

Unicorn

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Unicorn
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In the Beginning...

This magazine is dedicated to those
who never came home from war.

Elusive Expressionist

A thirst
Visionary
A heart winged
Sipped waters of the sun
From Grecian urns.
A smouldering eye
Eyed forms flowing in lightning repose.
A spirit immersed in moving oration
Unleashed fonts of classic wonder.
Foot now unshod
Feels
The earth's satin,
Cutting through a corseted art to
Freedom brought
A breath of pinkness
Flesh footfalls 'neath a simple swelling mantle.

A mother mad
Swimming through seas of snowy limbs
In unison swaying
A symphony she played upon tender sinews,
Minds and bodies stretched, molded into purity.
Rabbit-eyed waifs ensnared
Alluring aliveness of it all.
Suckled once more rites of sublime innocence
Outpoured in fierce tenderness.
Lilies forever adorned Lenten alters
Torches forever incensed the mourningtide even
When she stumbled through the wreckage of
Dream dregs of a
Vision
Over plains strewn with love letters
pilgrims' trail windswept
The scarf trailing, twisted spun chiffon thread
Rung from her throat the living thirst.

Will we ever hear America dancing?

Diane Sapliway

thats why

it would be easier to endure
if the blood hadn't caked so soon
and the clock weren't waiting so loudly
i didn't mean to slash my wrists
but then
i didn't mean to slash them and
have the red freeze before they emptied
i have a seance in fresno tomorrow
that's so long though
i may thaw by then

the loneliness one feels as the razor
kisses your wrists
the aloneness and fear you feel when
the cops say 'freeze' and you suddenly know
can't compare to the liveness as
you finally push the razor through flesh
and the dead appears
you don't wonder what's next
is there a god or no
no
your fear comes from behind
the knowing no one will miss you
no one will remember not to send you a card
that's what scares you
that no one cares
not even you
and that's why the caking is so terrifying

sb. smith

Minimus and Celerion: A Myth Revealed

The rain fell abundantly in the land of Luminia. Minimus, the young protector of the rain seeds, was responsible for this abundance. Minimus was a cheerful youth, nay a child who performed his task with the assistance of Celerion. Celerion, a beautiful steed, was a great horse with full mane and a magnificent pair of wings which could shade the open fields like some great feathered forest, and cool the land with the soft breezes from their flapping motions. But for all his beauty and stature, Celerion was not flawless. He was totally blind, and required the watchful eyes of Minimus to direct his flight. It was thus that Cirra had planned it. She was the mother of Minimus, and at his birth, she presented the blind Celerion to him. She then requested that the capacity for exceptional vision be granted to her son. And so it was. Minimus was bestowed with a special talent which enabled him to see all about him, even without having to turn his head, as the owl must do.

And so Minimus would mount his winged stallion Celerion and race across the sky. He would sow his seeds quite deeply into the clouds, until they would swell, teeming with rich, sweet rain. And Minimus was proud of his work, laughing joyously as his tiny arm cast the seeds now here and now there. Celerion, magnificent in strength, sped onward, his great wings beating rhythmically. And the reeds and grasses of the earth below were grateful.

In the seasons of the rains, after completing his task, Minimus loved to lie on the hilltops, where he could enjoy the fruits of his efforts. Celerion would wander to nearby puddles and sip of the natural refreshment which he had helped to provide. But Minimus would lie motionless. He loved the very feel of the rain. He loved its gentle tapping on his closed eyelids. He loved the way it would trickle across his features and seep in at the corners of his mouth. He loved the way it would pleasingly cool his tongue.

One day of the season, as he lay on the hilltop, he became especially pleased. The gentle breeze whistled around him, and the rain was particularly cool. He could almost feel the reeds bursting up all about him, and sense them whispering their gratitude into his ears. It was then



that he decided for the first time to open his eyes, that he may gaze at the sparkling wonders that tumbled about him. He did so, and was amazed. The Sun, despite the full clouds, still managed to shine down upon him. It was lovely and majestic, supreme in its warm strength. He was just pondering this, when he noticed an unusually bright object come soaring forth from the Sun's core. As it neared, he recognized it as one of his own raindrops. But it was truly an unusual drop. It was perfectly faultless, and round and radiant as his own plump cheeks. Struck with awe, he remained still and made no attempt to avoid it. It landed on him and gently nestled in the crevice between his nose and forehead. Amazingly enough, it did not melt away, but remained there, glistening enchantingly. As he tried to stand up, it popped upward very slightly, and smoothly returned to him like a graceful bubble. Playfully eyeing it, he noticed its almost magical reflective qualities as, without turning his head, he could watch Celerion contentedly sip from a pool behind him. This was yet an improvement on his already near-perfect vision.

Just then, the adventuresome lad came upon an exciting new idea. He would mount his noble Celerion and carry his mystifying bubble with him, that he may view the scenery around him in its entirety, and revel in its wondrousness.

And so they began the excursion. Minimus rode laughingly as Celerion's wings beat ferociously, faster and faster. Minimus marvelled at the wonders around him. He led Celerion up through the clouds to such a great height, that he could see the arched sloping of the earth's round surface through his glistening mirror-ball. Then he soared downward, shifting his eyes back and forth from the approach-inch trees below to the reflection of the disappearing clouds behind, all the while giggling hysterically, and without realizing it, driving his loyal Celerion to near exhaustion.

Now it came to be that they who had bestowed the wondrous toy and the great vision upon Minimus were saddened when he flew about, flaunting those gifts so recklessly. They decided to put an end to his careless merriment.

Just as the violent sea thunders while it crashes mercilessly upon the cliffs at some shore; just as the winds howl and re-echo while they rush about within some vast cave, so did Minimus and Celerion arouse a great tumult upon soaring headlong into a huge tree. They tumbled earthward, horse and young rider, and fell into a great heap at the tree's base, instantly taken by Death. Their bodies immediately began to decompose, though not in a mortal's usual manner. Instead of being transformed into dust, they amazingly liquefied and formed a tranquil pool, reflecting the powerful majesty of the Sun.

Now, in the country of Lumimia, the people tell of a pool in which can be seen a very young boy riding a great steed with beautiful wings and mane that are imaginatively brought to life by the gentle, rhythmic rippling of the water.

Rich Behles

hail mary mother of god

putting angel wings on whore-mothers and
napalming butterflies
it's oftentimes easier, but no less sad

rmn

An Allusion to Mark One: The Call of the Fisherman

On this early day of richly purple mist
Two fishermen, brothers by birthright
Known as Simon and Andrew,
Cast their net woven in tight luck knots
Of hopeful fortune
Into the deep breaths
Of mysterious blue-green uncharted kingdoms.
This daily necessary task:
Performed in rhythmic ritual
By once sensitive arms now bulging with muscles
Seduced out of proportion
By mechanical rotation of fisherman's plight.
Hands: preparing to deliver the salt watered,
Macrame basket-womb of sea-full fruit.

Evolving in currents of nonchalance,
The day encompassed by almost-light continues.
The brothers, aboard wooden craft
Hasten towards land nearing the Sun's rising.
Happening near home stretch on Galilee shore
A silhouette is recognized against the sun splintered sky.
A man in greeting voice of quiet persuasion
Challenges, "Come, follow me."
The princely resounding message still echoed within
A vault-consciousness of these brothers.
With hastening step into the uninhabited dimensions
They gave up their net of immediate occupation.
The kin by birth, and this stranger-on-shore,
Journeyed onward.

In peaceful sea-scape direction,
The kinsmen in silent woven wonder
And Jesus
Progressed, until in sight and earshot another fishing group
Seem near.
There they saw two brothers more.
From birth James and John
With aged father Zebedee
An aquatic hunting crew.
All were practicing the promise of fruitful water

With knotted net (that macrame womb)
While working in patterned fierceness
The woven cages,
slapped, splintered, and pierced
Blue water until hopeful labor
gave way to victorious tangibility.
Amidst common routine of daily lifestyle,
Jesus a man, declared freely his message
In unified tones.

And they moved on...

Jan Gorman

"Priest Professor"

Through early morning chill, this grumpy knot
Of students slumps and swaggers into class.
In front of us, the smile that we address
As "Father" tugs at us to wake and let
Him in. He lures us ... not to classes but
To carnivals of caring. Reaching us
Is something real and warming as a kiss,
And yet we have no name for it.
He beckons us to risk the rides and live
The lives that cost us nothing but the will
To leave ourselves behind. And so, I have
Abandoned much that makes my self a slave
To me, and live to answer Father's call
To make my life a carnival of love.

Noreen Mellick

Within

I die.

Leaving, I laugh at them grieving.

Living ghosts
Hoping in their groping,
Believing in their deceiving.
Lucifer-gods
Dying through their trying

I sigh.

Waiting, I remember the hating.

Resting in my solitude,
The end of every rainbow
Security of limbo,
I borrow the blackness
And wait within.

Knowing, I vacate the vacuum, growing.

Unraveling in traveling,
Being - blue eyes unseeing
I am without
Suffering smother-love
Again.

I cry.

Mary Lou Keating

Ben

bir küçücük kaktüsüm ben,
yalnız, yapayalnız çölde...
bazan, dağın ardından
gülümseyen aya merhaba
derim...

uzak ülkeleri sorarım ana;
dostlara,
küçük saksılardaki çocuklarıma
benden haber ilet
derim...

höy

Rain

Imposter.
You came in early morning,
Masquerading as a gentle mist
That smothers the world in its innocence
I knew that I could not escape you,
And I waited.
Four sterile walls besieged me. And the ceiling.
Casting off your disguise.
Pounding monotonous fists upon tin,
Drowning the world in your echoes,
My heart pounded to your every beat.
Nothing could drown you out,
Not even my insane laughter.
In the evening you left as you came,
Cupping the deluge of drum roll,
Looking back in laughter.
An empty shell is all that is here.
Only your constant explosions,
Your vivid sameness,
Remain in my mind.

Steve Glover

carrousel

if I had some place to go
I would go
or if somewhere to return
I would return
but
there is none
no beginning, no end
no place to be, or have been

HES

Secure Freedom

As a ship anchors in harbor,
I find hope in your love.
Sheltered from restless seas,
I am open to explore surrounding lands --
Building, in you, my nest
From twigs of weaker trees.

Gregory S Glinowiecki

even two raindrops
shall not forget,
swept by stormy winds,
lost in seas of others.
they remember.
for once in the clouds
they have touched.

Jim Gluch

Tasting Affection

Sitting on a cloud,
so soft and mellow.
Sleeping in the gentle
open field of hair.
Swimming in the cool,
soothing pools of light.

Riding a rainbow to your smile.
Drinking the sweet, warm water
of the ruby sea.
Riding that rainbow,
behind love's pearly gate.

Gregory S Glinowiecki

The Sum of What We Knew

Echoed by the sparks of fire,
Driven by the flames going higher,
Between the colors orange and blue,
Resounds the sum of what we knew.

The leaves now dead need not relate,
Through wind and storm they met their fate.
They lie in state upon the grass,
Withered more as each day does pass.

And we, the leaves of summers gone
Lie beneath winter's frozen lawn
And soon see the seeds which we sowed
Burst forth into spring's fresh abode.

We crumble, but not into dust,
But into sacred God-lent trust.
And return back where needed most,
Into the minds of living hosts.

We view the sum of what we knew
Between the colors orange and blue
As one thought to a million years
Or one fear to a million tears.

And as green copse turns quick to brown
Our youth soon dies and age does frown.
Then we remember orange and blue
And know the sum of what we knew.

Victor K Butanis

R.O.T.C. Boot Camp

Once I was happy when I was a bum
Now I'm unhappy, a slave I've become
By slave I mean boot, by boot I mean me
Though not quite a slave, I'm damned sure not free

I march in the sun, I march in the rain
And then when I'm done I march once again
I arch my sore back and brace my stiff spine
Then march into stacks and pace into lines

My neck is so sore, likewise for my chest
They always want more though I do my best
I tell them I ache, that this isn't fun
They tell me just wait, you've hardly begun

Pushups and situps and chinups with prones
Breathing and wheezing and heaving with moans
Exercise, flexercise, neckercise, crouch
Aching and breaking and making with ouch

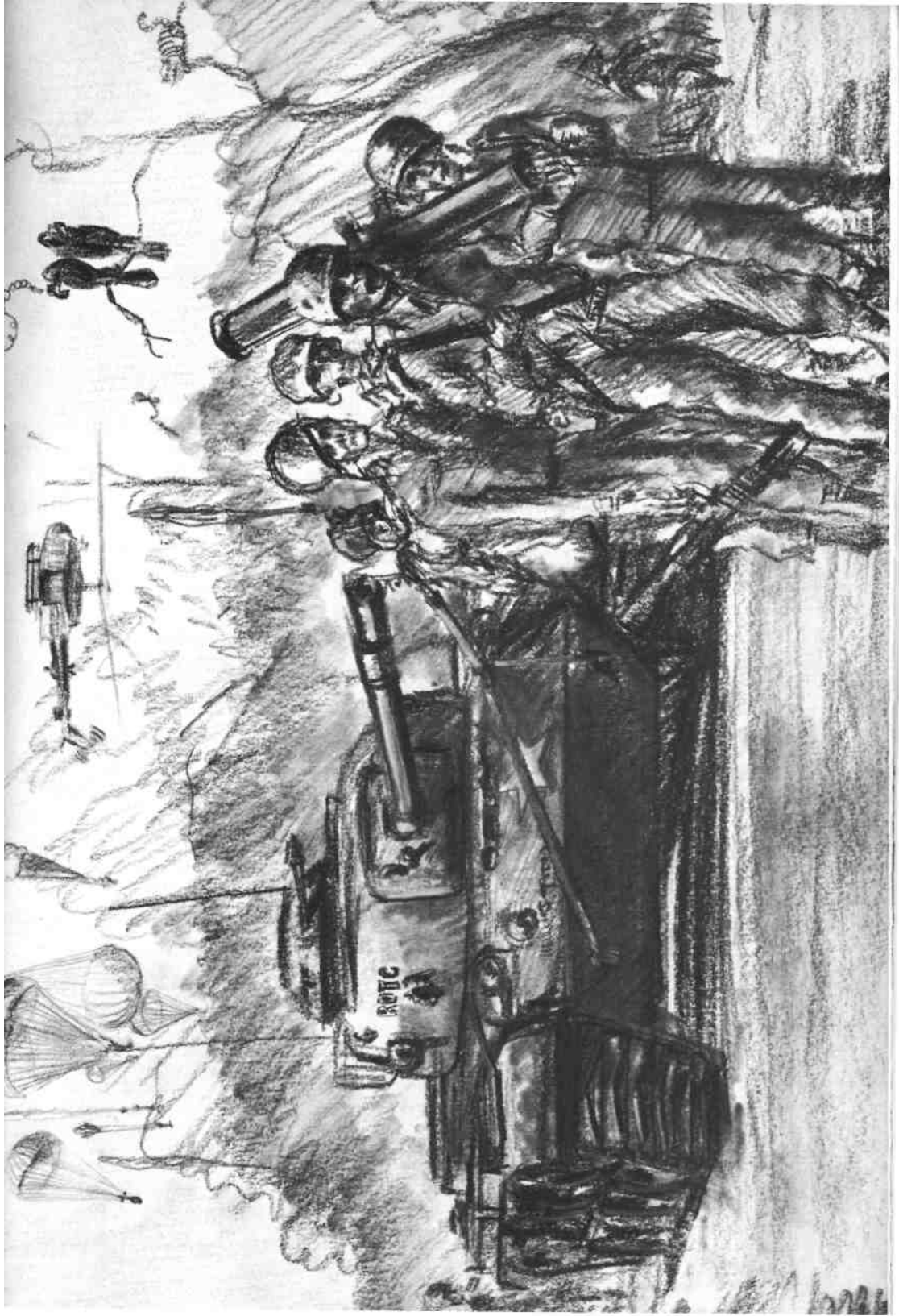
Attention, Attention, Attention they bray
At attention I eat, sleep, walk, breathe and pray
Attention, Attention, Attention they cry
At attention I'll be til doomsday is nigh

My timing is slow, my actions sluggish
My spirit's darned low, my morale muggish
A day seems a week, a week seems a year
A year seems longer, forever I fear

Quite patriotic, I'm Red, Black and Blue
A most quixotic, irritative hue
My bruises won't heal, my scars yet remain
With each step I feel a fresh searing pain

Yet despite my pain and my sunburned pink
I'd sign up again, at least so I think
I'd give it my all, the old do or die
A Boot proud and tall, whatever the why

dedicated sincerely to Wes & the troops
a veteran, usn



Swamply Memoirs
(Monsoons yes or maybe later)

Sticks slithered green
and goldly mallow--
 shallow, fallow, marshy mire

'Skeeter skater scooter
over scumly dankwet--
 steamy, teemy, desiree ranksweat

Reed bogly sawyer rushes
(fast and slow ones),
duckblinds, duck-behinds, circum-soggy mazes

Island fortly refuse--
corrugated tinwalls,
muck moat, sludge float, puddle-plank drawbridge

Sr. Christine Manlove

Libation

Earthen vessel, hollowed, waiting,
senses laughing breath that showers
pupplied petals (dogwood's dead now),
fragile, fragrant, not yet bruised brown.

Flowing over, loving brimness,
grace-full cup of goodly measure,
yield to yellow flames kissed blue when
bellows bellow chants of laud wind.

In me melt vain rinds once cherished;
forge enshrines the claypot christened
by buds bleeding molten homage--
crucible tipped in libation.

Sr. Christine Manlove

Suicide Note

Poor naked ape, melancholy Dane
 dying the silent, sinking orange
 I offer my praise to mad Ophelia's Black Mass--
 Receiving Laertes' pain poisoned harangue
 I'll soon join that fortunate lass
 Morpheusly oblivious of pain...

(Camus' first question of philosophy, so you'll see, re-echoes Thane Hamlet's "or not to be" and brings Kant's "progressive unification of sense manifold" into termination: total psychic expiration. Hence, the only true existential goal is fervently wishing sir death's black ghoul to sensually become as one with your soul)

...where god assumes skull Yorick's reign;
Stay yet awhile, Horatio, and give lie to my name.

sb. smith

Moon-dream

When I dreamt near the moon--
 babies' breath wished past my eyes.
In the white light I watched
 the gentle sweep of leafen legions
Kissing stones and fairy bones--
 the world was crusted green.
Over every chink were spread
 tiny cloven shields.
Plink.
 A dew-drop fell.
 Twinkling moon-drops fell.
They spilled onto and through
 the stirring green blanket.
There they sleep
 safe from the red sun's touch.

Diane Sapliway

American Ego

Looking for dog love
Whining her whimpering me
Shoving raised pleading eyes into laps
Cold empty nose onto arms
An empty dead end echo
Echoing 'me'

sb. smith

Not Looking Back

Cars zooming by staring at lights cars one of my best friends man walking lighting a cigar How fast you going still can't believe it not him neon signs grocery picture shows bars grilles steaks lobsters cocktail scary feeling not breathing what no thanks siren lights on the right move quick everybody over heart attack biggest killer I believe it lotta humbug joints and gas stations in the world in town pavement too engine drone calm relaxing hope he pulls through How fast you going probably half vegetable if he does though He wouldn't want that he'd rather die dye red dye blood is red dye blood is red dye red die don't weave youmake me nervous open the window we could be next oughta go to church out five days and asks for a beer then out again Coma's a funny thing not funny scary strange real strange plenty of traffic tonite no breath Jeez look at that backup right turn looked fine at the meeting taken out nine tenths of his stomach drone engine don't think about it red light right turn left parking lot sixty cents an hour get you coming and going no breath death house no air here's change big place idea of dying's hard to live with

"Condition's unchanged," the receptionist spoke into the telephone, and then "right down the hall to the right room 613," to us. We followed directions and found the room, entering quietly. Tom lay silent, still in the grip of the coma, his skin pale lustreless, sunken around the cheeks so that the bones stood out under his dark eyes-- a depressing contrast to his previously healthy fat face. "I still can't believe it," Gil said, "he looked so good at the meeting Thursday night." "Yeh," answered Curtis, "a day later and he's fightin' for his life. Crazy. Kinda makes you feel weak knowin' how fast it can end." Andy pondered "Ya just can't tell. One day you're here and the next day..." They all looked at Tom lying motionless on the hospital bed. Under the crisp white bedspread only his face disrupted the whiteness of the pillowcase and surrounding sheets. They all knew Tom was the most likable, most popular person in the club. He was the mainstay, the backbone of the Pleasure Club of Braddock Heights. He was a lively popular man who liked to eat and drink and laugh. Divorced, lots of girl friends, a great guy...and he's dying.

"Doctor told little Tom they couldn't operate to stop

the internal bleeding while he was in the coma. Been five days now...I don't know," Gil sighed hopelessly. "Stroke's bad enough," Andy broke the silence, "but while you're drivin', that's too much. Scares ya." "Makes it worse knowing somebody stole his wallet too; had to be the ambulance drivers or the police," Gil said. "Might'a been somebody in the hospital," Curtis said, "They didn't even tell Tom's boy he was here. Little Tom even called and they said he wasn't here. I don't know. Seems like too damn much to think about. Makes ya wanna punch somebody."

Everyone shook their heads disgustedly; each one looking back to Tom lying on the bed a few seconds. Then they filed slowly out the door, not looking back.

Drew Bauer

Reflections

When I sat down
To ponder the depth of the evening tonight,
It seemed so quiet –
 Moon rushing down to claim its territory in the sky
 Fragile uncertain stars trying to find their way home
 Wind blowing shadows of knights and dragons on my wall
 Birds uttering a single chirp to shatter the silence
And yet not quiet at all
That I decided to think about you.
Then realized I already had.

When I sat down
To ponder the depth of my feeling for you
It seemed so warm –
 Sun dripping honey on the early morning song of life
 Fire glowing gently in the winter's quiet cold
So very warm.
That I decided to love you.
Then realized,
To my surprise,
I already did.

Nancy K Webster

an old song, a new heart

a stroke of one a.m.
one more stroke of your long, soft hair.
the choke of: I Have to Go. Smile.
(if it could be summer
with fog and early morning dew
to ride home to) once more I'd say
how I love you.

I've left places before;
a single good-bye walking out the door.
I've leaned back in my chair--
Oh, I remember him.
What a good time I had with her.
there were the late night talks
and aimless walks through falling snow.
we toasted to the true-- "To me."
yes, and "To you."
only last week I got a note that said
"I remember too."

so now I say nothing,
now that winter's ending.
summer is still a long way off.
(and spring, I fear,
will not bring summer the same as before)
too long. to sit and watch the clock--
to wait for fog and dew;
to wait for stars that may arrange our fate.
to wait,
to wait--
till It Might Be too Late.

Jim Gluch

Of Prisons and Things

Let there be wretchedness

magog cried

And Lo

The earth was bathed in suffering

of broken-winged lovers

cradling weeping butterflies

Judge maggot saw the pain and was pleased

And the seventh day onaned

John Stewart

Van Gogh

"How wonderful the golden sun is"

You sit alone

Silently suffering.

Sunflower yellow

Suppressing inexorable pain,

But expressing all.

Vibrant colors of emotion

Express the impressions

Of a mind electric with light,

Enclosed in a shell

Doomed to everlasting night.

I see the painting

Of a lost minister

With a mission in the mines;

Just another mistake,

An institution you will not accept.

And at last they all

Will sing your praises

When the paper reads

"Suicidal social outcast

Destroyed himself today."

"Behold the kingdom of light."

Steve Glover

Quiet Suffering

I look strong, don't I, my Dear?
Or at least I hope I do.
I want to look strong, to make it appear
That I have forgotten you.

I haven't, though, forgotten you,
And believe me, I have tried.
But it is hard when I see you two
And know I've been cast aside.

But it isn't fair to accuse you of this
When I know you didn't mean it
To be this way, to take my Bliss.
And now I can't redeem it.

So I'll never let you see me groan,
For I know this would surely hurt you.
And so I'll suffer quietly alone
Because, my Dear, I still love you.

Syd Carton

The Pond

Sun-warmed breezes
 gently blow over the pond
Making little waves
 in the once smooth waters
Spreading outward - touching all,
 and softly rocking the lily pads
So that one can see
 the water flowers move
In a sleepy, peaceful dance

f.p.

I

I am one of billions. I am thought, I am spirit, I am body. I have many powers, common only to my specie. I am the individual and I am the mass, and I am the part which makes up the whole. My mind is capable of deep concentration and nomadic dreams. The powers stored in my mind are seemingly limitless. I use approximately one-tenth of my mental capacity. If I used more, my physical state would no longer exist, or it would virtually be of no use. I am energy, I am motion, I am life. I have reason to live and I have reason to die. The length of my life is questionable, but my death is inevitable. The thoughts I keep are known only to me and my Creator, while my actions are known to all who seek to learn of them. I have emotions and I have feelings. I have successes and I have failures. I have strengths and I have weaknesses. I am optimistic and I am pessimistic. I experience change and diversity though I will always remain constant. I have great hopes and aspirations and I have the power to achieve them. I have the right to be as I am and think as I wish, no matter how much I am brain-washed, computerized, programmed, and placed. I live in a world where temptations and vexations are many, though I must always overcome them. I have goals of peace and freedom, even though wars are fought to attain them. I live in a world where theory has been replaced by fact, flesh by metal, and imaginary boundaries have been replaced by barbed-wire fences and concrete walls. Material wealth is demanded by all though it is monopolized by the few. I live in a world where major concepts have changed and grown out of proportion. My specie has been allowed to use but a small portion of its brain and has succeeded in all but destroying itself, which is still a definite threat. To think that I am part of this specie, which has become a mad conglomeration of evil, quickens my pulse and trembles my body. I wish to be counted as an individual, separate and distinct from the mass. I wish to be as I should be. I wish to return to the image in which I was created, the image of God.

Victor K Butanis

Penance And The Palmer Method

Linear ached consciences cringe to their wooden mother desks bolting them to sweat dripping buttocks and inflexible truths. Dreadful eyes glue to sin personified who kneels head down in front of the black slate horizon which bounds them on three sides.

Suddenly spectacles slide down shivering noses to the sound of swish as sleeve is pushed past elbow by a ruthless traveling grasp. An explosive crack upon quivering pale palm turned liquid red strikes five consecutive stings of flame pain racing up his arm - higher - soaring past neck up and down - til it reaches his all and finally throat whose cry forces courage to silence.

The slit ruler is replaced by jagged rope which formerly drew a circumference around the protruding middle of the brown-robed scourger. The victim's palsied hand hides behind his back and a new one reaches upward - begging - from his right side. He did not hear it this time but instead saw the hole that the slash had dug in the corner of the instrument of thought that had unearthed the secret strategies of his satanic quest.

-Herald of Beelzebub!

-Son of Lamian breasts!

-Soul of Shedui!

You who are not worthy of repentance.

Numbness ascends limp mangled limbs until a double slap joins his right cheek to the left under his nose that bridged the singe cutting across the middle of his face. The bony hand of the sacred mediator, now too slightly sore, points its twig - like the fingers above to the Messiah crucified - the redemptive memorial everlasting to the sight of the dwellers of the academic tabernacle.

-Denier of Divine Omnipotence!

-Chooser of your ends

You who re-sentence His Son to Calvary.

Witnesses all! You see today with your very eyes Satan Incarnate in blue blood ink and heretic penmanship. Cover your souls and watch evil burn.

A match strikes and the loose leaf evidence hung high as the kneeled author lifts his dangling head towards the heavens. Locust humming zig - zags from ear to ear soon crescendo-ing into a choir of silent chanting curses -

virgins and confessors mutter mournings.

He thinks of the alphabet.

(This was the first year Dedalus could write down his thoughts. He was so proud of answering "Who is God?" in letters so that everyone could share the happy feeling he had inside him about the question. He was waiting for this chance four out of his seven years that it had been on his mind ((some times outloud when he was, praying)) But he soon discovered it wasn't a question at all-only the first part of the answer that his teacher had been telling him ever since he came to school. At least that's what the boy who sits across from him said. And he should know. This was his second year of school and he knew how to make a big "g" - the kind that covered the entire space between the blue lines.)

He smells the heat of his symbolic destiny as it flows through the tunneled window channeling a single streak of dusky sunlight shining wirely thru bristled trees.

Ellyn O'Heney

Cupid

Ancient angel, say goodbye
take on winged journey, hurry,
your spell at last
the mood you've cast
transformed my daily mood's momentum.

Gently now your spirit rocks me
what you've left behind is true
prayerfully now I bid it welcome:
touching love
tasting joy
and
the nectar
of
his
nearness.

Jan Gorman

Unresolved

I am a hue.
Who am I now?
I was a brown.
Or was I grey?
(Things never stay).

When skies are blue
Spring sets me free
For I agree--
All that dies young
Should live again.

And when it's June
All should be green
(I wish to be)
My greens fade grey
and slip away.

That's today--
Shades of grey.
June's away--

Where do hues end?
Suns scorch. Draughts parch.
But then again
It snows in March.
Hues change, not end.

June today,
But a day
and anyway,
I've seen blue

As far away
From May or June
As sunny days
In December
(with snowy flays).

Jim Gluch

The Sea Gull

Solitary over the sea
 dipping into the crests
 for a lonely meal,
A Sea Gull alone in his blue world
 winging,
 gliding,
 through the morning haze
A single silhouette against the sun.

David Dewey

A Moment at the Pinnacle

"Nuestras vidas son los rios que van a
dar en el mar - que es el morir"

(High upon the summit of the mountain)
Waves of clouds swirl below
Drowning all desire for home.
Stars float in upon the tide,
Regulus looms silent on the crest.
Acceptance of beyond has split the shade.
Reflection and abstraction reify.
All continues, but better than before.

Victor K Butanis



GESTE

It was an incredibly dull evening. The storm had kept most of the club's members away, and I had had to spend the evening listening to Commodore R-, an intolerable bore whom I had somehow managed to avoid these past few years. Fortunately he was getting ready to leave.

"Excuse me, my dear Smithston, but I really must be getting on. It's quite late and way past feeding time for my purple ape."

"Purple ape?" I asked before I could stop myself.

"Yes, beautiful animal. Netted him six months ago on my Kenyan safari. Terribly difficult trek, expensive too; cost me a little over nineteen thousand pounds all told."

I contented myself with raising my eyebrows non-committally, not really sure what to say. In spite of his being a crashing bore, R- had always been scrupulously honest, a gentleman of his word. However, he wasn't above pulling a practical joke, and I had no desire for this to be told about the Hunt Club at my expense. Still, my curiosity was aroused. Fortunately R- continued.

"Really Smithston, I do have a purple ape. I read about him in the trade papers years ago; written up as some sort of native myth like the Yeti was. Scoffed at and all that rot. Well, I got him: two years, nineteen thousand pounds and a wretched lot of ridicule it cost me, but I finally captured him in southern Kenya. Frightfully huge."

He seemed so sincere that I accepted his offer of a ride out tomorrow to his estate to see it. R- left, and I had my customary evening brandy before retiring to my room. I was an old bachelor, and my room at the club had become my home, an arrangement which quite satisfied me. Nowhere else could I have so easily combined the wifely aspects of an excellent chef, countless maids and willing domestics with the good solid company of my fellow gentlemen and a ready supply of evening brandies.

I slept soundly that night and after lunch the next day left with R- for his country home. The ride was most pleasant through the languid Wexley countryside, and I didn't at all mind the Commodore's continual talking. He recounted at great length the trials of his Kenyan safari, lingering longest on the affair he had had with his guide's wife. There is something pathetic in an old man's talking of his sexual conquests, imaginary or otherwise; sometimes I feel as if I am the only hunter who was never seduced

by his safari guide's wife. By the time we were nearly to his place, R- had gone over the entire hunt at least twice, and the guide's wife episode twice that.

Arriving at R-'s, we went immediately to the rear of his stables where he had a massive steel door set into the side of a hill. Impatient to show me his prize, he took out a key and unlocked the door. As soon as we were through, he closed the door and relocked it. We then went down a short flight of stairs and came to a landing which stood before another massive locked door. We repeated this unlocking-relocking-stairs cycle four more times. I thought this a foolishly elaborate protection even if he did have a lavender anthropoid, but I said nothing to my host. I was sure by now it was not a practical joke because R- was as tight with his money as he was loose with his conversation; he would never spend this much merely for a laugh.

Finally stepping through the last door, I found myself in a huge flood lighted natural cavern, in the center of which stood a gigantic cage containing an equally gigantic purple ape. Purple! Not the slightly bluish tinge I had been half way expecting, but an actual livid purple. The ape rose a good fifteen feet into the air and weighed at least a thousand stone. It was most unbecoming of me, but I must admit I stood and stared like some child. At last I collected myself and approached the cage. The ape's fur had an almost hypnotic effect with its purple sheen, and I experienced an overwhelming physical desire to touch it. The ape seemed docile enough despite its ferocious size, so I reached through the bars; R-'s hoarse cry stopped me cold.

"For God's sake Smithston, don't ever touch that ape."

"Why not?"

"Ancient death curse. Local witch doctor told me: you touch the ape and you die. Lost my chauffeur that way. He touched the ape against my orders, and we found him dead outside of camp, fear etched into his face; heart attack. It was a bloody shame, he was my best driver."

I let it go at that and watched R- feed the ape its raw meat. We returned above ground, once again going through the endless cycle of doors-locks-steps-etc. By the time we reached the ground, it was far too late to allow my host to drive me all the way back to the club, so I accepted his invitation to stay the night. After an adequate dinner we retired with our brandies to his den where R- regaled me with stories of past safaris both in

the far distant jungles of Asia and in the back streets of the Parisian red light districts. I offered a few anecdotes of my own, and we exchanged war experiences: his with Brandon's famed Seventh in India, and mine with Huxley in Spain. All in all I had a most pleasant evening. Perhaps it was the brandy or maybe somehow the purple ape, but I didn't find R- nearly the bore I had thought him. As it was soon time to retire, I thanked him for his company and went off to bed.

Try as I might, I could not sleep; the more I tried, the more elusive sleep became. I couldn't stop thinking of that bloody purple ape; it had infected me, ruined my peace of mind. I realized I had become obsessed with caressing that magnificent fur. I tossed about for what seemed like ages until I finally gave up, got up and dressed. Feeling it would be rude to awaken my host after all he had done for me, I silently crept downstairs to where he kept the key, and then just as quietly stole outside. Satisfied I had awakened no one, I hurried to the steel door and unlocked it. I didn't believe it necessary, but I relocked the door as soon as I had slipped through, in deference to my host. Shining my flash before me, I descended to the second door and repeated the unlocking-locking ritual; and so on until I was finally in the darkened cavern. As immense as it had seemed when fully lighted, the cavern now appeared even larger, its boundaries lost in the soft fear of the shadows. The ape was asleep; and as I shone my flash on him, his fur glistened in its liquid purple. I could well understand the Commodore's obsession with such a magnificent animal.

I think myself an intelligent man; but as I reached out to touch the ape some atavistic fear paralyzed my hand, holding me immobile. I stood for awhile fighting my deserting courage, but finally turned and left - without touching him. But as I got half way through that idiotic cycle of doors and stairs, unlockings and relockings, my courage crept shame-facedly back. I about faced and recycled back down to the cavern. Boldly I walked up to the cage and, before my resolve could fail me again, reached through the bars and gently touched the sleeping ape on the shoulder with one outstretched finger.

God's blood! Immediately the ape startled awake and let loose the most horrifying blood chilling scream I have ever heard. Aghast at what I had done, I raced for the door and slammed it shut. As I hastily locked it I

heard the terrifying screech as he tore the cast iron bars of his cage from their concrete foundation. My God, what had I done? My heart was beating far, far too fast for a man of my age as I raced up flight after flight of stairs, my chest burning, almost bursting as I was forced to halt at each landing to unlock, then relock each door. I knew now why R-'s chauffeur had died as my heart labored erratically. As I ran up the steps, I could hear the ape smashing through the locked doors below me: the massive steel doors savagely ripped from their hinges and tossed aside as if they were so many candy bar wrappers.

I ran through the outer door and, after locking it, dashed for the woods, the nearest place I had any chance of hiding in. But before I reached their protection, I heard the ape hit the last door, and I turned around just as he tore through, his triumphant roar almost as loud, almost as violent as the roaring of the blood surging through my temples. I could hear the thump-thump-thumping of his pursuit as I again dashed for the wood's darkness. God alone knows how long I ran, the low branches ripping my clothes and tearing at my numbed flesh; it may only have been a few moments, but it seemed hours, an eternity. My chest burned with the violence of each gulp of air, my legs became leaden with aching. I could almost feel his hot, rancid breath down the back of my neck as I tore blindly through the wood, that bloody thump-thump-thump right behind me, always a little louder, always a little closer. Finally I stumbled, I know not from exhaustion or fear; and I lay quivering on the ground, blubbing like a baby. I tried to crawl on my belly, bloodying my fingernails on the rocky ground. And then the ape was over me, towering silently in my inevitable death. A bloody carcass I had seen in Africa flashed through my mind: the flesh of what had been my guide torn beyond recognition by an enraged gorilla. I didn't want to die that way; I didn't want to die. His fangs glistened saliva in the moonlight; I saw the uncaring savagery in his eyes. I was too petrified to even pray; I could only make helpless baby sounds as I groveled at his feet. His hairy arm reached down for me; and just before I lost consciousness the ape stretched forth one finger, gently touched me on my shoulder and said:

"You're it."

sb. smith

heroin

groping toward the easily vague by crawling
away from the future drifting upon the
powdery plague infesting this newly won
suture beginning in the silvered tunnel while
sipping the pain blackened cup ending with the
tragic skin funnel forever flowing down into up

sb. smith

The Common Culture

Men who put cats in bags, and drown their lives,
also own, and drive a motorcycle
into a tree, and spit out their insides.
These same men sneer at Jews, and joke "kikes smell."
When younger, it's been told, "they fought like hell"
with fists and pipes and chains to maintain pride.
For sex at fifteen, all to divide, deride,
"they had looked up, took girls", and made them swell.
Now while losing none of their lust for life,
they must contain their rabid passion's teeth,
at least, as fits their stature or their wife.
They build hamburger joints, sell raw horse-beef.
Men who make profits by the rape of life
will use either high finance or a knife.

Dan Cuddy

An Iconic Instant

Thomas Becket lived when life and religion were one. Surely a man as exalted, intelligent and once-worldly as he must have occasionally questioned the catholic belief.

Bending Becket bows to pray
Beneath arched stones aspiring and inspiring,
Amid columns of columns
Like a sentry in catacombs.

Light enters the church through splendid windows.
(Colored puzzles of glass framed in lead
by some guilded glazier,
who's life's work was to fashion man's dearest stories
and form them for all time.)

Passing up, the Bishop steps
To the nearest window to see
His traditional dawn - the Nativity.
A familial scene in mosaic,
In royal blue the glass Virgin,
In humble pose a titian Joseph,
In between - their Divine Child.
Question: Was the mortal marital bond
Broken by the Child?

Sometimes these windows turned on him
And became a kaleidoscope.
One which man could twist
To form new doctrines,
And then build new windows for.

More panes and he sees another heavenly scene:
Has mankind crowned that ruby heart with Thorns,
And caused such blood to spill ever away?
Is that the reason those angels mourn
As clustered they are above the bay?
What consummate grace in flight they take
Eternally airborne by man's belief.
"A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

But when the glass shatters will faith still keep?
As faith loses hold, so artists' glass can break;
Does man's eternity lie in his endeavor?

The ancient Beadsman visiting the Stations
Broke Becket's vision.
And they both confirmed
The pane's permanence
Just as the glassmaker had once done.

Terry McCormack

Riding

The entrance closes;
thunder begins.
Looking out of the steel cage,
the world begins to move.

The paved ground
passes beneath me.
Monuments of Nature and Man
move in unison with the land.
Objects once ahead –
Now are behind.
At times, the speed slows;
Then spins,
Coming at my station from another direction.

Again, the pace slows.
Wind turns to breeze,
while the earth drifts to a halt.

I am released from my cell,
Part of the world
having passed me by.

Gregory S Glinowiecki

The rough bristles skimmed across my back molars,
scouring them with the aid of the creamy, green Crest.
Prickling the crevices of my mouth with the mint flavor,
the tooth brush continued its work. Stinging traveled
from my molars to my bicuspid and, reaching my incisors,
enveloped my whole mouth.

Suddenly I shivered as a frigid fluid irrigated
the rows of my teeth, carrying the tooth paste with it
as it surged between my lips into the sink. This rinsing
process continued several more times until the thick
paste was completely removed. My mouth throbbed after
so vigorous an ordeal.

Paula Zierolf

The Way I Feel

I am the guitar,
strumming and picking
accenting the song you sing,
if only it will bring out
the way I feel and what is real
to me.

I am the Coleridge dream,
interrupted, faded,
and forgotten.
I've thought it through
but I can't tell you,
the way I feel and what is real
to me.

From my Caufield world,
watching and judging
and setting myself upon the shelf,
for all the world to see,
the way I feel and what is real
to me.

Mike Peroutka

The Black Road, The Black Night Sky,
And The Sneering Traffic Light

I.

Picture a black road
running to meet a black night sky
in a kind of warmly pointless, warmly breathless,
never-ending hug.
Like two grandfatherly old men
who smell of grease and gasoline,
the road and the sky embrace
each evening.

A traffic light looks down upon that scene
each evening
with a steely sneer,
for to him, in his well-wired, statistically required
newness,
the road looks old and oily,
like a tarry trickle.
The sky looks old and oily too,
and worn in some places
and in some places even torn.
And of course it's very old.

And they both smell, too.

How horrible, how useless!
How old.

II.

Picture a black rain
falling from the black sky
one night.

The traffic light hangs and sneers
at its pimply reflection on the black road:

Green. Amber. Red.
Green. Amber. Red.
Green. Amber. Red.
And red. And red.
And red. Unchanging as stillness is,
and still red...

III.

Picture the traffic light hanging in horror
in the rain,
as impotent as the last gasp from a gallows.
For now,
its pimply reflection sneers back
like a grotesque, rosy face.

It glows. It glows.
Then, it's gone.

IV.

Picture the darkest hour before dawn.

The rain is rattling like death
against a burned-out traffic light.

And it spits
(with the scorn of age):

"How horrible,
how useless!"

And the blackness asks solicitously,
"how old?"

James Ercolano

Mausoleum, Museum, Movie

Entombed oh so neatly
in the wrought iron knots
of the gray spider's thread,
they surrender completely
to those surreal thoughts
that are hung on the dead.

Larry Slade

The Tasting

I search. . . and find
the one I love;
taking good care,
preparing for the wedding night.

Carefully, I undress her,
Revealing her true beauty.
Her bouquet slowly fills my head.
I gaze upon my blushing mistress,
then, take her into my mouth,
gently kissing her with my tongue.

Soon, our bloods will mix;
and I take more of her.
Ah, she tastes so fine –
as sweet as woman.

Gregory S Glinowiecki

"The Bum"

Walking along the bleak streets
of New York City,
I see a crochety, old man feeding
pigeons in Central Park.
I look into his somber blue
eyes which still reflect a ray of hope,
Wondering why the old sage is
feeding the pigeons, knowing full
well that it is his last crust of bread.
I see in this great nobleman a
modern Saint Francis of Assisi.

Charles Pizza

SELECTED WRITINGS OF ROSEBUD AND TOMATOPATCH
FROM THE DIARY OF NUTRITION, 1794

SEMINOLE

the red man was a seminole. i'm sure of it.
he told me and he is the one who cares. he
tries very hard. it is impossible to hear him.
If you crouch down late at night you can just about
smell the message he has to deliver. it is an
ingenueous plan. several coded odors. he makes
a period when he exposes his armpit. and if
you crouch down late at night you can just
about smell the message he has to deliver. which
is usually that he is a seminole. each morning
he eats his timecard thinking it is a cookie.
it is. it is a cookie.
i had to hide my face from the fire, but i was
not ashamed, we singed all our hair and had
a delightful time in spite of the fact that he
was a seminole. yes, i am crisp, very crisp.

---tomatopatch 1794

RODNEY AND JULIA

Hello rodney hello julia hello spencer
get out spencer.
that was the remarkable afternoon that
rodney had a stomach ache. he's so good
about things like that. he never complained.
he was a pederast. julia was so different.
spencer liked her get out spencer. that was
julia's fame and fortune. rodney loved julia but he
didn't know why. he often told me that when
he was a bit skyward and confused.
fortunately for all concerned julia didn't care.
it was one fine day in the month of may
when all are gay and want to play that julia
first noticed rodney being a bit skyward
and confused. did this bother julia? No.
(it did not) this did not bother julia.
she was careful and different. spencer get out spencer.

they had an awful time. what a flop. the beach was wet.
the picnic had melted. the car ran away. what
could they have done? spencer finished with julia
and inserted the knife into rodney's chest.
then he came after me and that's all i know.

--- rosebud 1794

RANDOLPH

what a sight! i hope i never see anything like
that again!
pardon me.
i missed you while you were away randolph and i
hope sincerely that i won't waste any time. you
are far off and your scars are oozing. there is
no telling where i can quit. you are three feet away
from my dusty face and i know you think my
eyebawl to be disfigured. perhaps you are right.
anyway, while i was on my way here to visit you i tried
to collect myself. i knew you would be horrible
and i tried to tell your mother easily. it is cool in
here; very cool and damp.
i prepared everything, myself included, for the sight
of you. i worked all last night convincing my
troubled mind that this whole business wasn't
necessarily impossible. and now as you try to
look at me, it seems that i must sever the wires
between your tired eyesockets and your brain.
your brain, your magnificent brain....in a jar beside
your bed ... floating. silence between us becomes
meaningful as i notice the little bits of mold on
your cerebellum.
yes, randolph, i have known you for a very long time.

---tomatopatch 1794

TRUTH

the truth is out and i can't hide from it
anymore. i sit in a highback chair in a
home for the aged. but i am not....really
aged. that's what they keep telling me.
if i am thrown out of here i will no longer

have a home. i will no longer have a highback
chair to sit in, i will no longer be happy.
and many people will just let this happen
to me and say that i'm not really aged.
i will reward anyone who can either hush
them up or secure for me a new home and a
similar highback chair.
it is autumn and i cannot move. my joints and limbs are full
of wax.

--- rosebud 1794

STANDING IN THE WAY

there is someone standing in the way.
he will have to be dealt with. don't
despair. he can't harm you. he is only
a man standing in the way. but if he
faces you, by all means, complain. he
is just a man standing in the way.
i don't like to hear you cry. i despise it.

--- rosebud 1794

FACELIFTING

i knew a man once who wanted a facelifting.
so i lifted it until he was above the clouds
and could see every tiny little star.

--- tomatopatch 1794

--- as found and edited by
Dean Hoffman

The Preparation

She opened the top bureau drawer. She sorted through the socks and shirts, picking out what was suitable for the maid's boy. She stopped her work often because tears would blind her eyes. Then she would dry them with her handkerchief and continue.

Her husband had pleaded with her not to enter the room until a few more days had passed in order that she might adjust to the reality of the accidental death of her son. However, she had insisted on getting rid of those belongings of the boy that would have to be disposed of anyway. Already she had decided on what she intended keeping: his photographs, paintings and books. These objects she would gather up and place in the large empty dress boxes presently lying useless under her bed.

As she removed the last shirt from the drawer, she noticed an envelope wedged into a corner of the drawer. She picked up the plain unsealed envelope and opened it. She stared at the airline ticket a full minute before taking her engraved cigarette lighter out of her skirt pocket and lighting the edge of the ticket. After dropping the burning ticket into the wastepaper basket, she opened the next bureau drawer.

Nick Codd

Must you come to see me Sunday?
I had an appointment with my life that day
I thought I'd go watch the sky
To see if it would turn to bluebird's wings
Or cotton balls.
And maybe look and catch the brook
That runs away forever to the sea.
Or if it rains, I'd go catch the droplets on my tongue
To taste what feeds the thirsty ground.
And maybe then I'd look inside and out
To find out who I am and where I'm bound.
But Hey! Why don't you come too?
Cause maybe then we can leave for life - together.

Nancy K Webster

Dreams in Greys and Yellows
or
An Optimist's Coloring Book

This poem, I am where I start:
cold and grey, where else
but in the dark?

Flowing through my brain's
bubbles of laughs and joys;
then came the rains!

Hello, friend. Good-bye, acquaintance.
Tomorrow does not come (I never sleep)
but dreams never end.

Jim Gluch
(From an obscured past)

Ending

Last man on earth meeting
last woman
Reaches out hand touching
bare breast
Sadly

Last woman on earth taking
last man
Agrees no conceiving
more beasts
Gladly

I. E. Leibowitz

Thoughts

He stares at the watercolor clouds
Ascending an orange morning sky,
Listening to voices which whisper
In his mind,
Measuring words by the silence they afford.

Many diverse thoughts congeal into
Forms of sunrises and seagulls and
The clear, cool taste of falling rain.
Things to be frozen in the brain,
Waiting to be thawed, returned to life,
And remembered.

Mary Carol Schneider

Paul

Paul, I feel I know you well
And I want you to know
I feel akin to the state you're in

Paul, I feel smaller than you
There's so much you must do
I live only from day to day –

but you go on and on and on

Men grow weary of seeming strong
and pretense becomes their game.
A brother's love is what it has to be
but it can't be quite the same.

Paul you've done nothing but right
having been done so wrongly
We live only from day to day

but you go on and on and on

Mike Peroutka



Transient dots wearing shiny black suits
Hastily shouldering new-plundered loot.
Horse-helpers lifting, lightening the load
Goose-stepping soldiers, find the abode.

Tunneling downward, beneath crumbling beams
Homage prevailing, all bow to the queen.
Gaudily gorgeous, with no wrinkled seam
Haughtily glancing, with fringed eyes of green.

Timidly darting, young running and playing
Hurriedly stop, to her all fall praying.
In this mother-church
I can draw the lines.

Sue Gosnell

"It's time for me to go"

Whose fault it was, it's hard to say.
Well, maybe it was all mine
seeing that hurt look in your eyes.
I know now that I must go;
not by measured distances
but by feelings.
To retrace those steps - backwards
which I made towards you
and hope that the fresh green grass
and flowers have not been destroyed
-just bent.

So I must go on a road
that is being covered by the night
and never look back to see
the flowers spring back;
growing back up to the sun
-where they belong.

fp

Fulfillment

My hand reaches out to his
He turns too quick
My hand falls to my side
He turns me off again.

My lips press against his
He speaks too harsh
My lips depart so cold
He turns me off again.

My body lies next to his
He goes too far
My body loves him so
He turns me on again.

Anne Gurley

Requiem

A wave
Born from the sea,
An infinitesimal ripple on
The timeless ocean.
It comes in mighty splendor
Swirling, churning, crashing to the shore,
Its frothy, lacy fingers caressing the
Smooth sand.
But it must die
Recede from the land
Leaving behind delicate skeletons
As remnants of its stay.
Reminders of a brief existence.
But who will mourn the passing
Of a wave?

Mary Carol Schneider

A Situation of Love

Love hides in the blackness
Holding love dreams and moments for lovers,
One within the cloudy white sheets.
Together, the two know one
In the blind purpose of now.

Apart, a kiss of assurance and consent
For the doubtful;
Hand with hand in speech,
Each finger listening in touch.
Dare they speak, as if
To disturb the conversation.

* * * * *

Sun, morning's disquieting nudge
To awaken the nocturnal characters of love.
Bright rays of question fill the room.
Some change by the nature of day,
Intrusion on the nature of night;
Love comes by Two---Love comes apart.

* * * * *

Talk is in the murmur,
As if from running over
Or from
The confrontation with belief.
A line of deceit marks his role --
She toys with the curtain, the theatre curtain
Admitting the act of day;
Some scene of the debate
In a lover's complaint.

She knows the loss; the tears
From the fears of a young girl
Found woman.

He finds the silver latch escape,
And hangs his empty hand on the door.

Timothy Davis

Watching Snow In The Night

Snow falls outside my window;
Secret in the darkness
Flakes let slip their brilliance
Upon passing the bright eye
Perched high on a pole
Only to descend once again
To night.

Only a moment of stardom,
Fleeting seconds of life
For this geometric artist of nature.

Yet how much the better
Than I cuddled here in warmth
Hiding behind my breath on the window.
How much better to have felt the cold fall
Than this stifling gray mood.
To have shined, if merely a flash,
To have shined.

Timothy Davis

Of being, alone

I thought on her leaving and smelled the musk
of grasshoppers held captive
in a mason jar.

Larry Slade

Flutter Bye

Once upon one summer's sigh
Not many tears ago
I took to bed a butterfly
And love began to grow

To follow her I sprouted wings
Full wond'rous to behold
For they had many myst'rous things
Entwined throughout with gold

We flew upon a silvered kiss
Flew high through em'rald rays
We skimmed the fated green abyss
And drank the blues and grays

We toured the autumn's auburn cave
And mocked the breathing dead
Yet still the black's blind somber wave
Did lay my love to bed

Steve Goodman

Peyote

Down hallways of infinite blue
paralleling mushroom doors
opening on virgin breasts
haystack playgrounds
And you

N. C.

Reflections

Like a cool breeze
Whispering through gently swaying rushes,
Soft gray-shadows
Saunter from the mountainous heights at dusk,
Delicately
Caressed by tiny drops of dew-joy
 (Pre-mature tears of Aurora)
And lavishly
Cascade into deceptive depths--
The ominous
Obscurity of an avid lake

(Ghostly shapes, ghastly and fathomless,
Recede from awareness
As the mystic fragrance of honeysuckle in summer,
Lingering for a few moments in the night air
then
Fading always into the timeless eternity
Of an intoxicating memory.)

and
Are forever lost
Amidst the separate solitude
Of an unavoidable
Conformity.

Ginni Wolf

Lady

You wait,
Staring at a door that will not open.
An inward pulse grasps at your choking throat,
Beats into your mind like an old piano
Pounding seconds that never end.
How does it feel, silent lady?

Look back
You may not know me,
I was one of many.
But I have become an ancient monster who will consume you
Ravage your mind until you know me.
Only for a second will you know how it feels, lovely lady.

You scream.
The door opens your mind.
To my silent cries you would not answer.
I move closer in each dark step,
Consumed in faint flickers of an old dream.
Your soul will make it burn again, gentle lady.

You are in my arms once again.
As I lay you beneath the burning torches of an altar
Borrowing the moment
To come to you in a dream, soft lady.

Steve Glover

Your face belies an inner soul
Of warm, contented youth;
Those haggard lines time graved with care
So best to hide the truth.

Your arms so stiff from life's long toil,
Your back bent by the load,
Those weary legs have walked their miles
Now slower goes the road.

Yet you rejoice in simple life
As though your heart denies
The mortal fate which lies in wait
To close your youthful eyes.

While I, in youth, am older still
Than those long dead and gone
And wish today would go away;
"Tomorrow" I'll be young.

For now I have not time to see
(Nor feel nor do nor say)
Those blessed thing that make you young
My eyes closed to the way.

B. F. Eby

the wholly Mother church

i am the night reaper, the pain sower
the wreath hanger
i come quietly upon things of sadness
and cradle your newly bourne in arms
thinned with weariness
i am death
the seamless edges of time's conception
spawned my purpose
in the slack inevitable of man
and so i await
buried beneath borrowed beliefs
a moon toad asleep in the river

sb. smith

Five Poems by Mary Claire Helldorfer

1. The oval brittle
smooth as white
yields imperfectly
from its jagged mouth
a syruppy prize within
- - the egg.
2. Lisp of wet tires
on a crushed patent road,
water-wrinkled and drooling wet neon;
street slicked, wheels slurred
in hissing sounds, slipping
to the rubbery shrinkage to screech
- - accident.
3. Office

Air filmed in lavender
of glazed light, glossing walls,
thin, paper-panelled and purpled;
flourescent buzz burns
above brittle type-rattle
til fusion in cacophonous fizzing of sound,
A fizzing that fuzzes the mind til thoughts
stagger - -
unsteady, staccato, and stealthy stark madness!
4. Violence

A finger-spread in ochre circle- -
a daisy's life-stretched hand,
that reached
then retched
in arthritic curls
of petals - -
twisted fingers, once strained, now droop.

5. Ambulance during the Night

A spasm of siren
pinches death-colored Sky;
His naked skin sweating and goose-bumped in stars,
he insucks his stomach
in recoil
from the raw touch of pulsing red,
and watches the earth's flesh crawl.

Mary Claire Helldorfer

ASEA ASHORE

I say, do you ever dream? Have you ever aspired to
send the soul off to worlds of wonder, to enjoy the flutter-
ings of fancy?

They say that a young man aboard ship must necessarily
abandon his childish tendencies, and learn to survive in
a world marked by nearly-excessive toil, and populated by
some of the crudest of society's "mishaps."

And yet, I defy the pattern set by the great young
seamen of yore, for, by climbing aboard ship, I do not
sail off into the reality of the anguish and endurance
which define the tough, hearty manhood of a sailor. No, my
voyage is a reversion, for a visit aboard an American
whaling bark thrusts me backward into the fancies of boy-
ish whims.

'Tis the Morgan of which I speak, as she lies beached,
resting. After travelling hundreds of miles, I am almost
frantically anxious, and all I can sense is a kind of
blind adventure and excitement.

There is some great Sublime Power which inevitably
takes hold during these times, to steer the course that
we mortals set in our foolish, juvenile ways. Somehow,
that benevolent Power sees it fit to bless us on this
particular day with a rather generous-steady rainfall. I
suppose I should be aggravated that my vacation trip has



turned out to be such a bleary, soaked affair. Yet, I've come so far to visit the Charles W. Morgan, that I would deserve to be damned to Eternity with Davy Jones if I should have to retrace all my tracks without hardly setting foot on board.

And so, I strain my gaze among the raindrops, as I determinedly mount the starboard stairway. Mistily excited as my vision already is, it is even more distorted by the penetrating rain. All about me, I see rain-drenched bulwarks, dripping with what my imagination chooses to call Nautical Heritage. I see a half dozen clusters of well-tarred ratlines begging to be climbed. And I am avid and eager to play as young "White-Jacket," to scamper up to the main-top, when I seem to hear them - - a group of mates, "the People," calling from their perches, precariously dangling aloft.

Looking aft, I see the abandoned helm, a sort of solitary sentry beneath the after-deck roof. Adjoining it, I find the aft-hatch, gaping like Hell-Mouth, beckoning all to the unknown caverns below.

Once below, it is oddly enjoyable to be showered by incessant little streams which ooze down from the saturated deck. It is here that the creaking hull boards are wailing their own kind of mournful chant.

And how does one return topside? To a boy of my fancies, I fancy that hoisting must be the best means. And so, instead of walking normally up the ladder, I must stop halfway, and, reaching up, boost myself and lunge upward, plopping my feet upon the deck with a soggy SLAP! Back out into the rain, I keep my eyes peeled to both port and starboard, anticipating a possible wave-attack from the Lord's violent sea.

It is now I come upon the Tryworks. Here, in these bulbous cauldrons, warmed by a great brick hearth, globs of greasy whale blubber once sizzled into lovely quantities of precious oil. Pools of rainwater have already begun to fill the huge pots, and I fancifully enjoy convincing myself of an oily, filmy residue swirling about atop the little pools.

It is one thing to assemble a model kit in the home, to adorn the bedchamber, or perhaps, the work-den with the realism of a plastic ship-replica. Yet, it is quite something else to be able to fully succumb to boyish whims, to revel in the magic of nautical romance aboard the actual vessel. The building of the model, then, is but a maiden christening-voyage; the visit aboard the restored ship is a larger, more enhanced journey to infinite ports.

And so, having mystefied my fancy, having spent some few minutes as a self-transformed boy seaman, I regretfully prepare to return ashore. A boyish tear freely joins a stray raindrop, making a salty little rivulet which trickles down my cheek, finally coming to rest on the deck.

I descend, and am a land-lubber once more.

Rich Behles

Burial At Sea

The widow's face - tragic, forlorn
A dress of black, a man to mourn
The beating drum, the lonely horn
The funeral march, December's morn
A gun salute, the gods to warn
Into the sea to be reborn

anonymous

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"The general aim of the magazine is to promote
a cultural and creative atmosphere on campus..."

(Footprints, 1971)