



IGNIS



Ignis



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The Tinderbox

A YEAR has passed since Brother Antoninus, the well-known San Francisco poet and speaker, visited Loyola to read his poetry. Those who attended his reading last fall may remember his compassion and candor as he took us on a long, difficult journey into the remote regions of Truth and Love. We traveled painfully—at times agonizingly—through canyons, along valleys, into prairies that vanished into seemingly endless desert. Though exhausted, most of us came back fulfilled and ecstatic, for we had found in the "Rose of Solitude" a momentary gift of Truth and Love.

But when most of us left the hall that evening, we had forgotten what the journey was all about and were content to get in our cars for a more immediate destination. For at least one traveler, however, the conclusion of the reading represented a mere lull in the journey, a moment to contemplate how far he had come from the darkness and how near he was to the light—how near to communion with Truth and Love. After the reading, Brother Antoninus was not any more relaxed than when pacing nervously on the stage. He was fumbling in his pocket with one hand, and he clutched his habit with the other. He was restless, still disturbed, still searching. It was late fall already, but he would continue his journey.

If we would have taken a survey at the Brother Antoninus reading, we would have noticed two basic types of people in attendance—those who wanted to go along on the journey and some others who refused to go along or who went along only because they were compelled by the Brother's charismatic qualities. Similarly, if we review

the pages of this magazine, we notice two basic types of writers—those who, like Brother Antoninus, are searching for fulfillment in ecstasy, and those who have already found fulfillment in a rational and ordered existence and seek to project that image. The former, we might almost imagine, are the heirs of the Golliard poetry of the Middle Ages, the *Anima Christi* of postcommunion, the *Ulysses* of James Joyce, and the present-day Beat movement to note a few; the latter are in the tradition of Saint Paul's in London, *The Last Supper* of da Vinci, *Paradise Lost* of Milton, and the heroic couplet of Dryden and Pope.

Clearly, in the pages of this magazine and in contemporary literature in general, both types of writers, both types of artists, are to be found. This is quite natural when we think of it. For, though both employ distinctive artistic means, they are united in a common goal—the search to give expression to reality. On this level, the plain of reality, artists such as Joyce and Milton, Antoninus and Pope, are one in purpose.

George Bell

Stuart Rochester

November 3, 1965

Dear Dr. Genthner:

Your learned translation of the "Heidelberg Manuscript" (Thomas Reynard *Non Sequitur* TR I) has been most gratefully received by the Society in Heidelberg.

Not since the publication of your lucid and unexpurgated translation of *Dominus ac Redemptor noster* have the Fathers experienced such *joie de vivre*.

In recognition, therefore, of these scholarly achievements and other erudition we, the faculty of Heidelberg, in the great *tradition de Reynard*, bestow upon you our highest degree, Doctor *Obscuris Magnus*.

With every good wish for continued success in future textuary endeavors, I am

ipso facto,
(REV.) GEORGES LA CLOCHE, S.J.
Chairman, Dept. of Extinct and
Obsolete Studies
Heidelberg University

Recollections of

Notable Streetcar Lines

• JAMES GENTNER

DESPITE THE MUCH ballyhooed advantages of buses over streetcars, I still remain among the diehards who would rather enjoy a trolley ride replete with clanging bells, the clatter of steel wheels over rail joints, and the flashing of blue sparks, than a ride on one of the air-conditioned buses with their vast expanses of plate glass and droning engines. After two years of all-bus transit service I am still adamant in my stand in favor of trolleys over their malodorous successors.

My low emotional boiling-point about streetcars goes back to my earliest days on this earth. Indeed, in those primeval days of my existence, streetcars were among the most interesting and awe-inspiring objects which I encountered. I can still remember travelling on the Guilford Avenue "E1" of the No. 8 line, delightedly watching the rooftops of buildings from the windows of the streetcar, and occasionally giving a shudder at the possibility of what might happen if the car jumped the rails while on the viaduct. What a giddy thrill it was travelling at twenty miles an hour in a streetcar, thirty-five feet above Guilford Avenue. Then, too, I recall a glimpse of a streetcar of the Mount Washington line crossing the Cedar Avenue bridge. Another misty reminiscence is of boarding one of the two-car "red rocket" trains on Fayette Street. These big cars, which were the mainstay of the Sparrows Point line for thirty-five years (until 1951 or thereabouts), sported couplers which enabled them to be joined together in trains of up to three cars. That was really mass transit!

To many persons the streetcar was, at best, simply a means of getting from one part of the town to another, and, at worst, a nuisance. But to a streetcar aficionado such as myself, the streetcar certainly was not plebeian; it possessed a charm and a matchless set of virtues all its own.

The connoisseur of streetcars is actually quite a discerning individual. He is well aware that there were literally hundreds of streetcar varieties; and he can distinguish one classic design from another, frequently by very minute distinctions that evade the un-arcana of the flanged wheel and the 600-volt wire to make such trained eye. It is not unusual for a streetcar specialist steeped in the baffling and occult statements as: "In 1937 the transit company received twenty-seven PCCs from St. Louis numbered 7001-7027, but when the shipment came in from Pullman-Standard in '39, cars 7023 through 7027 were renumbered 7301 through 7305 because they had Westinghouse controllers."

Just as wines have notable vintages and sometimes poorer vintages, so there were certain streetcar lines which were of better vintage than others. It is well known among streetcar experts that the Sparrows Point line was a particularly interesting route whereas the No. 4 line which ran on Poplar Grove Street was not very notable except for a short stretch of track in Windsor Hills.

As fate would have it, this writer was not born in the palmy days of the "electric pony". Thus the old "summer cars" to Riverview Park, the streetcar railway post office, the streetcar hearse "Dolores", the parlor car "Lord Baltimore", and the big, varnished electric cars which raced between Baltimore and Washington must forever remain only legends to me.

My favorite trolleys were the old 6000 and 6100 series "Peter Witt" cars (named after the Cleveland Railways official who designed them). These rather square-shaped steel cars with comfortable brown seats and wide aisles were familiar sights on Harford Road, Belair Road, and North Avenue until late 1954. They were perhaps the noisiest trolleys Baltimore ever knew. Their ponderous steel frames weighed heavily on their trucks, their traction motors made a loud, grinding whirr as the cars rumbled along, and their bells emitted a raucous clanging. The talented motorman knew how to handle the car in such a manner as to make all of the noise possible. The most favorable location was a switch or crossover. The motorman would give a

long, shrill clang of the bell, notch up the controller to the farthest position, and the car would lurch forward, passing over the switch like a clap of thunder, with big blue sparks flying from the trolley wheel as it passed along the wire. The Witts were particularly cherished by Baltimore's streetcar enthusiasts, and I was no exception. If I had the choice between taking a streamliner or a Witt, I would always choose the Witt, even if it meant waiting a few minutes extra for one of these antiquated delights to come along. So highly esteemed was the Witt, in fact, that when the transit company retired the cars in 1954 two of these venerable specimens of a more leisurely era were saved from the scrap heap and put into historical collections in Maine and Maryland.

Streetcar lines were not without their pragmatic aspects. They had a peculiar kind of ingenuity about them which their successors, the bus routes, have never been able to equal. When confronted with a maze of railroad tracks on Guilford Avenue, the Lake Roland Elevated Railway Company built a nine-block-long elevated structure over the complex and were able to run their cars through a congested area without any trouble. A huge valley in Wyman Park was bridged by a high trestle, instead of having the cars make a round-about detour over what were then the known roads in the area. Sometimes the cars would cut through open fields or woodlands to reach their destinations. On many thoroughfares, such as Edmondson Avenue or Gwynn Oak Avenue, the cars had their own special right-of-way where they could operate without the encumbrance of other traffic. At Bedford Square one may observe the station which marked the northern terminal of the No. 11 line's more than a mile of private right-of-way.

Streetcars were victims of some annoying pranks on Halloween nights. A favorite trick was to soap or grease the rails at the beginning of a steep grade, or right before a car stop. In the first instance, the car would get to the grade and its wheels would start spinning; the motorman would curse, and the car would not be able to move until the rails could be properly sanded. In the second case, the motorman would apply the brakes, only to have the car slide past the stop and continue on for block or so. Sometimes railway signal "torpedoes" would be placed on the tracks at a strategic location. When the wheels went over the torpedo, there was a loud report that could be heard for several blocks away. Once, on a particularly lonely stretch of track in Catonsville, pranksters strung a rope across

the right-of-way in such a manner that each car, as it passed by, would become "dewired". The motorman would have to stumble out into pitch darkness and grope around trying to get the pole back on the wire.

I admit a great sentimental attachment to the old No. 8 line; but I confess that it probably will not go down in streetcar history as a great classic line such as the Sparrows Point line, which succumbed to the machinations of the Uplifters and Forward Thinkers only as recently as August, 1958. The No. 26 in its last years started out in Highlandtown at Pratt and Grundy Streets. It was a conventional line for the first mile-and-a-half as it rumbled along Eastern Avenue past the establishments of respectable hardware store proprietors, dry cleaners, and druggists. What set it apart from other lines was the right-of-way which began at Eastern and Dundalk Avenues. From that point on, the motorman could operate the car at full speed over some of the most decrepit track that ever existed. The cars would lurch and clatter through Dundalk at what seemed to be a perilous speed until, reaching Bear Creek, they slowed down to cross the long wooden trestles. I never had much confidence in the structural soundness of the old trestle and well remember listening out the open window of a trolley and hearing the creaking noise the timbers made under the weight of the 36,000 pounds passing over them. In the middle of the bridge was a swing span which opened to allow vessels to sail through. The aroma of the bay wafted into the car, only to be succeeded by the acrid smell of the steel mills as the car dodged through the industrial area of the Point, past rows of gondolas loaded with scrap for the furnaces. The cars continued past some dingy houses and along a drab thoroughfare until finally reaching the loop. After a short stopover, they turned around for the return trip.

Perhaps somewhat of the antiquarian spirit must reside within me, for I confess that I am still unrepentant in my beliefs. Despite all of the whoopings and hollerings of the Civic Uplifters, the Forward Thinkers, and the Apostles of the Cult of Progress, I still prefer a trip on a street car to a bouncy journey on a bus. A pleasant part of Baltimore vanished when the last trolley swung into the carbarn on a dark November morning two years ago.

You and I

You and I, until we name ourselves
are bound to the past by puppet strings,
you and I, who bear some yellow-scratched
family name behind our dry and dusty eyes
hide all this pain in the smoky cellars
of encounter.

Someday all these practice words of love
will fall to the ground in the morning
with the hurried tangle of broken strings,
and the tears that flow before the lip
will bring fresh meaning to the given past,
and the eyes will meet like jingling pennies
that will slowly melt with time . . .

• **CARL POHLNER**

The Escape Artist

• WILLIAM DOOLEY

LITTLE JIMMIE JONES wakes up this morning and doesn't like what he sees. "DeGaulle Sabotages NATO, Signs 39-Year Trade Pact With Castro," he reads and washes it down with two donuts. Page Two: "Britain Recognizes Red China, Threatens To Recognize Her More If Something Is Not Done About World Peace." To the sports page for Jimmie Jones: "Yanks Lose Again." And the comics: "Lord Russell Denounces Americans As Capitalistic War-Mongers."

"That does it!" yells Little Jimmie Jones at his orange juice. "I'm going to escape from reality."

"Cut the grass!" screams Mrs. Jones, mad because it's Saturday and Jack Lescoulie isn't on.

Out on the front lawn, his face to the clouds, lies Little Jimmie Jones, little in that Men of Stature have yet to toast him. Lawn-mower handle neatly blotting out the rising sun, Jimmie rests his eyes and contemplates his escape.

Jimmie thinks: "War—yes, war. And what else? Glory. That's it: war and glory! And purpose. Emotional purpose above all! Right—now, which war? War of 1812? No! no purpose. Impressment's no good. Too dull. World War I? Five years in the trenches? Absolutely not! World War II? Of course. I'll liberate France. Be

cheered in Paris Wine! Women!—Wait—that dirty rat DeGaulle!
Why would I want to save his hide!

"But that was a big war. Who else did we fight? Let's see. Oh darn it, who were those guys? Oh yeah. The Japs. Boy! Me in the conference room planning Leyte Gulf, and then carrying it out with my bare hands!—Curse it! No good. The Japanese are our staunch allies in the troubled East . . . that lawn mower was made in Japan . . . Bob Nieman played baseball there. . . .

"There must be another war. The Revolution? Never. I simply cannot fight the British. All my friends look like them—Wait! The Holy War. The Thirty Years War. Religious zeal and foreign lands. That's it! I'll march back and forth across Germany killing Protestants . . . Damn it, I can't! . . . The Ecumenical Council . . . Church unity . . . the New Liturgy."

Turning over on his side, Little Jimmie Jones observes a baby sparrow struggling to free itself from the tangled branches of a fir tree. He sees it as symbolic. The tree is the world; the bird is mankind. "Ten years ago that tree didn't have enough branches to catch a sparrow." he thinks. "Today, no sparrow is safe!"

He leans his back against the ground again: "Ten years ago, I could escape reality easy. I could kill all the Japs and Protestants I wanted. And liberate France, too. Ten years ago it was easy as— There we were, in our fifth grade classroom, holding our own against the Commies. We were it—last hope of Democracy in North America. Lined up against the windows firing point blank into the charging Reds. Sub-machine guns, grenades, revolvers, bazookas, ammo— somehow we had 'em; and we used 'em. I was in command. Ordered the girls to be nurses. Declared martial law. All my best friends officers; all fought like lions. But I had something extra. Like the time I snuck out to the Avenue. Red tanks everywhere, parading down the street. I hopped on one; used the old grenade trick, took the tank, returned to the Russian lines, destroyed entire divisions before they knew what hit 'em.

"Later, saved my girl from a mean Russian soldier who looked like a Jap. Watched one of my classmates—never liked the guy much—get it in back while running away. Rich, my best friend, took a sniper bullet and saved my life doing it. With my girl encouraging me, gave him a Roosevelt dime to bite, extracted the bullet. My teacher ran up to me and repented. Always used to give me a

hard time in classes; now admitted how mature, how determined under pressure I was; said if we ever got out of this mess she'd beg me to become class president. I was touched, but there were more important things on my mind. Ordered some of the girls to attend to her.

"Got word over short wave that Finland was still holding out against the Reds. Rich and me stole a MIG, took off for Helsinki amid cheers of classmates. Used Finland as jumping off point, took Kremlin by surprise, held Khrushchev at bay till he surrendered.

"Odyssey began. Months of traveling through virgin forests of Russia, fighting off wolves, gypsies (our plane had burned). Across Hungary, through historic Vienna, Italy, Paris. To Southampton, but always incognito. Finally arrived in New York and were recognized. Crowds cheered, medals awarded; we'd been presumed dead for a year but now we were home. Offered riches, rewards, ticker-tape parades; turned them down; had to get home to my native city. After a year of travel Rich was exhausted. Had to carry him the last ten miles.

"Our school, along with the rest of the world, good as new. Recess. Kids were playing in the yard. Off to the side, our girl friends, mopping, looking off toward a horizon.

"Boy, were they surprised! Me in my tattered Boy Scout uniform; worn it for a year but it didn't smell; still lugging my sub-machine gun. Rich, leaning against me, unshaven, arm-in-sling. Tried to look tough but couldn't help feeling nostalgic. Just turned eleven and already heroes of at least two continents."

Never again can Jimmie Jones imagine himself the scourge of Russia. All the great pianists and composers of the world are Russians. A victory over Russia would be a defeat for Culture. Little Jimmie Jones doesn't have anything against Culture.

When Jimmie Jones fought the Russians, they may have looked like Japs, but they fought clean like Germans. But today, with Germany "our staunch ally in the troubled West" and Russia growing soft and capitalistic, Jimmie is faced with taking on Red China. An ugly proposition when one recalls that the Chinese not only look like Japs but fight like them. And anyone who knows anything about the East and West knows that (Eichmann aside) the West fights clean and the East fights dirty. Which has a habit of getting in the

way of heroism. Besides, what opportunity for glory would there be in a war where populations, not people, are destroyed, and where survivors are stamped not heroes but suckers?

Still flat on his back, Little Jimmie thinks of better ways to escape. "Say, why not go next door and Indian wrestle with Ralph!" he decides. No good. He remembers how Ralph got a letter from the U. S. Army, and how one day some big guys in gray-drab suits in a gray-drab truck came and took him away, and how Ralph will be spending the best years of his life peeling potatoes and defending his country at Ft. Dix, N. J.

With war ruled out, Jimmie considers High Adventure and Discovery in planning his escape. "A cross-country voyage!" he thinks. "Just like Huck Finn and the good old days." Then he remembers about the kid out at school. He spent a whole summer planning a real trip. It was great: a canoe ride down the Ohio; by day the ripple of the gentle river against his paddle; by night the homespun hospitality of a Mid-western family; perhaps a moonlit cruise along the Wabash with an Indian girl. Then the historic Mississippi, with its riverboats and gospel singers. And a wild, carefree ride up the Missouri, wafed along by its mighty current. Into the Black Hills and the Great Northwest. Through Yellowstone; a mile's hike across the Divide; to the winding Snake and the Columbia. And finally the majestic meeting of waters: the flushing of America's hopes and dreams, its aspirations and accomplishments into the Pacific and the World.

Three long months of planning. And just as he had packed his gear and was set to go, a wise old man appeared to him and said, "Hey buddy, the Missouri flows downstream. You're gonna hafta paddle like hell—"

Needless to say, it crushed him. Disillusioned, the would-be adventurer ran off and joined the Marines and hasn't been heard from since.

"There must be some other way," thinks Jimmie Jones as the sun rises higher in the sky. Discovery as a means of escape, he realizes, is nearly obsolete. A recent report in the National Geographic dealing with the last piece of unexplored territory on earth—a 2½ acre plot of ice in Anarctica—fails to entice him. The laboratory-oriented space race is even less attractive.

Possessing a reverence for the Past, beaten into him over the years by a steady diet of Shakespearians and distilled Latin instructors, Jimmie Jones rejects infringing upon the merits of History's heroes. "Oh, I guess I could march across Germany for thirty years and restrict myself to butchering uninfluential Protestants. Wallenstein could always use another man," he reasons. "But to pretend that I invented the electric light—why that'd be downright unjust . . . And kids' stuff," Jimmie concludes, mature escapism needing a pinch of realism to give it that adult flavor.

For a moment, he muses on a favorite theme: writing a Pulitzer Prize-winning expose which is instrumental in sending all of Jimmie's enemies to prison till they are old and bent. But he soon tires of it, having plodded through that daydream so many times in the past.

The rays of the sun beat steadily on Jimmie's closed but uplifted eyes, and he thinks of Ocean City—not of the place (a geographically trivial mixture of water and sand) but of the Spiritual Paradise one associates with the name Ocean City. He thinks of Freddie down the street, who tried to tempt Jimmie to escape with him to that Never-Never-Land. Freddie went. But Jimmie, who did not, protests the pretense of escapism in Freddie's actions. "Escapism is in the mind," he lucidly observes. "It's either mental or it's nothing. Separates us from the beasts." Sure, Freddie runs off to the beach—away from DeGaulle, away from Lord Russell, away from the Want-Ads and the Bomb. But how far does he go? No further than his own body and soul. No further than the surrounding environment, which, however changed it may seem from a distance, is nevertheless real—and in all probability unchanged.

And what does Freddie get? A smattering of fun, if he's lucky. Mixed with a heavy dose of curfews, cops, expenses, a boardwalk full of seedy old men parading their stomachs, bikinied wives of fifty and older, escorted beauties, unescorted scarecrows, hoodlums, wet sand in his toes, frustration and fatigue.

"Maybe Howie had a better idea of escape," thinks Jimmie, still possessed by the Spirit of Ocean City. He recalls how Howie, connoisseur of Beach Party movies and skate-board champion of the neighborhood, told him of his method of escape. Howie to be sure went to Ocean City. But he did more. Every night he'd go down and walk along the beach. Walking south, he'd pretend instead that he was walking north. Then, when he had become sufficiently con-

vinced, he would turn his head to the left and view the Pacific Ocean. There it was . . . he'd spent a full day in it, riding the big ones . . . up ahead, Malibu and the gang, getting ready for the Surfing Tournament tomorrow when he'd defend his little . . . and so on.

In his own way, Howie was able to do what is becoming so elusive to Jimmie Jones. "Maybe there is something to this Ocean City business," he thinks. "Of course, *my* Ocean City won't have any curfews, or cops, or seedy-looking men." But is Ocean City enough he wonders? How about Ocean City and War? "No, War is out. So is Discovery and Adventure. Everything is out!"

Then how about Ocean City and—Love?

Little Jimmie Jones has triumphantly found the answer. "It's so simple," he thinks. "Why, it's been sitting under my nose all along. Love. It's the basis for all escape. The world loves a hero." Jimmie thinks of the good old days: of Tyrone Power, hopelessly wounded, clinging to the deck, guiding his submarine out of the enemy harbor; of Spencer Tracy, exhausted, unshaven, counting cadence to his half-dead Rangers, returning home to Crown Point amid Redcoat cheers and swelling music, after having whipped the meanest Indians in North America; of Robert Taylor, blood in his eye, Bataan's last hope, firing wildly into the oncoming Japs; of Fess Parker, performing similar feasts at the Alamo. . . .

"The world loves a hero," he thinks. "Well, maybe it did—20 years ago. But today—it's so corny. The world can't be expected to love anything. It's unreasonable."

"So—we cut it down to size," he continues, as everything begins to become wonderfully clear. "Take away the world and what have you got? Girl. Take away the hero and what's left? Guy. Who needs the world? Who needs heroes? Who needs Ocean City?"

And so, we leave Little Jimmie Jones, face down, beneath the noonday sun, a million miles away from the planet on which he is sprawled, oblivious to passers-by who are in turn oblivious to him. We leave him writhing on the ground among the uncut blades of grass, doing the thing that separates him from the beasts.

Our Town

• JOHN CIEKOT

AT HER HOUSE one day, she sat in a broken down big chair. I know it has three coverings because the outer cover is worn through where the next layer and the next layer are worn through. Her legs are huge, and from where I sit I can see up between her over-relaxed thighs. But I can't tell whether she wears pants or not, for the thighs meet before the crotch. She wears cheaply-framed glasses. Her eyes are bent.

The one window in the room has a tattered ugly yellow shade that can't go up or down. It just hangs. Above the mantle is a drawing by her brother which pictures Christ with a halo; and on the wall to the left is the glossy picture of Christ on a barber shop calendar, but the calendar pages are long gone. The fireplace was cemented shut years ago. Also on the mantle is a letter; but she can't read.

Two bottles of shoe polish are on the floor: Griffen's Liquid Black and Griffen's Allwhite. Alongside are two pairs of shoes—one white, one black—each over-carefully polished.

"Say 'loaf': lllloaf."

"Llll," she replied.

A trying-to-look-busy man with a tie and a cigar just walked next door to get rent. He left in two minutes.

On her coffee table (supported by three legs and a used brick) are two warped copies of *LOOK*. One is almost a year-and-a-half old; the other is over two years old. Also a copy of *POST* which is two years old: "Carol Lynley in Beverly Hills . . . The Twisted Age ... The Flying White House."

Neither the screen on the window nor the one on the door could keep out anything. There is evidence of an attempt to repair the doorscreen, but nobody here knows how to fix it. Strips of rug are bent-nailed along the edges of her front door to keep out the wind or something. In some sort of glass bowl next to the (depending on how you look at things) filthy wall is a card on which I can, but she can't, read the paragraph titles: "Your Card Your Account Monthly Benefits If The Worker Dies."

There is a new addition to the house this week—a borrowed alarm clock which could tell her when to expect us. The silent white clockface could tell her. . . .

But we were late.

"The letter is R, the sound is rrrrrr."

"The letter is R, the sound is rrrrrr."

"The letter is R, the sound is rrrrrr."

"The letter is R, the sound is rr....."

She's moved her arm, pushing down her skirt with it between her outstretched legs. We can look up it no more.

quote down with intelligence and long live death unquote
 is twelve and garden roses hang
 by the thread of a thorn
 in the wooded afternoon
 believing in a heavenly connection
 last
 the doorway leaking to the lightless room
 his room with no lights but mirrors
 cover every wall
 a mistaken identity
 on the death of mother
 god
 He took the eleven-year-old
 into His home
 where He proceeded to make him
 a garden rose like his
 mother
 a mistaken identity
 for he when she marbeled the loneliness with hope
 a gentle swirl
 sweetly gentle in the wooded afternoon
 hamocks and lilacs
 and a shudder of warmth
 he heard green dawning on the horizon of winter
 but she gave him
 emptiness (you owed it to him)
 entering into common life,
 like rays of light
 which pierce into a dense medium,
 are, by the laws of nature
 refracted from their
 straight line
 let us meditate upon the law of love: St. Bernard from a letter
 written on white paper
 let us love and be loved for those whom we love
 on those do we rely,
 This is the Noble Truth of the Arising of Sorrow
 from thirst,
 which leads to rebirth, which brings delight and passion

Buddah written on a white sky
 with summer lightning
 the white sky of the ceiling of his room
 stars appear and disappear:
 the flash
 god is rose-stem without the roses
 how dense is water how dense is the darkness in the
 mirrored room

 thirsty, thirsty for light's moisture
 the taste you give him woman ends by calling him to
 himself
 he grew and like the sound of grass growing
 it obscures the earth-song the womb-love destroys itself
 earth is supplanted by the beauty of the sky touched
 god made him a garden rose
 transfixed by trees

 he knows knows the density of the viscous room
 death in the mask of love
 verily the life to come shall be better for thee
 so violent and motley was life, that it bore
 the mixed smell of blood and of roses

 he lays upon the green grass, Roland
 and hides beneath him his famous sword
 falcons fornicate upon the rocks
 Roland dies and hides his sword beneath him

 who am i that he gives a thought to me

 mother you turned him in upon himself
 his sword between the earth and his heart he hangs upon a thorn
 and within the darkness a light
 refracted yet how dense is water
 the density of a pearl

St. Genet pray for us

•James Traglia

Summer Night

• TOM FEENEY

“I T'S GETTING DARK.”

"Or is it getting light?"

"Maybe. I don't know. I've been up a long time, longer than I'm used to. And yet. . . ."

"The gods of summer keep you up with the warm breeze of their voices."

Stillness, quiet all around.

"It's a good night for a moon," he continued. "There is no moon up there but it's a good night for one. A late summer night is always something special."

"Love, that's what makes a summer night," she added as if she had just realized that the whole conversation, in fact, the composition of all conversation throughout history, had been in anticipation of her remark.

"Or is it a summer night that makes love?" He could hardly allow that remark, or any she made, to go unchallenged.

Anna, who had been standing, was now seated in a nondescript position.

"Maybe, I don't know," she answered him without really answering him. Cole attempted to translate what she said with about as much energy as Anna had used to put meaning into it.

"I wouldn't want to make a choice between them. Love and summer nights," he added, half in hope of relieving the anxiety that

had crept into her voice and half in hope of concluding the conversation.

They had known each other as long as she could remember. *He* could remember a time when they hadn't known each other, but this was because they had just met at the beginning of the summer. That was three months ago, but she always claimed it was ". . . for as long as I can remember."

The branches of a young tree were blowing in the wind and turning three or four stars off and on at random.

"I'm not alone down here by the pond," Cole said.

"Oh I love you," came her reply.

Cole looked over quickly and queried, "What's summer without it?"

"Love?" she asked.

"No, the pond."

"It seems we have been in love for as long as I can remember."

"That's a long time," Cole said, digging his fingers into the ground beside where he lay.

"I don't know," Anna answered.

She was pressing a wrinkle into her skirt with the thumb and forefinger of her right hand. She was thinking of the times that her mother used to try to break her of this habit by buying her corduroy skirts.

Cole was thinking of her, too, but not of her habit. As a matter of fact, he hadn't ever noticed that she even had the habit.

How often he has heard Anna tell him that she loved him. When she is happy, when she's mad, anytime she'll say it. Anna's funny that way. Come to think of it, she's kind of funny in a lot of ways.

"I can hear her voice now," he was thinking.

"I can hear summer, too," he said, as his thoughts became whispers.

"Summer is quiet but it has voices, steady humming voices like that of the cicada, so soothing they seem like echoes from a thousand miles away. The voice of the cicada is an irritating sound, but its

constant repetition rolls it into a salve. She is saying nothing, the cicada that is. I guess the cicada will pass away and summer with her—although nights like this make me feel summer will never end. It seems so constant, like the voice of the cicada. Summer gives no hint of autumn. Nothing in the voice of the cicada tells how soon she will die."

He had been speaking just loud enough for Anna to hear him but not loud enough for her to think he was talking to her. Or if she did think he was talking to her she didn't show it.

"I love you," Anna said.

Cicadas apparently didn't interest her. Or at least not enough to say they did.

There was silence.

The pond, which they had visited so many times this summer, seemed almost like a third party to Anna. Actually, it was the second party. Cole was the third. The slow movement of the water aroused Anna, and she raised herself up on her elbows as if she had accomplished something. Then, sensing that she hadn't, she reclined again with her back to the damp moss beneath her and in the process moved slightly closer to Cole.

"I wish it was winter," she declared, as much to the pond as to Cole, for she equally acknowledged the presence of both.

"God, what a thing to say," one of them answered without moving.

"I mean it's so cozy and...."

"So's a hair shirt." Cole hadn't meant to sound so sarcastic, but he wasn't one to retract an opinion for the sake of geniality.

Moving towards him, she half shouted, "You're mad at me!"

"You're mad!" he retorted.

"I want to leave," she said somewhat confused.

Maybe she did, but she didn't move.

"I'd like to build a raft," Cole said.

"I said I want to go home."

"Yea, go get us a coupla beers," Cole said after a time.

"I'll see you tomorrow."

Cole was surprised to see her get up. She rarely acted on anything the first time she said it. He thought he should say something.

"Why don't we get something to eat from my cottage?"

Anna's eyes opened wide.

"You mean it? I mean I shouldn't. We'd be together . . . alone I mean."

"Tea, go get us a coupla beers," Cole said after a time.

"You said something to eat and you said at your cottage."

"All right, make me a ham sandwich. I'll eat it when I come up."

Half-angered, Anna turned and left. She was out of Cole's sight a few moments after she was out of his thoughts. Cole was alone now.

"Ya know, if I got as many graces for enduring winter as some guys get for wearing hair shirts, I'd be a saint. Hell, maybe I *am* a saint."

The sun was coming up, Cole was climbing the back steps to his cottage, and a steady voice from inside was getting louder and louder.

When he got inside, a record was playing on the stereo. Cole picked up its jacket from the floor where Anna had dropped it last night. "Brazen Lovers' Heaven" he read from the cover.

Side one: 1) Love Me Baby, 2) Don't Make Me Blue, 3) All Day, All Night, 4) We Were Meant To Be, 5) I Don't Need You Baby.

"Breakfast. Man am I hungry."

He had not noticed the ham sandwich of last night, which was sitting on his unjacketed Brubeck album.

"Hey Anna."

She stirred. She was in bed but she stirred.

"Hey Anna, rise and shine."

She awoke, hardly shining, but she awoke.

"I must have fallen asleep here. Ohh! You didn't. ... I mean we didn't . . . last night?"

"No, I wanted to wait for you."

"Wait for me! But how could you ... I mean without me."

"Well I could have, but I waited. But I won't any more."

"You won't?"

"No."

"Isn't it sort of early to ... I mean. . . ."

"Early? I always eat breakfast early. That way it comes before lunch. Now get up."

All this time she had been mechanically distorting her limbs in an attempt to get up without really getting up. Swinging her left leg over the edge of the bed and pressing the pillow to her stomach, she prepared for the great plunge.

Cole returned to the kitchen, but breakfast ceased to be important. In fact it was completely forgotten. He strolled to the front entrance of the cabin, which faced a flat landscape studded with short green bushes.

Anna had started her twice daily ritual of repairing her face. It really was more of an exterior decorating than a repair job, for her face had what probably would be considered a natural beauty to it.

The open front door swung silently in the morning breeze as Cole proceeded aimlessly away from the cabin. He halted about fifty feet from the door and looked from side to side—not back, but from side to side. Then, avoiding a dead branch hanging from a small willow tree, he continued walking until he blended into the distant woods.

The sun had cleared the tree tops and its light was fully visible inside the small room where Anna sat. But Anna was too busy putting on hair spray to notice.

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