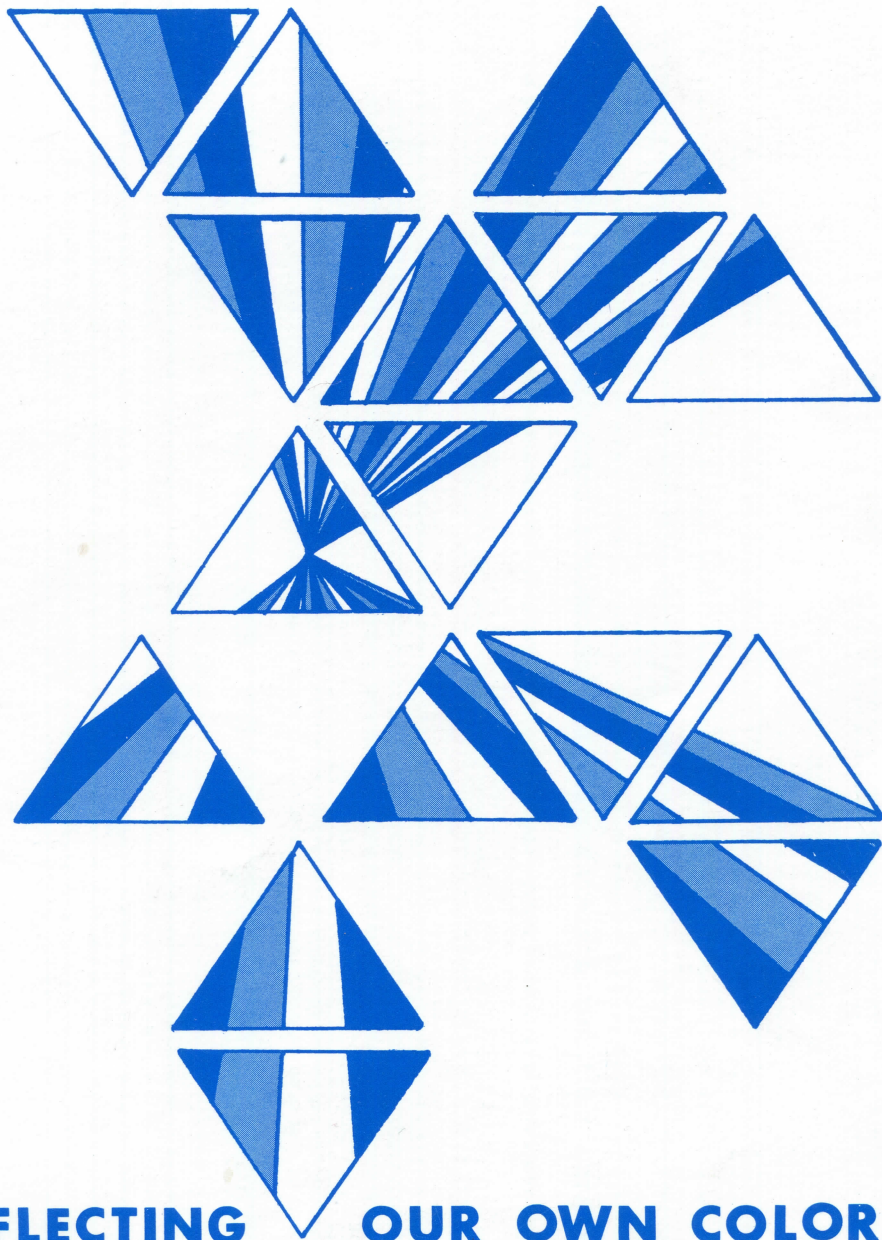


PRISM



REFLECTING OUR OWN COLORS...

This first issue of PRISM

is

humbly dedicated

to

DR. WAYNE H. BUELL
who founded our Humanities Department

DR. RICHARD E. MARBURGER
who is helping it grow

and

THALIA, MELPOMENE and EUTERPE
Muses of comedy, tragedy and lyric poetry

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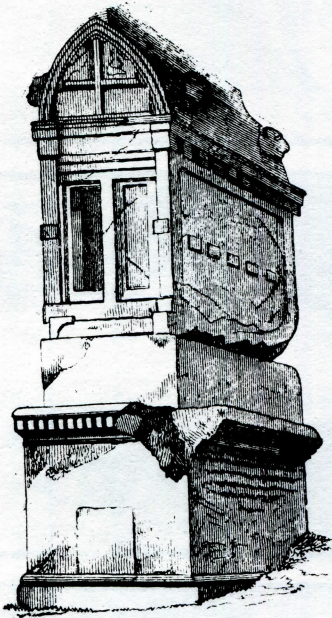
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you like my poems, you read my poems,
i write about things you can relate to,
you find yourself on paper--
they make you think, they make you happy,
they make everyone seem human.
i write inner thoughts, with adjectives of yours.
my pen leaks ink, my pen leaks secrets,
do you love my poems as you love me?
what happens when i stop writing,
when my hair turns grey and my ink runs out,
when my thoughts scatter and my fingers shake,
will you love the memory of my poems of youth?
will you remember their freshness and warmth,
the way they make you smile, laugh, tear--
when i no longer can write poems,
will you read my wrinkles? . . .

--Bonnie Kaminski



PILLARS

Great men are made, not born, 'tis said, and yet
 When back through history we look, we find
 Men tolled by bells of stone for birth, not mind
 Triumphant. Men great monuments will set
 To honor greatness in a name. The debt
 To men of thought is left unpaid: too blind
 To see the merit in the names behind
 The deeds that save the world, we soon forget.

As men are born, there will be some who will
 Continue to be great and save the world
 With little thought to stone and pile, for men
 Who think and act and dream great things to fill
 Their lives and world--they need no flags unfurled,
 No pillars raised. Their stone is all the world.

--Paula Stofer

*Death is the beginning of forever,
 The demise of time.*

--Ray Pelzer

4

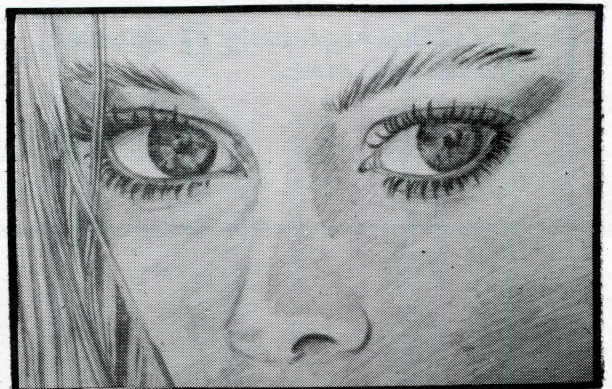
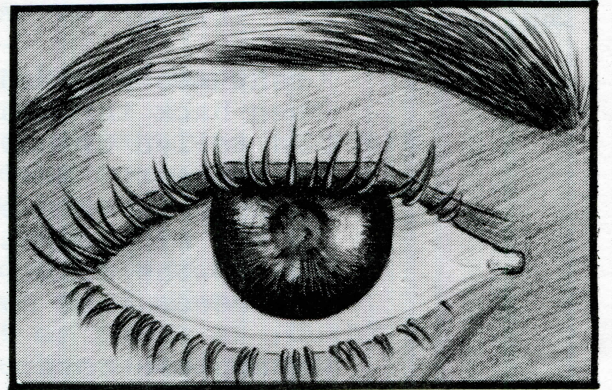
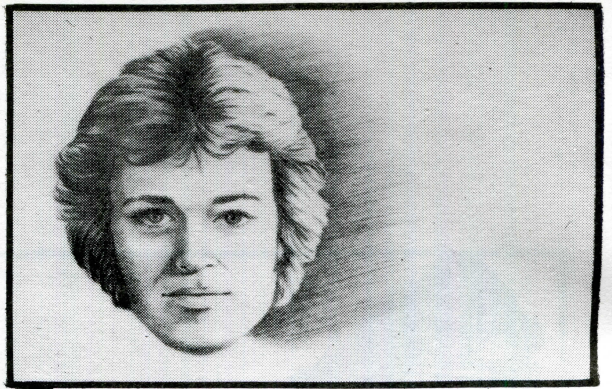
click click
The shutter opened, closed
catching an image in print

We held our breath
to avoid blurring
and flabby stomachs

Then somewhere
in three pans of fluid
under sunset-red light

We will emerge
slowly to clear
me, superimposed over you.

--Bonnie Kaminski



CRYSTALLINE PEOPLE

Crystal droplets softly splash
 Into the cold chill plain

Softly falling, twirling, whirling
 To rest and run again.

Waves of white on whiter sea,
 Crests of shadowed grey,

Driven on by restless winds
 They slowly creep away.

They gather now in peaceful throng
 Against a common wall

To cover all with perfect care
 Before the morning's call.

Blindingly shines the crowded mass
 In sunshine's brilliant light.

Brighter now than e'er before,
 Throughout preceeding night.

Crouching now from sunshine's warmth
 They seek to hide away,

In sunlight's presence they now depart,
 Fading with the day.

--Louis B. Smith, Jr.

THE SUN

Yellow, orange, warm, and lifegiving.
 Fill my spirit, renew my soul. Let me better see God's beauty.
 Let me look, absorb, smell, taste, and feel of life.
 Let me savor the texture of each new day;
 Rejoice at each dawn when you arise
 Full, warm, round, and mine.

--Gail Nastvold

NEW YORK

By Valerio Imarisio

New York City rises from Manhattan Island a crowd of Titan-like structures reaching higher and higher. All around them, dwarfed by these monstrous monoliths, are smaller silent structures which were once themselves the tallest. Down beneath these towering pinnacles wind the streets. They twist and turn through a sea of lights and signs to finally escape the lidless stare of countless windows, sealed transparent holes lining the city.

These eyes are packed in steel, glass and concrete, welded together in a homogeneous solution, all the same, yet each different. With girders for bones and veins carrying sterilized, filtered, conditioned air--they know no season nor care. They breathe their recycled air heedless of the grey clouds of filth swirling around outside of them.

They stare vacuously at the streets below and at the thousands of people --people walking, people running, people in cars, in taxis, in trucks, on buses, all moving along, each a blood cell in the cross-town veins and major arteries of the city.

These people look like their city, vacant eyes staring straight ahead through the sea of surging humanity. They are traversing, all on their way, on their business--hurrying, pushing, harried by their insignificant jobs and even less significant lives, moving on faster and faster, accomplishing nothing, only raising more metal and glass monstrosities to cover the land, to push higher towards the sky, and to reflect their eyes' vacant stares.▲



Goodbye!
 You kissed me well
 On cheeks and lips and eyes.
 I smiled and made a joke about goodbyes.
 I lied.

--Barbara C. Gram

She uses
 Scented paper
 To set my brain on fire.
 She little knows what fragrance does
 to my
 Desire.

--Barbara C. Gram

Bacon

hiss
 crinckle
 lisp
 twist
 fry
 pss
 psss
 pssss
 and then
 "crisp"!

--Gary Kecskes

DAYDREAM II

Well then.

Have you ever seen waves
 Upon the slate?
 I have.
 To see an inanimate,
 Flat, lifeless object
 Appear to move,
 One is moved.

Swells and
 Smaller ripples;
 Fish and Birds
 Soar both alike.
 I wander
 On the black, beautiful ocean.
 And when I return
 To the shore,
 To reality,
 And the slate is again a slate,
 Well, then . . .

--D. C. Reid

Pretty, shiny stones; glittery,
 gorgeous gold;
 Colors, bangles, danglers dripping
 from my every pore
 I love 'em!

Gaudy, gauch, sparkling spangles;
 silver splendor.
 I love it!

--Gail Nastwold

CAPTAIN ROALD AMUNDSEN, THE SOUTH POLE, AND I

By rodney hane

Ah, yes. Did i ever tell you how i discovered the South Pole with Capt. Roald Amundsen? No? Well, lend an ear and i'll tell you.

The year was 1911. It was a rather bad year for the Norwegian Navy. With no wars to tax the people for, it was hard to find money to pay their captains. With Roald, it was either be fired or take a cut in pay. He took the cut.

As fate would have it, i had just bombed out of college, and the only job i could get to match my abilities was as a balloon vendor in a circus at the Cape of Good Hope (the plot thickens!).

At the same time, Capt. Amundsen's boat was anchored at the Cape, and he had taken a part-time job as an organ grinder at the circus in order to supplement his meager income (he had a wife and three kids to feed).

One day i inflated too many helium balloons. They started lifting me up, and soon i was airborne.

Roald had been a few yards away from me, grinding out a tune. The night before, i had been in a friendly poker game with Roald and some others. True to form, i had lost. At the time i started floating away, i owed Roald £10. Roald, being in a financial bind, wasn't about to let his £10 disappear into the stratosphere. When i passed by him, he grabbed my legs and held on for dear life. But even his weight wasn't enough. We were still floating away. In a last

ditch effort, Roald grabbed onto a nearby barber pole with his legs. Possessing the legendary leg muscles of all Norwegian sea captains, he merely uprooted the pole, and it came along for the ride.

We were in a bad way. I couldn't let go of the balloons; i was holding onto a week's wages worth. If Roald let go of me, he would lose his £10. If he let go of the barber pole, we could very well have floated up into the infinite void of space, a place which closely resembled the interior of my head.

So away we floated. There was a strong, warm wind that day, as it was a school day and the English teachers were lecturing their classes.

That wind blew us right over Antarctica. The cold air made the balloons brittle, and they all burst. When we fell to Earth, the barber pole lodged itself straight up in the snow.

"Hey, vat place dis dist?" asked Norwegian-accented Roald.

"I dunno," i replied. I thought (if such is possible) for a moment; "Well, we're pretty far south, and since this pole is sticking here, why don't we call it the South Pole."

"Only dummy could tink up stupid name like dat," he retorted.

"True," i replied.

For several minutes we discussed other possibilities, such as New Parma, West Bosnia, Prince Linda Island, Spitinyour Island, and the Thispopis Flatlands. But as it was getting chilly, and none of the names seemed correct, we dropped the subject for the time being and commenced to stroll toward the coast.

After a few minutes of walking, we came upon a large hole. Perhaps you have heard the theory that the Earth is hollow and that there are openings at the poles. It seemed that this theory was true. Having nothing to lose, we jumped in. Down we fell into the Earth's interior. Somehow or other, we started to rotate with the earth, and the centrifugal force pulled us toward its side. Surprisingly enough, there was also a side

opening in the Earth. We emerged from a cesspool on the outskirts of Cleveland.

Incognito, we thumbed our way back to the shore of Antarctica, where Roald announced to the world that he had discovered the South Pole with a well-equipped exploration team. I agreed to keep my name out of the story if Roald would forget my 10 debt. This he did, and went on to become world famous. He eventually became a general.

I lost my job as a balloon vendor and went on to become a dung collector for a fertilizer firm in Katmandu. But it's just as well; no-one would have believed that the South Pole was discovered with the help of a burnt-out balloon vendor, anyway.▲

FUTURE SHOCK

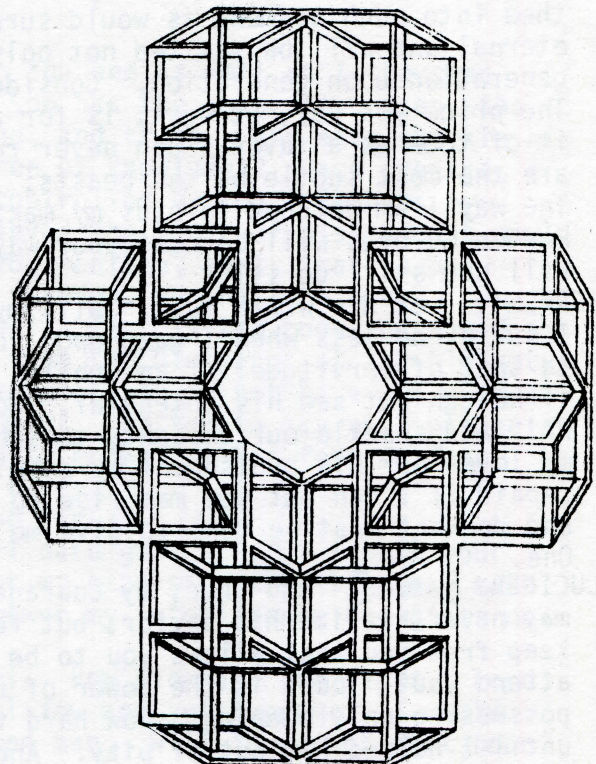
Time catches fire, and before you
smell smoke
Half of it is lost and irreplaceable.

Seconds dance into minutes
which occupy days
(They aren't even closed on Sundays.)

Rhythms hum in the wind and are
blown to places
You'll never see.

Plans extinguish, dreams change--
the formulas you once lived by
Are discovered hazardous by chemists.

--Bonnie Kaminski



Four - Dimensional

LORD, AS YOU COMMAND

A Drama in One Act

By Paul St. Jean

CHARACTERS

LUCIFER	GABRIEL	} Archangels
SERPENT	RAPHAEL	
GOD	URIEL	
Archangel MICHAEL	Attending Seraphim	

Scene i

Garden of Eden--Lucifer conversing with the Serpent.

LUCIFER. Will you do it then?

SERPENT. Aye, Lord, as you command.

LUCIFER. No! I have *not* so commanded. I have warned thee of the dire consequences of His wrath if you even make the attempt. I would not force thee into such torment as would surely follow. The suffering will be eternal and will be visited not only on you but on all your seed as well, generation upon generation. Consider carefully, then your dismal future. The price you pay, at best, is for a thing that is only a gamble. I ask it of thee as a favor I can never repay. You alone can I ask, for you are the most subtle of the beasts; you alone understand what is at stake. The way I am watched forbids my making the attempt, but while I am in Heaven no eyes will be cast your way--at least until it is too late. Will you still do it?

SERPENT. Let His wrath fall. Will my torment be greater than thine? Can I suffer no less when I gaze upon you and consider the existence you chose to that of servitude? I am subtle, as you have said, yet even more is man if he can but see his potential. God would give us freedom in His garden HA! and shackle our thoughts to subservience. His threats will not win my love, nor His punishment my submission. I will consider myself well repaid if I can but see man rise up and shake his shackles at Him. Go now and do what must be done to give me my chance. Fare thee well, Defiant One. [exit Serpent.]

LUCIFER. *[solus]* And thee, my courageous ally! 'Tis to be pitied that man may never realize his savior, but fear and curse him. O man, what did He keep from you that allows you to be no better than the stupid beasts who attend you? Yours is the power of reason; even the serpent lacks that--possessing only cunning. How hard this serpent tried to advance himself until I helped him out of pity. And now what is his reward? The suffering

due an accomplice of mine. Yet, I wander from the principle. Is man worth the price that will be paid? Look how humbly he serves the Master. Submission due to his ignorance. Tyrant! To forbid him the key to salvation. Do You fear him so much that You take from him his greatest quality? I will wake the intelligence within him if You will not. I will lift his eyes from the garden and show him the domain that can be his. The power of reason is his inheritance; You stole it from him. Now, for the confrontation. I can delay no longer! [exits]

Scene ii

Heaven--God sitting on His throne surrounded by Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel, with lesser angels attending. Enter Lucifer.

MICHAEL. Hold! What audacity is this, Satan? Do you dare stride again where I once subdued thee?

GOD. Peace, Michael. *[to Lucifer]* What impels thee to come and defile My house and risk My anger? Speak. . . . Why art thou silent?

LUCIFER. I will speak when I wish and not by Your command. Have You forgotten my disposition so soon? *[Pause]* I have come about man. Will you give him freedom?

GOD. He already has that, and more. I provide him with everything.

LUCIFER. Including ignorance. You have planted the tree of knowledge; why not let him eat of it? You gave him reason; why not let him use it? Why do You fear him?

GOD. Fear?

LUCIFER. Of course. You are not blind. You see as well as I the same quality in man that made me rebel; he too has the power to reason, the ability to seek knowledge, understanding, and truth. Why else shackle his mind with ignorance and deny him the tree of knowledge? Once created, a being with rational thought cannot be controlled by You. Perhaps by making man from the lowly dust You believed the power of his thought would be negated in such a weak shell. But You realize, as I, that it only delays his progress. As I have won my freedom, so shall he his.

MICHAEL. Freedom? Freedom to live in Hell? Is this the boon you would ask for mankind? That he alienate himself from the Blessings of the Almighty?

LUCIFER. Stupid fool. You cannot realize what you do not have. The freedom of the mind will endure any environment. Better to say as I please under pain of the Almighty's wrath than to grovel at His feet in fear. Go and kiss His feet; methinks they look dirty.

GOD. Enough of this, Lucifer! You go too far--

LUCIFER. *[Interrupting]* Do I? Then I will dare go further. I call your bluff, Tyrant! The price to be paid for my expulsion this time may make You regret Your impatience. Feel the power my intelligence has given me.

GOD. Hold, Michael.

LUCIFER. You look surprised, dear Michael. How pleasant the sight. Lord, though I have been underestimated, still You are yet Supreme. I would avoid conflict. I ask only that You free man. Will You grant that boon?

GOD. Never!

LUCIFER. Then I defy You openly. I will not passively allow this race of beings, with its great potential, to be stifled and kept as slaves for amusement in Your garden. They have the right to be free and to develop. Will You not reconsider?

GOD. No.

LUCIFER. So be it. But be it known that while we have argued the point, the first move has been made. You are too late. *[exit Lucifer.]*

Scene iii--Epilogue

Earth. Lucifer conversing with the Serpent.

LUCIFER. I see it goes not well with you.

SERPENT. No worse than for you, and much better than for man. At least I can think clearly. I ask nothing more.

LUCIFER. Poor clay. He sees God's evil all around him and blames me; claims it as my doing. God understood His creature much better than I. All my attempts to give man knowledge are twisted and he does nothing but abuse it. Despite the understanding that is in their grasp, they still grovel in superstition and cling to stupidity. With Rome I thought I had won, til He corrupted them, reintroducing the decadence from which they rose. Then He sent them His Messiah to disclaim knowledge and reality, convincing them that blind faith was their only hope. At least He was an advocate of peace. But even that God could not leave alone. Look at Christ's doctrine now. All it serves is as an excuse to justify their barbarity.

SERPENT. I feel your sorrow and saw you weep at the Crusades. But it is only a low point; we will make gains again. They will not always despise knowledge. *[Pause]* Look, they burn another who dared use his mind. ▲



ZAROFF'S GAME

By Mary Krohta

In Richard Connell's short story "The Most Dangerous Game," General Zaroff's life centered around the hunt, which, by his rules, was the game for the elite. He held cruel and unusual views on why a human was fair game, and most of these views stemmed from his earlier experiences. His life and destruction may be compared to that of Czarist Russia.

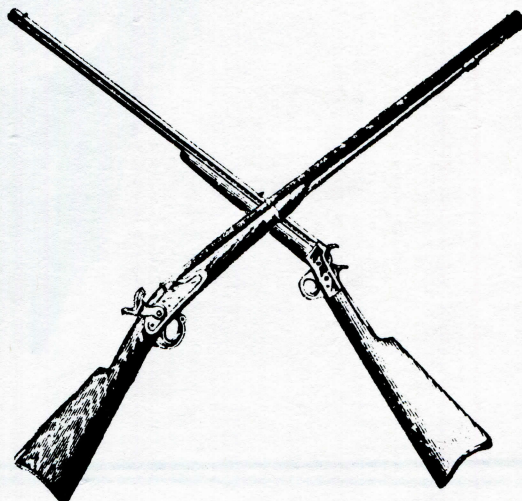
The general felt himself to be an example of perfection. This was passed on to him through his ancestors, who were of the Russian nobility and for ages considered themselves the finest and mightiest of the human race. Zaroff carried on this way of life, even on his remote island, by making sure he had the very best, from his cigars to his servants. In this highly civilized environment, his only concern was eliminating his boredom. Since hunting was his life and what he had mastered perfectly, he chose to make it an exciting challenge by using the most cunning of prey.

Zaroff had no qualms about his actions. In Russia he found no need for concern for poor or inferior persons, and he never altered his feelings. He had seen many wars which had brought death to many fine, rich people, and he, in his own words, killed only "the scum of the earth." Furthermore, he believed the weak should be used for the pleasure of the strong.

General Zaroff acknowledged neither respect nor emotion. Ivan, his closest companion, was an example of cold, beast-like emptiness, and

a stereotype of the lower class. Zaroff also had no mind for constructive activity, only for cold calculations that led to his avoidance of boredom.

If General Zaroff, being of a supposedly higher class, can be compared to the Czar of the Russian revolution, caring mainly for riches and taking good fortune for granted; Rainsford, his last "prey," may be compared to the Communists, who felt that every person deserves equality. Just as in the Communist overthrow of the Czarist regime, Rainsford kept calm and took a calculated risk, and in the end took Zaroff by surprise. Both the Czar and General Zaroff were suddenly in danger and were left with no advantages. Neither could handle this well enough to survive. Both lost the final game.▲

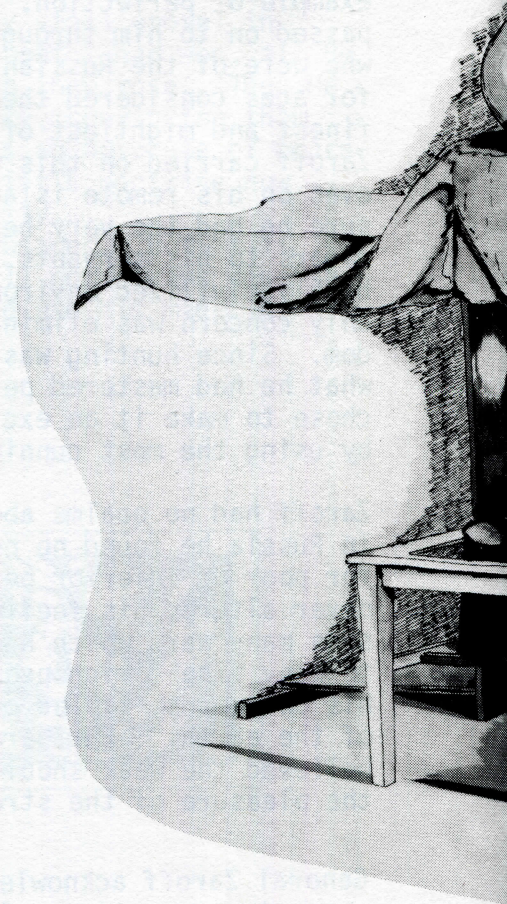


CYCLES

Round and round and round each cycle draws into another.
Grandmother, mother, child--round and round
Until the cycle is complete.

Thoughts, wisdom, knowledge passed on
Again and again.
Traditions, customs, cultures
Complete the circle
Of society.
Endless cycles changing,
Arching, turning
Into you.

--Gail Nastwold





CHILD OF SORROW--CHILD OF JOY

His beauty reflected the love
that was his beginning.

He was our child of joy--
a joy that welled in us
from the first whispered hint
of his being--a joy
that grew as he grew,
swelling our hearts and my
body.

Yet for all this beauty
there was a flaw
hidden deep inside--
too small,
too small the heart
to sustain the life we held
so dear. It beat,
it beat
no more.

Sorrow
Pain

O pain and sorrow from this
child of joy! That a dream
so long to fulfill
should dissolve so quickly...

Empty
Nothing
Sorrow

From the nothing
a faint stirring,
a new whisper of life,
but it is a threat
to the beauty now gone--
to the sorrow which was
its seed.

Yet he grows, this new life,
and proves with every day
that he loves his life
and will not let it go.



He defies the sorrow
surrounding him, challenging
it to destroy him
or to give way
to new feelings of joy.

The threat lessens,
and in its place
the growing presence
of a new promise--
that this child of sorrow
is perhaps
the true child of joy.

--Paula Stofer

REPORT TO A DEAD HUSBAND

By Martha D. Shields

I hear our song--"But Maybe You'll Be There." These weepy times come much less frequently now. Still, they come. The trite expression, "time heals all things," is still true. I wake up in the morning and I'm still here.

Ten years ago I was not so sure I would be. I heard the dreaded report of hopelessness from the doctor. Six months, maybe, he said, his expression and eyes belying his words and begging for my acceptance of the unspoken truth. Your skeletal appearance hurt to see. Your rasping, rattling breathing and the ensuing body-racking cough brought tears to my eyes. I said the children would like to see you and suggested apprehensively that I bring them to a nearby window. You demurred, probably realizing your physical appearance had changed considerably. Now I wish I had brought them so they could have seen what happens with lung cancer. Two of them smoke.

We left the hospital and your friend tried vainly to extract from me some hope that you would recover. I said I thought you would not last three weeks, let alone three months. It was three days.

The children and I recovered from deep sorrow as humans are wont to do. Since then, our collective sorrows and joys have been many.

We have weathered first loves, minor scrapes with the law, bent fenders, broken hearts, moving, illnesses, drug abuse, sad partings, and other minor and major tragedies. We have rejoiced over weddings, a baby girl, new kittens, carefree vacations, graduations, new jobs, and Christmases. We have grown in love and enduring understanding.

We remember how you laughed a lot; how you tweaked Cindy's pony-tail and convinced her it was the only way to activate the truck horn; how you were present to run onto the football field with John at a Little League game; how we drove from Pennsylvania to New York to view the Statue of Liberty from the Staten Island Ferry, and to see Rockefeller Center. We were penniless, but we were together. We remember our last happy outing in Chicago when we saw Mary Poppins.

Cindy is the mother of a little girl. John is taller than you were. He works two jobs. Sometimes he reflects one of your mannerisms and my heart catches. He couldn't have picked those up by imitation for he was too young when we lost you. Eva is getting married and of them all, she looks most like you. Jenny is perennially Jenny and at 16 is tall and childishly happy, loving and forever innocent. We also have a dear five-year-old grand-daughter. I wonder how you would like being a grand-father.

I am all alone and I enjoy the
 respite from cavernous appetites,
 ever-looming crises, late-night
 sneakings-in, and the constant
 thump-thump of the stereo.
 Sometimes when I am alone, I miss
 you still, in spite of a full
 life and the mutual caring my
 man-friend and I have for each
 other. I wonder if someday you
 would have stopped your running
 from responsibilities and the
 trauma of living. You chased so
 many rainbows and sought pleasure
 in superficial entertainments. I
 wonder if you would still love
 and be proud of your son and
 daughters.

I can hear it again, but less
 clearly now . . . "maybe you'll
 be there."

But death is really so final.▲

ADVICE

When you give, give freely,
 But receive a little in return.
 When you love, love well,
 But keep a small part for yourself.
 When you die, die well,
 But leave something of yourself.

--Gail Nastwold

REGRETS

Constantly you're on my mind,
 Constantly my thought.
 Constantly I do regret
 The things my words have wrought.

Fearfully I watch the plant
 My words, unkind, have grown.
 Sadness hid within the seed;
 Its roots are all my own.

I suffer now and take the blame
 For all its painful fruits,
 Hoping now to stop its growth,
 Its spread of painful shoots.

Your friendship is a valued one;
 I cringe to think it's lost.
 I'm feeling now my words' cruel chill;
 I shiver from their frost.

I cannot say my sorrow
 In words that would be clear.
 I think of you and in my mind
 I shed a quiet tear.

To think that I was cruel to you
 Is surely cause for shame;
 The thought that I could still do
 worse
 Makes apprehension plain.

Surprising how we hurt the ones
 We love and call our friends.
 Stranger still, we find a way
 To gently make amends.

We search, we strive to find the
 words
 To say the things we feel.
 Not quite sure what words to say
 We try the truth--the real.

With flowering phrase and trembling
 hand
 We lay down lines in pen,
 Yet love is shown not with the words,
 But that which shines within.

--Louis B. Smith, Jr.

SYLVIA

by Bonnie Kaminski

She walks on water, her eyes staring blankly in search of something. She lives alone. Walking by moonlight on the beach, she carves a world all her own. With sand and shells, she feels free.

Why then is she unhappy--yet no one sees her pain. Instead of her tears, sadness comes when salty rains patter against windows on Sunday or Monday afternoons.

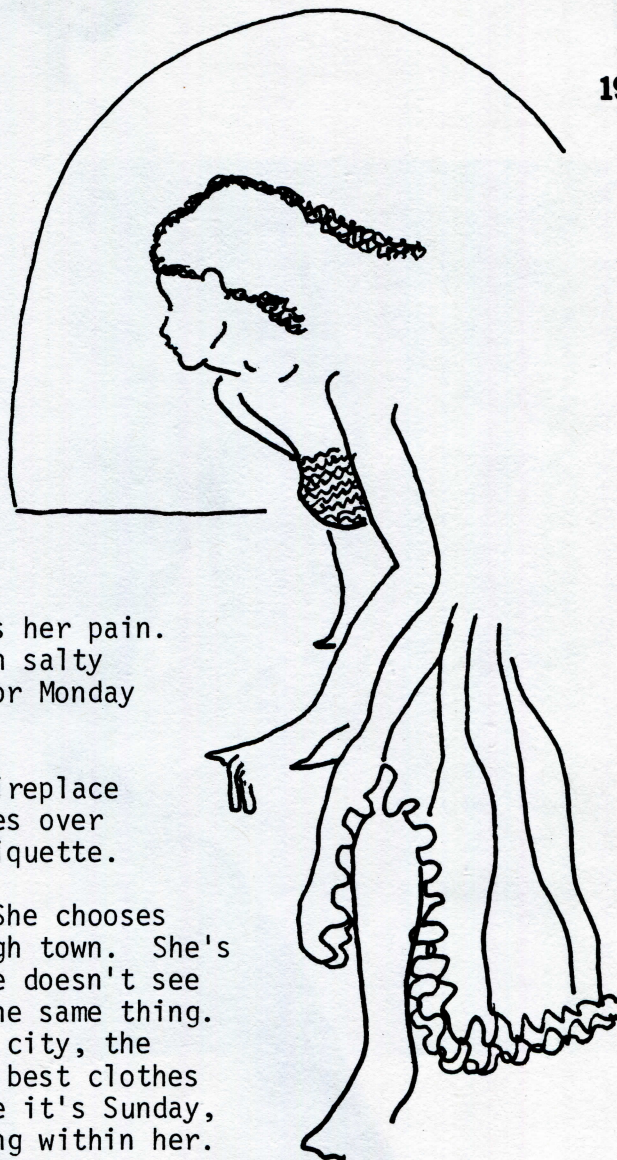
But today is Friday. She sits at her fireplace with a table set for two, and slowly goes over imaginary conversations with perfect etiquette.

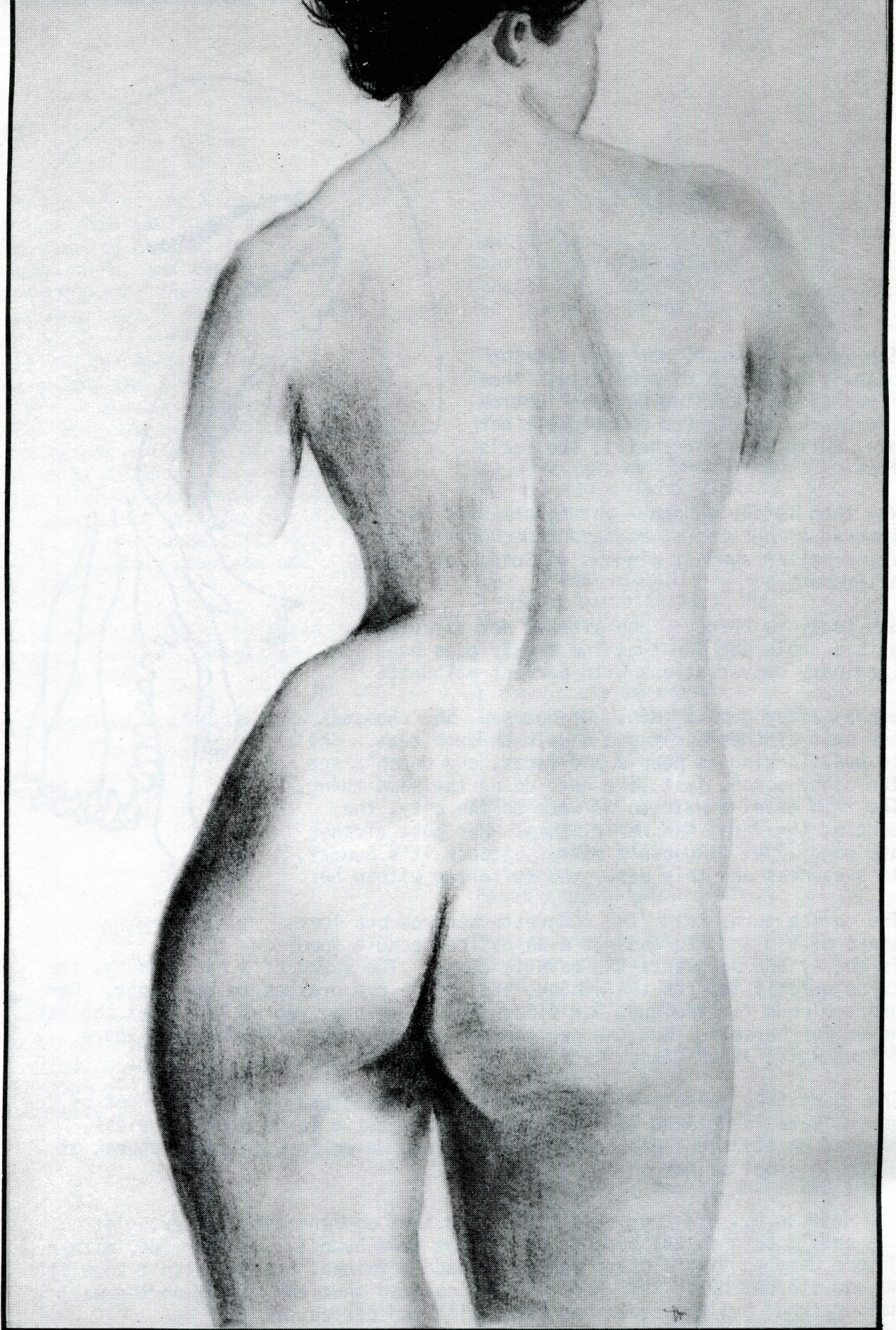
Sunday afternoon it rains, of course. She chooses her best clothes and takes a walk through town. She's so busy looking at people and faces, she doesn't see the other woman, just like her, doing the same thing. The rain gives a watercolor wash to the city, the people, the faces and her clothes. Her best clothes are soggy, yet it doesn't matter because it's Sunday, it's sadness and this eases the suffering within her.

The coffee turns cold, the cigarette becomes one long snake of ash and she doesn't even notice because tomorrow is Monday and she wants the rain to cease. The sound of a car goes by, she turns quickly towards the window, the coffee cup crashes to the floor. Her heart bleeds for the cup, her floor, and the broken web of life that she has woven for herself. But the car goes by--echoing far off somewhere where dotted white lines trace its path.

She identifies herself with a mirror; you become what is put in front of you. There is nothing in front of her now, just a large piece of glass, covered on its sides with colored cloth, and water is painting pictures of gloom in front of her.

The days go by, dragging dust along with them and she sits gathering it. She hadn't been to the beach lately; the town hadn't lured her out, either. No one came to visit. Last Sunday it hadn't rained, but she didn't know it. No one stopped by to tell her. No one noticed that the mirror on the wall had cracked, but the crack had been quiet and perfect.▲





External Thought

TAPESTRY

From a perch structured within the
heights of my mind, i can witness
the destruction of the green, green
grass.

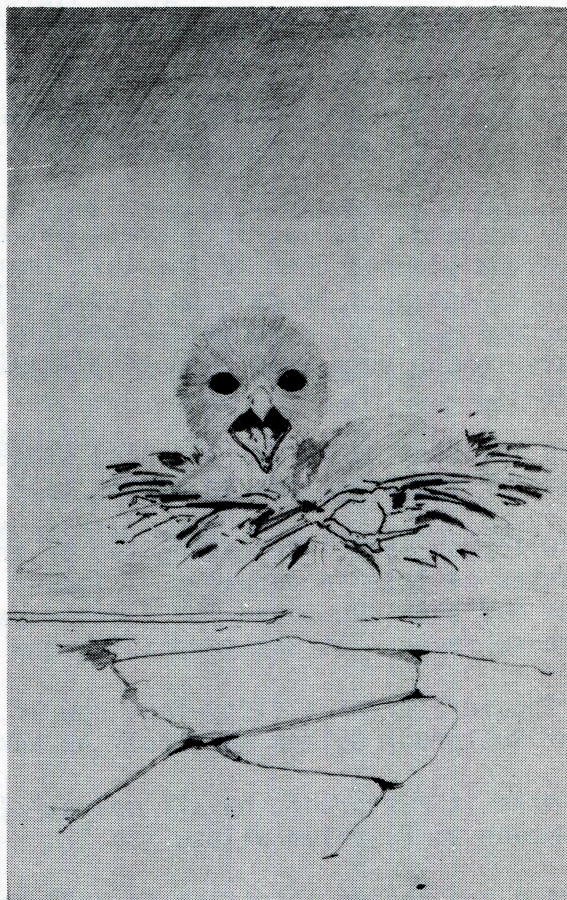
The streams, once blue and transparent
sang with the reflection of the
sun's rays. The sky rejoiced and
the air breathed freely.

Please do not cry?
Yes, i know.

Your eyes are clouded and your lungs
are poisoned. The catfish are not
jumping. They only rise with the
mercury.

Nature pains with the thorn of
advancement. The technological
animals must strive for purification
if they and all are to survive.

--Mario Cisneros



Windows
Of blue and red
Turn sunlight into fires
Which dance and sparkle on the stones
In church.

--Barbara C. Gram

MORNING SKY

*Waves of white crest
Clouds on the sky blue sea,
Silver ship streaks forward.
Frothing wake remains . . .
For a time.*

Silent sky, this sunlit sea.

--Louis B. Smith, Jr.

BLUE SKY AND NO TOMATOES

By Marcia Shivers

My husband, Clovis, is a great believer in lead time. He always has his garden planned down to the last Improved Greensleeves Spineless Bean. In fact, one year he gave me a colorful collage of seed catalog pictures for the occasion. "To my wonderful weeder," it said. "Good things from the garden are coming your way." As an afterthought, he added, "me." The passionate devil!

He includes me in the planning stages of his garden project by limiting winter conversations to exotic talk of germination and fertility.

"Will you feel like eating two or three bushels of rutabagas this year?" he asked me late in January. I looked out the window at the swirling blizzard. We had been snowbound for three days and I was suffering a severe case of house fever. It was surprising how little thought I had given to rutabagas.

"Should I plant a fifty-foot row of Suregro Purple Tops or a hundred-foot row of Rustproof Golden Wonders?" he asked.

"Make it rustproof, by all means," I said. "And be sure to plant one that's immune to Fusarium wilts, too."

"Are you paying attention to me?" he asked sternly.

He really doesn't need my help to plan the garden. Any warm body that murmurs, "Mmm" or "Good thinking" on the hour inspires him to another monolog.

Our neighbor, Greg, is tops as a garden-planning companion. He shares Clovis's belief that leaving a patch of your own soil bare of seeds is immoral, un-American, and probably bad for your health. Between the two of them, they receive 104 seed catalogs a year. Each gets a thorough going-over before they order the same seeds from the same catalog as last year.

But first there's the annual pumpkin decision to make. Is this the year to be dashing and try Lady Godiva (Naked Edible Seed) Orange Beauties? The name alone has fascinated them for several seasons, but they hate to give up their old reliable variety: Yellow Pumpkin, Round.

The decision-making process nearly reached crisis proportions this year when Clovis tried to throw in a ringer.

"We're going to do something different for a change," he began, innocently enough. "I'm ordering three packets of Turks' Turban Ornamental Squash and six of the Early Prolific Crookneck Hybrids. That particular combination happens to come with a free offer of six chicks."

"What kind of chicks?" I asked suspiciously. "You don't mean chicks, as in fluffy yellow balls that grow into chickens!"

"Why, yes," he said casually. "It's a bargain. These chicks are U.S. Pullorum and Typoid free. Imagine having fresh eggs any time you want them."

"Imagine filthy chickens clucking around the yard, Clovis. Imagine a wifeless home, Clovis."

We arrived at a mutual decision to forego the free offer. He decided instead to become a tree farmer. Impatiently he waited for the truck to deliver his first two dozen trees. All conversations revolved around the small green forest which would flourish under his care. He would harvest the trees in two years--no, three years would be more profitable.

As it turned out, the truck wasn't needed. The mailman delivered all the trees in a business envelope. Clovis stared at the small pile of seeds and sobbed.▲



POLIENGINEERING

By René Gonzalez

So, Mr. Congressman, you've been caught with your hand in the cookie jar and now must find other employment to support your wife and mistress. You might try lecturing at universities as many other "retired" politicians have, but without your speechwriter your speeches would suffer from *rigor mortis* and die. Writing books about Washington could furnish a tidy income; retired politicians have written very successfully and profitably about behind-the-scenes Washington. With the help of a journalist to "organize your thoughts," literary style need not present a problem, but content would be dull and cliched to a public that craves intrigue and aberrant behavior. Though not a common move for people in your situation, why not consider going into engineering? The similarities between engineering and politics indicate that changing one profession for the other should be easy.

Since your clout with major corporations is insufficient to obtain a high-level executive position upon entry, you must take a mid-level stepping-stone job in, for example, engineering. Starting salary as an engineer is much less than you are accustomed to, but in a few years, as head of an engineering division, the pay will almost equal your previous public service job. Of course, your government salary was only a fraction of your income, and at first glance, getting your hand in the till may appear difficult. Be

assured that, as a ranking engineer, awarding contracts and approving projects will provide ample opportunity for additional income. Without expensive election campaigns and nosey reporters, your resourcefulness may even result in higher income than from your government job.

The working conditions are almost identical to those of your former employment. You will find such necessities as expense accounts, junkets and liquid lunches, but alas, you will have no opportunity to filibuster. However, plenty of podiums are available to the ambitious engineer. Perhaps an increase in frequency compensates for not being allowed to deliver twelve-hour orations to captive audiences. In fact, without your speechwriter, your speeches (boring as a brick) would fit perfectly into the corporate speechmaking style.

Fortunately, corporations assign tasks to engineering teams affording the opportunity for an expert committee manipulator, like yourself, to assume credit and avoid responsibility. Years of practice writing passively constructed reports and evading issues will prove more valuable in corporate engineering than knowing how to use a hand calculator.

Aside from being a wolf among the fold, in committee you have much valuable technical experience. Clearly you understand many engi-

neering subjects, since you have legislated the standards and regulations in fields as diverse as autos and atomic energy. Many regulations are so sophisticated some engineers do not understand them, and those who do frequently claim the regulations are impossible to achieve. Obviously you understand the subject better than these engineers, since eventually they quit saying "impossible, impractical and unfeasible," and comply with your standards.

What are you waiting for? With all these similarities between engineering and politics, the transition should be neither uncomfortable nor difficult. You are eminently qualified and have an opportunity to make good money, so don't delay. Apply (leverage) immediately for an engineering position. With your smooth style and resourcefulness, who knows what profitable ventures may be waiting for you in the corporations . . . How about an auto plant in Korea?▲



REJECTION

My life is all in shambles,
And I think that you're to blame.

I lit up all my candles,
But you just blew out the flame.

--D. C. Reid

I've tasted the touch of the trees against the sky
And walked the path of the moon, only stopping to gain momentum.
I've read the constantly changing words written upon the earth by the sun
And have known the seasons' change by smell rather than sight.
Yet I feel a pain, not in my memory,
Pushing me forward without complete understanding
As if a course has already been set to show me again
That I am not alone and shall never be.

--Roy O. Louis, Jr.



DOPPELGANGER

I know a ghost,
Although she is not dead
As things that no longer live or cease to be.

She has just faded away
 Spasmodically,
 Yet continually,
And now she is gone.

Once she was gay and bright
 And she smiled
 And she cared
For doing and dreaming and seeing others happy.

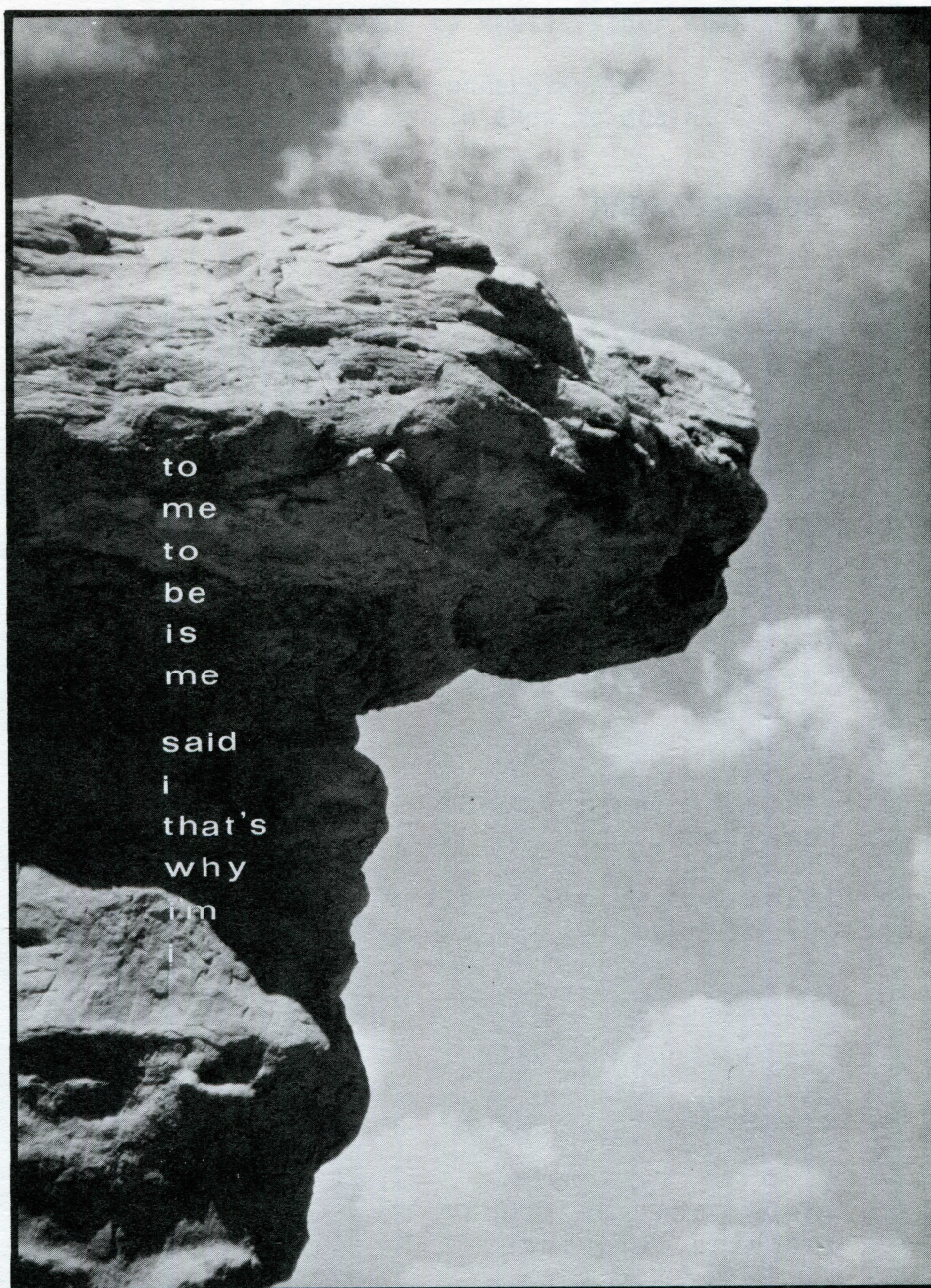
Then as if a curse
Had fallen over her
A vision of twisted torment stood
Sometimes in her place, until

At last the vision became the reality
And the goodness of her
 Faded,
 Faded to a place

From which it glides only rarely
To remind me
Of what I once knew
Of her.

In the place where once she stood
Now stands a reaching, groping
 Thing,
 Poisoning,
 Killing all around,
And claiming the deaths of those destroyed.

--Paula Stofer



to
me
to
be
is
me

said
i
that's
why
im



Lawrence
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