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If it were absolutely possible to say what I feel I would

John Smith, Editor

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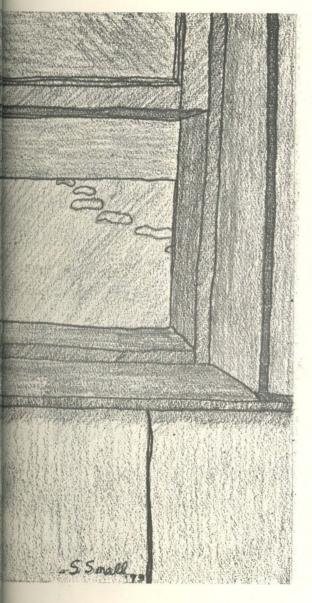
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WINDOW PAIN





I WALK TO MY WINDOW AND IT BECOMES A PEEPHOLE TO THE UNIVERSE.

I BLINK MY EYES TO CHANGE THE SCENE AND STOP THE WHIRLING OF THE FRAME. HOW MY MIND DOES TURN AND REEL, AT THE RUSHING IMAGES I PERCEIVE!

COLORS, AND HATE, AND LOVE, AND WAR, A MILLION THINGS I'VE NOT SEEN BEFORE. I WINK FOR DAY, AGAIN FOR NIGHT, ONCE FOR WRONG, AND ONCE FOR RIGHT. I CRINGE IN FEAR AS ROCKETS FLARE, I LAUGH WITH GLEE AT CHILDISH PLAY. "IT'S ALL TOO QUICK," MY MIND CRIES OUT, I TURN AWAY AND PULL THE SHADE. TO THIS WINDOW, CONFUSED I CAME, AND FROM THE SAME, THE SAME I'LL LEAVE, IN A NEW AND DIFFERENT WAY"

Don Campbell

A PART OF THE SAME TOMORROW

loved and unable to return the same kind always tortured by the pock marks.

Garry Charter

bricks

The bricks stacked high Were new and uniform, Except for a few,

near the bottom,

Which were cracked From the pressure.

FORM

Billie Kerr

Configurations
glowing in the
eternal quietness
softly
then
intently......

Nocturnally forever the illumination expands

then

contracts

back into itself ...

Lines of force

compel and drive
constraining and freeing
moving vigorously......

yet the energy applied

is:

ingratiating--serene

no obstructions

fill the spaces

on and on

a continuous transfer

of

power

Carole Cross



my first borned was a little girl as cute as she could be, a tiny babe in Mother's arms and yet a part of me.

a little bit of heaven to make our home complete, a blessing from the hand of God so precious and so sweet.

a carbon copy of her Mom the one i loved so dear, a sunbeam on the sands of time the perfect answer to our prayer.

as i reflect upon those days of happiness and joy, i'm glad God sent a little girl and not a little boy.

today i sit alone and think since her mother went away, my daughter is the closest one i have to take her place.

the footprints in the sands of time have slowly blown away, old age is swiftly coming on but i still hear my daughter say

"Mama's gone to be with God she's waiting for us there, i love you daddy don't be blue take courage don't despair."

so with my deepest gratitude i offer God this prayer, "thank you for such tender love and such devoted care."

God knows i don't deserve the love my daughter holds for me, but love for daddy never fails that's the way she is---you see.

if these words seem rather blurred and hard to understand, tis that my thoughts come from my heart and not just from my hand.

until the sun refuse to shine and rivers cease to flow you are the sunshine in my heart my darling daughter, i love you so.

The Traveler

By Maureen Ottenburg

She was short by today's standards and apparently uncomfortable about her choice of dress for the flight, though she had no reason to be. Her powder-blue coat and dress ensemble with white linen shoes and matching bag would have taken her anywhere in style. That particular shade of blue certainly did justice to her fair skin and jet black hair.

A visit to see her parents after living in Greece for six years was the reason for this vacation. She chose her words with great care. It was as if she were afraid they might reveal a hidden emotion if she didn't use exactly the right phrasing.

Although she spoke highly of her family and the great distress her absence had caused them, her apprehensiveness surrounding the expected reunion was most apparent as she uttered quiet reassurances to the small child accompanying her. I think she was trying to soothe herself, not the little girl.

Two martinis (very dry, please, and with a twist) gave license to the young woman at my side. Her parents had never approved of her or her actions, and this she whispered very confidentially. The final blow was delivered with their rejection of her husband, a young Greek immigrant studying electronics, working, and living here on a temporary visa.

Vasilio, at the time of their marriage, was earning \$60.00 per week on a factory assembly line. A disgustingly inadequate sum, she explained, when compared with her father's annual net of \$75,000.

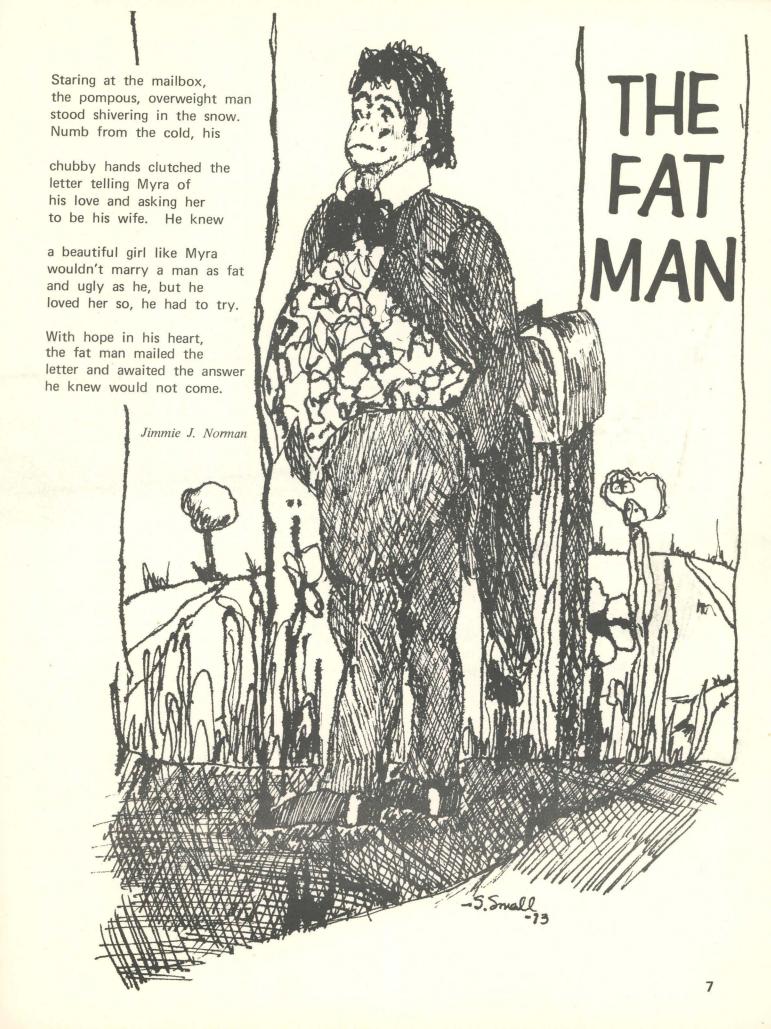
They moved to Greece a year later and Vasilio had done very well in Solonikus. A son was born but had died at the age of three. Her blue eyes dimmed as she spoke of him and of her disappointment in the fact that her parents had not sent congratulations at his birth, nor condolences at his death. Later a daughter was born.

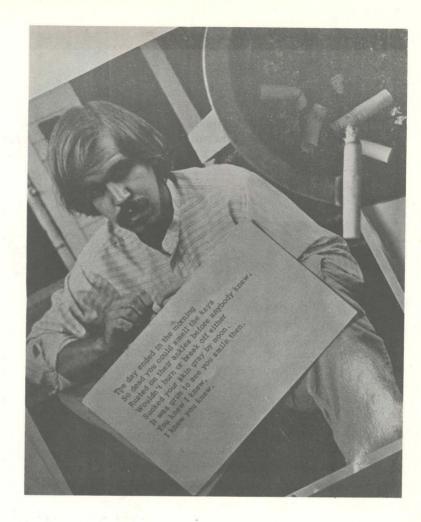
Ariana (she brightened) was a lovely child and imparted great joy. I glanced at her daughter and the child's coal black eyes, offset by fluttering lashes and finely sculptured brows, twinkled a response. Her skin was milky whte, like her mother's, with not a hint of having ever met the Sun.

We were on the ground now and moving towards the front of the mammoth DC-10 (however do these things fly?) and the trim hostesses seemed everywhere at once (thank you for flying Olympia - we hope you enjoyed your flight) smiling their good-byes.

She looked so small and vulnerable with her head down, Ariana in one arm, and the bright packages in another that I wanted to say something meaningful. Instead I uttered a hurried farewell, and heard her whisper to the squirming child, "Sa agpo, kukla mu, sa agpo."

When I turned to wave, she and the child were lost in the crowd.





THOU ART KNOT

I've seen it happen before.

Different style.

Same thing.

The scotch taping of the cat's feet.

The razor over the eyeball.

The peanut buttering of the dog's mouth.

And I have seen you happen before too.
But you have made your own helplessness.
This inability to climb out of your own frames?
This thrashing of grown-ups in butterfly nets?
This price tag on your face?

You must give up this mindless suicide. This happy whipping of your hands.

Linda Lee

we sit in wet hair counting bridge points wearing our clothes like barriers against the rain shuffling in like a sky full of so much gray cotton candy. the dogs and children are in and so's the weekend all in deal em out

Linda Lee

EXORCISM OF A MEMORY

Still you remain.
I've told you more times than I can remember that you must go.
Do you think that I can shelter you forever?
I can't.
Good-bye.

Kathleen Hipson

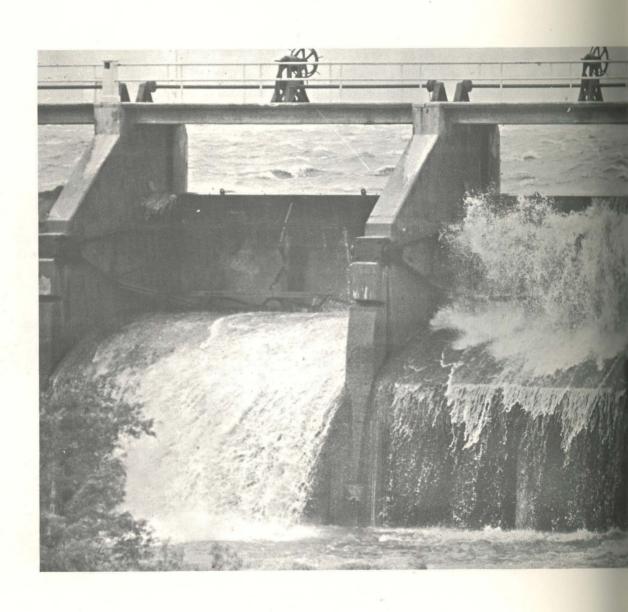
FOR M_

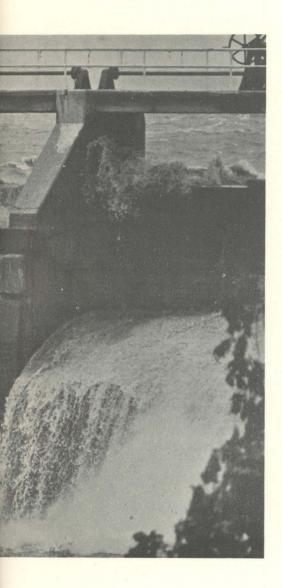
What will I find there? Who will I see?
Where are their minds? What can they be?
They told me, "College is different now,
You'll be surprised;
Full of hippies and weirdos and far-out guys."

But I gathered my courage and stuck out my chin; Somehow I might find a place to fit in. The school rooms were crowded, classes were full; Not with hippies and weirdos and far-out guys, But long-haired giants with gentle eyes.

They speak with their hearts and have something to say. Don't wait till tomorrow, live for today; Care for your brother, care for your world. It's not important, the things money buys To these long-haired giants with gentle eyes.

Yes, college is different now, I will agree; For love is the door and they are the key. Don't sweat the future, for it's in good hands. For hope, peace and brotherhood, the answer there lies With these long-haired giants with the gentle eyes.





One drop of sea the gift of clouds rains and rivers and streams held fast by earthen works steel and concrete captured in the grey black white of a silver halide poet.

An inland sea covered by mild unsalted mist which shrouds some trees along the earth beside it and rusts the ironworks which hold it back from quiet unconcerned nearby dwellers.

Some floodgates in the mind will not hold back the waters of a memory flowing from a past of

Marblehead, ocean
Salt air and seagulls
East, foghorns
Sunrise on greenwhite waves
Sails, mild winds across
the beach pounded
by the sea;

Sounds of night
Moonlight fire
across and down
a silver span
white foam
hidden in the dark
around the moonbeam's path;

Daylight sounds and smells of beach seaweed and sand warmed by sun which tans the bodies of lovers and other girls in not so revealing one piece suits.

The sea, the lake not so alike when memories fade into today.

No salt, no sand no moonlit span? mist, wild water and spillways covered with foam in a black and white silver halide poem.

silver halide memories

while eating sweet potatee pie

later that day

met you in the common you said you know i asked you how

biofeedback . . you said

this must be that we proming said

Donnis Cunninghan

while eating sweet potatoe pie

later that day

i met you in the common you said you know i asked you how

biofeedback . . you said

this must be that

Dennis Cunninghun

I feel your love in morning hours, as I awake to the smell of flowers and songs of birds

flying above, I feel your love.

I see you when I wake at night, and round me when you shed your light of love, I see your glow of warmth above my head,
I see your love.

I hear you whisper loving songs, from days gone by from nights so long, and days so short when we were

together and, love,

it seems that whether or not you remember I do,

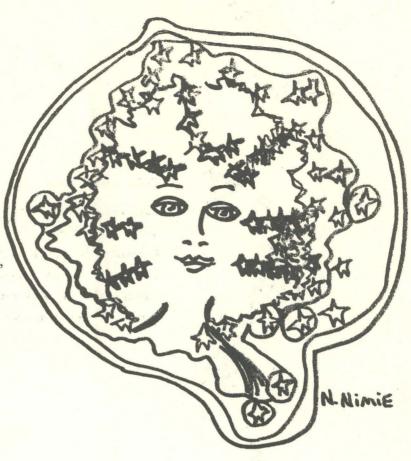
and hear your songs of love, again.

I miss you now
you're gone so long,
so far from sight,
yet still your song,
your light,
your love,
shine round about me
as I go through life,
I know you once again,

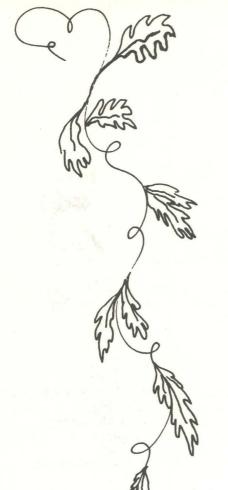
as I have in days gone by

and,

I miss you, my love, as I remember when.



As
I
Remember
When

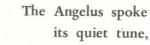


AUTUMN

Cold winds blow

And the painted leaves are different hues That have fallen to the ground Caressing the earth in brilliant colors. Tomorrow a new season is to be found, Autumn has brought remembrances of you. I wish it would snow!

Rita Cain



We settled in our lonely room,

To meditate a day on God.

Our toils •

at rest,

Our heart

knows best,

- - - - We sleep!





Enigma



our transient, thin shoulders, taller than the other children, almost clean—but never quite; wearing shoes with flapping soles that plop-plop in dull thud patterns against the blacktop.

Tommy,

tyrannical on the playground with his younger, smaller playmates; shy in the classroom—at times unspeakably so. Poor at skills in math and reading, then again, working with feverish activity; at other times sitting dejectedly lips curving downward in a pout, bringing frustration to himself—and others.

Tommy,

our transient . . . on the move again.

He's leaving us with silent tears
spilling down sunken cheeks.

His wordless actions tighten our fearful,
knotted hearts.

To him our empathy we extended, encompassing
a boy who seemingly had no one — but us.

Now he's leaving.

Will others take our places to help solve his inner problems, to encourage his vascillating positive self-concept, and blot out his unsureness?

Dear God,

you who never allow one sparrow to fall without your knowledge and concern, please take care . . . of Tommy, our transient, our enigma!

Bernita Coffey



"Life will never be the same again," the kindly doctor held my hand trying to calm me before the rising hysteria consumed me.

"You must decide what is left for you that you also value and go on from there. You have a husband and another child to live for. That little girl deserves more from life

than an atmosphere of gloom.'

"But why, why did this happen to me?" I voiced the ageold query of one suddenly bereft. "Why, my child so loved, so wonderful in every way?" The lament of the mother crying for her first-born.

"Couldn't something have been done?"

"No, came the calm voice of the doctor, "there are times when medicine is helpless. I lost my first wife at childbirth and nothing Medical science could produce could save her."

Through the fog of my agony a tiny thought momentarily

pierced my consciousness.

"You, too," I thought.

But it was a very tiny thought and immediately I again

became immersed in my own grief.

The dreams of eleven years had vanished like the feather of smoke exhaled from a cigarette never to return. But the memory of those wonderful plans would return from time to time to grab painfully at my hear and completely immobilize

During the following months this same compassionate man tried to lead me out of my valley of despair into which I retreated each time the "whys" became stronger than faith.

My youth added to my lack of comprehension, and I would think if only I had known. Known what? The mysterious

ways of the Lord. How could I know that?

I had never faced death before and to have it happen almost overnight and to my beloved first-born was incomprehensible. I resolved I would never, never let myself love that com-

pletely again. No more involvement.

Eventually the household routine took over and went on as usual. As usual, except for the times when the children were coming home from school and I would rush to the door expecting to see him, and once again that awful realization would break through that never again would be that sight

No, Jim didn't come home with the children, but Mary trudged home alone. . .lacking the protection of her beloved big brother.

Months went on like this. Since Jim was quiet and read much of the time I pushed Mary outside to play in the fresh air and get "healthy." That was the way I rationalized.

But one evening, after having refused for the "umteenth" time to read to her, Mary looked at me and said,"What if I should die, too? Then what would you do?"

It was then and for the first time since I had wrapped myself in this cocoon of grief, that as I looked at this lovely sixyear old I realized the enormity of my selfishness.

"Honey," I said as I gathered her in my arms, "Don't you dare do that to me"

She grinned up at me, the sweet, impish grin that has soothed many a heartache in the years that followed.

No, I thought as she searched for her "favoritest" story life will never be the same again but two people are waiting for you to come to life. So do it and do it now.

RUTH'S STORY



In a peaceful moment behind the shadow of our souls, the future prospect of an eternal extension of that peace between us lies in a mutual joy of love which sparks through space and time and pounds in the rhythms of our pulses beating from our hearts.

Flickers of light, like distant stars
Burnt out but shining through time,
we are possibilities allowed one beam
of eternity to practice life.
Of all the possibilities, we met
and by our meeting pledged what love we could
to last into eternity.

Richard Rouillard

Uncle Billy

by David Blakeman

Uncle Billy liked to buy things—all kinds of things. It didn't matter if he didn't need it or couldn't use it. It didn't matter too much if he didn't have any money. If a thing was a bargain, Uncle Billy bought it. He got hooked now and then, but not often. Because Uncle Billy seldom came out on the short end of a deal.

There were a few. Like the carload of pre-war automobile seat covers he bought one time. They stayed in the upstairs bedroom at Grandmother's until finally she had one of the hands take them out in the lot and burn them.

There were several reasons why Uncle Billy never, or at seldom, was bested in a deal. One was that whenever possible, when he bought things he preferred to use other people's money. Or no money at all. A lot of people didn't understand this—bankers and lawyers mostly—and they caused him a lot of trouble. The sheriff would come down from Cedar Ridge with a warrant, but Uncle Billy was never at

home when he came.

Daddy always said Uncle Billy killed Grandmother with his fooling around-worried her to death. But I don't think so. She understood Uncle Billy; she understood him because he was so much like Grandfather. Grandfather died before I was born, but if only a few of the stories they tell about him down in St. Clair County are true, well, Uncle Billy couldn't hold a candle to him.

About the turn of the century, when he was still a young man, Grandfather left Kentucky and took off for the Yukon looking for gold. He never found it, of course, there or anywhere else, but he never stopped looking. And he was never

satisfied for long with what he did find.

After nearly freezing to death in the Klondike, Grandfather made his way to Oklahoma and filed a claim on a homestead. He stayed there long enough to get his crop laid by; then one day he walked off and left it and never went back.

Sometime after that he went out west to Wyoming and Montana where he bought up a herd of wild horses which he shipped south to Georgia, riding in the freight cars, right along with them. Down there he sold them off to unsuspecting sharecroppers and used the money to buy a bunch of pigs which he shipped back to Kentucky where he planned to fatten them for market and sell them. And where they all died of the cholera, and infected all his other stock to boot.

Eventually Grandfather settled down some. He married Grandmother who was a young widow, in her early twenties. Grandfather, by this time, was over forty. And he took up farming, but even that he did with a flair—on three farms, each in a different county—rotating his time among them, so that none of them ever amounted to much. And this in the days when the automobile was still a novelty in the Knob country of Kentucky.

So Uncle Billy got it honestly. And Grandmother under-

stood that.

Before Grandmother died, Mother and Daddy used to let me go down to the farm and stay during the summer after school was out. Every chance I got, I would tag along with Uncle Billy. I learned a lot that way, some of which I got my mouth washed out for repeating. Uncle Billy would start out every morning, early, and stay gone until late, long after dark, even in the summertime, and much later than Mother and Daddy ever let me stay up. He didn't always take me with him, but sometimes he did. He never worked, oh, occasionally he would do something around the farm, but not enough to tie him down. Not like other people let work tie them down. He went to sales, to auctions, to the stockyard, maybe to the courthouse, or just drove around in his truck. Maybe we'd see a nice field of corn somewhere and stop and pick a gunny-sackful or roasting ears to take home to Grandmother.



Or see somebody he knew and stop to talk. He knew practically everybody. Or go to a junkyard just to look around at the wrecked cars and see if there was anything there Uncle Bil-

ly might want to buy.

One August morning, when the weather really gets hot---Dog Days, Grandmother called them---one of those mornings when it's already hot at sunrise, I knew Uncle Billy had something unusual planned. I could tell just by the way he acted, the way he moved. I was in the kitchen eating breakfast. Uncle Billy was out on the back porch shaving. I could hear the swishing and gurgling of his shaving brush as he twirled it round and round in the cup of lather. Grandmother had been complaining about frogs getting in the cistern again and asked Uncle Billy to do something about it. He said he would when he could get around to it, but I could tell his mind wasn't on frogs. He called to me inside, through the screen door, "You want to go to Fort Knox?"

"Shoot, yeah," I answered, shouted, "When?" "Now," he said, "This morning." "Shoot, yeah, I want to go!"

Grandmother just shook her head. She'd have to get some-

body else to get the frogs out of the cistern.

"Billy, you be careful," she admonished him, like she did every morning when he got ready to leave. He was grinning when he came through the door, putting on his blue shirt, and throwing his towel over in the corner in the general direction of the towel rack.

"I will," he said, "Come on."

I left part of my pancakes on my plate and jumped up and ran after him. I had never been to Fort Knox but I had heard Daddy say that during the war they could hear the big guns firing all the way to the farm from Fort Knox.

Uncle Billy and I walked back through the house together,

through the big entrance hall to the front door that was never closed. We crossed the wide front porch with its swing and bottom chairs, went down the steps and through the tall blue grass that clung to the rubber soles of my tennis shoes and made them slippery. The cows had gotten into the front yard during the night and were grazing there. A little black calf bawled at us as we went by.

Uncle Billy's pickup truck was parked in the lot amid the old junkers he had collected, the rusting farm implements Grandfather had bought when they were still working with teams, and an old Army ambulance jacked up on concrete

blocks. Uncle Billy had made it into a hen house.

The yellow dust and gravel stuck to my wet shoes and trouser legs and I had to stomp my feet to get the goo off.

I climbed into the seat beside him. His truck wouldn't start--nothing unusual. He put the gearshift in neutral, stuck his long leg out the door, and gave the truck a shove to get it rolling. As it picked up speed, rolling down the gravel lot backwards, Uncle Billy rammed it into reverse and let out the clutch. With a jolt the engine started and the truck jerked backwards.

"Got to get a new battery," he muttered as he stuck his head out the window to look back and see where we were going. We narrowly missed the big stone gate posts as he swung the truck around backwards in the road. With a roar and with the tires throwing gravel, we took off, leaving a trail of yellow dust behind us as high as the tops of the locust trees that lined the road.

Uncle Billy liked to drive fast and he had a lot of wrecks. That's why Grandmother always told him to be careful. Daddy used to say that Uncle Billy drove like a bat out of Torment. He was a deacon and couldn't say hell.

As we got to the bottom of the hollow and started up the other side I looked back through the dust to see the big house, yellow brick, with a veranda on the two sides that you could see from the road, and four tall chimneys sticking up from the roof.

They said one of the governors of Kentucky had been born there way back before the Civil War, but that house had tall columns on it. It had burned and the yellow brick house was built on the same foundation. The house and the farm had been left to Grandmother by her first husband when he died. In his day the place had been a fine farm. But over the years, Grandfather, with his three farm system, had let it run down; and then there was the Depression; and during the war they couldn't get hands to work it. And Uncle Billy really wasn't very interested in farming, anyway.

Over the hill the house disappeared in the dust and trees. The road was lined with blackberry brambles and honey-suckle. Sometimes Grandmother sent me out with an empty lard bucket to pick blackberries for a cobbler, but usually the tenants beat me to them. About all I got were the small berries they left me and lots of chiggers. Grandmother would rub kerosene on my arms and legs to keep the chiggers off but it

didn't seem to do much good.

About a mile from the house was the mailbox, where the yellow dirt road turned off the white limestone gravel county road. Our yellow dust turned to white dust there and the rocks banged against the fenders of the truck as we went by. Eight miles up the gravel road and across the condemned bridge was Dry Fork, where the blacktop road began.

Dry Fork had a wonderful general store run by a crippled man, a filling station with a pool room and pinball machines in the back, a church, an elementary school and a few houses. One of the houses, a big white, gabled Victorian-style house with what they called a gingerbread porch had once been a hotel. Later Uncle Billy bought it and lived there after

he got married.

He bought the general store too after the old crippled man died, and tried to run it for a while. But he wasn't much of a storekeeper and let folks run up a lot of bad debts. Then one day he got tired of the store and locked it up and left. From then on everybody in Dry Fork had to go into Cedar Ridge to the A & P to get their groceries, which is what they did when

they had cash money anyway.

We stopped at the filling station and got out. I thought maybe Uncle Billy was going to stay there and talk and forget all about Fort Knox. He did that a lot. And bought me a coke and a candy bar. And sometimes he would give me a nickle to play the pinball machine if I promised not to tell Grandmother. But not this time. He led me over to the biggest truck I had ever seen, a tractor-trailer job. It had a long flat bed with tall wooden racks that had once been yellow but now were faded and splattered with tar and mud. The cab was a faded olive color; it had once belonged to the army. The army numbers were painted over with blue paint and the doors were gone. The windshield was cracked where another truck had thrown gravel up on it. But up on top of the cab were two shiny silver air horns- - - the one improvement whoever owned it had made.

Uncle Billy climbed up into the cab and pulled me up, across his lap and into the seat which had a lot of bare steel springs sticking up through the imitation leather that was split and torn.

He pushed on the starter and the engine turned over slowly while the gas pedal squeaked as he pumped it up and down. With a trememdous roar the motor started. If this truck had ever had a muffler, it was gone now.

"Here we go!" Uncle Billy shouted at me over the earsplitting racket of the motor. He eased the big thing into gear and pulled out into the road. Everybody came out of the fil-



ling station to watch as we started off, headed down past the

church and school toward Cedar Ridge.

It was Saturday and the streets of Cedar Ridge were crowded with all the country people when we got there. Their old beat-up cars and trucks had filled all the parking places on the square where the men in their bib overalls were standing around or sitting on the steps, talking, spitting tobacco juice, and swapping jack-knives.

Our truck was so big and the street so crowded with folks cruising around the square looking for a place to park that Uncle Billy had a hard time getting it around the courthouse and

out the other side of town.

The sweat was running out of his thick blond hair and down his forehead into his eyes. He would wipe it away with a sweep of his big, brown hand; then shift into another gear; and wipe it away again. His blue shirt was wet down the front and a drop of sweat clung to the end of his nose. Every once in a while he would try to blow it away, sticking his lower lip

out and huffing, but it always came right back.

All three stop lights in Cedar Ridge caught us on the way through and a lot of Uncle Billy's friends hollered at him from under the awnings in front of the stores or from the doorways of the beer joints. He would wave, shift gears, and ease the big truck up a little farther in traffic, swinging wide to get around the square, blocking off the traffic coming the other way. There was a lot of horn blowing and cussing, but he pay any attention to it. Finally we got out the other end of

town and onto the highway

Out on the road Uncle Billy would downshift going up the hills and around the curves, then floorboard the big rig on the down-grades and what few straightways there were. The speedometer was broken so I couldn't tell how fast we were going downhill, but the big truck was really rolling. The racket of the engine and the wind whipping through the open doorways was so loud we had to scream at each other to be heard. The road was narrow and winding; and any time we met a car Uncle Billy would have to pull into the gravel on the shoulder of the road to let it by; then fight to get back on the pavement.

The hot tar was bubbling in the roadway in two tracks where the traffic had worn down the gravel. Uncle Billy said the tar was giving us a free re-cap on the tires. The wheels were slinging blobs of hot tar up onto the fenders and into the cab where the door should have been. Ahead the road shimmered in the heat with an ever-receding patch of water, always just

beyond us.

Traffic was light and it was still fairly early, so we were making pretty good time, considering the roads and the size of the truck. Uncle Billy had to be pretty careful, as careful as he ever was, to guide the wide truck through the little one-lane bridges that crossed the brances, forks, creeks, and gullies.

Soon we cross the county line and were going through Hodgenville where we picked up 61, headed foe Elizabethtown. Uncle Billy pulled off the road and stopped at a little, unpainted, sagging country store with a big red coke cooler on the front porch, with greasy kerosene and oil pumps, and out front a hand operated gas pump with "Aetna" in green letters on the globe and a red-orange gasoline in the glass window. Uncle Billy bought some gas from the man who ran the store. He moved the lever on the pump back and forth with one hand while he held the nozzle of the hose in the big tank behind the truck cab with the other hand.

I put my bare arm into the icy water inside the cooler, feeling around for the cold bottles of pop underneath. With the cold water almost up to my shoulder I found what I wanted-the brown, narrow necked bottle with concentric rings around it and the letters: Orange Crush in orange and green letters. Mother always told me to drink Orange Crush and not cokes

or Dr. Pepper because it was better for me. I pulled the botout and opened it with a bottle opener tied to a piece of dirty string on the cooler. Uncle Billy came over and stuck his big tanned arm inside the cooler and came up with a Double Cola which he drank in one long gulp.

He paid for the gas and drinks and we climbed back up into the truck cab. With a roar we took off again, crossing now in-

to Hardin County and getting closer to Fort Knox.

Once we were past E-town only Muldraugh's Hill stood between us and Fort Knox. Muldraugh's Hill was a long, winding, steep hill that crossed the escarpment between the Knob country and the less hilly Bluegrass. It was nearly a mile from top to bottom of Muldraugh's, most of the way with a rugged limestone cliff on one side of the narrow road and a steep drop on the other.

At the foot of the hill, just ahead of us, was a straight stretch, across a narrow bridge, where Uncle Billy poured on the coal to get up enough speed to get the truck started good up the hill. I thought it was a good thing we were going up the hill empty. The old truck was straining as it was. Loaded, it would never have made it. By the time we rounded the last curve and could see the crest of the hill ahead, Uncle Billy had shifted all the way down to bulldog, double clutching and gunning the motor as he shifted gears. The truck chugged and groaned and strained to the top; then began to pick up speed again when we got over big Muldraugh's and into the Bluegrass.

I don't know just what I was expecting, but Fort Knox was a big disappointment at first. Just so much nothing for miles and miles. If it hadn't been for a big sign that said: "Entering Fort Knox Military Reservation" I wouldn't have been able to tell it from the countryside we had driven through all morning. Finally we began to see some signs of civilization, roads turning off the highway, buildings here and there. We came to a gate marked "Armor Training Center, Gate 1, All Traffic Stop." There was a glassed-in booth in the middle of Gate 1 with a stern looking MP inside.

Uncle Billy wheeled the truck into the gate and stopped. The MP came out and Uncle Billy took a piece of paper out of his pocket and gave it to him. The MP looked it over; then

waved us through.

"Where's building number T-2706?" Uncle Billy yelled over

the noise of the engine.

"Take a right on Avenue F; then follow the building num-

bers," shouted the MP back at him.

And off we went. Soon we began to see the real Fort Knox. Row after row after row of identical, yellow barracks. We took our right on Avenue F and started counting the buildings. T-2706 was not hard to find. The street in front of it was full of parked cars and trucks. The building was a rundown barracks, obviously long disused, and badly needing another coat of yellow paint. There was a crowd of people milling around the building. Uncle Billy had taken me to another sale!

Uncle Billy pulled the truck right over the curb and up into the yard beside the building. Ours was the biggest rig in sight. Uncle Billy thought big. We got out and went up the rickety wooden steps into the barracks. Inside was old furniture, all painted Army olive green, and stacked to the ceiling: tables, chairs; and iron beds; more beds than I had ever seen in my

life.

The beds seemed to fascinate Uncle Billy. They were rusting, with brokes springs, sagging springs, and no springs at all. He shook them; sat on them; lifted them; jiggled them; kicked them. Then we sought out the man in charge, a sweating middle aged sergeant with a clip board.

"How much are the beds?" asked Uncle Billy.

"The bunks? Four bits a piece," answered the sergeant. "Fifty cents," mused Uncle Billy, "I believe I'll take a hun-



dred dollars' worth."

It took me a while to do the arithmetic, writing in the air with my finger. He was buying two hundred used Army bunks! Grandmother wasn't going to like this.

The sergeant pulled a paper from his clip board and gave it

to Uncle Billy.

"Fill this out and give it to the officer in the next build-

building. Cash or cashiers checks only."

Uncle Billy dropped his big frame into one of the broken chairs and took a short pencil out of his shirt pocket. He licked the point and laboriously started to fill out the form.

"Uncle Billy," I ventured, "What're you going to do with

two hundred old beds?

"Fifty cents a piece. That's a real bargain, boy," he re-

plied, "a real bargain."

We took the form to the officer. His building was air conditioned. He looked it over; looked up at Uncle Billy towering over him.

"Looks okay," he said, "You got the money, Mister?"

Uncle Billy pulled his big pocket book out of his hip pocket and took out a frayed, damp blue paper- -a cashier's check for \$100.

"Bank of Cedar Ridge," said the captain, looking at the

check, "Where the hell's that?"

"Down the road a piece," said Uncle Billy.
"Here's your bill of sale," the captain said, handing Uncle Billy a yellow paper.

Uncle Billy folded it up and put it in his pocket book. "When can you load them out?" asked the officer.

"Right now," said Uncle Billy, "My truck's outside."

"Okay, they're all yours."

After we walkéd outside I asked Uncle Billy, "How're we going to load all those bed?"

"We'll find somebody to help us." he said.

He left me beside the truck and began to circulate among the crowd. Within a few minutes he had persuaded five or six men to help him load the beds. He had a way of getting people to do what he wanted them to. But after they had started carting the dirty, rusty bed out of the barracks and stacking them on the truck, I think they began to have second thoughts. The sun was high in the sky now and plenty hot.

It was a good two hours before they got the last of the beds loaded and the helpers were all wringing wet. I did my part by picking up the loose springs that fell off the beds as they hoist-

ed them up to Uncle Billy on the truck.

He stacked bunk on top of bunk, row after row, as high as he could heave them over his head. Somehow he got all two hundred stacked precariously on the truck; then climbed

"Do you think they'll stay up there all the way back?" I asked him. He looked up at them and shook his head.

"I sure hope so. Maybe we ought to tie them down some." He reached under the seat of the truck and brought out three coils of hemp rope. Then he started climbing up the swaying racks, the ropes slung over his shoulder. I thought sure the racks would fall with him, but they just swayed back and forth while he tied the ropes and threw the loose ends across to the other side. Then he climbed up the other side and and tied the ropes off.

"That oughta hold 'em," he said, climbing down. He stood

there a minute, looking up at the beds, his hands on his hips. With a deep breath, he said, "Okay, let's go."
"Thanks, fellas," he called to the men who had loaded the truck as he climbed aboard. The old engine coughed, then started with a bang. Uncle Billy didn't try to turn around. He just drove off between the buildings and off the curb when he came to a street.

"Where do they keep the gold?" I asked him.
"I don't know," he replied, "Let's look around a little bit.
Maybe we'll find it."

We wandered around the alphabetized streets, then came upon Patton Road, a four lane thoroughfare. "Let's see where this goes," he said.

We hadn't gone far when I spotted a sign: "Gold Depository" with an arrow off to the right. Uncle Billy wheeled the big truck into the drive and soon up among the trees we saw

it--the Fort Knox Gold Depository.

There was a high fence around it, but the gate was open. A sign by the gate said: "DO NOT PROCEED BEYOND THIS POINT." Uncle Billy drove right in and stopped the truck. "Well, there it is," he said, starting to get out and look around.

Suddenly, out of nowehre, came a loudspeaker voice,

"HALT. STATE YOUR BUSINESS."

Uncle Billy hesitated a second, then yelled back at the unseen voice, "Well, I don't reckon we got any business here!"

"THEN PLEASE LEAVE" said the voice.

"Suits me," said Uncle Billy, as he started the truck. This time he carefully backed it out of the gate and down the drive, leaning far out of the door to see where he was going. We headed back down Patton Road the way we had come. Soon we were back on the highway, heading home, the beds rattling on the trailer behind us, the racks swaying in the wind.

Uncle Billy was happy. He had bought himself a real bargain- -two hundred rusty army cots. He was whistling. I couldn't hear him but his lips were puckered up and his jaws were puffing in and out as he drove the tractor-trailer down.

the road.

When we got to the top of Muldraugh's Hill a sign said: "Hill. Trucks Use Lower Gear." Uncle Billy stomped down on the clutch and revved the motor, forcing the transmission into a lower gear. The roar of the truck got louder. "Hang

on!" he yelled as the truck began to pick up speed.

The tires squealed on the hot blacktop as the truck careened around the curves. Uncle Billy was trying to gear it down more but he couldn't. He began pumping the brakes, but the truck went faster and faster. He reached down and hauled back on the emergency brake. I could smell the trake lining burning. Uncle Billy was fighting the wheel trying to keep from hitting the rocks on one side and going over the other. The truck was weaving back and forth across the road. He stomped up and down on the brake pedal. I was holding on to the dash board, my heart pounding.
"This goddamn truck ain't got no brakes!" he screamed at

me. Uncle Billy didn't cuss often, but when he did he really meant it. "You better jump!" I shook my head. I'd rather take my chances in the truck than bouncing off the rock wall

outside.

"Jump, boy, jump!" he hollered.

Brakes completely gone and truck out of gear, we rounded the last curve, the wheels sliding in the gravel on the narrow shoulder. Ahead was the straight stretch and the one-lane bridge. But between us and the bridge was an old black Model A Ford, chugging along slowly.

"Sweet Jesus!" shouted Uncle Billy and it was more a prayer than anything else, "Get out of the way, you son-of-abitch!" He reached up and grabbed the air horn handle and yanked it down. The blast was deafening. The Model A's

brake light came on. He was stopping.

"Goddamn it, jump!" Uncle Billy shouted over the noise of the horn. Out I went, tumbling, falling, sprawling. We were beyond the cliffs and I hit in the high weeds, skidding on my belly, skinning the hide off my knees and arms. I hurt like I never hurt before. My mouth was full of dirt and blood; my

clothes were ripped to pieces. I looked up just as Uncle Billy hit the car with a loud SMACK. He was going so fast the truck lifted that car up just like a freight train throwing a cow off the tracks. The Model A flipped over the side of the bridge and disappeared into the creek bed below. The truck never even slowed down, but beds were flying everywhere.

I staggered to my feet, not sure I could walk. I was scratched and battered all over. My chest hurt real bad where I had hit. Slowly I made my way down the road toward the bridge. The truck had disappeared around the curve down the

road. I couldn't even hear it anymore.

Cars were already stopping and people were running around, looking over the side of the concrete bridge down at the car. Army cots were everywhere: on the road, hanging off the bridge, up and down the creek.

One man had gone down into the creed, up to his knees in the muddy water, helping an old man out of the car. He seemed to be no worse off than I was, but was shaking all over.

"Somebody call the highway patrol!" someone shouted and one man jumped into his car and took off, looking for a tele-

"You hurt?" a lady asked me as I got to the bridge.

"Were you in that truck?" the old man demanded. He was mad as hops.
"Yes, sir," I stammered.

"Well, who was drivin' that damn thing?" he wanted to

"I don't know, sir," I lied, "I was hitch-hiking and he picked me up a few miles back."

The crowd began to gather around me, everybody talking

at once. The lady gave me a handkerchief.

"Who was he?"

"That crazy bastard musta been doin' a hunnert and ten." "What did he look like, son?"

"Did anybody get his license number?"

I was getting scared. I knew I couldn't keep lying. And if the police came. . .I was about to cry when I looked up and there came Uncle Billy ambling down the road, his hands in his pockets, innocent as a lamb.

"What's going on?" he asked, peering over the side of the bridge. "Anybody hurt?" he asked, looking at me. I shook

my head. I hurt all over.

"Naw, I ain't hurt!" the old man screamed, "but I goin' to kill that son-of-a-bitch in that truck! I got a pistol in my car and I'm a-goin' to kill him!"

"Truck?" asked Uncle Billy innocently, "Was it a big ol"

tractor-trailer loaded with beds?"

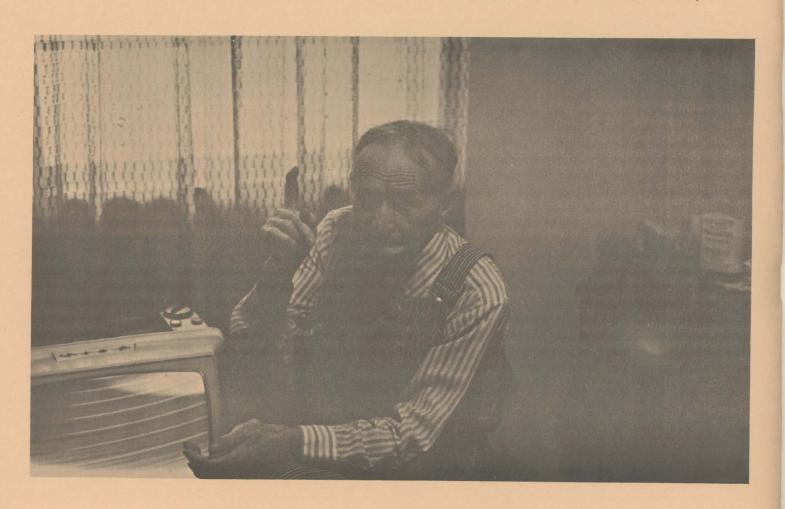
"Hell, yeah!" yelled the old man, "Don't you see the god-

damned things all over the place?"

"The truck's a-sittin' down the road a piece," Uncle Billy said, "in a ditch. I seen the fella that was drivin' - -a little sawed-off short chap. He took off runnin' up through the thicket down yonder," he said pointing toward a clump of trees down the road. "Y'all better get goin' if you're goin' to catch him."

And with the little old man leading the chase the crowd took off for the woods. Uncle Billy watched them go; then with a smile, he lifted his shirt. Stuffed into his pants were the license tags off the truck.

"Let's go home, boy," he said, and we walked away.



THANKSGIVING

from "The Vegetarian"

So many good things do cost so Much And they can Often

Put another in Dutch.

We love to congregate and Greet Our friends and Share

A hunk of Meat,

And quaff a mug of beer or Wine And refill again

Our favorite Stein.

But what about our feathered Friends Imprisoned and shackled

In escape proof Pens,

That gobble and strut but do us no Harm And dream of Freedom

Back on the Farm,

While we are planning to end their Career
As we talk of Spreading

The spirit of Cheer,

Of peace and goodwill this time of Year With no thought of Mercy

Never shedding a Tear,

Though we well know his life will End When and Where

Our fun Begins!

Orlo C. Skinner

P. S. Please, pass the gravy!



Ivy inside the walls

(Near Guthrie, Oklahoma)

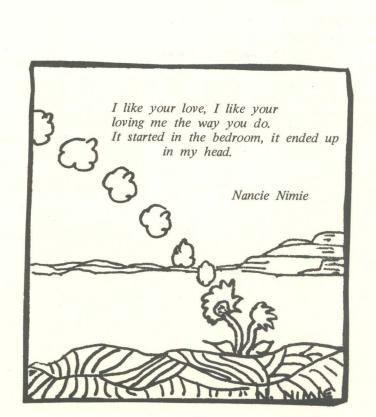
Upon these ruins sunlight plays, makes green the site of other days when family hands preserved with care the red stone house then standing here.

Thick sandstone walls two stories high staunchly the elements defy, with vacant squares like staring eyes, their roof replaced by Western skies.

Where wild grass grows was once a floor, empty rectangle was a door.

Brave remnant of the bygone times, inside the walls the ivy climbs.

Marj Bennett



Wrote your name on a sunsoaked rock. Beginning to dry, letters mingled as do memories.

Rebecca Foster

Suzy wanted to play dolls.

I wanted to play football.

She got mad.

I got a tooth knocked out.

Jennifer got a frilly new dress.

I got a new set of shoulder pads.

She laughed.

I made a 30 yard touchdown.

Leslie wanted to practice cheers.

I had a game at 4:00.

She got Head Cheer Leader.

I got a black eye.

Linda got me a date with Joey.

I broke it.
She saw West Side Story.
Dad & I saw Greenbay smash the Colts.

Rebecca Foster

IT AIN'T EASY BEIN THE ONLY

GIRL QUARTERBACK ON THE BLOCK

I am not an inspiration.
I do not feed wine and cheese or even bits of crumbs.

The hands are not out to me.

I fly short distances.
High.
The distance from fence to castle is not measured by how much wheat lies between.
The distance from fence to castle is measured by how the wheat is seen between.

Once
in flight
I heard jewel songs.
Some were in party.
They had music boxes full of laughter.
Cats at side, flowers vased, hearts
taken out of the trunk.

They could see soaring going on.
They were not sure what kind of music it was.

It was decided a miracle and left at that.

There are very few miraculous inspirations.

Susan Schmidt





70: From:

I gave the winds a message To carry across the sea. Whisper to her softly winds And ask her this for me:

"Does she still remember when We walked beneath the sun? Does she still remember when We talked beneath the moon? Does she still remember The words I spoke at night?"

I will surely come back some day For I know that she knows too.

Last night I sat beneath the moon And watched the shadows move. When a soft wind whispered to me, "She's waiting there for you."

Roger Hadley

PHILOSOPHY

I never ask in what direction lies
The walks along which my footsteps go
Nor whether on the corner signs will show
Me if the way I take is wise
Nor would I ever dare Philosophize
On some alluring crossroad on the way
That might have been the road
I should have taken one lost day
Regret shall never scar a memory
Nor life look back on some elusive theme
That might have been but for fate
That made a major loss a minor dream

Anonymous

THE STORYTELER MAN

Note: Just my way of telling you I can write interesting stories about, of all places -- the Old Indian Territory, which is now Oklahoma state. I was born there in 1874!

We know the nicest man, we do.

He is the captain of our crew.

He leads the joyland caravan.

He is the STORYTELLER MAN!

He tells us lots and lots of tales
Of everything from frogs to whales.
Of mountain giants and forest elves,
And cave 'gazoots' that eat theirselves!

There's not a place he hasn't seen;
He isn't fat nor is he lean;
When he talks it makes us giggle,
'Cause his ears both start to wiggle.

But he says: "Shhh!", and we sit still,
And just as quiet as mice -- until
The story's ended -- that is when
We all shout: "What happened then?"

He laughs and laughs, and we do, too,
Then he admits it's not all true.
We're everyone a story fan,
And LOVE our STORYTELLER MAN!

Joseph Straughan Alviso, California

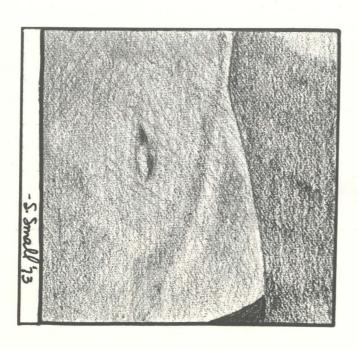
Monday

Saturday came and went and who showed up but the postman who said I wouldn't live forever and I should get covered so my wife would be hoppy. Well to hell with him. I think I'll just live forever! that'll show him.

anyway, couldn't my wife be happy without all that lvil

oh yes, postman smiled and said hello ... saturday

John Smith



748 DREAM

From the top of a building a man looked down on the steel and concrete of his own hometown.

The population was composed of specks running to and fro and very few knew why they were doing so.

All the buildings were many times too high and, of course, long ago man had learned to fly.

He himself was a cog in the fascinating wheel: had several masters; among them, petroleum and steel.

Everything, he thought, that today I see, once was not, and someday will not be.

Strange, he thought, it seems that all of this, and I too, may only be a dream.

Maureen Ottenberg

Every Now and Then

Every now and then I feel a little weary. I stop along the way to rest my eyes. I try to block out all the views of ugly streets and avenues, of people hating one another, teenage kids against their mother, guns with bullets going wild, an unwed mother bearing child I stop to rest my eyes along the way.

Every now and then I feel a little weary. I stop along the way to rest my ears. I try to close out all the words
that seem like great big elephant herds. like words that cause somebody pain and words that use God's name in vain. and words that really aren't the truth because their users have no proof.... I stop to rest my ears along the way.

Mrs. Guinn Vanzant

sittin' on the side of the road. gathering dust as car after car screams by. and I know every one of you as you coolly ride air conditioned by, and i sit and cry. the sun burns holes in my and i irrigate my face. i lose sight of you in the haze. but then clears and i see all. i pull in my thumb and start to

John Smith



sittin:

The long and winding dirt road soon narrowed to barely one lane and ruts had formed. Trees lined both sides of the road and an occasional squirrel could be seen darting through

At the end of the road stood a small white wood-framed house. Traces of chipping paint could be seen. The trim on the house was a forest green which almost blended neatly into the countryside. The chipping paint was all that marred the landscape which hosted huge pine trees and dozens of brilliantly colored wildflowers. A slight chill was in the air.

A matching green swing hung on the porch of the house. A girl sat alone on the swing, rocking slowly back and forth. A plump woman, well into her fifties, came out of the door and steadied herself on the arm of the swing before she sat down. The girl finally turned toward her.

"How are things going, mama?"

The elderly woman shook her head and pulled a worn sweater across her shoulders. She looked tired.

"About the same. Always about the same."

"Has anyone been to see you lately?"

"No, no one's been by or phoned since your sister was by her a few weeks ago," answered the woman. She reached down and drew her knitting out of a small bag that was

sitting beside the swing.
"Honestly," said the girl, her face clouded with anger, "Sometimes I think that no one cares about anyone anymore." "After all, sis lives much closer to you than I do. It wouldn't

hurt her to come by more often."

Shrugging, the elderly woman said, "She has kids and a husband to take care of now."

The girl started to reply, when the tinkle of a small bell broke from the house.

"That's your grandma," said the woman as she forced her self to her feet.

The girl nodded absent mindedly as her mother went into the house. Coming out a few minutes later the woman sat

"Sometimes," she said as she picked up her knitting, "I think I can't take another step, but somehow God always sees me through."

"Mama," the girl began, "God has nothing to do with it.

It's your own stubborness.'

"God has something to do with everything, and so far, up until now anyway, I thought I'd raised all my kids to believe that."

A look of despair came over the girl's face. "If you would only listen to someone for a change, mama, you wouldn't have to depend on Him or anyone else. If you would just take grandma to a nice, modern ho-."

The woman cut her off, I'm not taking grandma to one of

'those' places."

The girl's voice rose. "But mama, if you would you could be alone just like you've always wanted to be. All we heard when we were young was, 'if I could only get you kids raised, I could find a nice quiet place for your father and me to live."

"That was when you were young and your father was still

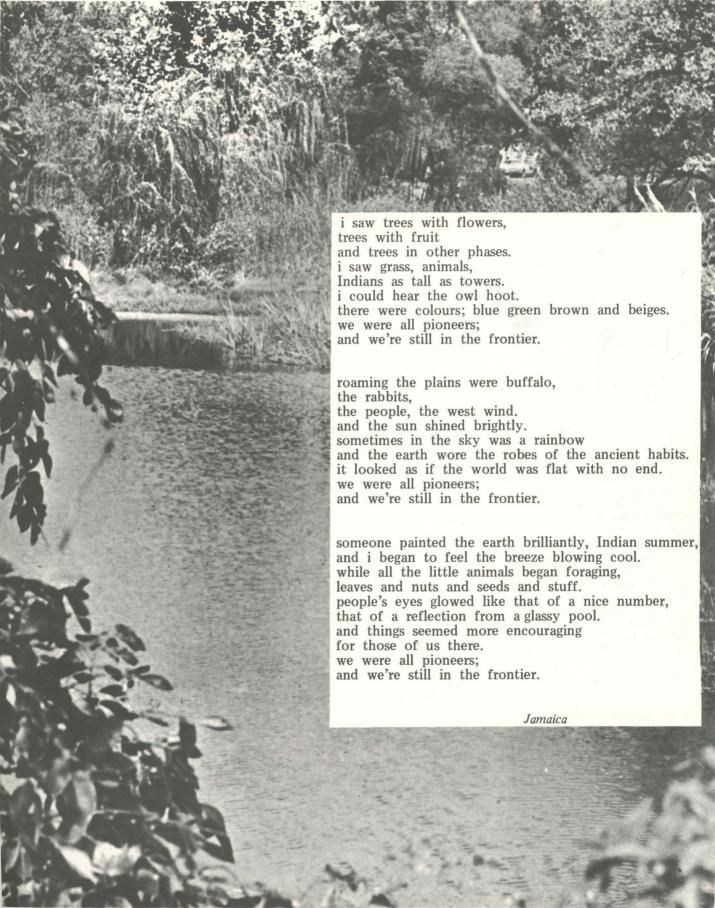
"But mama," repeated the girl, "without grandma here, sis and I wouldn't have to come so often to check on you."

The mother looked sadly around the clearing which was quiet. "You don't really have to worry about us."

"Mama, you know I'm only thinking of your own good." Silence overtook them as they ran out of things to say to each other. Suddenly, the quiet silence was pierced by the tinkle of a bell, and the old woman got up a little slower than the last time and went into the house.

the road

billie kerr





PERCEPTIONS

As I sit in this cold and deserted woods,

I listen to the wind whistle through the towering pines.
The night is dark.

The moon is gleaming bright.

As the whistle gets louder the owl hoots

while he perches on a limb of a tree.

Now everything is quiet.

All are asleep.

In the morning I awake to a beautiful orange yellow and blue sky Breaking the unborn horizon's light.

Now the woods become warm and full of life!

Bradley Rose

FLOWERS AND ME

Pretty flowers grow big,

like me.

I like to smell flowers.

that I can see.

What do I need flowers for?

To smell, to pick, to put in a jar.

Kimberly Dawn Swofford

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Some of my friends are small like me.

Some of my friends are as big as can be.

Some of my friends are quiet as mice.

Some of my friends are loud, but nice.

Some of my friends are the neighbors moving in.

Kimberly Dawn Swofford



He has A indian frind and whin He wants his Horse to go the long Raniger says Hi ho silver!

THE OTHER NIGHT, WHEN I SAW THE WORLD'S LARGEST STAR OF ALL, IT TWINKLED IN ITS STARLIGHT, AS IF IT WERE THE SUN, AND IT EVEN WATCHED EVERYONE.

THE OTHER STARS SO DAINTY, BUT NOT AS MUCH AS HE, THE OTHERS ONE BY ONE, POPPED OUT FOR EVERYONE TO SEE.

Karl Rouillard

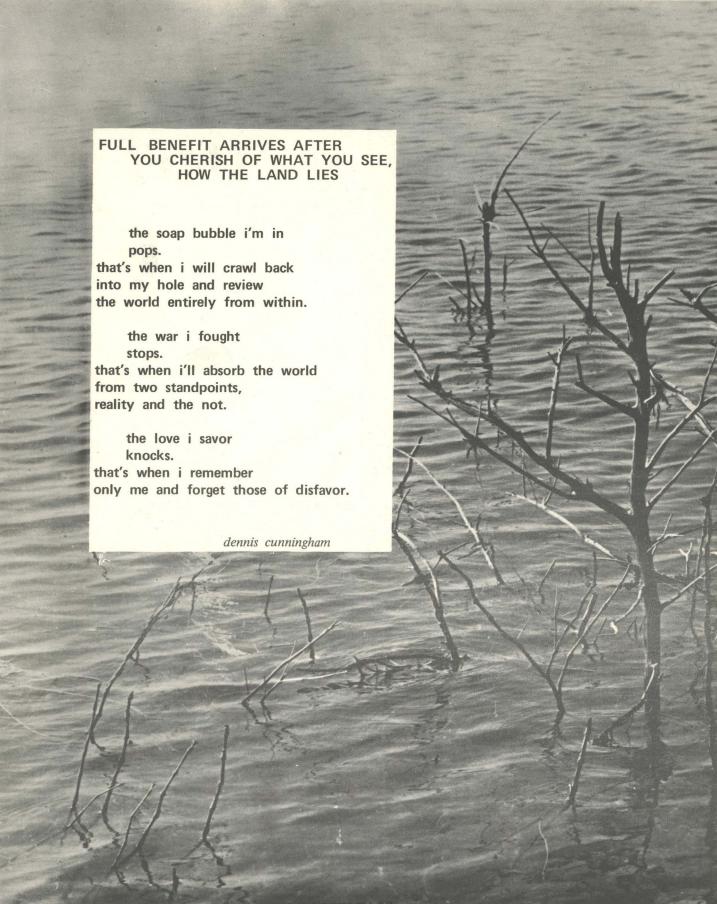
Pollution

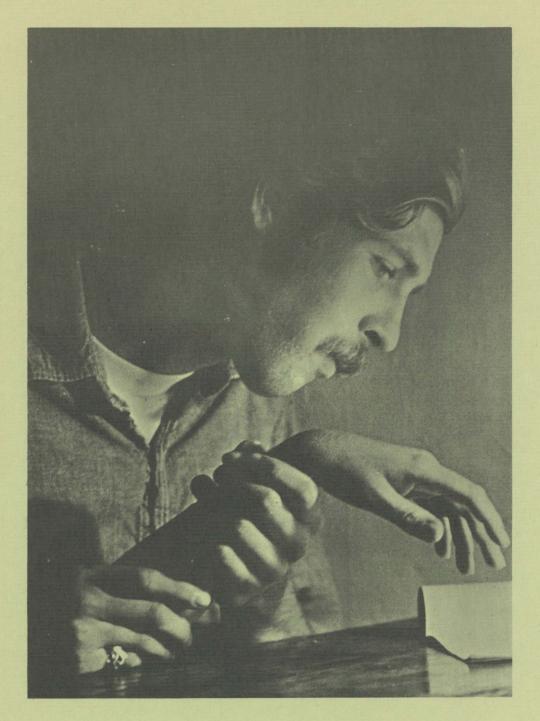
There's pollution in the city, Pollution in the town, Pollution on the sides of things, There's pollution up and down.

There's pollution in the air, Pollution in the seas, The animals are dying, The bears, the birds, the bees.

There's pollution in the factory, Pollution in the state, Don't you think we'll all die off, If pollution keeps up at this rate.

Cathy Brownlee





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