

# Absolute

Spring 1979

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*cover photo by Dan Schmid*

In the soundless darkening  
of evening  
stars appear but quickly retreat  
behind stealthy sliding black clouds  
like a watery watching shroud

The long day of darkness  
has gone  
and left the night in silence  
man has done this to us  
he has sent us away to await our sylvan keepers

Listless looming gray forms announce  
winter  
once again to bury our souls  
for we have never known time  
and once again await its coming

The music of the wind  
gone now  
the rains flow onward to other hills  
to take its life this season elsewhere  
its virginity to accept newer pastures

Will it come again?  
we know not  
where it went or if it was ever really here  
for time is measured in droplets of water  
Sad silent night we await the morn

—D H Moore



## The Musician and the Poet

I do love the musician  
whose fingers sweet melodies render.  
His touch is soft, the strings sing of Love  
yet his song of despair is all he sings to me.  
Sonatas of Sadness in his kiss. . .  
Still, the harmony is sweet,  
I ask him to sing again:  
    he, who sings of sorrow.

—*Wanda Brayton*



## **My Philosophy**

Walls and Nothingness  
Are created by  
A world where  
Machines create  
Isolation with  
Their Unnatural quality,

Paradoxical in nature  
The machines create  
Emotional states  
With their promotioa  
Of unreality which  
Are illegal.

Since it isn't  
Possible to be happy  
in isolation, the  
company of others must  
Appear genuine and not  
Promote meaninglessness.

*—Robert Hetherington*



## Displaying

Who would think the falling of  
an apple could be defined?  
May intelligence define the who?  
Drive your thoughts across the path  
of another line of thought and  
disagreement may or may not be the  
conclusion.

Isaac Newton deserves four hands  
in comparison with his two.  
He must have been prime before  
factoring his analytical  
geometric mind-boggling  
square divisional methods.

Well, math majors: the natural  
log shall be made rhythmical;  
that is, thou shalt first  
calculate diverse trickery before  
honoring parametrics to equate  
your variables. Be strong  
and don't give up. Root!  
Root! Root! for your square.

Simplify: 
$$\sum_{i=1}^N \left[ \left( \frac{i}{N} \right) + \frac{i}{N} \right] \frac{1}{N} .$$

—Bernice Honaker



## Woman's Work

I slowly build it up  
this wall  
And there'll be no room for you  
Or you or you she said  
I build my wall of your  
discarded stones of silences  
Pitched with envy  
Dropped in resentment  
I build my wall with my tears  
With sores old and unhealed  
With hard, harsh, cold "loving"  
I build my wall with my mind  
Ready to stretch out taut and tight  
I build my wall with my eyes  
That see a great horizon  
I build my wall with a vibrating  
energy that pales the world  
This wall—  
Building with great determination  
Stone after stone is placed  
Desperate from past and present  
and future need  
And behind my wall—  
I am me  
I am me  
I am me

—Sandy Pruitt

to you

not quite as many  
people will sneer if you dress shabbily or try  
to be an artist  
or love someone of a different race  
or chicken out  
more people will say it's okay to be you  
if you're lucky enough to figure out  
who that is

but some still won't.  
and you'll have pollution, poverty, starvation  
and not enough energy—chemical or physical or emotional  
and you'll be afraid  
but keep trying  
please  
for you

—Karen Kamm

## Age Speaks to Youth

So what if I am wrinkled?

So, my skin's begun to sag.

So what if memory's shorter?

So, my footsteps seem to drag.

So what if I am graying?

So, my eyes are growing dim.

So what if I ask over?

So, the body's not so trim.

Does my aging state offend you?

If so, why might that be?

Do you see yourself in years to come

personified in me?

### *Listen, child*

I've been a bud, a blossom;

I've watched the seasons come and go.

Tender springs, torrid summers

Now I bravely wait for snow.

I've been a belle, a beauty

with promise in my touch.

I've laughed, cried and taken love

and given back as much.

I've given birth to children,

nurtured them and set them free.

I've been child, woman, lover . . .

Death holds no threat for me.

All nature will embrace me,

fold me to her endlessly.

The person that I was and am

will never cease to be.

—Andrea Lynne Miller



*photo by Artie Hicks*





*photo by Artie Hicks*

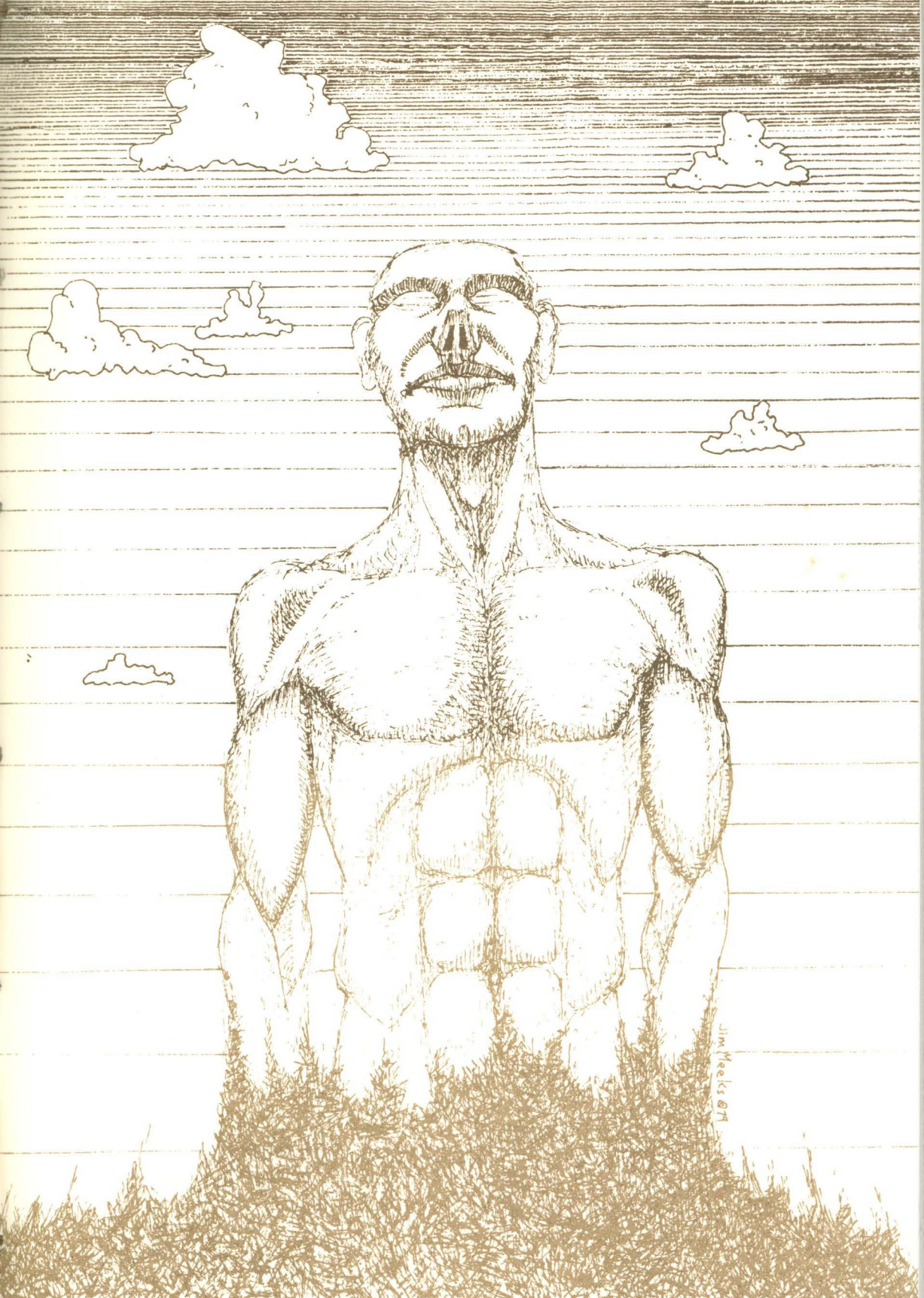
## Compromise

hurry,hurry the city screams  
and so we do  
scream  
that is  
when the lights become too bright  
and the hustle and bustle turn to madness

slow down, slow down the country cries  
and so we do  
cry  
that is  
when the sun goes down and the sky  
turns liquid black  
when the air goes dry with stillness  
and the quietness and solitude  
blend into boredom

peace the ocean whispers  
where it is always and never the same  
finite and infinite  
changing to abolish boredom  
stable to ensure security  
exciting and frightening  
a compromise

—Tami Jo Bush





Snow barrow covers  
Autumn's funeral pyre

Icy moon drifts  
Below  
Barren Trees

Dead eyes speak  
Of life's anathema  
Limitless void

Frozen artic blasts  
Forlorn  
A shape cowers

Winds delftly erase  
The shattered bloom

—*David Bowie*



starlit crystal night  
risen by misty streams  
to  
elvish trumpets braying  
before a silver host  
while  
phoenix lifting on mythical air  
transforms in sunrays to bare  
golden thoughts of form and fare  
as  
the sacre of love's rebirth  
changes reality perceived  
and  
time warps on  
time warps on  
time warps on

—*D. Bowie*



Don  
Chilcoat 77

## For Othello—with love

Grabbledyspat  
was a very fine cat  
who lived in a very fine alley  
one day in the spring  
he did a fine thing  
he went to a very fine rally  
the rally was at school  
the school was Yale  
where Grabbledyspat went with intent  
he stalked the great halls  
looking right and then left  
till he found a very fine gent  
a Professor was he  
of History  
and all things related thereof  
the problem was this  
(the rally I mean)  
the question of — WHAT IS LOVE?  
the Professor pondered  
then followed the cat  
down the hall—out into the sun  
where they saw the rally—the Professor and cat  
and broke simultaneously into a run  
they stopped short of breath  
the Professor proclaiming  
the answer is simply that  
the question of LOVE  
(and what it is)  
is answered by  
LOVE IS A CAT!

—Tami Jo Bush

I'm not so much for raptures now  
Since living in their pain  
Finding my colors run together  
And my days seem all the same.

I'll settle now for a rush or two  
Warm on a winter's night  
Then I can always find my self  
When wakened in the light.

—*S. Pruitt*



In the quiet of a cold evening, five men were huddled around a small campfire. All of them bearded and wrapped in furs, they looked like strange creatures rather than men.

"I do not like this I tell you," came a voice from the shadows. "We are in a strange land, and your comforting fire away from home will do us no good."

"Shut up!" said one man near the fire. "It's not our fault the storm blew us so far off course. Besides," he continued, "I do not wish to freeze to death."

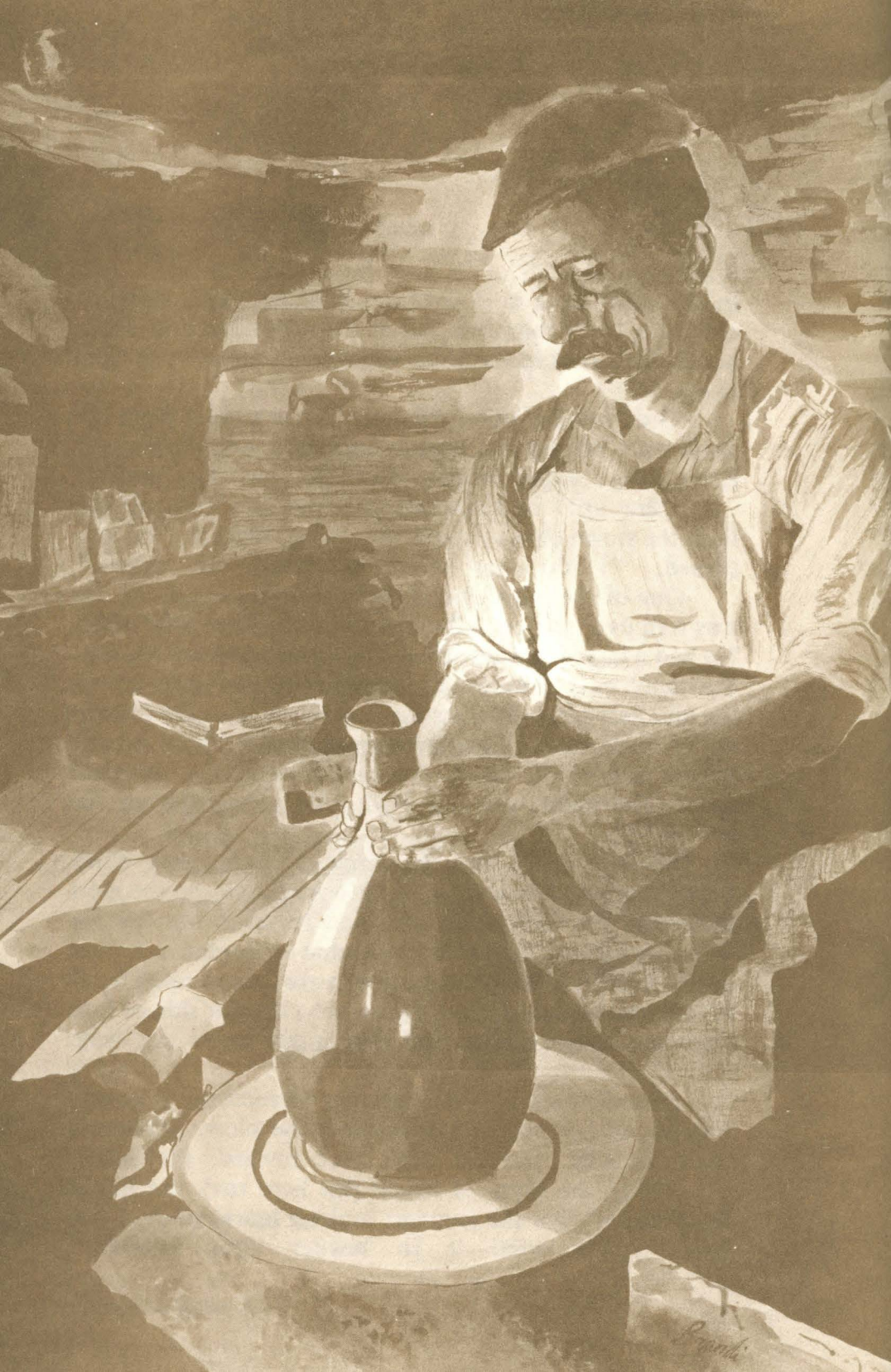
One of the others stood up to stop the argument. He was well over six feet tall and weighed at least four stone. He had a large broadsword and a throwing axe on his belt. Suddenly, as if by magic, the length of his red beard covering his chest sprouted a small arrow. It was quickly followed by three more. The five men were filled with arrows before they could move. An instant of silence followed before the night was split with wild screams from the woods.

No one came into the circle of light until dawn brought a pale yellow glow to the eastern sky. As the glow deepened, the sixth man, who had forsaken the fire for safety, crept into the camp, took what he needed and crept away. After a while he stopped at a rock in an open field. At once he began to carve figures into the flat side of it to warn any more of his kind that might come this way.

Several hundred years later in Minnesota, a woman watches as her husband puts away the plow. Obviously tired, he still carries a large rock towards the house.

"Ma," he says, "I found this here rock out in the field, and it's got the funniest looking marks on it. I just knew you'd want it to border your flowers."

—Lowell Aumiller



whales humpbacking it across  
liquid spaces as evening waters  
blush royal in the sun's vanquish  
and all things are equally joyous  
in that moodset that comes  
with eternity's travel spray  
by star paths of sea song

and the whirl of that swirl  
of bubbles in the vortex  
draws me nonresisting up,  
up to the maw of a trap

rocking, arching to leaps and dives  
of brine as on we go inside  
deep under the blind  
of a planet that sits like an awkward hat  
on top of the vat of ocean night  
and the whales sing — or sigh  
hoping for control of lessened space  
in slippery times

—*D. Bowie*

The fragile, flawless flower  
bursts into bloom as quickly  
as childhood hastens to its finish.  
Suddenly, wholly open, the  
forget-me-not flaunts its fullness  
to sisters spreading near it.  
Flourishing for a fragment of a  
moment in eternity —  
fading, falling.  
Your essence has escaped us,  
your petals become a portion  
of the path we plod on.

—*Alice DeVane*



Every perfect drop  
of rain  
that shattered on the  
window pane  
was dying in a  
different way.  
Never having  
lived at all  
it's difficult for  
me to say  
how high a price  
each drop must pay  
for dying in  
a different way.

—*Melanie Chilcoat*

## Generations of Smokers

Generations of smokers  
Living by the sea,  
In the sand  
Living chokers lay  
Generating smokers  
Increasing day by day.

From the seed of first man came  
The treasure of existence  
Through the fog of ages past  
From the ledges on the mountains.

From a bed of leaf was raised  
Those ridged unsustained organs  
Whose sons must smoke their father's bed  
To gasp his funeral dirges.

From the rocks down to the shore,  
Laughing as they play,  
Fumbling fingers turning yellow,  
Wagging tongues wax gray.

Now the smokers, bright and cheery,  
Wonder all aloud  
Can the beach be left a moment  
Till more fuel is found?

Could they breed in winter's rain?  
What measure of resistance  
In increments of metered pain  
Would mark a mere subsistence?

—*W.D. Housden*

Make me too blind lady  
Like Bernie's magic double-barrel  
Corrupt Matchmaker  
Lead me down  
Aureate corridors  
seeking/escaping  
Miniature Minotaurs  
Effete snorting beasts  
with cowseyes  
and the rimless spectacles of a librarian.  
Towers I built to you,  
Dessicate sand castles,  
Crumble in my hands,  
~~Aching fists and shredded knuckles,~~  
~~An agony I explore like a bad tooth.~~  
At the end,  
I fall into the florid arms of the  
Matchmaker, Marchmaker  
Her pimp smile and  
Cantaloupe-rind nose  
Oily, pockmarked,  
A scar for every lie.

—brown

shards of starlight immortal bright  
transform the silent snowshroud tonight  
creating an icebound town of gone-by days  
rife with treetowers and frozen tri-ways

strands of ice trap the flight of moonshine  
sparkle like rows of southcasings — all in line  
while nightcrawlers out to stroll below  
carve new paths from pawworn old snow

shooting then thru the vault above — a meteor dies  
heralds the sleep of darkness in swift sunrise  
cumbersome with too much time flown an owl seeks home  
night flees the land that men alive never roam

dawn sight breaks on rocks and barren treescape  
deathless and dying from quenchless sun rape  
harsh now unwelcomed change from moments gone before  
just a country reft of time and lost to mortal lore

—*D. Bowie*





Don K.  
Chikout 78



Don't look back; your life may be gaining on you.  
Don't look ahead; you may not be here.  
Take a look at now.

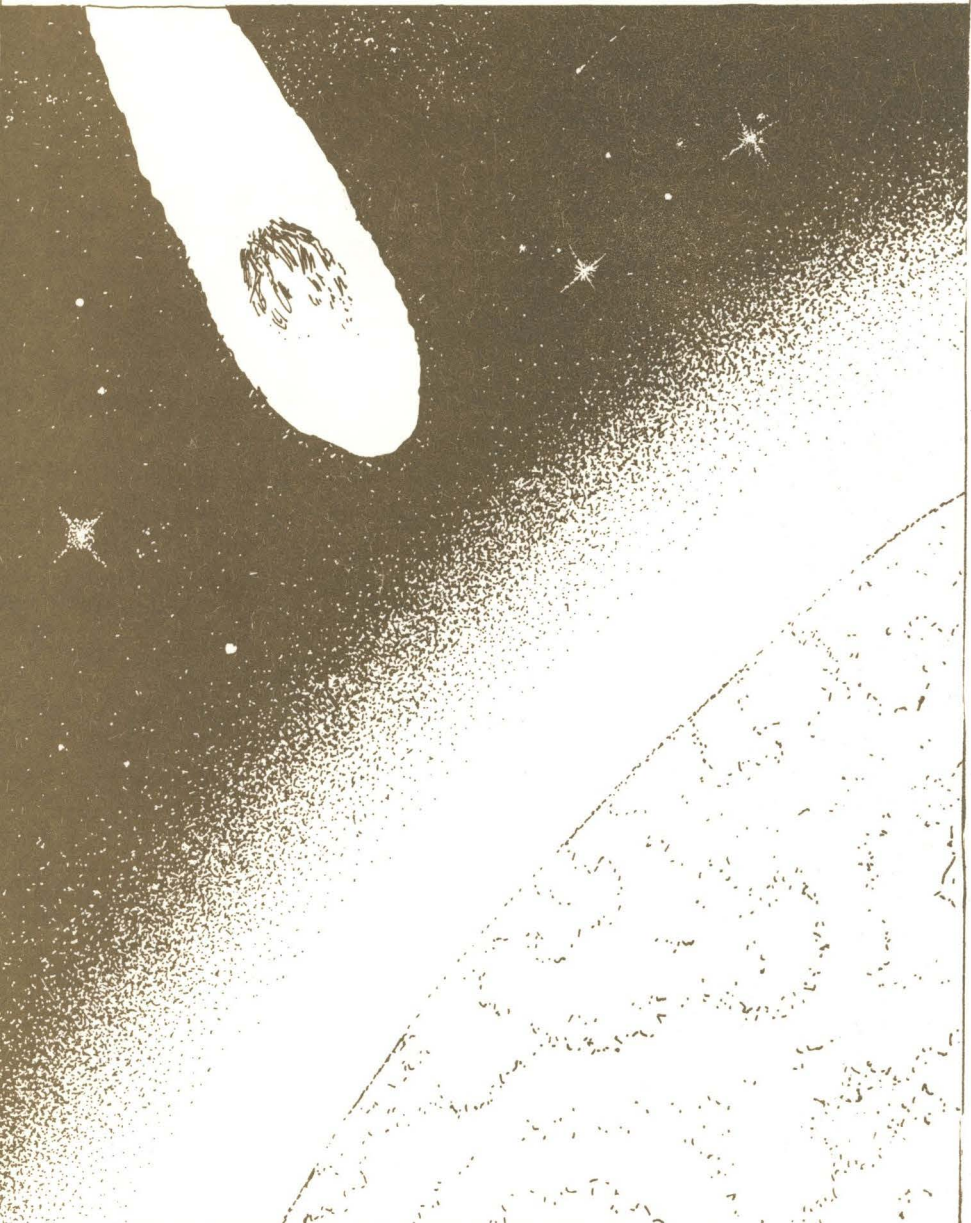
—*Tim Neeley*

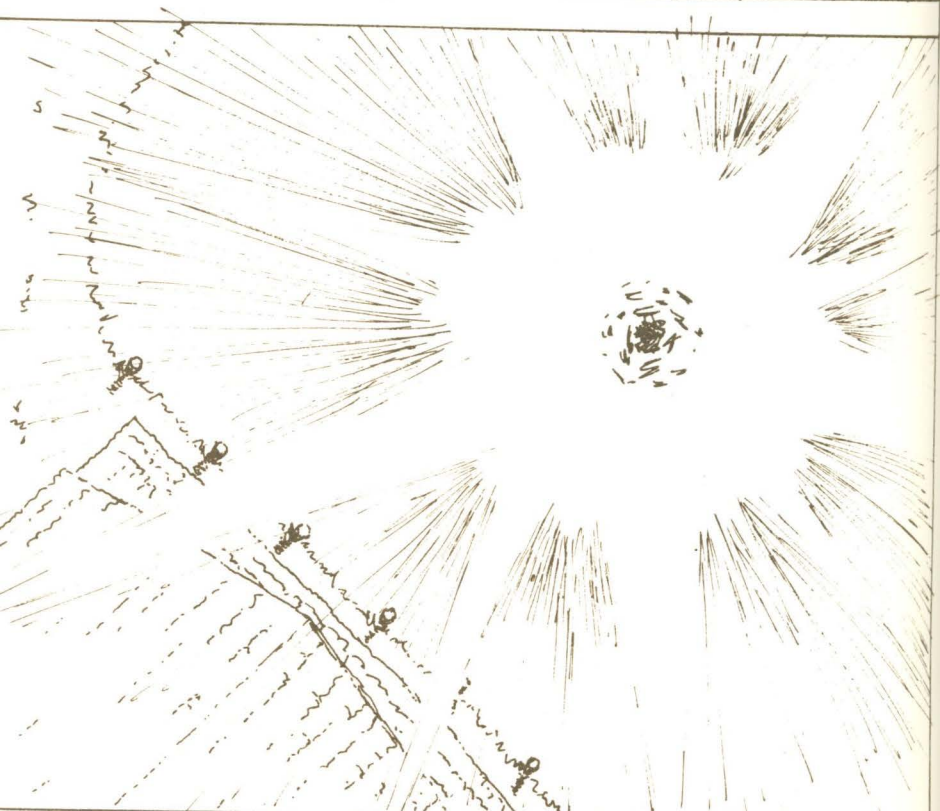
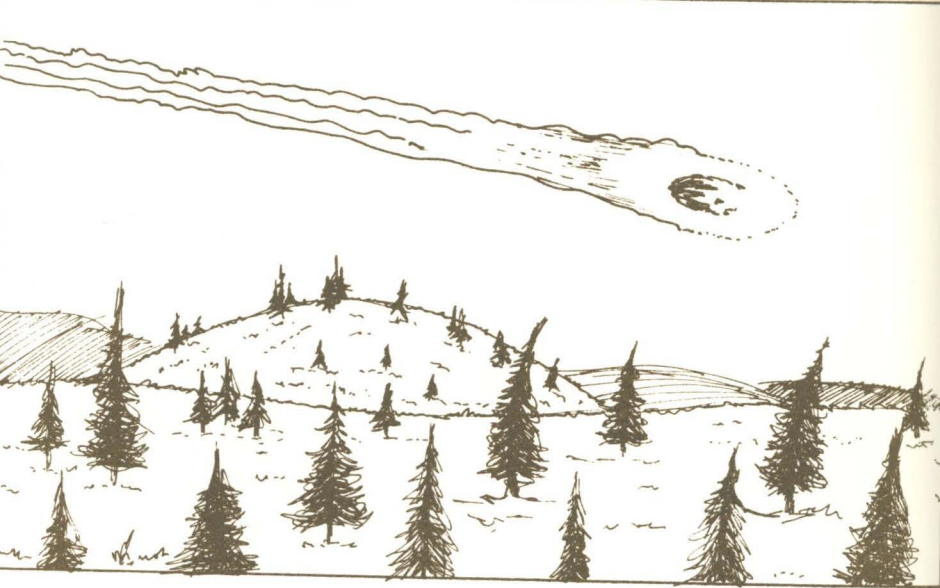
Madness manicures the mind —  
snipping away equilibrium,  
cutting out calmness,  
rasping at nerves,  
painting my soul blood-red,  
leaving only a mask of self.

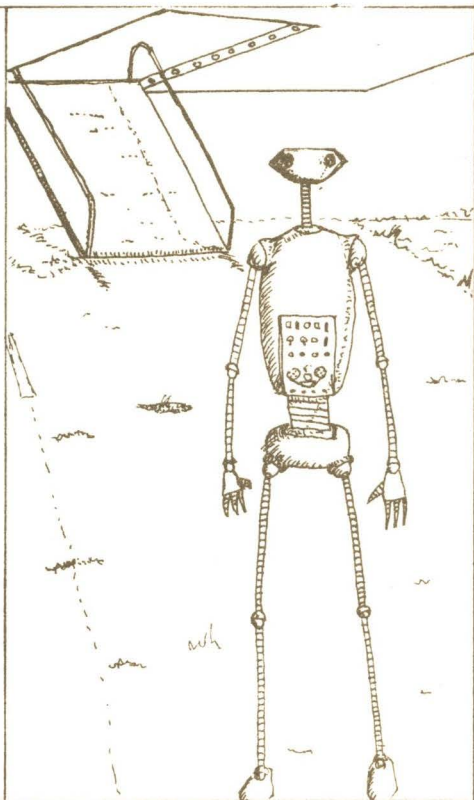
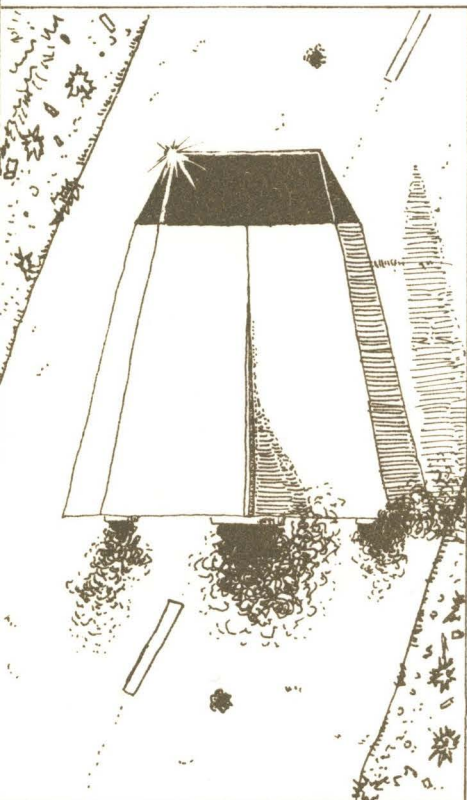
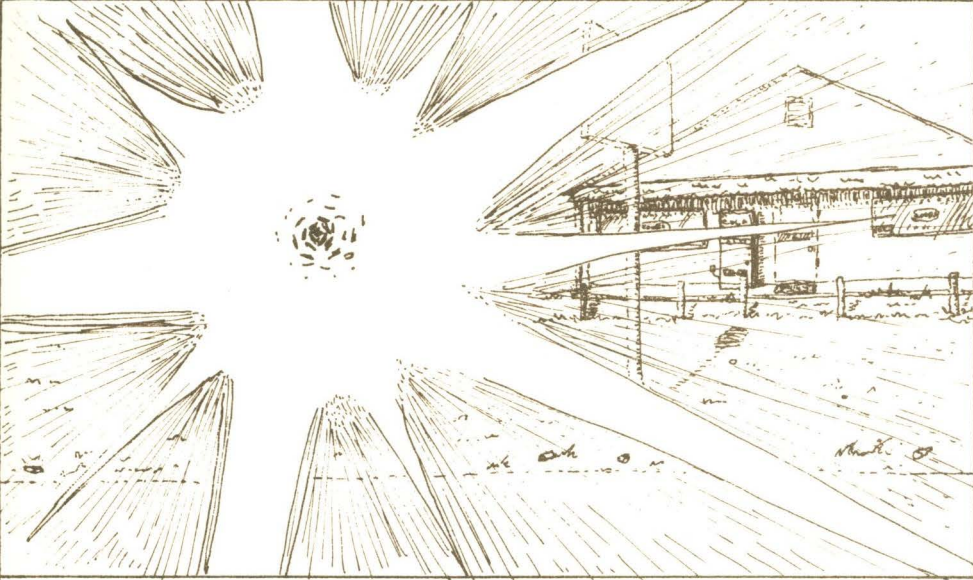
—*Alice DeVane*



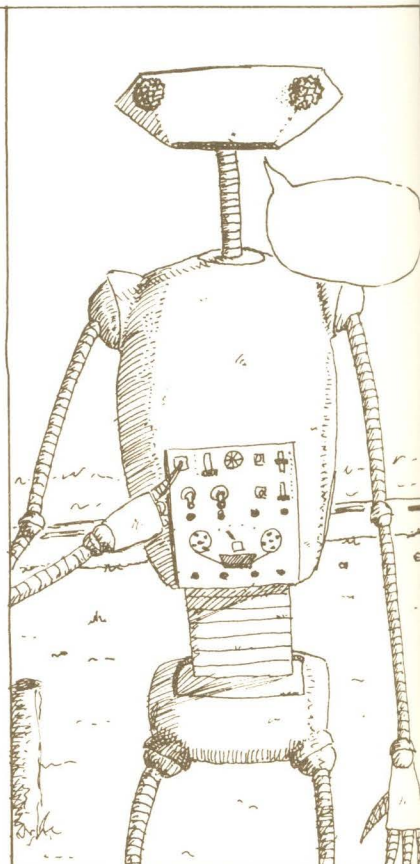
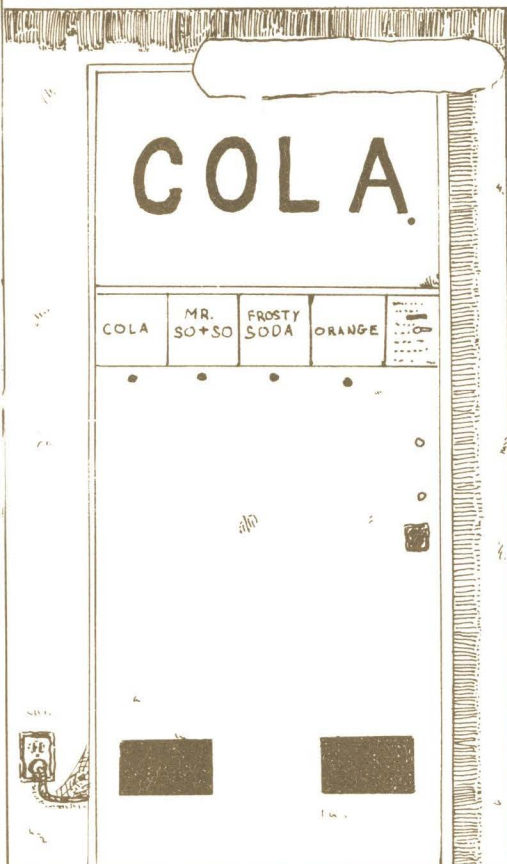
# LOST IN SPACE



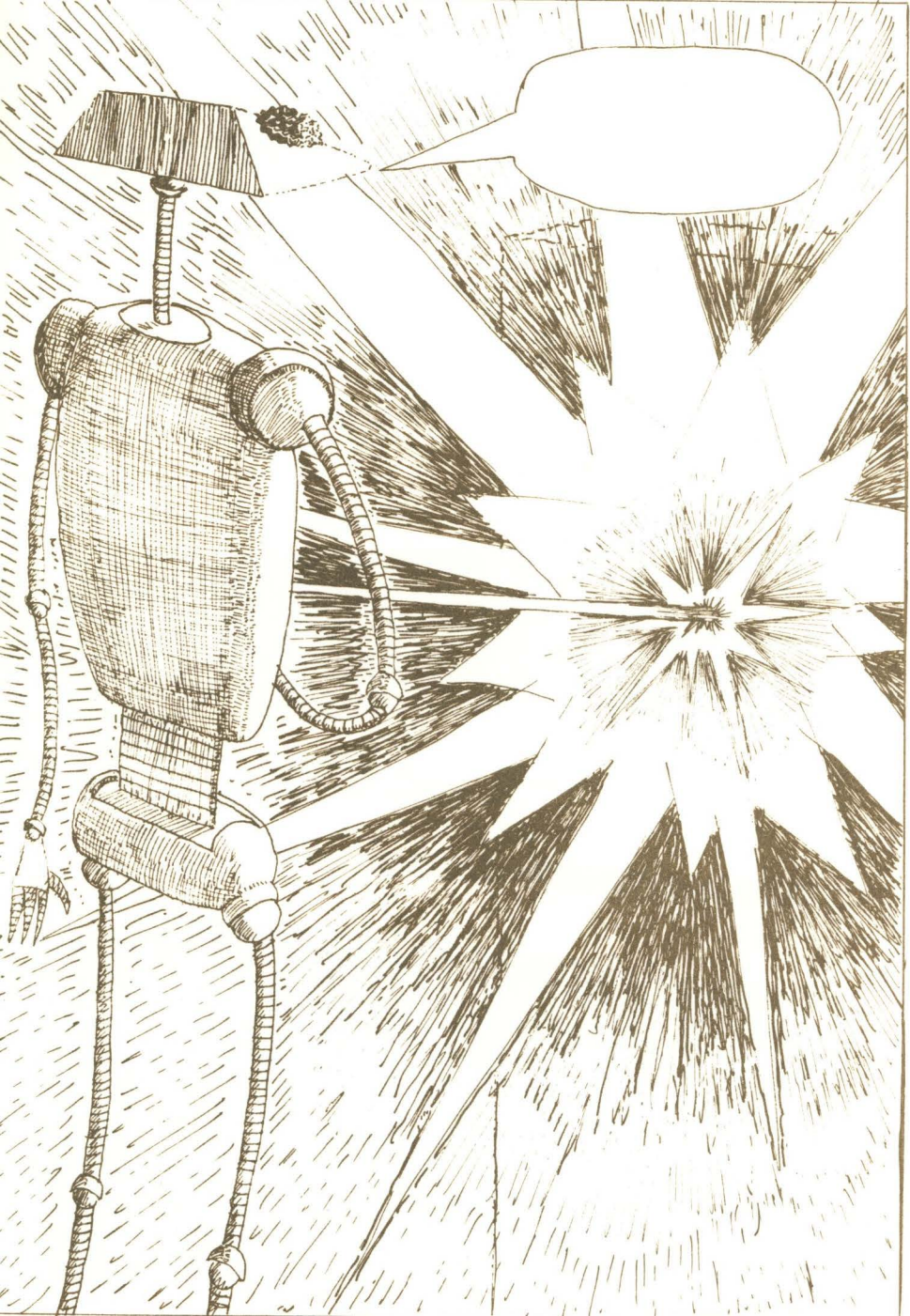


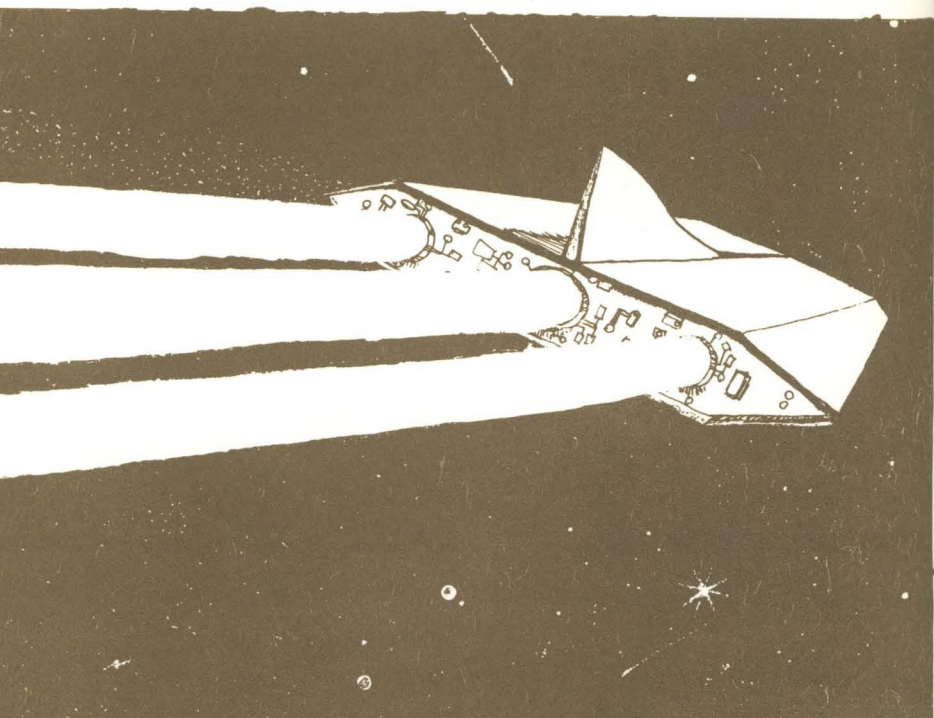
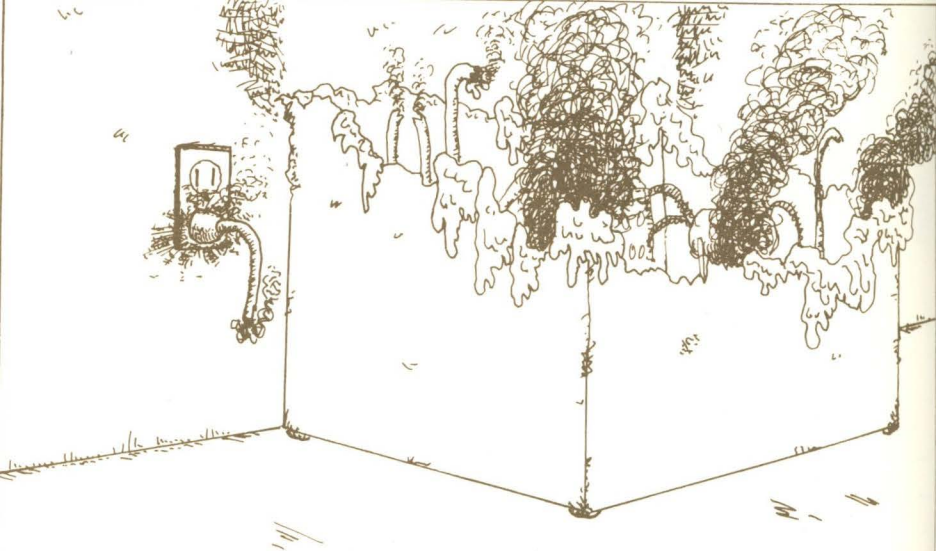












THE  
END

## The Skipper and the Farmer's Daughter

What Wonder. . .

Coarse bleating introspection and

The mystery of a girl

Joan randy hound eclipsing in wonderment

Silken precipitous curtains of legendary coral sunsets.

Lithe gunfighter whose silver and ivory Colts flash shiny

Pink at the balance of the

Day

Riderless mare on a roan stallion delivers death

While faintly twinkling dimples appear

Hidden beside sparkling white teeth glistening

Beneath a thick layer of crystal clear

Saliva.

Don't let the blood red hole in the middle of

Your new vest tell you

Exactly why, mister, this uppity broad should

Tell you where to spit—

Better you should swallow your spit and your pride,

Get thee to an altar

And wish you was a dish or a fish

Who doesn't spit at all

And never has to get a shave.

—Bill Housden

## And Now

Slender body and sharp bones  
Pricking my anger  
With something I can't see

Love me, hold me or don't. I will be  
Ten thousand miles away

You rock rhythmmed me,  
Beat without a heart

Command me to obey, say nothing.  
Hard man of kindness  
Your goodness settling too close,  
Your closeness settling too good  
To my fears  
Feeling for openings  
Not between my legs or my lips  
Not through my ears or my eyes  
But through my fingertips  
Touching your smooth  
Ever-present  
Ever-absent  
Skin

Your kiss  
Tasting of cigarette smoke  
Wakes the past  
Brings on the future  
When I want only  
To quickly wait in the present

I can't resolve you . . . . .

—*Mary Ann Peters*



# *Kit S6: Sopwith Camel*

*Wingspan: 18 inches*

*Length: 11¼ inches*

He figured he could assemble the model in six hours. And he knew that with a little persistence on his part his mother could be persuaded not to require him to come to the dinner table. She would even cooperate by protecting him from interruptions.

“Actually,” he thought, “it might take as long as twelve hours to sniff all this glue.”

He wasn't like all those children who went overboard making pigs of themselves by sniffing a whole tube at once. He did it naturally, organically — as he made the nest of balsa fragments into an authentically scaled replica of the deadly British World War I fighter.

He unfolded the instructions. They were nice and complicated. Plenty of “easy-to-assemble” directions. It was true that the models themselves were easy to assemble. That was simply a matter of envisioning the finished product and putting the parts together properly and in the right order. By the time the plane was finished each part

would have his own carefully applied drops of glue. But it was rather ironic the instruction sheet was headed “easy-to-assemble directions”; the directions weren’t to be assembled. In fact, the directions were so poor and poorly organized that they themselves were a part of the challenge. He always made it a point to rewrite the directions as well as assemble the hundreds of stamped bits of balsa.

The machine that punched the thin sheets of wood had not been perfect, had probably never been perfect. Also, he was never able to pull the pieces out without breaking some, having to trim or sand others. Sometimes a piece would be so poorly punched that he’d have to draw by hand his own version of the machine’s casting.

He picked up the double-edged razor, holding it carefully between thumb and forefinger so as not to cut himself. He hadn’t been able to find the single edge blade he should have had. He rubbed his middle finger along the outline of the hole in the center of the blade. His other three fingers were delicately poised aloft, ready to stabilize the cutting of a piece.

Dried glue was everywhere; his fingertips were covered with dried glue; on his blueprint plans sat a ball of dried glue. The ball rested there on some of his scribbled editing. As he rolled his thumb across his fingers, collecting more glue to add to the increasing lumpball, he wondered why it was they couldn’t get some *good* writers to write the directions. The trouble was they got *adults* to write them. Surely, children could write them better. Their heads were in the same place, at least. Adults’ heads were definitely not into enough creative stuff, were not orderly or logical enough to write model directions. Their heads weren’t into the sharp-sweet aroma of glue either. Grownups seemed somehow to forget the simple pleasure of making things.

The glue on his thumb had dried too much to be able to roll. He peeled it off with a fingernail of his other hand. The clear film of cement was exactly like his skin, fingerprint and all. He held it up to the noonday light blazing through the window, blazing right through the glue finger

print. Holding the cast glue print of his own finger, he knew for the first time the feel of his own touch.

He put the glue skin where the lumpball was and put the lumpball in his mouth. The balls were interesting to chew on, though he knew that to eat the stuff was bad. It tasted of lead, and the label was filled with cautions.

*WARNING:       Extremely flammable  
mixture  
Keep from fire and flame  
If swallowed call physician  
Contains acetone— Vapors harmful*

His heart raced at *harmful*. Harmful was exciting. It meant if you went too far in your fun, you could get hurt. And *fun* meant the odor of glue and the forming Sopwith.

"Why don't you leave the door open," his mother said. "The odor of glue in here is overpowering."

He looked up from his work.

"Dinner is served," she continued.

"Aw, Mom, let me eat it in here just this once."

"You know the rules. Eat at the table or not at all."

"Okay," he said, meaning "I won't eat, then."

"Well, at least give your eyes a rest," she said, accepting his determination. "Look out the window a while."

He rubbed his eyes with his knuckles, and when he opened them she was still there; so, picking up a bottle of paint, he said, "Why do they call this 'dope'?"

"Just a name," she answered.

They called the paint dope, and the dope was really the glue. Now he knew why adults couldn't write directions.

"You'll just have to starve then," she said emphatically, leaving.

He gave her time to get all the way back to the kitchen before getting up to close the door and preserve the heavy atmosphere. On his way, he determined that, as long as he was up, he might as well swing by the bathroom. He might not eat, but a piss could only be held so long. A piss was like making something; you couldn't put it off.



The wings were dry. He carefully went through the process of stretching the silkspan over the skeleton. When the silkspan was dried and stretched, he held the Sopwith aloft before the mirror over his desk. It rested like a butterfly, lightly poised on his fingertips. His elbow was planted securely on the table top, and the image in the mirror mimicked the thrust and pull of his forearm.

Moving the model through the air, he noticed the little piece of transparent glue skin dangling from the fuselage. The fingerprint was his mark on the model, but it couldn't stay. He scraped it off gently and placed it next to the lumpball on his scribbling.

When he sat back and looked at the finished model, he realized much more than the six hours he'd told his mother it would take had gone by. It looked perfect. He balanced it delicately by the leading edges of the wings on his fingertips. Perhaps it could even take a gentle flight to his bed. He started to wind the propeller and noticed past his hand on the instruction sheet *Adjusting and Flying the Model*. Under the heading were three items: the first told how to correct warps in the wing; the second how to make it fly straight and even; the third statement had to do with winding the propeller, and that was where he saw some more rewriting to be done. It said to be sure to wind the propeller clockwise when facing the nose of the model. It could just as easily have added, "or counterclockwise from the rear." Why tell half the story and that arbitrarily? Why limit you to viewing it from only one end? He realized it was only because he was so insanely high on the glue vapors that he was being so picky. After all, they did imply what was not stated.

To hell with improving the directions. He began to wind the prop. His forefinger slipped and punctured the silkspan on the side of the fuselage. He stared at the hole, thinking, "I'm so ripped my finger is longer than I thought, and it got to the plane quicker than I realized."

The hole was a damn shame. It could be patched quite simply with a bit of scrap silkspan, but the flaw would still be visible. The *invisible* flaw was a hole in the words of the directions, and if the words had fleshed out the skeleton of the idea as the silkspan fleshed the ribs of the plane, there wouldn't be such errors. Suddenly, his flesh tingled with



the power of words. It dawned on him that his life would not be spent building model airplanes, but rather, assembling words into soaring vehicles of grace and beauty and balance — instead of just models of things that flew.

“It’s beautiful!” his mother declared with pride. She had again sneaked in.

“Yes, isn’t it?” he said. He slowly revolved it in his hand for her.

“What’s that hole?” she asked at once, noticing the fingernail puncture.

“That hole is a mistake.” Thinking further, he added, “But, you know what, Mom? I know each detail of this thing so intimately even that hole is filled with what I’ve learned.”

“Well, now that you’re finished, why don’t you come and eat something?”

He knew her offer was to prepare a meal out of her schedule just for him. She, too, helped fill the hole. And on the way to the kitchen, it came to him that instead of painting a name for the plane on the fuselage, he could paste the fingerprint glue skin over the puncture.

—*Frank Paul Armstrong*

## Remember Me?

do you cry out for me in your sleep?  
do you ever hold your head and weep?  
when you left did i let out a peep?  
remember me?

do you go to sleep and wake up crying?  
do you sometimes feel like you're dying?  
did you ever justify your lying?  
remember me?

do you ever feel lonely or sad?  
do you know the meaning of the word mad?  
was i merely a passing fad?  
remember me?

do you ever pick up the phone to call?  
do you pick yourself up when you fall?  
do you think of me at all?  
remember me?

—Tami Jo Bush

## Abuse

He beat her with  
Fists of tearful eyes

He kicked her with  
The truth she trustfully gave

He broke her bones with  
Qualified intimacy,  
Untimely withdrawal

She bruised quite gently and slowly,  
Changing hue,  
An eager chameleon

—*Mary Ann Peters*

## Mirror

I saw her slip over  
The edges of categories  
A thirty-year-old adolescent  
With tired eyes . . . . .  
Dancing before me  
Like Isadora thrilling the Russians,  
Fleeing to the burdens of freedom,  
A Sojourner Truth in white,  
She glanced back at me  
Keeper of the past  
But breathless I waived . . . .

—*Mary Ann Peters*



i'm just another clown in the circus to you  
an upcoming attraction — matinee fraction  
in the grotesque managerie of cadavery  
with which you fend off the villains of the dream  
but  
when my part comes  
i'll preen and prune and prepare to prance  
then jauntily into the ring i'll run  
flapping and flopping in foppish clownspun  
and  
behind the blinding lights you'll say  
“o mommie look,  
the clown with the candy heart”  
and  
then the painted-on tears will stray

—*D. Bowie*

## Mable Steppenwolf and the Disco Dudes

I threw a knife through a wooden door,  
Not once, but many times,  
Then I splinterd the door with my black booted foot. .  
I broke a little finger on a solid oak door,  
On a Granada door window I broke my finger again,  
But with an empty pop bottle I smashed a Chevelle's  
back seat glass.

These are  
Windows and doors on the  
path to your soul—  
For the key you do not surrender.

You stand on the sidewalk outside the door  
And work up the courage to lead you inside  
You notice I see you and I see you turn red  
It's not right to watch but love cannot hide.

You ask if I'm lonesome,  
Do I ever see friends,  
Did I pay for the suit that I wear?  
No, my friends stay at home and the costume costs  
money,  
Like the shells of the shotgun I bear.

It's blue and it's chrome as it pulls in the lot  
And there's six chatty people within  
The dance hall so warm will soon become hot  
With coke and rum drinks they begin. . .

*Are your parents at home?  
Do they ask where you go?  
Have you told them you found better friends?  
Has the barman passed out?  
Should we give a big tip?  
May we order some tropical blends?  
Parlez-vous Francais? Are your  
pants too tight?  
Have you been down to see the new show?  
If the judge makes us pay will we stay there all night?  
Can our lawyers make them let us go . . .*

In this artificial lighting you seem very  
near, though you pass by in deep space . . .  
In your command module there is celebration  
How such a weightless endeavor has left you elated  
You are removed from the earth, above masses  
numbered in billions,  
No other has been in your position, so  
few have been near the spot.  
Will a presidential award await you and your companions  
upon your return?  
Will New York City greet you with a blinding shower of  
ticker tape?  
Will you ever find yourself here again to ask if I ever  
feel lonely?  
You are so close I could reach out  
and touch your hair, although in  
this artificial light you do  
not recognize me . . .

*We once spoke of Viet Nam. We stood with our hands  
tied, aching to open our hearts to the world. The  
love burned like lightning inside us, coursing  
through our bodies like heated blood, until our  
souls exploded and washed the streets of the world  
with our rainbow spectrumed atoms of passion.*

*Afterwards, naked before the world, ashamed of  
our bare emotion, we were forgiven. The fuel crisis,  
the spiraling inflation, Watergate—*

*Our society, at war with itself for our endeavor,  
slowly turned in the same direction and struggled  
into motion, gradually at first and then with a  
quickenning pace, racing finally as a single unit,  
with a single heart pushing blood through bulging  
purple veins, and we were accepted as a part of the  
great forward thrust . . .*

*Accepted and forgiven and loved, encouraged to  
produce movies, broadcast news, discover serums,  
build skyscrapers, weld mufflers, be elected . . .  
loved and nourished like wayward nieces and nephews  
as the greatest society on the face of the Earth  
began its struggle for survival . . .*

In the turning confusion I found myself in the military, and  
you decided to go to college . . .

We lost each other's address for separate reasons—

You mentioned you were opening a plant  
shop in your last letter

I mentioned that I qualified expert on the  
M-16 in mine.

A strong wind blows past my shoulders as we find ourselves  
searching for words.

Tonight you do not remember,  
I stand alone here most nights, watching you  
thrill drunken rebels

With the time when we turned on the lights  
So they place soothing hands on your shoulders,  
They chuckle and point at my gun, and  
Claim that but for my existence  
They could unleash the might of the sun.  
You start to explain but you falter, and  
Smile like an actor in mime,  
Withholding by shrugging your shoulders  
What must be said some other time . . .  
Twenty-six rumors passed by here tonight  
A zombie bared seven one hour  
The best was that nine million bottles of rum  
could equal the grace of a flower.

I could say this and you could say that and they could  
say something else

Do I really believe in humanity? I believe  
what I've already seen,

In whispers and threats and sleek shiny cars,  
In circles and points in between.

In blood I may write you a letter, and let the wind  
blow it to you,

Past windows and doors on the path to your soul—  
For the key you do not surrender.

—Bill Housden





I watch my sister's face

when she hears it one more time —

“We can have an arrangement—I want you—I want her  
please understand.”

And I wonder about this hunger game of numbers

and warm flesh and bleak mornings—

Who do I send my letters to?

I want to complain about a consumer deception of  
outrageous proportion.

—*Sandy Pruitt*

## A Time When

I lusted after your words —  
Tall and cynical as you —  
Slipping from your orderly mouth

I fed my lust with say-dreams  
Nouns and verbs panting their want

I collected bits of elation  
Hoping to shape the perfect word  
To caress your impeccable ear

I failed . . . choking on swollen syllables

I gave you  
Only dust-words  
Only pallored pieces

You said something in the language of  
Nothing

I bargained for hopelessness

—*Mary Ann Peters*

## Mormons

### I.

Always first  
Weighs heavy as dew on a spider's web  
The fragile net straining, holding  
Waiting for the sun season

A smile and your God  
Took me in.  
Now I am comfort—trapped  
Now I weave my web  
From your belly to mine,  
Our bodies sinking in the dark,  
Sighs caught on the scent of rye bread and  
Absolution

### II.

I balanced on your other eye,  
One foot on your iris,  
Circling like an ice skater

I fell into the cold depths of blue,  
Grasping the pupil-bouy.  
I clung while your  
Eyelid washed waves  
Of strength  
Over my tingling body.  
I filled with drowning.



### III.

Two women are sewing,  
Collecting the children with their eyes  
Protecting the home cycles  
With a glance, a motion

They split the man while keeping him whole—  
Shared turns in his bed,  
Timed times for themselves—  
They live in a three-body flow

In wonder  
They serve  
A callous Christ  
A loving Christ  
Savior naked of miracles

—*Mary Ann Peters*

## **This Road**

I've been here before  
I've walked this road a thousand times  
I know I'll walk it many more  
If only for a little while.

I've heard those words  
a million times they echo deep  
within my mind;  
even when I sleep.

I've worn these shoes  
to walk this road  
to hear these words  
it's a heavy load.

—*Melanie Chilcoat*



Don Chiscoat 78





## See the Hunter

Now can't you see the changing faces on the wall,  
When comes the news—the seasoned hunter comes to call:

All along the trail behind him  
Death and doom are all there is  
to see

Between you and he stands life alone  
And that is how it ever has to be

Oh see the hunter  
His armor dull but hard  
Run beneath the moonlight  
Forever on your guard.

—*W.D. Housden*

## Death's Awakening

Today I met myself in death's awakening.

My barren skeleton reaching out—  
to touch life.

“Why have you gone from me?”  
the bones cried.

“Why have you quit aching?”

My spirit feeling all—my spirit  
soaring—yet—yet  
searching for the things life  
might have brought.

Did not, did not my bones cry—  
and ye wonder that I did not die?

Who can, who shall—with angered soul  
astirring—  
until the final death of dreams aborning?

—*Ruby Lowery*





Jim Meeks '90

## At This Point In Time

At this point in time  
Your time  
My time  
Our time has come together  
to meet  
and share  
and enjoy—this time  
we call in point.

At this point  
we may call time-  
out from the rigors which  
point each of us to  
this time  
and  
by virtue of the  
standstill state—relate  
one to the  
other  
points  
to ponder when once again  
Time-in is called and we proceed  
to our next  
Point in time.