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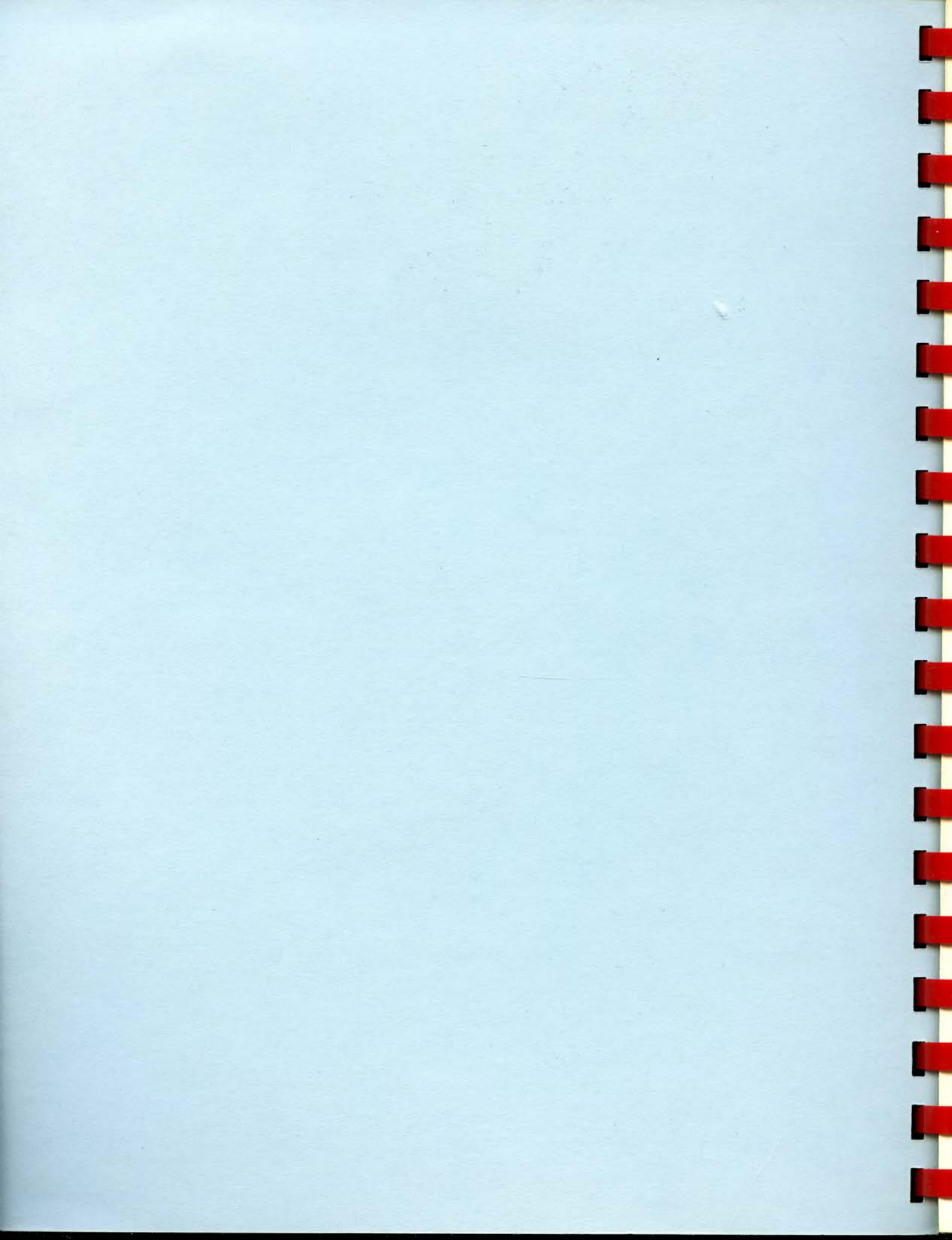
# MOSAIC

marist college arts & literary magazine

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Spring 1981



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 Special Thanks to Pat Creegan

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.

T.S. Eliot

## MARATHON JOHN

By John Kraus

My friend John is a runner. You know, the dedicated kind. This means he likes to run about five miles a day in total disregard of the weather. It means he doesn't buy his running shoes at Tom McCann's, either; he buys them at a running shop.

I could never see the attraction of running. It appeared to be a downright painful procedure to me. I saw it this way. Whenever John ran over to my place, which was three miles from his, he would arrive all sweaty and out of breath. He'd drink a bucket of water and then, perhaps, ten minutes later he'd be able to talk again.

"Why do you do it, John?" I ask him.

"Not only is it fun," he says, "It's great for the heart too."

"If your heart has a death wish," I responded.

I was as much a bicycling enthusiast as John was a runner. He couldn't get me to run and I couldn't get him to bike. Whenever John entered a marathon, he'd have me pedal beside him with a bag full of raisins and mixed nuts. When he gave the sign, I'd lower the bag and he'd stick a hand into it and grab a handful. Then he'd pop the stuff into his mouth. John also needed tanks of water during those torturous races. I had a water bottle mounted on my bike. Whenever he needed a drink he'd call out "water" like some desert nomad who hadn't seen an oasis in three days. I would then hand John the water bottle and he would empty it before I could say "masochist." Refilling that bottle could be a real pain; on a good day John could empty it about fifteen times.

It's obvious that when I enter a bike race, John doesn't run beside me with a bag of mixed nuts and raisins. Bill

Rogers couldn't do that. Instead, John keeps time for me. If I race on an oval course, he runs on the inside, back and forth, from one side to the other and shouts my time as I pass. By the time the race is over, he's worn a diameter into the infield.

I am thankful to John that he keeps time for me, and he's thankful to me for catering to him.

Seeing John race almost makes me as sick as it makes him. He's a ferocious competitor, you see. If I didn't have to look at him while he ran, it wouldn't be so bad. His face contorts in the worst way after the first couple of miles of each race. He doesn't believe in pacing himself either. He'll always be the first to line up at the starting line, and the first to break at the sound of the starting gun. John's built for running; he's a feather-weight and tall. The trouble is that there always seems to be a handful of competitors who are designed slightly better. So, John usually finishes a handful away from first place.

Perhaps the worse thing John ever did was build a trophy shelf. It turned out real nice and all, but it didn't look right without any trophies. Ever since the shelf was finished, John has been real hungry for a trophy.

The last stretch of John's races are really hard on me, especially when he has a chance of finishing in the top three (usually, the first three to finish a race get a trophy). These horrible noises wheeze out of his mouth, his breathing evolves into a series of gasps, and his skin tone fades to fire engine red. At such times I don't know whether to cheer him on, or force him off the road and make him stop.

"Why do you do it, John?" I keep asking him.

And he keeps replying, "Not only is it fun, it's great for the heart, too."

I may have been ethnocentric to believe it, but I felt that bike racing was more fun than running. I was certain that it was less demanding. I truly enjoyed biking--trophies or no trophies.

One day I was to enter a team bike race with four other guys. At the last minute, one of the guys got a virus or something and couldn't make it. A team of at least four was required to enter the race; we'd need a substitute, and soon, or we'd spend the day on the sidelines. John immediately came to mind. I called him.

"John, I know biking is against your religion," I said to

him over the phone, "but would you consider entering a bike race. Don't answer right away. Think it over."

"No."

"But John," I said, "look at all the biking I've done for you, through thick and thin, mostly thick. I've been there at your side, feeding you when you were hungry. When you thirsted, I gave you drink..."

"Quit the crap," John responded. "Are there any trophies involved?"

I had him. "Are there trophies?" I teased. "Why, there's a trophy for the first place team that would look mighty snappy on that shelf of yours."

"I've never ridden a bike before," he said.

"Poor excuse, John. It's easier than running," I replied.

"Well, I could really use a trophy. Tell you what..." Here it came. "...I'll enter this bike race of yours if you enter a running race with me."

My body screamed, "no, never," but my mind gave in. "O.K.," I said. "But who'll feed us when we run?"

The weather on the day of the bike race was friendly enough. The sky was clouded and the spring air was luke warm. The race organizers provided each team with an almost identical bike. A half hour was given to make any modifications. A team could adjust the brakes, seat, or handlebars of its bike. We put John on ours and tailored it to his powerful legs.

When John first attempted to pedal the bike, he wobbled, but soon he got the idea of balance. All the running he had done in the past suddenly took on significance. God, his legs were meant to connect to a crankshaft! "John, the human turbine," I muttered to myself as he peddled flat out.

"Look, Bob," he called to me as he shot by, "I'm not even stretching." Biking was easier than running.

The race course was an oval that was marked out in flags around a large parking lot. Once around was half a mile. The race was to be twenty-five miles or fifty laps.

The guys and I went over our strategy with John.

"Basically, you pedal until you get tired," I said. "Then you give the pit a signal that you're coming in. When you're in the pit, get off the bike as quickly as you can and present the bike to the next rider. Any questions?"

"Yeah," asked John, "who goes first?"

"I can't see why you can't," I answered. None of the other fellows had any objections. John would be sure to get us off to a fast start. I still marvelled at the speed at which he rotated the crankshaft.

"Gentlemen, mount your bikes!" the starter shouted. The starting line was in plain sight of a table which held the magnificent first place trophy. As John positioned his bike on the line, a reflection bounced off the trophy's gleaming facade and caught John's eye. He turned and viewed it squarely; his breathing became very heavy and sweat developed on his face.

"John, don't burn out before the race starts!" I yelled. "Pace your thoughts; take your mind off that trophy. Save your energy for the race!"

The starting gun couldn't have gone off any sooner. John flung to his customary quick lead; he pedaled in a standing position. He wouldn't sit down. The other nine racers eclipsed him from my view as he rounded the first turn, but he emerged soon, still holding his lead and approaching the straight-away opposite the one where our team was stationed. He was widening his lead, it appeared, as he pedaled wildly to the turn at the end of the straight. It then occurred to me that I hadn't told John how to round a curve at high speeds. If he tried to peddle around it, chances were that the inside peddle would hit the pavement with John soon to follow. If he used his running instincts now, he was going to get skinned.

John pedaled into the turn! I closed my eyes and waited to hear a moan arise from the small gallery of spectators, but all I heard was laughter. "How cruel people can be," I thought, "laughing at a fallen biker." I pried my eyes open. John hadn't fallen! His speed hadn't allowed him to cut the turn sharply enough; he had gone straight into a patch of shrubbery, and was now trying to free himself from its clutches.

By the time John had snatched his bike from the shrubs the other racers had passed, some mistakenly snickering at him as they did. He completed the turn, and headed down the straight which held our pit area. My fellow teammates tried to wave John in. I laughed at their futility. Wild horses couldn't



put a stop to that boy now.

"Can't go so fast around turns!" John shouted as he went by.

"Glad you agree!" I answered.

"He didn't stop!" my teammates complained.

"I don't reckon he will," I explained. "That's marathon John."

We may as well have taken the seat off the bike; John was not going to use it. He zeroed in on the still closely bunched pack of bikers. They were just coming out of the far turn as he approached it. John modified his speed just a touch and then lowered his inside foot, extending it as though it were a third wheel. The foot scraped the pavement, keeping the bike from going over; it was angled almost parallel to the track. He survived the turn and came out of it like a charging bull. The pace was now halfway through the far straight. To John, it was a taunting red cape. His legs churned almost as fast as a Stanley power drill. He caught up with the pace at the near turn and did his footwork again with the same success. By the time he came out of the turn, he had passed four of his nine challengers. Halfway through the pit straight, he had the first position; he gave the thumbs up to me and the team. This time the other fellows kept their hands to themselves. They laughed in disbelief. Not me. I believed it. Running didn't utilize all of John's storehouse of energy, but now he operated one of the world's most efficient machines: the bicycle.

John continued at a matchless pace and progressively increased his lead. His turning skills became more and more refined and efficient. By the fifth lap, he had lapped the last place biker, and by the tenth lap, he did the same to the second place biker. One thing bothered me: this human turbine of ours hadn't eaten a nut or a raisin for at least an hour; he might run out of fuel and we had none to offer him.

At about the thirteenth lap, my fears were realized. John's pace slackened and his face grew red. His legs no longer churned like a power drill, but more like a rusty egg-beater.

"Bring it in," I called to John as he approached the pit area for the fourteenth time.

"No way," John said. "I started this race and I'm going

to finish it."

"John, you're exhausted," I reasoned. "This isn't a marathon. You have replacements. Why don't you use them?"

"Don't need them!" he yelled. He passed his team by.

The fellows and I were getting a bit annoyed. At the rate John was going, his lead wouldn't hold but for a couple of more laps. We would have to bring him in ourselves.

Only those who were on bikes were allowed on the course, so we couldn't all run after John and tackle him down. That would disqualify our team. I thought up something else instead. I had one of the guys get a length of rope and had him make a slip knot. I gathered the rope in my hands. Now we were ready for the fifteenth passage of John.

As he rounded the near turn and headed down the pit straight, I started to swing the rope with a circular motion. I was going to lasso him. Here he came, wheezing and all, his mouth all contorted and probably dying for a drink, and yet he was prepared to make another pass. As he was just about even with me and only fifteen feet beyond, I let the lasso fly. It glanced off his right arm and then fell to the pavement.

"Oh, no. He got away!" the guys and I moaned.

John now knew what we were up to. Next time around, he'd probably swerve like a jack-rabbit fleeing from a mongoose. I'd have to be sharp. It was becoming apparent that if John got by again our team would lose first position and probably for keeps. The other teams had already switched riders several times. John was the only stale rider on the course.

Here he came again! I readied the rope--got it swinging over my head. John was hugging the inside of the track; that would make my second toss longer than the first. This time I let go with a very large loop. "No, don't!" John shouted in protest. The rope arched high into the air above the stubborn biker. The loop descended around his slender, rebellious figure. I pulled.

Talking over that race with John was always worth a good laugh once he saw it in perspective. He had been yanked out of action just in time to save the victory for our team. John wouldn't talk to me for a week after the race. At first, he wouldn't even accept the trophy; it's on his shelf now--still the only one he has. Funny thing--I thought he'd take up biking after his relative success at it, but there's no way on

earth to get him on a bike again. He says he'd constantly fear being roped.

Oh, he's still running. "Ever think of giving up running?" I asked him for the last time.

"No," he says to me, "and remember that deal we made, Bob? Ever hear of the Boston Marathon?"

Maybe I could hide little wheels under my running shoes.

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...I believe...

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## A LONG HAired STORY

By Gertrude Burns

Paddy Donegan, a man of immense size, was given to exaggerating his own strength and fond of telling tall tales. It was said that Paddy earned his total keep, lived in the best homes and dined in the finest restaurants throughout Europe all because of his ability to think up the most elaborate intricacies in a moment's notice. Some said he was lazy but others who knew him knew he was worth more than money alone could buy. He had a penchant for taking the most gloomy of gloomy situations and reducing them to mere trifles to be endured.

I came in from the park that dreary, fall day to find Uncle Paddy sitting at our oak kitchen table, drinking tea and looking like this was a common, everyday thing that he did when in fact it was three years since he had last visited. I sat down opposite him and without looking at me he proceeded to pour me a hot cup of tea and placed the warm, corn bread invitingly in front of me. I picked up the cup and leaned over it in an effort to conceal the tears bubbling in my eyes. Uncle Paddy leaned back, lit his pipe, took a puff or two, and then gently inquired, "Now whatever could be troubling a wee pet, such as yourself, on a fine day like this?"

The tears broke loose from my eyes and rolled down my cheeks, stinging my face. I managed to sputter through quivering lips, "It's the Bodkin boys."

The Bodkin twins were boys my own age, that age being approximately nine years old, and I told Uncle Paddy how they said I was a witch and that they could prove it. The proof, they said, of my being a witch was the wart on my lip.

"Aah," says Uncle Paddy, "pay them no mind; those two are pricked in the head."

"Whatever do you mean?" questioned I.

Then Uncle Paddy began to speak in his very slow and precise manner, as if he were sharing the greatest of confidences. He said, "It was 1945 to be precise, your mammy and I were about our afternoon tea when all of a sudden the cruelest of screams shook us from our tranquility. It emanated from the Bodkin's apartment that was just above this apartment. You know of course the Bodkin's

use to live upstairs. Well anyway, your mammy and I looked over at one another and again the fierce noise, that chilled me right down to the tip of my big, brown boot, resounded through the ceiling. I sensed the emergency of the situation and responded by racing up the stairs to the apartment above.

"Entering into the Bodkin's kitchen I spotted Mrs. Bodkin, standing with her arms stuck straight out in front of her as if rigamortis had seized them. Her black, furnace coal eyes stared pleadingly in my direction and she was screaming with her mouth open enough to have a man believe it was a tunnel to China. I tell you, child, a more terrifying sight I've never since nor ever want to again encounter.

"It was some time before I realized what the matter be. Mrs. Bodkin had long, black hair under her arms. It was these, very hairy arm pits, that was the cause of all the commotion. For you see...while washing those young twin boys of her's diapers she had been seized by the wringer washing machine. And there she was when I came upon her in the kitchen, wailing like a pig being taken to slaughter, with the hair of her arm pits sucked into the wringer part of the machine.

"Being the quickthinking feller that I am I sprung into the kitchen, took my belt from around my waist and tied it around Mrs. Bodkin and the machine. Then, I hoisted both the machine and woman on to my back and raced off to the hospital with them.

"I had a devil of a time, after reaching the hospital, trying to balance both the woman and the machine on one of those narrow examination tables they have in the hospital emergency room. Several doctors viewed the plight of the poor woman and after much deliberation they decided, the doctors that is, to disengage the woman by cuttin the hair loose from her arm pits. Of course, Mrs. Bodkin created much hoopla; you can imagine the woman's alarm after having spent a lifetime growing all that fine hair. Fifty three years old she was at the time. The mother of 13 children, including those twin boys, and she had become dependent on her long hair for comforting her babes.

"Now those boys ain't never been right since that day. The reason this be true is Mrs. Bodkin had a habit of picking up her babies and tucking them under her arms as she went about her chores. However, where she once had fine, flowing hair that the babies could snuggle up to, warm and safe, there now was only stubbles. Coarse, prickly, stubs of hair. And each time Mrs. Bodkin's tucked those twins under her arms for months thereafter that fateful day the poor wee infants would be pricked in the head. Now a wart on your lip ain't nothing compared to what those younguns had to put up with." Uncle Paddy ended his narrative here and we decided to go to the park.

Arriving in the park, Uncle Paddy seated himself with the newspaper in a bench and I headed off toward the swing set area where I found my friend Dorothy playing. Dorothy and I challenged each other to see who could swing the highest. The dreariness of

the Autumn day vanished as we swung higher and higher on the swings into the kaleidoscope of red, gold and rust fall foliage of the trees that overhung the swings. We giggled and hooted as we neared the top of the swing set. Then all of a sudden, out of nowhere the Bodkin boys appeared and began to chant, "Look at the witches, look at the witches, one has a wart on her lip the other a mole on her nose."

Dorothy was staggered by the onslaught of the taunts and wanted to leave but, "Aah", says I, "Pay them no mind, they been pricked in the head."

"Whatever do you mean?", questioned Dorothy.

...the top of the swing set...  
...the machine...  
...the hair...  
...the children...  
...the woman...  
...the boy...  
...the man...

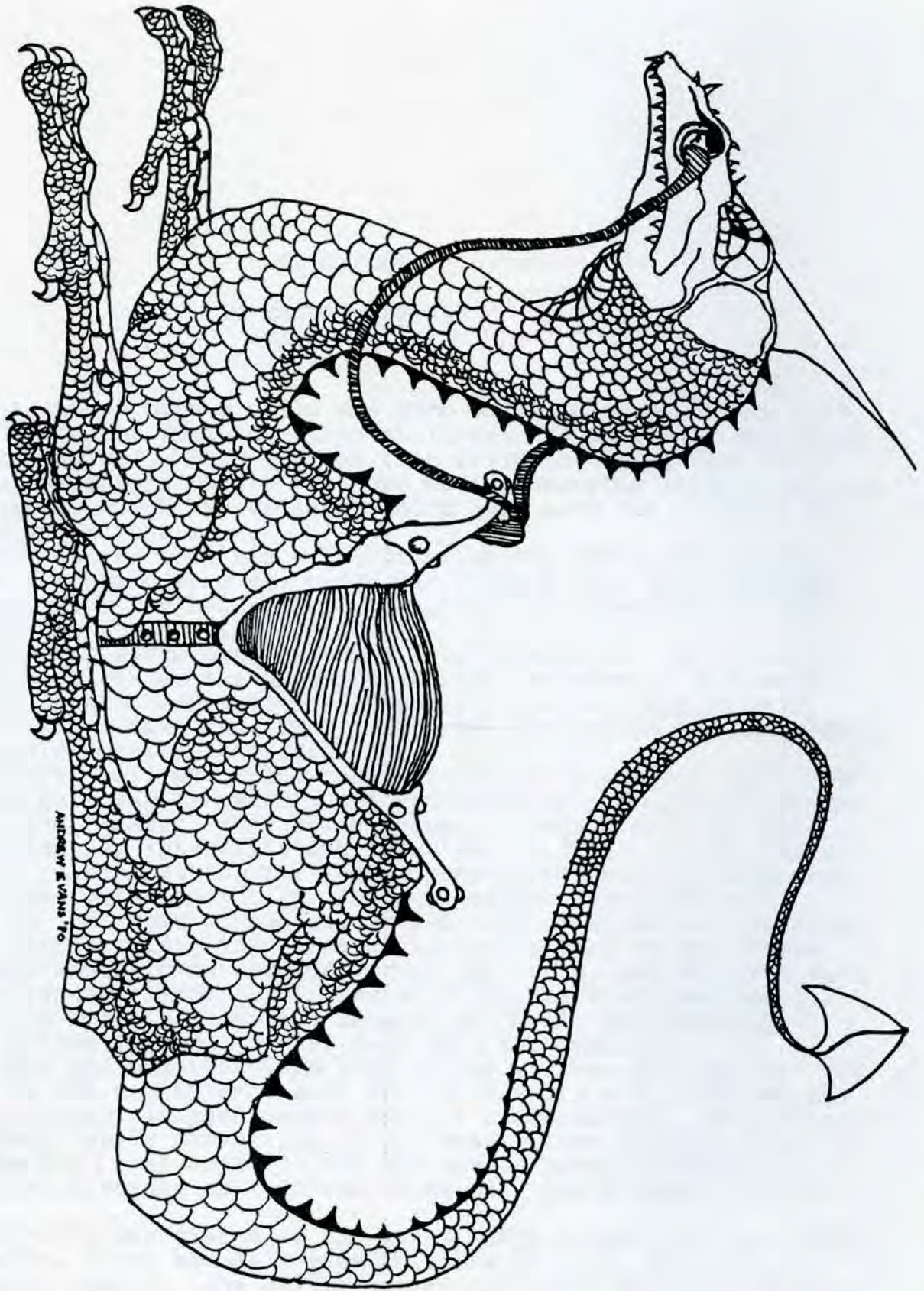
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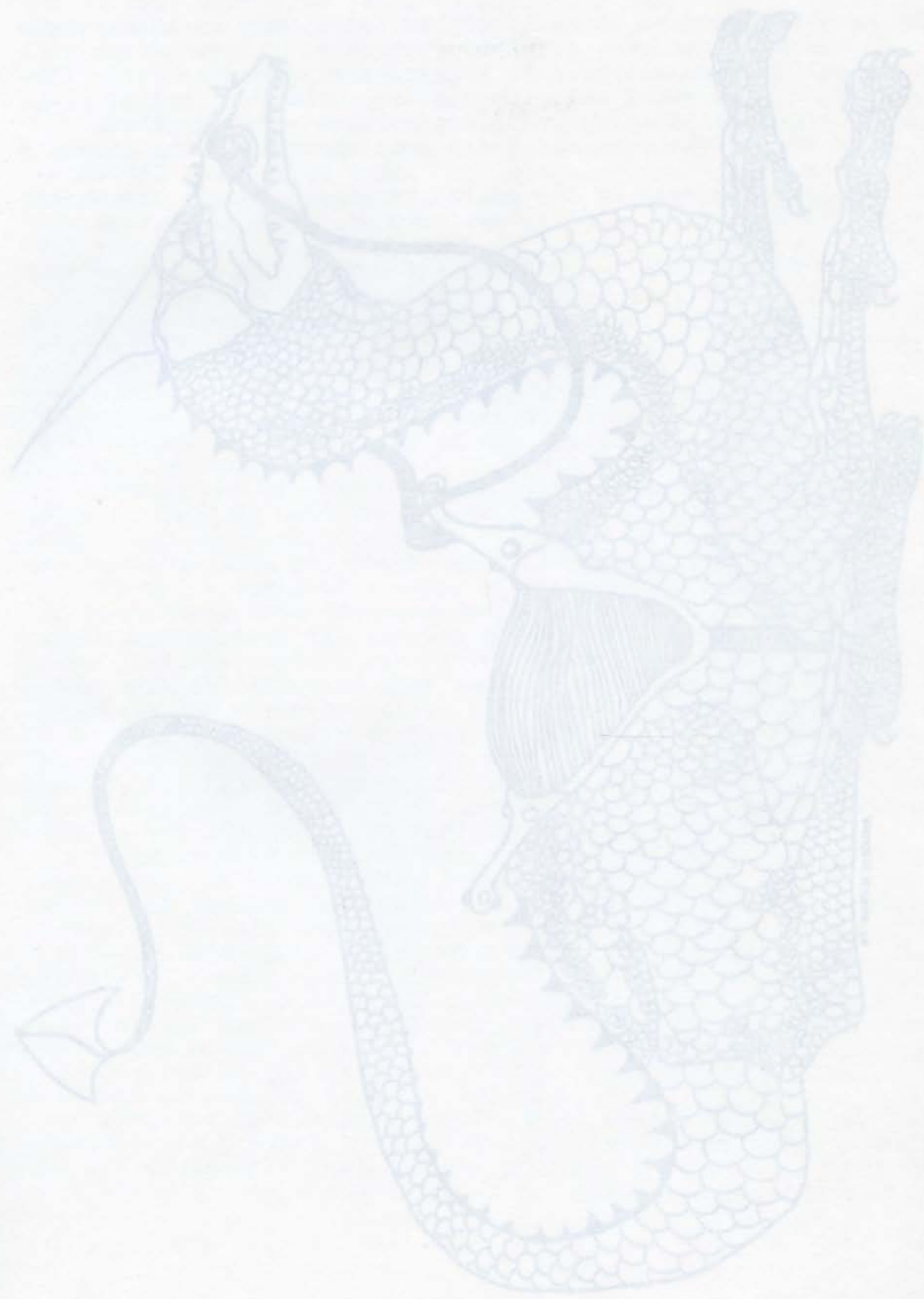
"I had a lot of fun..."  
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...the boy...  
...the man...

"I had a lot of fun..."  
...the woman...  
...the boy...  
...the man...

"I had a lot of fun..."  
...the woman...  
...the boy...  
...the man...







## COLTSFOOT

By Patrice Sarath

Once upon a time a child was born to a goatherd and his wife. She was different from the other children, who were dark and squat and coarse-haired. This one was fine featured with golden locks the color of autumn wheat. But the most remarkable thing about her was her eyes, which the village elders said were the color of the darkness around the moon.

The goatherd beat his wife, thinking the child was not his, and beat her again when she protested. After that the child was forgotten, save for her mother who nursed her occasionally, and then left her to herself.

She never spoke once or cried like infants do. Her eyes remained as blank as the distance between two stars. But sometimes her laugh was heard, a wild shriek or a whispery chuckle, eerie enough to make the young folk cross themselves and the elders make the sign against the evil eye.

She grew tall and thin, and thus Coltsfoot was her name, because her gait was as awkward and graceless as a pony still unused to its legs. Indeed, they often seemed to have a mind of their own, carting her into walls and trees and people. Yet off she'd go again, running for no particular reason, and only stopping when she collided with something. And she was forever climbing, whether to the roofs of houses, or the tops of haystacks, reaching forward with her long thin arms until she tumbled to the ground.

Still she said no word nor cried any tears, and her eyes were like the center of the sky. They said she was bewitched and let her be, and Coltsfoot ran and laughed and fell, her hair like tangled yellow flowers and her legs thin and awkward.

A Duke and his courtiers rode by the village one day, and the Bishop, in his magnificent garb astride a white mule, was among them. Coltsfoot laughed nearby and all heads turned. They shivered at her laugh while marvelling at her beauty, and the Duke said, "I will have her in my court." But the Bishop merely replied, "Nay, my Lord, such beauty as this can adorn only God's House." And so it was.

Coltsfoot was placed in the great stone church, by the Duke's grey castle, where she was dressed in robes of silk, embroidered, with costly jewels. She neither spoke nor cried but only laughed.

Yet her beauty was rumored far and wide, and people came from all over the land to wonder at her. Learned men pondered her silence-- save for her mirthless laughter and came to the conclusion that she must be made to speak.

"For of course God has weighed her tongue with all the splendour of Heaven," said one. "Of sorrow one can speak and weep, but she only laughs. Therefore, she must be the bearer of all Heaven's joy. To have such knowledge--" he sighed.

"She must be a saint!" exclaimed another.

"She must be made to talk," said the Bishop drily, "of all that she knows, that we may learn."

"But how?" said one again.

"A tournament," replied the Duke who sat quietly listening to the others. "If the splendour and pageantry of Heaven has bound her tongue, will not the splendour of Earth release it?" Thus it was decreed.

Knights came from all across the land to the tourney. The field burst with color and noise as trumpets blared and armor clashed. Coltsfoot sat enthroned upon the high dais, with the Bishop and the Duke at her side. No matter how hard they watched her, still she said no word, nor cried no tear, and her eyes were like the sun on a cloudy day.

And suddenly she laughed, jumped up, and ran. With her knockneed, flailing legs, she stumbled off the dais and toward the castle.

"A sign!" shouted the Bishop. The courtiers and the churchmen ran after her, fat monks and matrons, effete earls and knights of the field, all gasping and panting and clanking.

Into the castle she ran, with the others staggering feebly after her. She turned up the narrow tower steps.

"A sign!" bellowed the Bishop again, and the others took up the cry and the chase with renewed vigor, as they panted and perspired, and clambered and pushed and pulled at each other on the narrow winding stair, to be the first to witness the miracle. Some dropped out, but others fought bravely onward and upward.

Up Coltsfoot flew, up to the top of the tower, her awkward movements throwing her against the walls, and her laughter shrieking in the confined space. Then she was on the top of the tower in a blaze of sunlight and a rush of fresh air. She teetered on the edge of the turret, laughing, laughing, laughing. Not a word did she speak as the courtiers clustered about beneath her, faces upturned, waiting for the sign. Still laughing her harsh, whispery, shrieking laugh, she cupped the sunlight in her hands and leaned into the air. It was the most graceful movement of her life.

## AIRBORNE AT LAST

By Ferg Foley

The winds had reached thirty knots, stirring up gusts of sand and stray tumbleweed across the Normandy Drop Zone. It was overcast, a bad day for a jump considering the low visibility. Didn't really matter though since the plane would land here in fifteen minutes. The conditions on the Drop Zone didn't matter to me, after all, 240 jumps from Bi-planes to Jets. Jumping became second nature. Ever since I was a kid, parachuting was an obsession. When I was six years old, I made a make-shift parachute out of bedsheets and tried jumping from the window, but Dad caught me. Well, I got my chance eleven years later with the ARMY special forces, and have been jumping ever since.

I sat under a tree while waiting for the plane, listening to the NCO's bark orders as they checked their men for proper equipment. Of course the officers had gathered in a huddle, probably reminiscing about their days at West Point. Everyone else wandered around impatiently. I noticed one person walking around nervously. He noticed that I was sitting down taking it easy, so he approached me and asked how I was. The Private's name was Tom Melnyk, a new arrival to the platoon, a product of N.Y.C. This would be his first jump.

"Hey John, do you think we'll really jump today?" "Sure," I said, "If the plane ever gets here." Big Mel was always the tough kid from the city, who could chew rocks and do no wrong. Back at the base a few days ago, I heard Big Mel telling everyone how he managed to lose the cops in a car chase. This was only one of his minor heroics. Now and then he reminds us of his super-human drinking talents, guzzling a brew in record time.

Today was different. Big Mel still played the tough guy, but he did a lousy job doing it. Big Mel was scared.

His eyes were wide, responsive to every sound and motion. He tried to hide it but couldn't. I've seen lots of guys like this on their first jump. Melnyk was staring into the grey sky, hoping the plane would forget it's destination.

"Look here, Big Mel, sit down and take it easy. There's really nothing to jumping."

Big Mel just nodded, and agreed that I was right. At that point, there was the distinctive hum of an engine somewhere in the sky.

The tiny dot grew into the shape of an airplane, circling the drop zone like a vulture hunting its prey. Mel's eyes were fixed on the aircraft; I could hear him cursing under his breath.

We walked over to the truck to get our parachutes and pass number. We were Pass Two, which meant that when the plane took off a second time--we would be aboard.

"You know, Tom, that's your second pack of cigarettes since we've been here. Are you all right?"

Mel fumbled with his cigarette, and dropped the lighter. "No, I'm scared to death. I don't know what I'm doing here. When I signed up it seemed o.k. but now..." I interrupted him. "I'll tell you what we'll do--after the jump we'll go downtown and celebrate. How does that sound?"

Mel nodded affirmatively, and felt a little relaxed.

As the plane landed on the dirt runway, it sent dirt flying everywhere. Everybody sheilded their eyes cursing the Airforce pilots. It seems to land as close to us as possible to get everyone dirty. Mel burst out, "Jesus, look at the size of that plane! Hey, John, how do you know when to jump? I mean, will they tell you or do..." I smiled at him and said "Just follow me."

We watched the first pass disappear into the tail end of the plane. Once again the mighty propellers turned, and the engines roared until the wheels left the ground. The plane circled the drop zone, increasing altitude anddisappearing in and out of the clouds. It was searching for the green smoke, which is used to help the paratroopers know the wind direction. The aircraft flew overhead dotting the sky with green silk. Big Mel watched in utter amazement.

"It's beautiful!" he cried. "They look like leaves

falling from a tree."

Big Mel's tough city image melted away for a few moments. I said "See, it isn't that bad."

At this point, the paratroopers were executing their parachute landing falls and, at the same time trying to collapse their chutes so they wouldn't drag them across the ground.

"Mel, remember to release your 'chute when you land, or else you will become part of the real estate."

"Oh yeah, sure, I'll remember. Thanks."

Once again the big Iron bird had landed, and was waiting for its next prey, which happened to be us.

We filed into the craft, and sat down on the iron seats buckling ourselves in. The noise of the engines, when you're not used to it, is unbearable and sometimes frightening. I noticed that Mel was praying and fidgeting. The turbo engines whined and the plane started to move, it's speed, increasing, until finally we were off the ground.

I pointed to the back of the plane, which was wide open to show Mel where we would be jumping from. We could see the Drop Zone getting smaller and smaller until it blended into the rest of the landscape. The noise was so intense that the Jumpmaster had to use hand signals. The Veteran Jumpmaster leaned out of the airplane to see how much further we had to go. He beckoned us to stand up, and hook static lines. I looked out of the corner of my eye to see if Big Mel was doing it right. He was.

There are two lights by the door, red and green. Right now it was red, but any second it would turn green and we would be airborne. Mel was still frightened as he constantly checked his gear for defects. I looked out the door, waiting for that magic moment when I'd experience the same freedom an eagle feels flying against the sky. My thoughts ended quickly when the light by the door turned green. The pass shuffled to the door, and jumped out. At every jump I always have that little notion of my chute not opening, but I quickly disregard it or else it starts to build on you.

I was only a foot away from the door when Bit Mel, in a moment of nervousness, didn't see me, and accidentally pushed me out. It all happened so fast. The next thing I remember is the wind rushing around me, and my parachute being deflated

around my ankles. In desperation I tugged at my reserve chute only to realize that the handle had been ripped off when it got caught on the airplane's door. I figured that I had about ten seconds left until it was all over. The next thing I remember was a hand tugging my boot. It was Big Mel.

"Don't worry, John, I got you!" screamed Mel. I couldn't say anything, because I was too scared. I thought for sure that Melnyk's parachute also malfunctioned, but it turned out that he purposely jumped without the static line so he could reach me.

Big Mel pulled the handle of his reserve as we clung on to each other. The inflated chute temporarily pulled us up, and then we floated down for the remaining five hundred feet. "Jesus, Mel, I don't believe it. You saved me. I thought it was over."

"It's my fault, you know. I pushed you, and I wasn't going to live with your death on my conscience." Big Mel smiled and I couldn't help laughing. His fear of jumping was erased by the preoccupation of saving me.

The ground was gaining on us fast. We tried to land the best we could, missing a clump of trees by a few yards. We both landed on our butts, but at least we didn't break any bones. Big Mel quickly got up, and packed the chute. I remained seated. "What's wrong there, Johnny? You look a little shaken up. Want me to call a medic for you?"

"No thanks. Come over here and sit down for a minute," I requested.

Big Mel brushed the sand off his fatigues and sat down.

"I don't know what to say Mel. I really want to thank you for risking your life to save me. That's pretty dangerous--jumping like that, and depending only on a reserve."

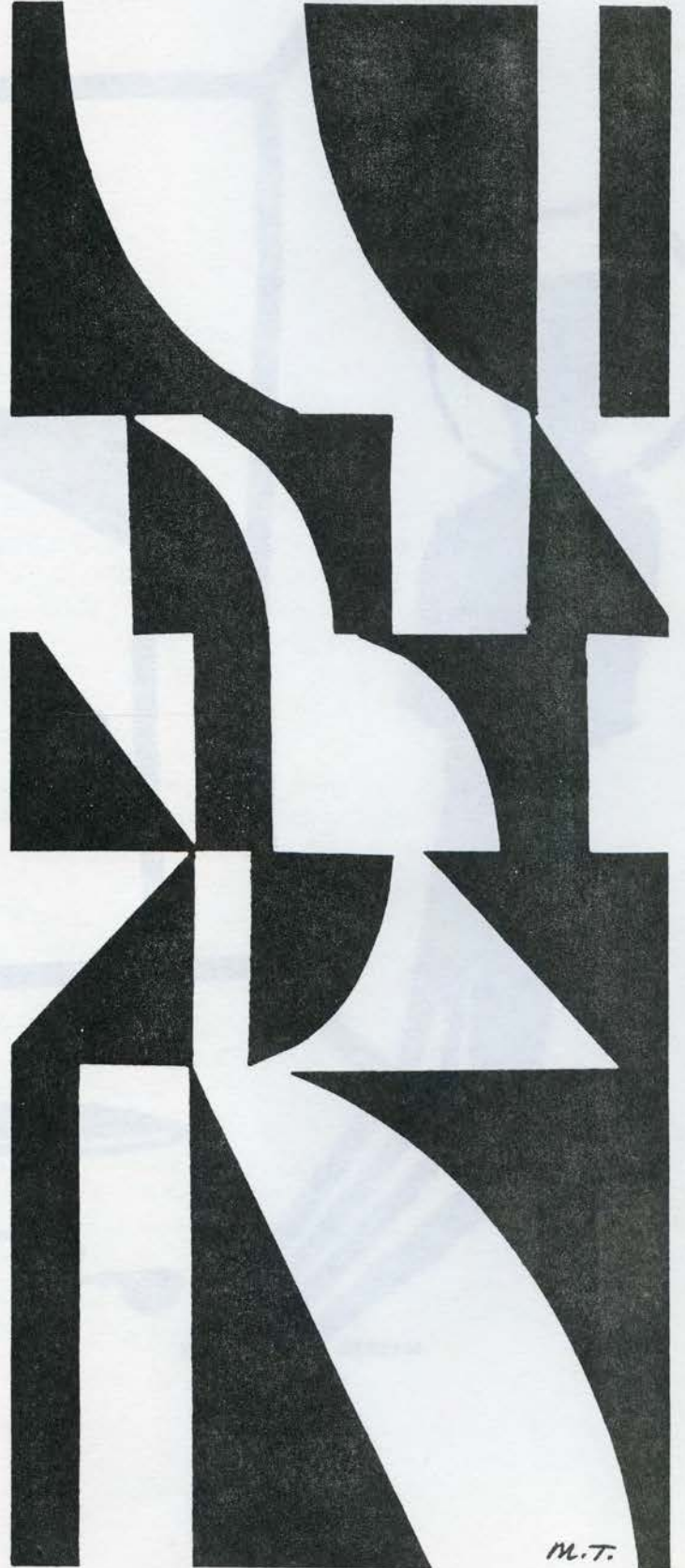
Mel responded, "Yeah, I know, but I've seen them do it on TV so I figured why not?"

I just shook my head in disbelief. This guy was so nervous he couldn't walk, and then he pulls an act of courage that the most experienced paratrooper wouldn't dare execute.

"You know, John, you're right. There's nothing to this jumping business," he said with his distinctive NYC accent.



We both paused for a moment as the shock of the whole nightmare wore off. Up above, another pass was being dropped to the earth causing Big Mel to be a proud spectator. I stood up, and put my hand on his shoulder. "Mel, let's go downtown. I think I owe you a couple." Big Mel just grinned and murmured "Airborne."



The first cause for a moment of reflection was the  
nightmare which off and on appeared in her  
the first morning Big Mike had been  
-stood up and put my hand on his shoulder. "What's  
down?" I think I was a couple of days  
and murmured "Albino".

"Albino? I let her see that I was  
and she thought I was a  
the night I had, and I  
time as we will have the

no doubt as to whether it  
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"I know I was never  
"Big Mike" said  
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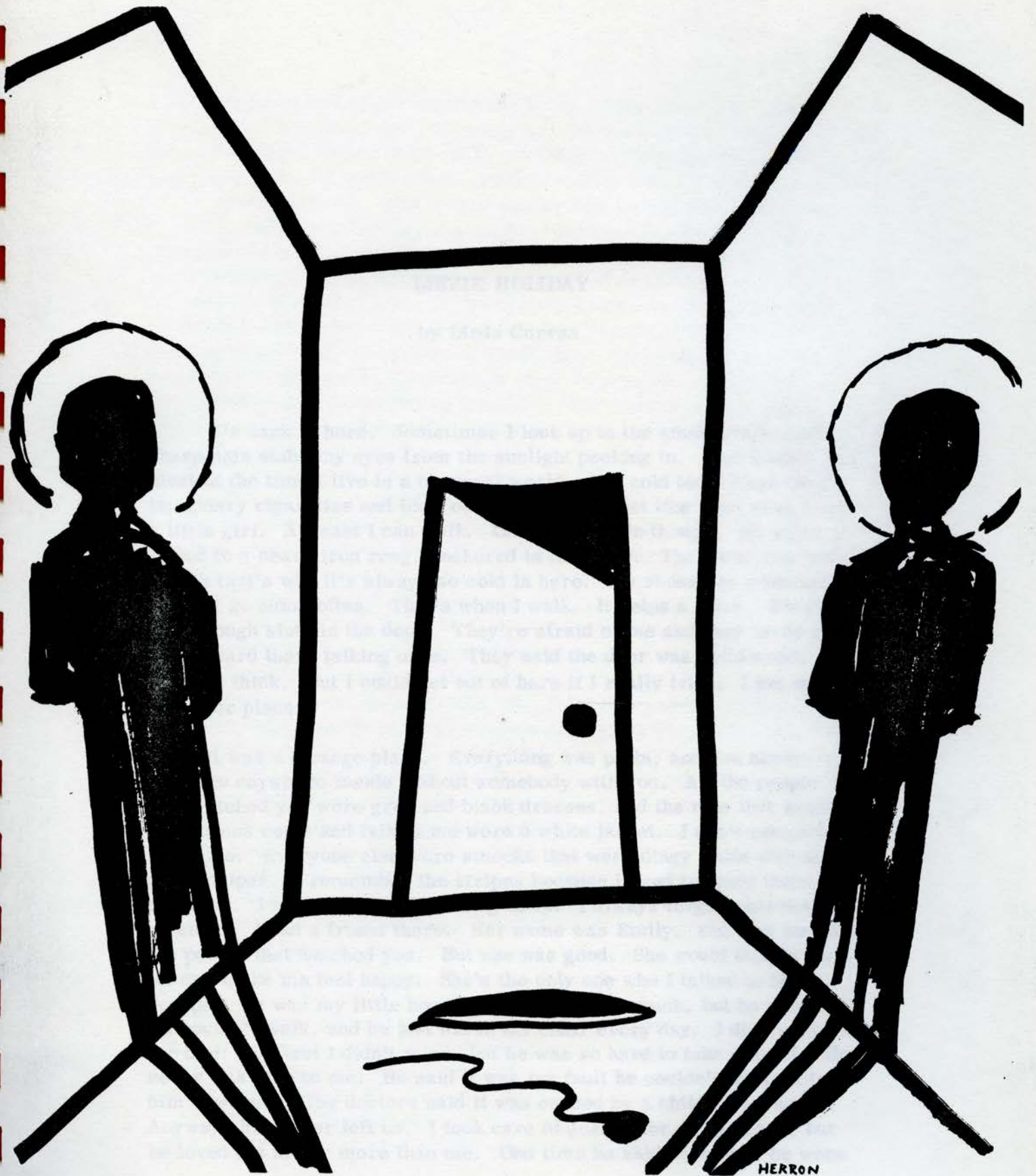
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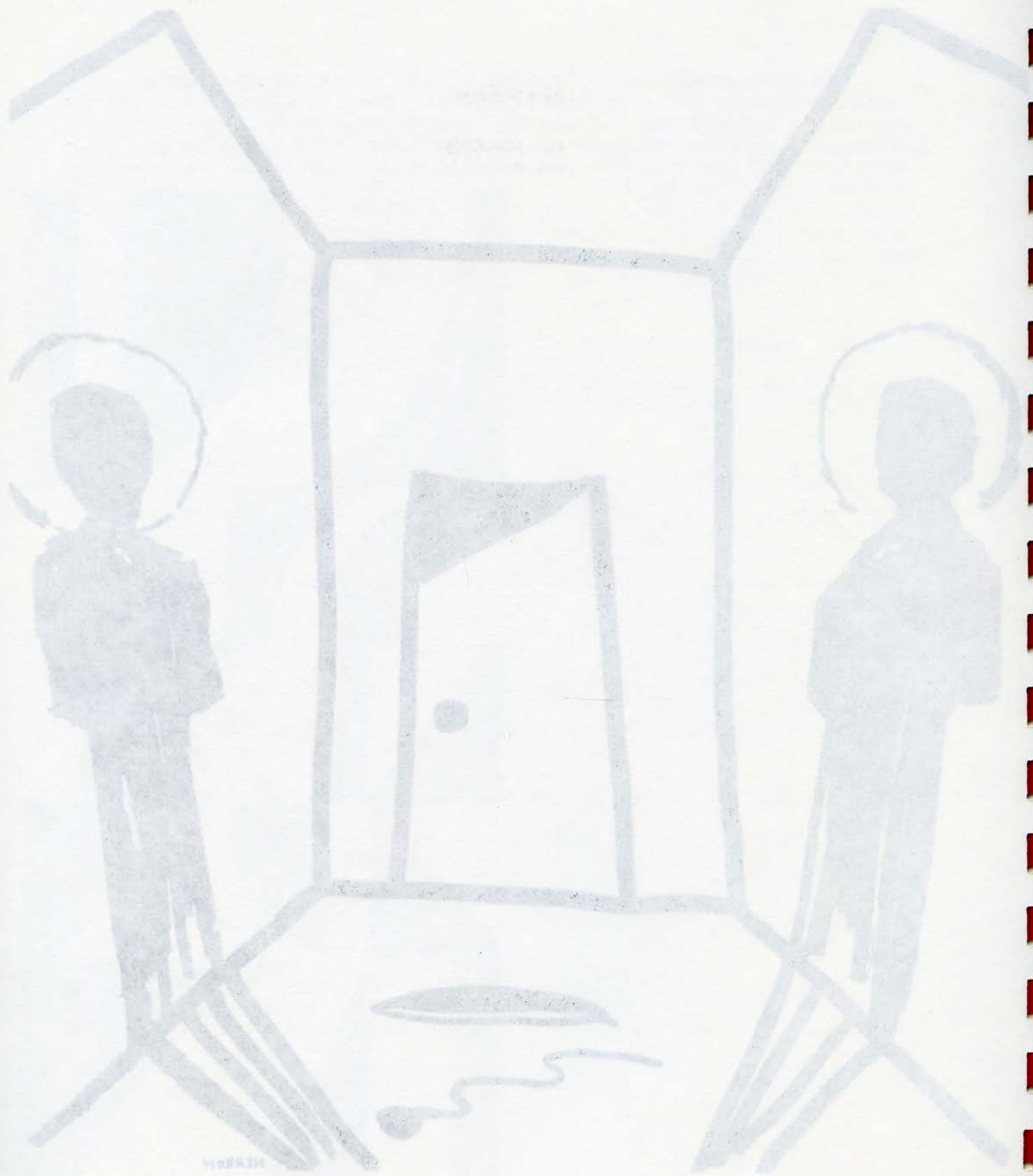
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WINTER HOLIDAY

by Linda Connor

HERRON



HERB

LIZZIE HOLIDAY

by Linda Curran

It's dark in here. Sometimes I look up to the small grate, and a sharp pain stabs my eyes from the sunlight peeking in. Just a little sun. Most of the time I live in a charcoal world. It's cold too. I can smoke imaginary cigarettes and blow out white puffs, just like I did when I was a little girl. At least I can walk. Only in a circle though. My chain is linked to a heavy iron rung, anchored in the floor. The walls are stone. I think that's why it's always so cold in here. My shoes are worn and my feet go numb often. That's when I walk. It helps a little. They feed me through slots in the door. They're afraid of me and they never open it. I heard them talking once. They said the door was solid wood, about two feet thick. But I could get out of here if I really tried. I got out of the other place.

It was a strange place. Everything was plain, and you never could go anywhere inside without somebody with you. All the people that watched you wore grey and black dresses, and the man that would sometimes come and talk to me wore a white jacket. I don't remember his name. Everyone else wore smocks that were dingy white with small grey stripes. I remember the stripes because I used to count them on my shirt. I never finished counting them. I always forgot what number I was on. I had a friend there. Her name was Emily. She was one of the people that watched you. But she was good. She would talk to me a lot and make me feel happy. She's the only one who I talked to about Joseph. He was my little boy. I loved him very much, but he was bad. He couldn't walk, and he just sat in his chair every day. I did everything for him. At first I didn't mind, but he was so hard to take care of. He never was nice to me. He said it was my fault he couldn't walk. I told him it wasn't. The doctors said it was caused by a childhood disease. Anyway, his father left us. I took care of Joseph for many years, but he loved his father more than me. One time he said he wished he were

dead. I asked him if he meant it and he assured me he had no good reason to live. I tried to tell him he was wrong but he just yelled at me. Then the fire happened. He died. The house burned till nothing was left but ashes. I thought he was happy then. After all, that's what he wanted, and I loved him enough to free him. But they came and took me to Emily. They said I had done a bad thing, but they were wrong. He had wanted to die. Anyway, I stayed with Emily for a long time. She told me I was in Matteawan, an "institution" for people who had done terrible things. She said it wasn't my fault, that some part of my mind had malfunctioned, and that's what made me different than other people. But she said I could be good again, and she would help me. I trusted her. So I stayed there a long time. Then they told me I could leave. They said I was like normal people again, but I knew I had been normal all along, they just hadn't believed me.

I missed Emily when I went away. But then I married Jack. He was very good to me and I cared about him as much as I cared for Emily. We had nice things. A beautiful home, expensive clothes, and Jack bought me a house in the country. We even hired a Housekeeper. Her name was Ema. She had a pretty daughter called Sarah. Everything was perfect for a while. Then Jack started liking Sarah. I told him I knew he had affection for her, but he said he only loved her like he would his own daughter. He lied. They would spend long hours talking and laughing together. That hurt me, so I put an end to it. I punished them all for their cruelty. First I invited them to visit me at my country-house. I told Ema to bring Sarah and stay for a weekend. They came of course. They trusted me like I had once trusted them. I cooked a delicious dinner for them. Jack hadn't arrived yet because he was finishing his business in town. I waited. We talked and played some parlor games till it grew late and they retired for the night. I waited. After a few hours I crept into their bedchamber and covered their faces with chloroform-soaked rags. It had a pleasant smell, and I wanted to make sure they didn't wake up. Then I took a gun and shot them each with eight or nine bullets. They left this world together. It took most of the night to move their bodies out into the woods, where I buried them.

Early the next day Jack arrived. I waited for him upstairs. He called out but got no answer. He ascended the stairs, and went into our bedchamber first. I waited. He walked the length of the creaking floor to the guest-room. Once inside he saw the bed riddled with holes and bloodsoaked. He turned, gagging, and stumbled towards the door. That's when I struck him, nearly severing his head from his neck. When

I had finished I felt good. They had paid for mistreating me. I had loved them all but they proved unworthy. I placed the remains of Jack beneath the floorboards in the parlor. Then I cleaned up the mess they had made.

I stayed in the country for weeks, but then the men came again. They asked me lots of questions but I told them that Ema and Sarah had been dismissed and had gone away. As for Jack, why, he was away at the moment on a business trip. Everything would have been fine if they had believed me and left. But they started searching. They found Ema and Sarah first. By that time they had decayed somewhat, and it was hard to tell who they were. But they knew, and kept looking for Jack. Perhaps they never would have found him, but the stench in the parlor was beginning to grow strong. They took me back to Emily. I was happy again, and I decided that was where I wanted to stay. Emily was very mad, but eventually I got her to talk to me. She said I had disappointed her. That I should have come and seen her when I was suffering from my anxieties. I explained to her I was quite capable of taking care of my own matters. I couldn't make her understand that I had merely corrected a wrong they had done. Emily and I spent much time together, and she agreed that I should stay at that place with her.

But she lied too. One day she told me she had to go work at a different place. She said she was sorry but it wasn't her decision. I didn't believe her! She just wanted to hurt me like all the others. So I knew what I had to do. First I pretended I was sick. Very sick. It worked, and they took me to the infirmary. I told them I wanted to see Emily; I had to see her. I told them if I didn't see her, I never would get better. When the doctor left me to call someone, I took a pair of scissors. I waited. Finally, Emily came. She said nice things to me, and told me I would be fine after she left. But I grew angry and told her how wrong it was of her to leave me there alone. She didn't listen and I lost my temper. She came closer to comfort me, and I lunged at her, burying the scissors deep in her chest. She opened her mouth to scream but it came out a choked gurgle. I stabbed again, and again, and again. Dear Emily fell to the floor, the scissors following her down ready to strike. But someone grabbed my arm. Then I heard the screaming. It was loud. My ears rang and I wanted to be far away from there. I shut my eyes tight and started humming, but the screaming didn't stop. Please, please! Stop screaming! My head, my head hurts!

I don't remember much after that. They took me away from Emily and now I'm here. I miss Emily. I regret that I punished her. But I had to. She was wrong. It wasn't my fault, it really wasn't. My feet are numb again, so I'm going to walk now. Around, and around, and around. They should let me go home soon, because it really wasn't my fault. They said I'll be here for the rest of my life. But I won't. If I want to I can get out. They'll see, and they'll be sorry.



## THE CAT'S MEOW

by Dianne Kelleher

No, I'm not messing around with Jim any more, and I'll tell you why.

It all happened last Sunday. I woke up around dawn and heard someone out in the back alley calling me. It was Jim's cousin Bob, the one who's in the paratroops, so I went around and opened the door for him.

"Bonnie, could you do me a big favor?" I told him sure. "Last night Jim wanted to borrow my car and said he'd bring it back by midnight. He's still not here and I'm getting worried -- I've got to be back to Fort Bragg by tomorrow morning at six and I'd like some sleep before Monday. He said he was going over to Alton. Would you mind going over and seeing if he's at his wife's? I wouldn't ask but I really need my car back."

I've probably never told you about Bob. He was always pleasant enough, but awfully quiet when I used to see him with Jim. He'd just sit back and watch everybody else. But he was well-mannered and I knew he wouldn't ask me to go if he hadn't been in a bind, so I asked him for directions.

"Sue lives to the north of Alton, on the river road. You pass a 7-11 on the river side and turn down the road to the right of it, and right away you come to her trailer."

I asked him if he wanted any breakfast but he was going home to sleep some more, so I threw on my clothes and got my purse and the screwdriver and the distributor rotor and went out to put my car together. The second week after I'd moved to the city from Poplar Bluff, some idiot broke the vent window on the driver's side and took out the lock assembly. I still don't know if I surprised the thief in the process of stealing it or if he just got a better look at the shape it's in and decided it wasn't worth it, but anyway now I've got to start the car with a screwdriver; and since I can't lock

it, I take out the rotor when I leave so if anybody gets any smart ideas again they at least won't get very far in it. I've been saving a hundred dollars every two weeks out of my paycheck towards a new car, except last week, when I loaned that hundred to Jim to pay his bills.

Jim had been acting pretty funny lately. He hadn't been by as often as before. Remember when I told you how he said, "I think I love you, but I've got to have some time off by myself to make sure"? I figured I was in the home stretch with him and we'd be getting married any day, and didn't even worry very much when he got fired for not coming in to work. He told me the man who runs the shop fires him every so often, he just has a short fuse and you've got to humor him and then he'll call you back in a week or so.

I didn't wake up completely until I'd crossed the river, and then I started worrying about barging in on Sue and Jim. Just what would he be doing over there all night, anyway? I could see that he might have spent the evening with her, since he'd want to get their divorce lined up before we could get married. Of course, maybe they'd had a few drinks for old time's sake and he thought it would be better to sleep over and not take a chance in Bob's car.

Jim told me she drank a lot. That was why he'd left her not too long after she had Tina, about ten years ago. They'd never gotten divorced because there really wasn't any reason to -- not until now -- to spend all that money for lawyers and court fees. As Jim used to say, he'd rather take that money and spend it on his daughter. It made sense to me at the time.

I passed the 7-11 and turned down the dirt road. What I saw in front of me was everything I had left Poplar Bluff to steer clear of. A beat-up trailer was set across a dirt yard from the road, which ended there with a rusting car up on cinder blocks. Toys with paper labels peeling off them were strewn around in the dust near the door. There was no other car in running condition there that I could see. No wonder Jim had left a mess like this.

From what I could see of Sue she was no prize either. She had her back to me and was pulling half-frozen laundry off the line. Her jeans were all bagged-out in the seat and her hair hung in thin limp rattails across her shoulders.

"Susan Bowman? Would you know where Jim is? His cousin Bob lent him his car and was expecting it back last evening." She must have

been wondering how I came to be there. "Bob thought Jim might be here and asked if I could come by and check. He's got to be back to Fort Bragg by tomorrow morning." Her teeth looked terrible.

"I haven't seen Jim at all lately. Sorry." She looked over my car and must have noticed the license. "Did you drive all the way over here from St. Louis already this morning?"

When I told her I had, she asked me if I'd like a cup of coffee before I drove back. I was starting up the wooden stairs when something, which I took at first to be a rabbit, leapt out and ran across the dirt.

"You have rabbits out here?"

"No, that's No-tail the cat, she's got her kittens under those steps. She ran wild and I only saw her around sometimes but when she had babies she brought them here and put them under the steps. See?" She put her laundry down and pulled out two kittens, squeaking and squirming around in her hands. No-tail ran back out from under the car and watched. They were both gray like their mother, but fat and fluffy. Their eyes were clear. "She only had the two. Would you like one?"

I told her sure. A cat would be some company while I was waiting to get married and have children of my own. Sue seemed to warm up toward me a little, the way people do if you'll take kittens off their hands.

I was surprised at the inside of the trailer. I had expected stacks of gummy dishes in the sink and everything smelling of stale beer. The kitchen floor was clean and waxed. I was watching for liquor bottles when Sue opened and closed cupboards and the refrigerator to get cups and sugar and milk, but I didn't see any.

Sue turned on the oven, opened the door and put her frying pan upside down on the top of the stove with the handle hanging over the front. Then she sorted through the stack of laundry, picked out some little socks, boy's undershorts and a T-shirt and laid them across the pan handle. "They don't get the dampness out now that it's freezing. I don't know where to send you if you're looking for Jim. I thought he was staying in St. Louis now. Hey, watch this."

No-tail was pawing at the door. Sue went out and put a bowl of food down for her, which the cat nibbled at. "Now watch." We stood inside the door and waited. When No-tail was done and washing her ears, a big shaggy tom ambled out of the brush and hogged the leftovers, then stretched out in the sun and slept, ignoring the kittens that hopped on him and tried to catch his tail.

Sue took the dried clothes off the pan handle. "How many children do you have?" I asked her.

"Three. Tina's ten now, Sandy's eight and Jimmy's five. Here's your coffee. I'm not having any with you now because I just got off work and want to rest soon."

"Sure . . . how do you get there, if your car's being fixed?"

"Oh, it's just up there at the 7-11. I work three nights a week and if anybody's out. When we moved here Jim got the job with the trailer, and after he left, the manager let me stay on. I used to fill in a lot before that anyway, when Jim wasn't around. So I don't need a babysitter or a car, really, and we don't have many expenses unless somebody gets sick. Once Jimmy's in school I may look for a day job so we can get out of here."

"Doesn't Jim help you out at all? Not that it's my business. Sorry."

"I'm sorry too. No he doesn't and he never has. I tried once to get a court order to garnishee his wages but he has his boss pay him just a small check and the rest in cash so I can't touch it. I guess I should just be glad I don't have to support him and the kids. I really shouldn't have married him. I just did it to help him out."

"How's that?" This certainly wasn't the way I'd heard it.

"Well, my father took him to court for child support for Tina, and Jim found out he'd get a bigger allotment from the Navy (he was in the service then) if he had a wife and baby so he figured he might as well get married. Sure didn't change him any, though, no more than it would that cat out in the yard."

By now the kids were up and slamming around. I was getting ready to stand up and rinse out my cup and leave when another car pulled in behind mine. A thin girl with her hair in curlers came flying up the stairs, snapping the screen door behind her. She looked at me and slowed up a little.

"C'mere, Sue, something's happened, come on outside a minute."

I guessed I wasn't supposed to hear. However, you know how those trailer doors and windows shrink away from their frames after a few years. The girl talked away, low and fast, and then Sue said "WHAT!" and they both let their voices get up louder. I could hear "Jim this" and "Jim that"

and got so worried I didn't care any more if it was rude, but opened the door and asked just what was going on.

"She may as well hear this now," Sue said. She looked even tireder than before. "I'm going to get the kids' breakfast and then lay down. You can have whatever kitten you choose. Bonnie, this here's my sister Charleen. Jim's cousin sent over Bonnie to find Jim and get his car back."

Charleen probably guessed there was more to it than that. She looked at me real closely. "Well! Jim's in jail."

"WHAT!" Now it was my turn.

"That's right. Assault, and drunk and disorderly. He was beating up on his girl friend's mother, and her other daughter called the police."

Sue called out from the kitchen. "Which of those Roberts girls was it, Char? LuAnn?"

"Oh no, it was that Lisa Ann, the one with the black hair down to her waist." To me she said, "You see, he was trying to move his clothes and things in, to move in with her. He's been buying Lisa Ann all these presents, her mother told me -- just last week he got her one of those rabbit-fur jackets. I've seen them all over. You can't get one anywhere for less than sixty-eight dollars."

"It couldn't have been Lisa Ann," Sue called out. "She's only fourteen or so. Why would he want to move in with her family and all?"

"She's sixteen now, Susie. See, her mother remarried and they moved real far out, so she was staying in town with her next-oldest sister (that's LuAnn) to finish high school. Her mother says Lisa Ann told her she met Jim out dancing in September. He gave her some phony name, and of course she's too young to have remembered him from around here. Well, anyway, last night he drove up and started unloading stuff and LuAnn told Lisa he couldn't stay. She started crying and Jim started yelling, so LuAnn left the house and called her mother. She tore up there and her and LuAnn went back in. 'You can't tell ME what to do!' Jim says to her, 'or Lisa Ann either!' Maybe he didn't know just how old she was. So LuAnn and her mother started pitching his suitcase and shoes and coat out the window, and he pulled her back and punched her, and LuAnn called the police."

"Hmmp!" I said. And then, thinking fast: "Where's LuAnn's place? Could be his cousin's car is still over there."

"It's on Van Buren, the north side of the street. It's the second house after you cross over Thorne." And Charleen turned away and headed for her car.

I went back inside to get my coat and pocketbook. Sue was gone, in bed already I guessed, and the kids were finishing their cereal. Tina and the little boy took after their mother, but the middle girl looked like Jim. I asked Tina, who was clearing away the milk carton and cereal boxes and who looked like she might have some sense, if I could borrow some shears. "I'll be back in a half hour to get the kitten, and I'll leave them off then," I told her. She poked through some drawers and cabinets, found them, and turned them over to me. I tried them out. They were crisp-feeling and not the least bit loose.

"They're my mother's best pair," Tina said, "so be sure to give them straight to me so they don't get ruined." I smiled at her, and she smiled back. I knew just what she meant. That other little girl, I wouldn't give you a dime for her, she was smacking and slobbering around in her food something awful. And of course the boy was twitching up and down, running his cars around the salt and pepper shaker and talking up a blue streak. However could Sue sleep? It was a shame about her teeth.

I drove out of the yard, being careful not to hit any cats, and asked directions to Van Buren at the first gas station I came to. It was all the way in town. I parked on the south side of the street where I could watch the house door, and settled in to wait.

It wasn't long before, sure enough, out comes what had to be Lisa Ann, wearing that foolish rabbit-fur jacket and wobbling around on a pair of high heels, heading towards town. What a sight! Jim should have given her a trick-or-treat sack while he was at it.

It was no trouble catching up with her. Between those shoes and the jeans she was wearing, she could scarcely move. I put my hand on her shoulder when she was a block from the house, and turned her around. "Lisa Ann Roberts, aren't you?"

She said "Yes" before she had a good look at me. When she noticed the shears in my hand, her eyes bugged out and her chin went back till she really did look like a rabbit. I tightened up my hold on her arm. Under the jacket, which she hadn't zipped up, I could see she was built real skimpy. Of course, I was pretty small at her age, but I've filled out a lot since then. She was just a child and her mother ought to get her back home and sit on her a little.

"See here, Lisa Ann," I said, tapping the front of her jacket with the shears, "you're swimming out of your depth messing with Jim Bowman." Her chin started quivering. "That's his real name, you know." She nodded, still staring at the shears. "Furthermore, he's twenty-nine years old and married. And he has three kids. And I'm his girl friend -- or I was till I found all this out." I stopped. I hadn't really thought about that, till I said it. Did I want to bother with Jim any more? And if not, why was I here ranting at his little high-school honey?

She was crying and shivering. "Zip up your coat. I was going to cut the fur off your jacket and hack up your hair, but I can see now there's no sense in doing that. I'm not going to harm you. But just to show you I'm not lying I want you to come along with me and see how that jackass lets his family live. Look, I'll put these shears away."

I went to put the scissors back in my coat pocket but there wasn't room, which made me mad all over again. I had a pair of knee socks stuffed in there, and I pulled them out and waggged them in Lisa Ann's shiny little face. "Do you call this fair?" I shouted at her. "Do you?" She looked at me like now she thought I had gone crazy.

"Look, Lisa Ann. I don't have any gloves to wear when it's cold out, and so I use these knee socks. I double them over if it's really cold. There's a lot of stuff I need, but instead of saving my money for myself I loaned it to Jim because he was out of work and wanted to pay his bills. That's what he told me last week. It turns out that's a lie. And what did he do with my money? He bought you that silly coat, that's what. Is that fair?"

Lisa looked at me funny again when she watched me start up my car with the screwdriver, but she didn't say a word all the way out to Sue's place. When we pulled up I could see her taking it all in, the car on blocks, the dirt yard, the two kids playing in the dust. I had her stay in the car while I returned the shears to Tina so she wouldn't see how much nicer it was inside the trailer. That wasn't Jim's doing, anyway. I picked out the scrappiest of the kittens -- a male with double paws in front -- and waved good-bye to Tina. Then I drove Lisa Ann back to Van Buren. She was no company at all and I was tired of explaining things to her.

On the way home I stopped to get some cat food and a litter box and a can of pingpong balls, and was scarcely in the door when Bob was calling outside again. I'd forgotten about his car.

"Bonnie, Jim's in jail!"

"Really? Whatever happened?"

"He had somebody call me and let me know" (who? I wondered. Somebody else I don't know about?) "and they brought back my car. He wanted me to ask you if you could help out on his bail. I don't know what he's in for, some fight or something."

"Well, I know what he's in for. And I'm saving my money to buy him an asbestos-lined rabbit suit to wear in hell." I slammed the window down.

After I had gotten the kitten's things lined out, I went hunting through the basement till I found what I was looking for, a mop handle. I put it inside my coat, got three pingpong balls and slipped them in my purse, and walked over to where Jim kept his car in the parking lot behind the Ontario store.

There was no one in sight near Jim's car when I got there, but to cover myself I pretended to drop my purse. I bent down, pulling out the mop handle on the way, and took the pingpong balls and rammed them up the tailpipe. I've heard this will wreck a car as well as sugar in the gas tank, but isn't detectable the way sugar is.

Back home, I put the mop handle back where I'd found it. I felt considerably better now. However, I still had a lot of energy left over, so I decided to go bowling. It was still just early afternoon and I had plenty of time to fix a meal and get ready to go out.

The dishes were washed up and I was taking the last curlers out of my hair when I heard Bob at the window again.

"Oh Bonnie? . . . could I come in a minute?"

He was already in his uniform and would have to get going if he planned on being back on post by Monday morning. He stood around by the door after I'd let him in.

"Uh, Bonnie, Jim's out on bail, and staying in Illinois. He called me up and I told him what you said . . . he's real mad at you. I thought maybe I should let you know that he's threatening to stomp your teeth out."

"He can come ahead and try. I have a twenty-two by my bed and a knife in my purse. You might tell him it'd be easier to pick me off at a distance than to try hitting me like he did his babydoll's mother."



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Bob looked more embarrassed yet. "I don't intend to talk to him again. I've got to get back tonight. You know, I don't care for what he's done, even if he is my cousin. And I don't like the way he lied to you and all, Bonnie." He looked around at the walls.

"You sure you don't want some coffee or anything before you go?"

"Oh, no, I just stopped by on my way out of town -- I think you're real nice, Bonnie. Even if Jim's my cousin, do you think you'd care to write to me? And if I came back to St. Louis, maybe we could see each other? I'll fix your car, too. I don't think any less of you because you, ah, liked Jim. You couldn't have known about him till you met Sue."

I had a sudden suspicion, but Bob wasn't looking at me.

"What do you say? I've got my address all written down here."

He pulled a piece of paper out of his pocket.

I told him sure. I mailed a letter to him Tuesday.

Just before I woke up this morning I dreamed Jim was sitting at the foot of my bed, laughing and talking and tying up his shoes. And when I sat up, and saw that he wasn't there, I actually started crying before I realized what I was doing. That's all over now. And if you'll excuse me, I'll go check the mail.



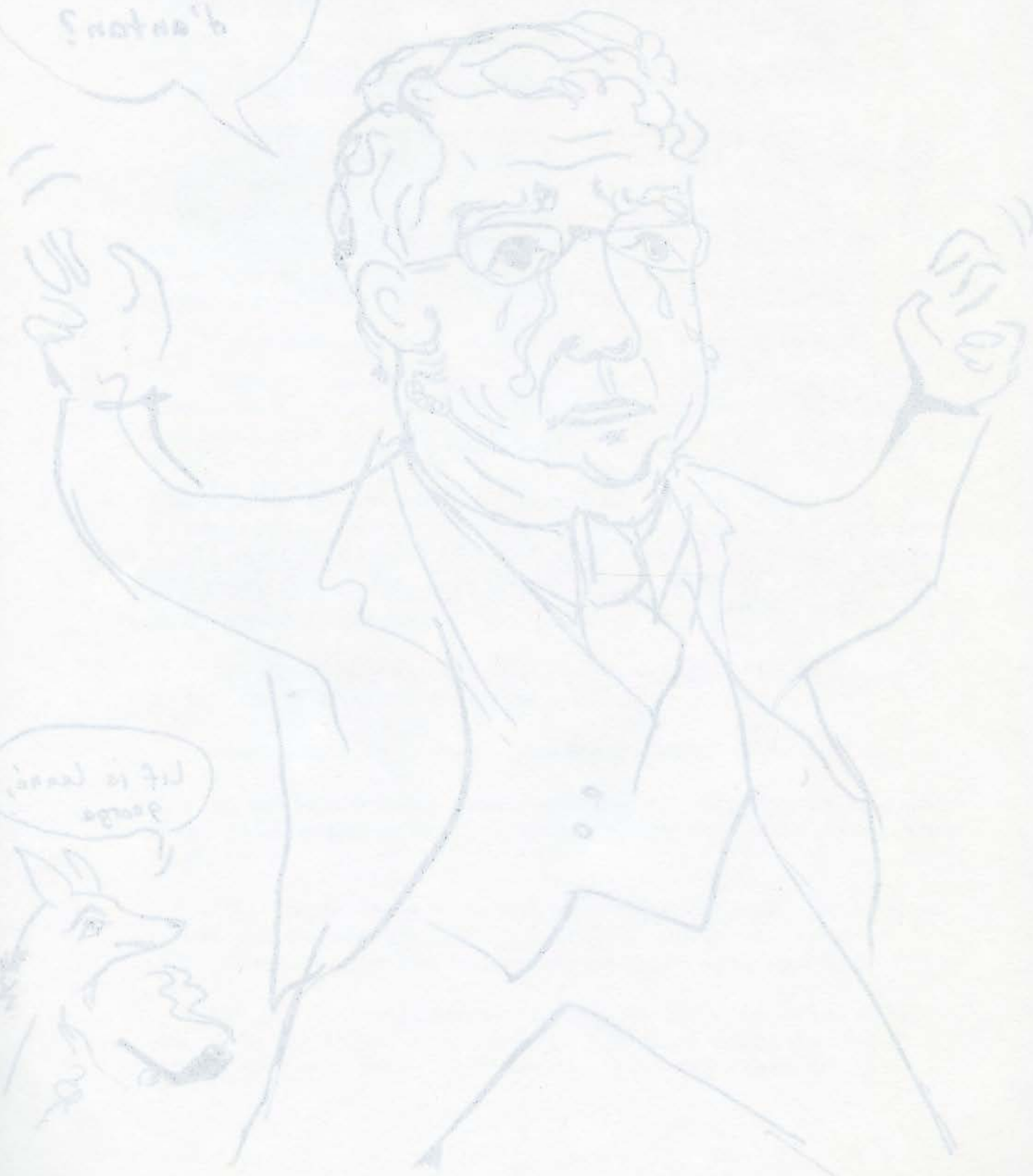
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On sont  
les étudiants  
d'antan?



It is better,  
George

books in order to think...

a man of books thinks;

And if he does not have any books,

then he will imagine that he has books

in order to think;

but if he has books

And does not think,

then those books do not belong to him...

Francisco Sanchez

The Lord of the Wood

That heavy smell is in the woods again,  
Those heavy-footed things with their  
    metallic sounds  
    and glint; sometimes a smell  
    like burning leaves.

Could it be that time again, so soon?  
I should be deep in the thickets today  
But the moon was dark last night,

    I couldn't see.

And Now I want ripe apples, clover, grain  
Hunger for the rut; a tender she--

I paw the earth and scrape my antlers clean  
    (How many times have I done this?)

Against a slender maple tree.

Hell with these rustling, racket-making  
    things;

Today's a good day for the rut,  
Hah! It's a good day to die.

by Bill Herron







He made himself.

He drew a circle out of nowhere;

And out of that circle

he made many other circles;

And out of those many other circles

he made light.

There was too much light,

And out of too much light

he made much darkness;

And out of much darkness

he made much fear;

And out of much fear

he made God;

And out of God

he made himself.

by Francisco Sanchez

The virtuous sun

is mirrored in fragments  
On the cold river  
late in november.

It peers through the cloudbank  
(tightwoven, angelhair)  
over stern buildings  
and slumbering mountains.

Virginia Mades

Autumn Lands

Fierce winds throw leaves  
forming a puzzle of scarlet,  
gold, glittering brown.  
Here we are near hills,  
both vital and vulnerable.

Virginia Mades

"in quest"

beyond suburbia  
clouds drift by  
silently perform-  
ing drama; magic  
in the sky

belies sudden shift-  
s of structure and  
Form; a cat gives  
birth to an apple  
emphatically

employing soliloquy.  
The winged horse is  
become Daedalus;  
away stealing  
gifts of the gods

Prometheus bound-  
s with no feet  
upon the ground;  
Shapes do not tire  
of their hands

on fire, lift-  
ing mankind above  
the pyre; Ah! but  
wait and see  
Suddenly

a cloud is  
torn from root  
Magically  
led onward like  
the piper and the flute.

"un-Belief"

We do not believe  
in gods anymore,  
or philosophers  
like John Wayne.

The old man who  
owns the only  
local drugstore  
has passed away;

he had his eyes  
fixed on the only  
local theatre-house  
on Main Street.

He wore spectacles  
on his feet.

On Sundays  
he rested and read

the only local paper,  
and noted the scores;  
he did not believe  
in politics. Old men  
do not believe

in politics.

by Kevin Hancock

AN EARLY GLIMPSE

I heard your soft melody whispering, whistling a  
telling timely moment of your entrance,  
Your song whirled in the eye of the stream, and my  
face caught your hint with a wink of sunlight,  
Yet we are fooled for this day alone, your stay has  
been postponed.....but you knew that all  
along and only listened to us trying to keep up with  
Your teasing tune.

by Dara Hope Zinney

(the old alchemist)

With fire and ice  
and my pet cockatrice  
I tried to turn lead into gold;  
But all I transformed  
was my feet--to a bird's  
and my health, to a bad head-cold.

Gemini

(1): ease (an aimless joy)

I smoke a bowl of captain black  
And toke a bowl of green;  
Meditate on human fate,  
Sit back and view the scene.  
O "Wisdom is a butterfly"  
So I've returned to getting high.

(2): obligation

Let it go for awhile;  
Mr. Zip's smile  
Is growing kind of stale.  
What's the good of altered states  
If the rest of my life should fail?  
by nicely goodfellow

## Burial

Bury me not,  
where mourners abound,  
but bury me  
by a tree stump  
in a hole in the ground.

Let it be a primeval place  
where lichens, fungus  
and decay  
will grow on my face.

Let there be flies.  
So they can lay their eggs  
and let their larva  
eat the meat of my legs.

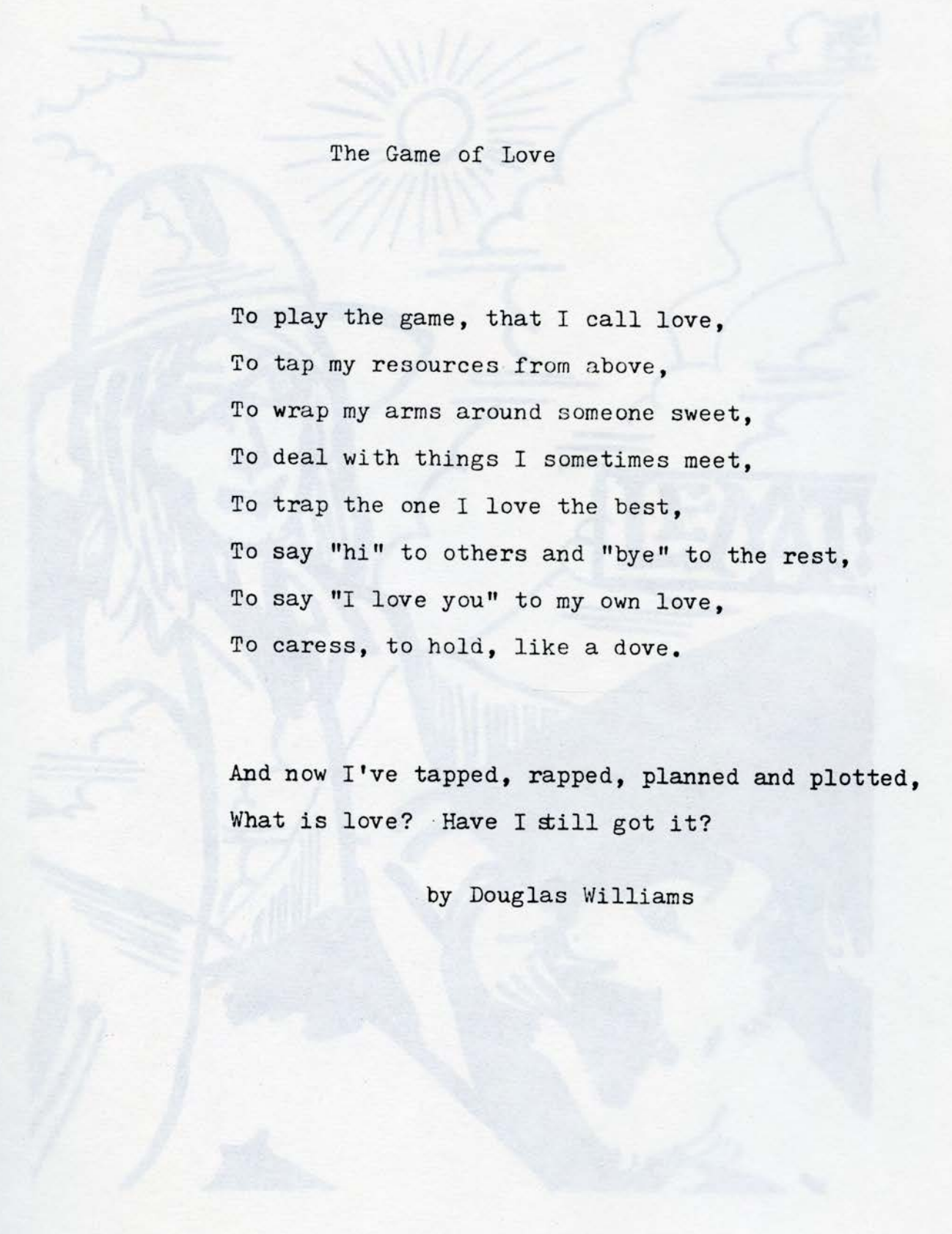
Let there be spiders  
So they can suck me dry  
and feed their families  
what was left by the flies.

Let there be worms,  
to drain my marrow dry  
so my bones crack  
half a mile wide.

Let there be ants  
to colonize the rest,  
and carry things  
in and out  
of my empty chest.

A burial by nature  
this is for me  
back in her lap  
for eternity.

Andrew Evans



The Game of Love

To play the game, that I call love,  
To tap my resources from above,  
To wrap my arms around someone sweet,  
To deal with things I sometimes meet,  
To trap the one I love the best,  
To say "hi" to others and "bye" to the rest,  
To say "I love you" to my own love,  
To caress, to hold, like a dove.

And now I've tapped, rapped, planned and plotted,  
What is love? Have I still got it?

by Douglas Williams

The Game of Love

To play the game, that I call love,  
To trap the one I love the best,  
To say "hi" to others and "bye" to the rest,  
To say "I love you" to the one I love,  
To care for the one I love the best,  
To deal with things in competition best,  
To trap the one I love the best,  
To say "hi" to others and "bye" to the rest,  
To say "I love you" to the one I love,  
To care for the one I love the best,  
And now I've tapped, typed, planned and plotted,  
What is love? Have I figured it out?  
I don't know, but I'm going to try.  
by Douglas Williams  
written by Laurel A  
on Feb 14 1981  
at the  
University of

Andrew Evans







Le Mat on Love

My little dog climbed on my knee  
& I kissed her with my tongue.  
This was accounted foolishness  
By the fools I walked among.

O some call love a goad,  
Some call love a heavy load.  
Some call love a crooked path,  
& some call love a mask for wrath.  
Some say it's a fever in the blood;  
Some say love's another name for God  
And turn and drag that name in dung.

Well all their figures may be apt; and yet I fail to see  
What true love is; what human love should be.  
I return in kind what's given me.  
My little dog and I agree.

by Bill Herron

THE WEREWOLF'S MISTRESS

Oh Lover, please, I beg thee, stay!  
'Tis not yet the light of day!  
By your own eyes' rosy glow I see  
The hour's barely ten past three.  
So come back and tease me with your pointed smiles,  
I command you, back- just a little while!

Oh Lover, please, do not go!  
False dawn is just the mountain's glow.  
"Tis only four- lay you back,  
Let me smooth your rumpled back.  
Your palms are dampened hairiness,  
Velvet softness to carress.

Oh Lover, stand not and scent the wind!  
Come back to me, my liebeskind!  
Nay- go! For grey has turned the dawn!  
Alas! Too late! For it is morn!

Patrice Sarath

An Apology

I have absorbed you:  
I know your crippled stillness,  
listen to your resentful resignation  
and clutch your despair with rapt grey eyes.

And, a year and more ago,  
I tried to write you --  
to end the obsession of being without you  
by forcing you to lie on a page  
for my pen to write you.

And now, a year and more later,  
(which letter?...which vowel?...which sound is you?)  
I retch to find that I cannot write you.

I can only write that I cannot.

by Mary

Studying in the library (again)

Hey!

Are you over there?  
I've been sitting in this stupid cubicle-thing  
for nearly an hour --  
I've been trying to absorb Polk's Presidency...  
Are you still breathing over there  
On the other side of this box?

Hey you!!

You on the other side of this simulated wood wall,  
What are you up to?  
Would you get your knickers in a twist if I  
stood up and peered over the wall at you?  
Would you say it was a violation  
of your first amendment rights?

Hmmmm..... I guess you would at that...

Maybe I should try a more intellectual approach.  
Want to play footsie?  
No, I bet you're even too intellectual for that.  
How about if I tie your shoe laces together???  
Then, again, you might not appreciate that very much...  
This is becoming quite a challenge for me...  
I don't get out much, you know.

Now I know you're alive over there.

I can't hear you breathing,  
And I can't see your face ---  
But!!  
I can hear you shuffling papers,  
And I can see your wiggling toes ---  
I just know you're there;  
So, I'll sit here  
Until I figure out a way to get you to notice me...

by Mary

To W.W.

I scrawl my ABC's and love letters  
On sheets of pink toilet paper,  
And you are my crayon.  
I can be myself with you.  
I am sandpaper and baby's breath  
I am the fifth dimension in a  
Four-dimensional world.  
I am the whore who put strawberries  
And whipped cream on your glistening black frame  
and indulged in the sweetest dessert.  
I am the executive secretary who  
Purposely tripped on an imaginary cleavage  
In the kinky black curls of your hair  
So the very real you could catch me.  
I am a mother nursing you with  
The burgundy of my breasts.  
I am a virgin  
Naive and fragile  
Afraid of being touched, afraid to touch.  
I am as real as a black woman can be.  
I am a scholar willing to absorb each page  
Of the book called "You".  
I am a clown laughing with the slightest  
Quiver of the corners of your mouth.  
I am a restless spirit with thumb in air,  
Won't you travel with me?  
I am the journey.

Meryl Lynn Samuels

(Title) written out in capitals  
To W.W.

I scribble my ABC's and love letters  
In sheets of pink paper with a little red  
And you are my person.  
I can be myself with you, I don't need  
I am sandwich and baby's brother and I love you  
I am the little dimension in the world and  
Four-dimensional world.  
I am the whole who's whole and the  
And whiplash cream on your blushing  
and included in the world's  
I am the executive secretary who  
purposefully slipped on an  
in the kinky black curls of your  
So the very best you could  
I am a mother making you  
The burghery of my  
I am a virgin  
Native and I'll be  
Always of being  
I am as real as a  
I am a scholar willing to  
Of the book called  
I am a clown laughing with the  
Gulver of the corners of your  
I am a restless spirit with  
won't you travel with me  
I am the journey.

Meryl Ann Bennett  
...an edition of my book of love letters I'll  
I'll be

your



liberte-wiki9878



liberty - liberty



They Call Me A Jew

telos

they call me a Jew

Power is of the body;

Direction is of the soul.

They support each other.

Together, they create a whole.

A hole? A whole....

A whole hole;

A holy whole.

A whole-- space.

Space is a hole,

And of a whole.

Like the body,

Like the soul.

The whole, holy hole

(That space): the goal.

W.L.H.

NYS Route Nine

I first saw the cat, new-killed, gut-crushed  
about 6:00 one morning, walking.

His eyes screwed tightly shut, as if in self-absorbtion;  
the tongue lolled out, the same as his intestines.

That, and his twisted grin  
made him look like some old carving  
of Odin, god of magic and the dead;  
as if the cat had bought  
some bitter hidden wisdom with his pain,  
that roared and screamed him into ecstasy.

Now, all that's left is a greasy rag upon the road,  
a piece of hide, the fur fast coming off;  
and the cat's runes (were there ever any?)  
are left scratched into the pavement  
and carven in the winter sky.

Soon only a stain will mark the place.

by Bill Herron

They Call Me A Jew

they call me a Jew  
but I am Allmen

they call me a Jew  
and they took me from  
my home

my home  
they took from me  
my home  
my mornings full  
of soft linen and featherbeds  
breakfasts  
of pungent cheese  
and strong coffee  
mornings full  
of sunlight painted patterns  
playing tag  
on the kitchen table  
and warm wooden smells  
my home  
with happy talk  
and soft wine  
over a full of family love supper  
and my dark-eyed daughter  
laughing at me  
a dribble of bouillon  
escaping down her baby chin  
my home

my wife  
my friends  
in front of the fire  
in song and in prayer  
animated  
by good feelings and firelight  
my home

they took from me  
my wife  
my daughter  
my humanity  
and they jammed me  
in a cattle car  
cold and hungry  
with a hundred more

my beloved and my baby  
were plucked from me  
as if I, a thief  
was caught stealing them

will my aching eyes  
see them alive?  
will they, living,  
look back at me?  
or will they, naked, die  
an insects death  
asphyxiated  
as their soft fingers  
leave desperate impressions  
in a concrete ceiling?

they call me a Jew  
but I am Allmen

and we ride in a railroad car  
full of flesh and foul odor  
in the darkness we stand  
because we can't stand  
the smell if we sit  
and sitting takes space  
and there is no space

four days  
this way  
hunger gnaws our ribs  
cold gnaws the rest

from train to truck  
a herd, a flock  
former members of mankind  
transformed  
transported to where  
Arbeit Macht Frei  
for all faithful beasts of burden

they call me a Jew  
but I am Allmen

and our bare arms are branded  
like the beasts we have become

no longer do I lay on linen  
with fluffy featherbeds  
and a warm and loving woman

I sleep in spaces  
too small to sleep  
on hard  
so hard hardwood  
and guard  
my skinny blanket from the night  
its loss brings lashes  
from a Nazi whip  
its loss lets cold  
insidious cold  
nocturnal predator  
silently consume  
the scrawny sleeping self

my bedmate is male  
emaciated  
like myself  
emaciated

they call me a Jew  
but I am Allmen

unwilling, unwanted  
morning crawls  
through windows  
high and small  
and its wearisome light  
makes the stench of the night  
visible

I awake and wonder  
whose body I slept in  
I and my fellows  
are skeletons with skin  
skin stretched so thin  
each bone we own is showing

no more  
the fragrance of wine  
instead  
the stink of human waste  
no more  
warm wooden smells  
but  
the acrid odor of burning bodies  
no more  
friendly faces reflecting happiness  
only  
hundreds of hollow eyes  
whose owners' only wonder  
is who burns tomorrow

where are you my wife  
with your soft voice?

God is mute

where are you my daughter  
with your innocent eyes?

mankind is blind

or can it be  
that they see  
and pay no heed  
because they call me a Jew?

but I am Allmen

I no longer count time  
time no longer counts  
what counts is my crust of bread  
and my warmwater pseudosoup  
which I quickly consume  
so they are not stolen

and when my stomach has stopped  
hollering its hunger at me  
my swollen feet shout their misery instead  
just before

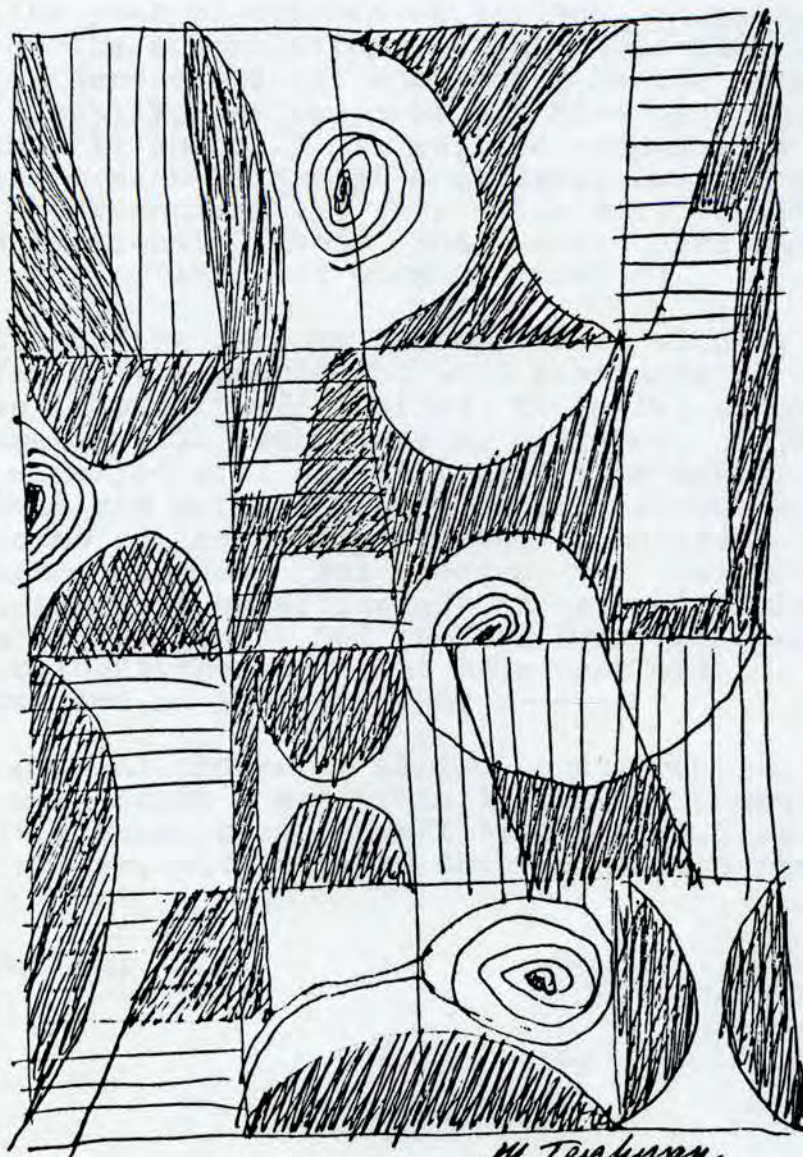
I am forced  
to walk  
on them  
again

I walk to work  
which makes me free  
I feed the furnace  
with the bodies of my brothers  
and stare into their lifeless eyes  
no more vacant than my own

you see  
I stopped counting the days  
when the days stopped counting  
the day that day  
when a pair of still open, still innocent  
dark eyes  
passed through my hands on their way to the fire  
the day Allmen burned with my baby daughter

they call me a Jew  
but I am  
Allmen





M. Technan

where are you my wife  
with your soft voice?

God demands

where are you my daughter  
with your innocent eyes?

asked in his

he can't be  
that they  
and pay no  
because they

but I am Allah

I do longer  
like no longer  
that counts  
and by words  
which I quick  
so they are

and when  
hollering  
or swollen  
just before

I

I

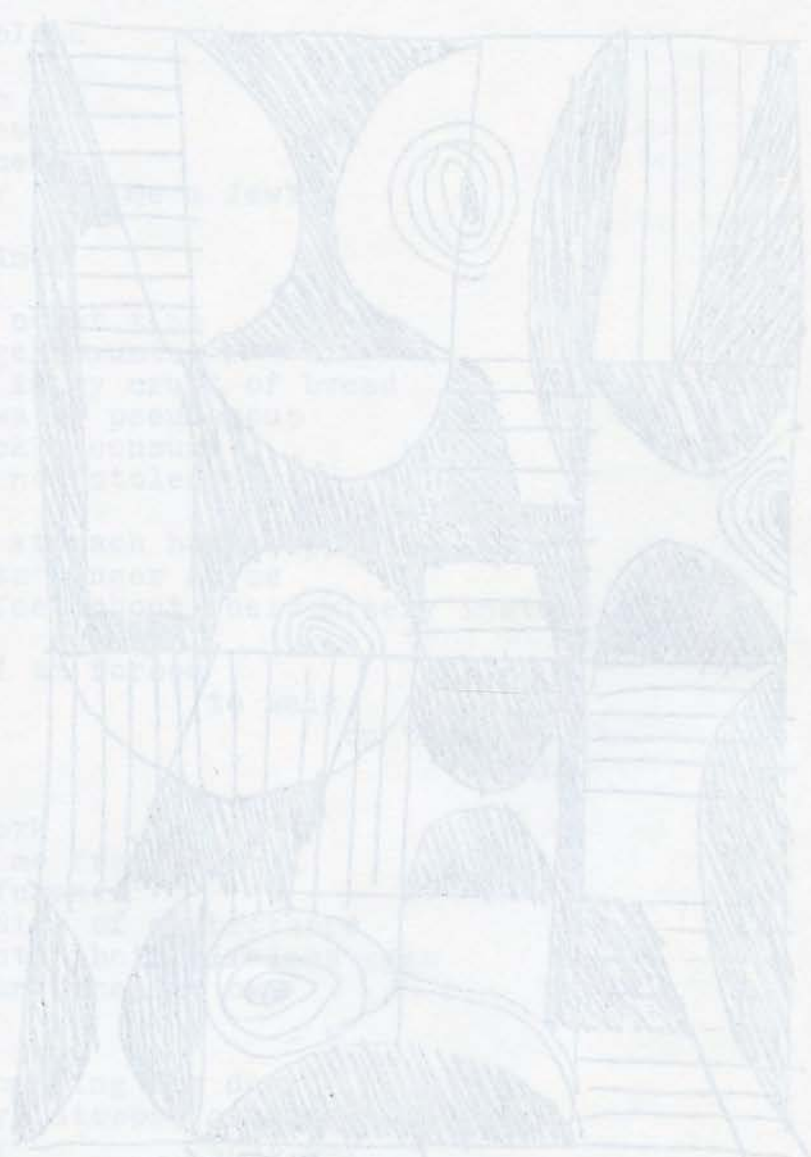
I will  
which  
I feed  
with the  
and state  
no more

you see

I stopped  
when the  
the day

when a pair of  
dark eyes  
rained through  
the day Allah  
burned with my baby daughter

they call me a Jew  
but I am  
Allah



FROM THE EDITOR

1981...the year we started up the Mosaic again. The number and quality of the contributions we got shows that the arts are alive and well here at Marist - at least in the area of word-smithing. (Visually, the response was kind of disappointing this year - but that'll change.) To me, the response is a good sign; it means that as much as Marist's students want to get ahead professionally and economically, they still want to live deeply and richly on an emotional level. What we did here was to collect a sampling of some of the best work we received.

Without sounding like an academy award winner, I would like to thank a few of the people who were instrumental in putting this magazine in your hands. First, Kevin D., my partner, who I hope (and expect) will learn from my mistakes. With him in charge, next year's magazine will no doubt make this one look sick. Dr. Milton Teichman did a fine job organizing, encouraging, prodding us along; and he collected a good deal of material from his writing workshop courses. Pat Creegan, the club president, was great in helping with selection and in arranging the printing. Also, thanks to Joy Kudlo, and to Lori Dyer and Dianne, who did the typing (without them we might have been able to get this issue out sometime in February 1982).

A very special thanks to all you contributors, especially those whose work doesn't appear in this issue because of space or other considerations; please don't stop trying. Finally, thanks to you, the reader, without whom this would be a pretty useless enterprise.

Pass the jug.

Bill Herron

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Face the fog.

Bill Horton

