



# CRUCED le!



THE CRUCIBLE IS:

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### CONCRETE FORESTS

Concrete forests have no trees, city engineers fail to include them in their plans.

Trees are uprooted,

like fish in a trawlers net.

Streams are rerouted,

until they become no more that a faucet drip.

Cranes pull slabs of concrete toward the sky,

as the sun once did to the oaks and maples.

Progress clears the land,

quicker than a forest fire.

by Maureen J. Hogan

Merging shades are broken into institutionalized black and white.

A child's innocence is splintered with force-fed tradition.

Change is the foe--Her offspring feared

The bosom of peace is caressed with blood stained hands.

Her gown-lies torn among the rapture of the faceless dead-for there is no willing seamstress to repair

The Chosen Ones will not permit

Ecstasy swells from past pains.
Lovers fight each other for pleasure.
Blood befriends Life and Death, flowing free denying both.
Those different are chastised for similar views.

Brightness dulls the eyes Contrast is everything

by Sean Collins



#### THE SHORT STORY

I clasp his hand in mine as I wait for a sign of good-bye--a gentle squeeze The chapter is ended; the book is done. As the sky closes its eyes He sits alone and crys his silent tears. I feel so helpless as I see him there, for Is he thinking how his life, too He just lies there--I'll stay here all day I don't know what to say, I don't know what he's feeling; staring at the sun but if I have to, and then, he's gone. so does he. and the evening brings a quiet dark. as it sets in the sky, just to let him know how very much I care. but now the end has come, and end this mortal's glory. will chose to close the story as the day is done. he is dying, but will not let me share we can only look--Someone else turns the pages; His life was full and bright We'll never know when the reader is like an open book? in his pain or anger.

Life is so precious; it makes me wonder how long my novel will run.

by Sheree M. Deen

## HAD I ONE MORE DAY

Had I one more day
I'd like to climb the tallest mountain
and scream my lungs out in joy.
And I wouldn't care who heard me
for all the years I wasted I did care.
I would change all that
Had I one more day.

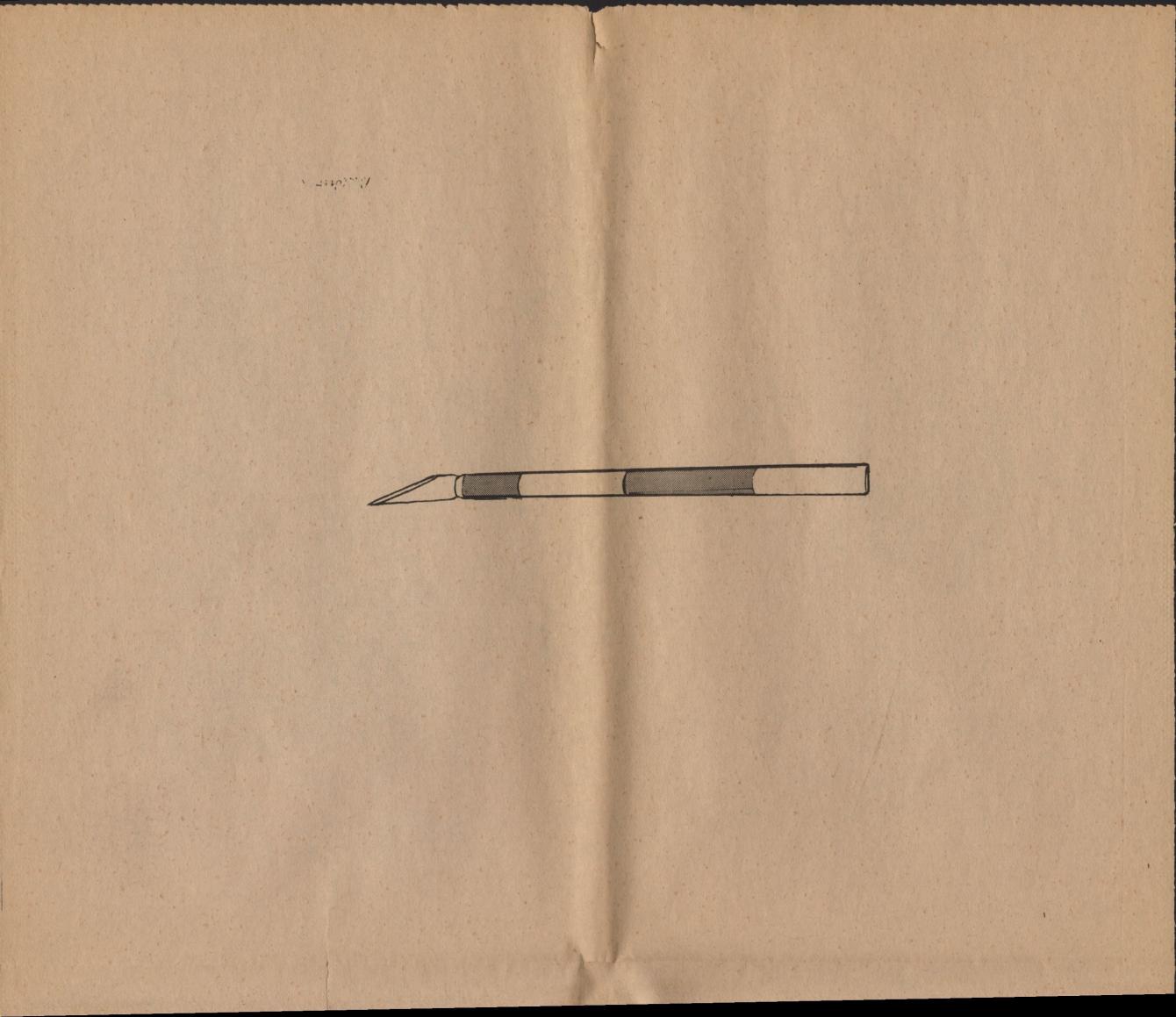
Had I one more day
I'd marry the man who asked me.
He loved me, you see,
but I always wanted someone else.
All those years I wasted searching.
I would change all that
Had I one more day.

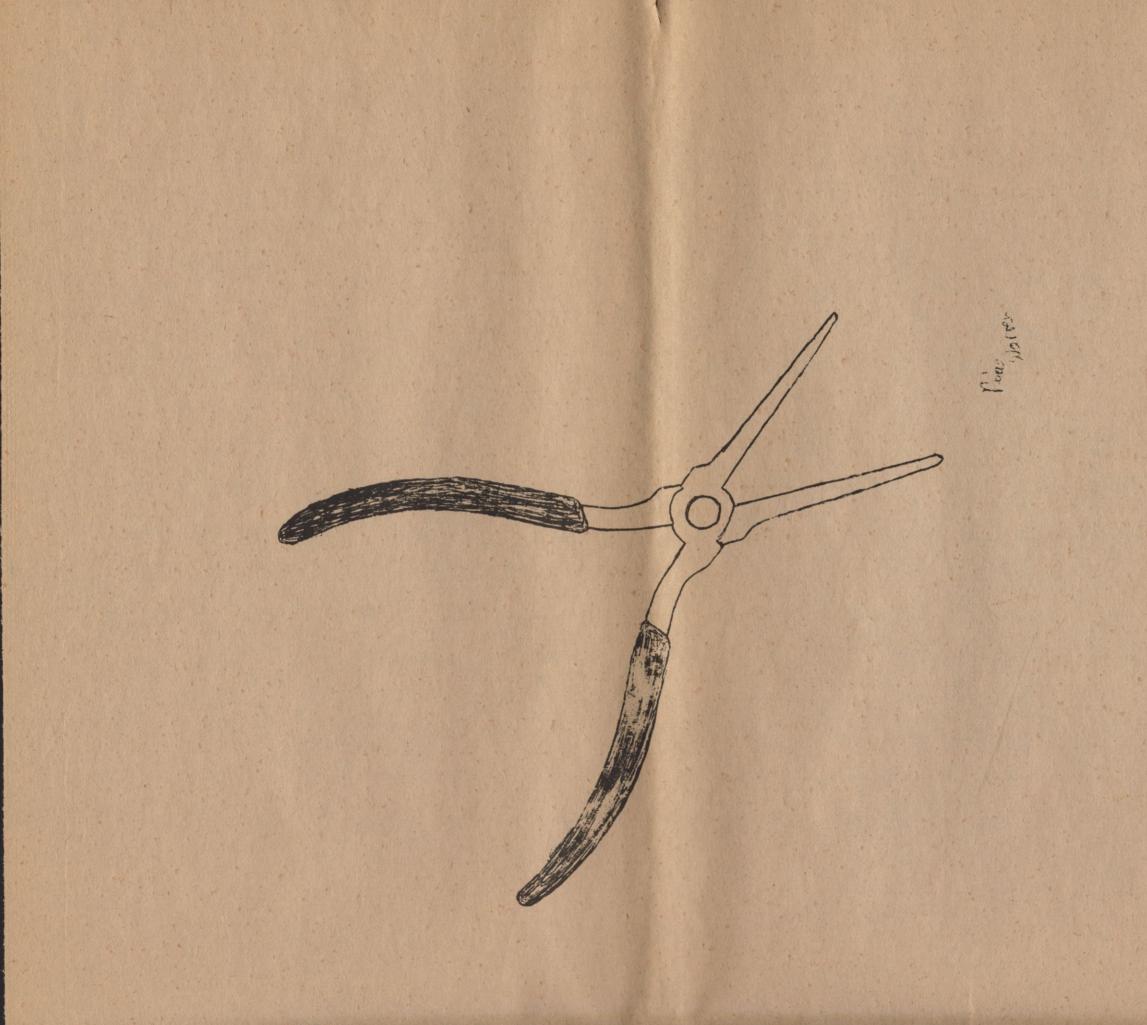
Isn't it rather stupid how when you're time is up You would change all the things you did instead of realizing it when it mattered? Life is funny that way And, I guess I can't complain.

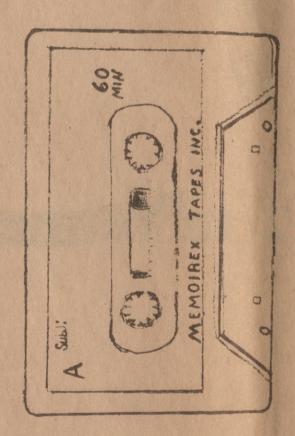
Had I one more day
I'd apologize to you
for the rotten way I treated you.
Can't understand why I did those things.
Perhaps you frightened me.
Well, I'd change all that, my friend,
Had I one more day.

by Shawn Bingman

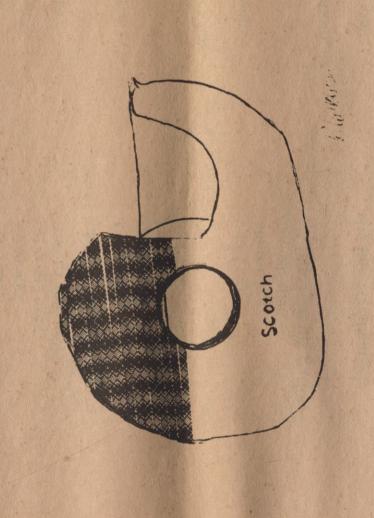








Robustan



## THE SPIDER AND THE FLY

I see her descend from a shadowed corner onto a barstool.

She lights.
Her cigarette
spins gray ribbons
across her face.

Dressed in black, a pillbox hat spills webbing over hungry eyes.

She waits-Red, streaks her lips and hints
of what will come.

I see him drift into the room, drawn to her on ribbons of gray.

He hovers close, Bewildered, then hungry eyes strike their mark,

and he knows.

She rises.
Long legs
carry his eyes
toward the door.

He follows, wrapped in gray ribbons and pillbox webbing,

and I can
almost hear
her whisper,
"Come into my parlor."

by Sue Harshbarger



# DEATH OF A TREE IN SPRING

Arthritic limbs grotesquely stretch In twisted crucifixion While hungry, greening nature waits For final benediction.

by Barry Sullivan

One brown-shadowed leaf

Netted and webbed
in the right field Knowing too much the
unrelatedness of all how
Quickly distinctions
distract.

Strong shapely trees
vary in muscularity
but glimmer at the
same steady rate. Adjust to treespeed
and bury roots Firmly,
reach and spread.

Ancient rock greenly
chipping resting cold
thin your self and enter
refresh your breathing.

by Leslie Taggart



