the livin' daylight out of the little son of a bitchin' bastard. I guess she couldn't remember his name too good 'cause that's what she called both of us my brother and me since we looked so much alike and she couldn't tell us apart when she forgot who we were and I was always afraid my father would beat us to death when we used his tools to make a tree house out in the desert or in the woods and left his hammer there. He just got really crazy when he couldn't find it and didn't like it anymore when it got all rusty out in the woods for a couple days.

Me and my brother got along pretty good except when we got into fights all the time but I really hated my sister after she was born when she always cried and told on us when we teased her or beat her up she went crying to my mother who would take a fit and yell and cry and say we were driving her crazy; but me and my brother neither of us knew how to drive so we didn't know what to do except go to our room and listen against the wall when my father got home from work and my mother got all upset again and told him to beat us 'cause of what we did. Then my father would get upset too and grab me and my brother by the hair and kill us until we cried and tell us we had to stay in bed and stay there without anything to eat for supper and we cried but we didn't want to eat anyway because my mother always made stew and it was awful and we always cried when we had to eat it.

We hated it when our sister had to go to bed too 'cause she'd always tell on us when we'd talk about her and called her witch hazel and said she was ugly and wasn't really our sister but that we pitied her and adopted her and she was really an orphan and nobody liked her at all and we'd kill her if she told on us again. And we hated to go to bed because we couldn't watch our TV programs but it didn't matter 'cause we could see the TV from our bunkbeds if we opened the door a little and didn't breath too loud so my dad didn't hear us or my sister didn't tell on us for sneakin' and stayin' up late and she always got real jealous and we'd have to hold her mouth shut when she started to tell on us and hold her down so she didn't cry when we punched her in the stomach.

Then we moved away from the project and we hated to leave all our friends and our cousins who all lived across the street from us in the project but they were tearing down all the houses and we had to leave. And where we were going my father said there was no niggers so it would be alright and we really liked it because there was a creek down the hill and we could play hide and seek in the woods and stay outside until dark since there wasn't any criminals or murderers who would kidnap us and cut us all up into little pieces if we stayed out in the dark.

In the summer we used to pick blackberries in the big empty lot in back of Patton's house and play football in their yard until she kicked us out when we broke her window and my brother and me had to pay for it 'cause everyone else ran too fast and we took the blame since she told our mother who did it. Then somebody built a new house and th

ey cut down all the blackberries so then we never had jelly anymore after that. And my mother stopped baking bread 'cause she was getting too fat and had to go on a diet again even though it didn't help and she still got fatter and fatter until she was fatter than my father after a couple of years.

We could never hit my sister which wasn't fair 'cause she could always cry and get to watch her programs on TV and when my brother stole the knob off the TV and we'd laugh she'd cry and then we'd all have to go to bed because my sister was giving my mother a nervous conditions and she couldn't take it anymore and needed peace and quiet so that my father didn't get upset and beat us to death. But after my sister went to sleep me and my brother would beg my mother and she'd let us watch the "Untouchables"; it was our favorite program and was on at ten o'clock (after my sister fell asleep). Then when my mother went to bed me and my brother would sneak back downstairs and turn on the TV really low and sit two feet away from it so our parents didn't hear it and tell us to get the hell to bed 'cause it's too late and we had to go to school in the morning and we'd probably never get up and miss the bus and she'd have to drive us to school and my dad was coming down if we didn't come to bed right now.

We really had fun when we all went to Grandma's except my father 'cause he hated to go even if someone died and he always got mad when we played cards and blew his top and told us we had to leave 'cause he lost and he hated to lose since cards was the most important thing in the world except his tools that he hated when they got rusty or we left them out in the woods.

Brown Dove

. . . CRAIG ZUMBRUN

The first circle is unsure, then
a larger concentric circle and then there is no following with the eyes:

VW convertible top down, on a hot father's day. The new red paint in
the sun could easily hide the blood, except there was none.

Second gear from the corner. Two turtle doves feeding on the road
Fly late from the tracks of an inevitable hot car on elm street.

The windshield catches her just for and in an instant she is over the car.
BRAKES. Reverse gear . . . sounds, whinnes like grandfather's impatient
backing out from the garage.

Lying on his left side the dove, the other waits over, as if nursing,
then flies away as I STOP . . . shutters once in my hand, then is still but blinks.

Remembering cats and the gentleness of doves, for safety, [rationalized]
into the openness of the convertible and gone . . .

She is in the car with me and now holds the dove like—my feelings
Now easy in her hand. touching the neck and head the eyes again blink.

At the house no one is home and before any more gentleness ensues, the hand
is a perch and center of the circles and all the beauty of being a tree is gone.

in a letter this week she tells me
"doves mate for life"



A Time to Look

. . . TOM COATES

Down on mldnite
Up on daytime
A time to sleep
A time to look
For things other than
What you see
Shine on to brightness
Live on through darkness
See where there is no light
And touch what seems to
Not exist
Reach out into a field
And harvest what you need to
Be a reaper
And sew to
And so.

"Siddhartha"

. . . KEVIN SPANER

Awake and restless.
In sleep I am at peace;
But what of now?
Due to the times
Our minds are troubled.
Still, all can reach Atman.
To those who think—it confuses
To those who wait—it irritates
To those who fast—it famishes
When awake and at peace
The troubled times of now
Lay lost in silence.
Think not.
Wait not.
Fast not.
Do not seek what does not hide.
Gather yourself and go outside;
Sit somewhere and listen.
Can you hear?
Listen again—
Perfection is in all
And all is good.
But how? Why?
Shhhhh; be silent; listen.
Hold out your hand
Close it gently,
You now hold Atman.



PAUL BLACKBURN, a widely published and internationally known poet, has recently died. REFLECTOR remembers Mr. Blackburn for his vibrant poems which he read here in Shippensburg in January, 1971.



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