JANUS

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

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CONTENTS

COVER PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID BROWN

DISTRACTED

There are so
many better things
to write about
than your beauty

which I am not
presently concerned
with.

FRAGMENT

The quixotic
son of my neighbor
is sitting on the bus bench,
eating windmill
cookies.

THE ZOO

I fed some love
to the camels
despite what it said
on the signs.
The nasty bastards
spit it back but
I hardly felt like
I should have known
better at all.

HEADLIGHTS

We all take a look
at life,

when it stands
the way it stands
on the serious side of the tracks.

Do not be angry

that of all those headlights,
covering the highway
up and down the hill they define

you will meet exactly none.

Do not be angry

that the darkness pantomimes eternity,
while the radio station tower
stands alone and transmits nothing

and static fills the dashboard.

If you spin your dials inward
leaving what you know as frequency
you will find anger just another wavelength

and that we all take a look
at life the way it stands.

A FAREWELL

This is my last Chicago
winter
This town is a young man trapped
in an old man's body.

I have known the opposite of this.

Straight through the yellow jacket winds
of February,
I walked Sharidan Road by the college
and clung more than once to a traffic
signal, for dear life or it might have been
a broken passion to remain of this earth.

Or indignation to be cast adrift by such
a thing as the wind. Old ladies frightened
of the chill huddled in the doorway and
trusted what they could see of my pink face
to help them board the bus.

And I did and the driver waited.
And the sun broke through the clouds
and seeped into my facemask like age.
It stung my eyes during a short moment
of calm air.

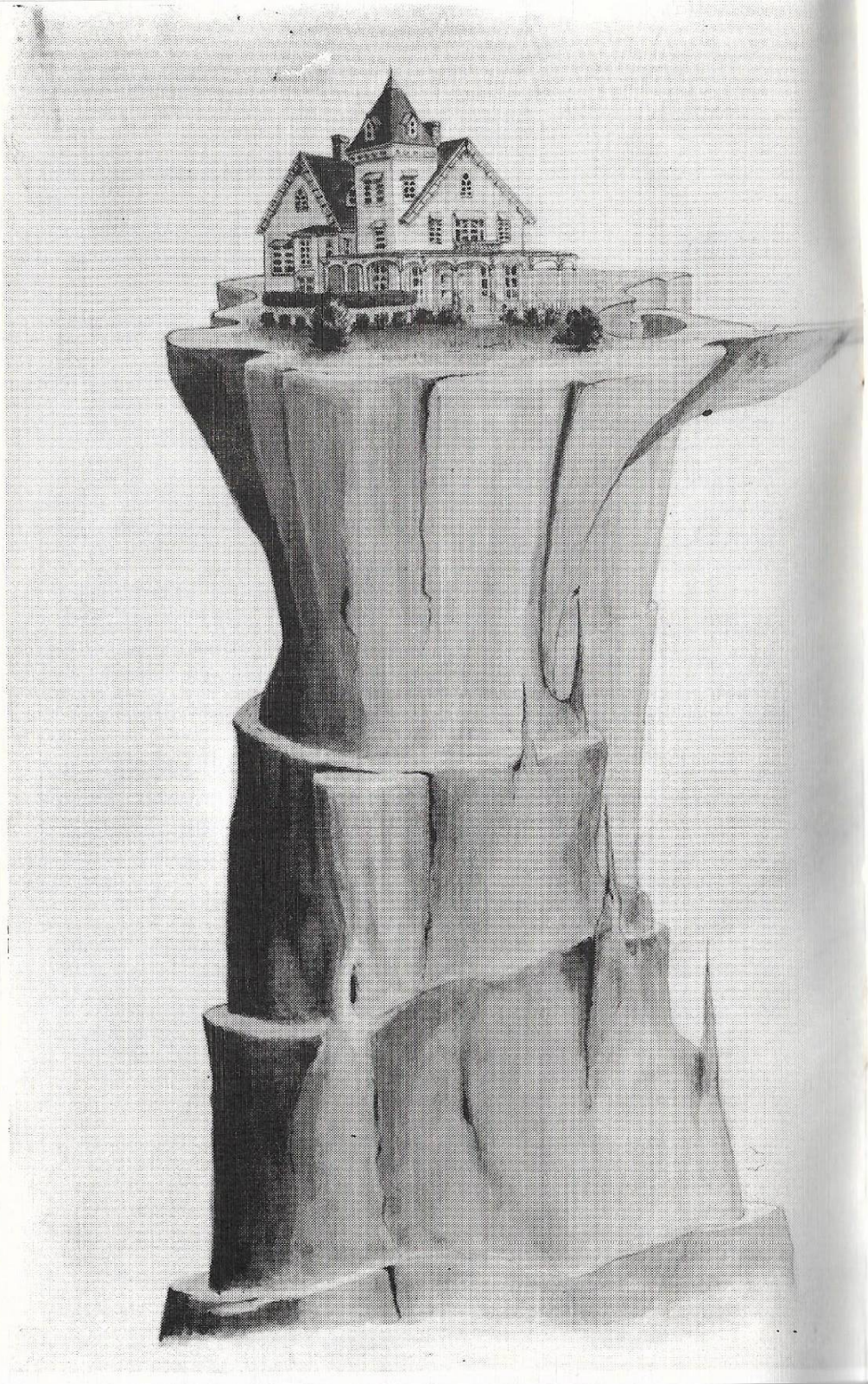
And all that was apparent was my
own breath's shadow in the cold brightness,
and that I must make the train before
the end of the calm in the wind.

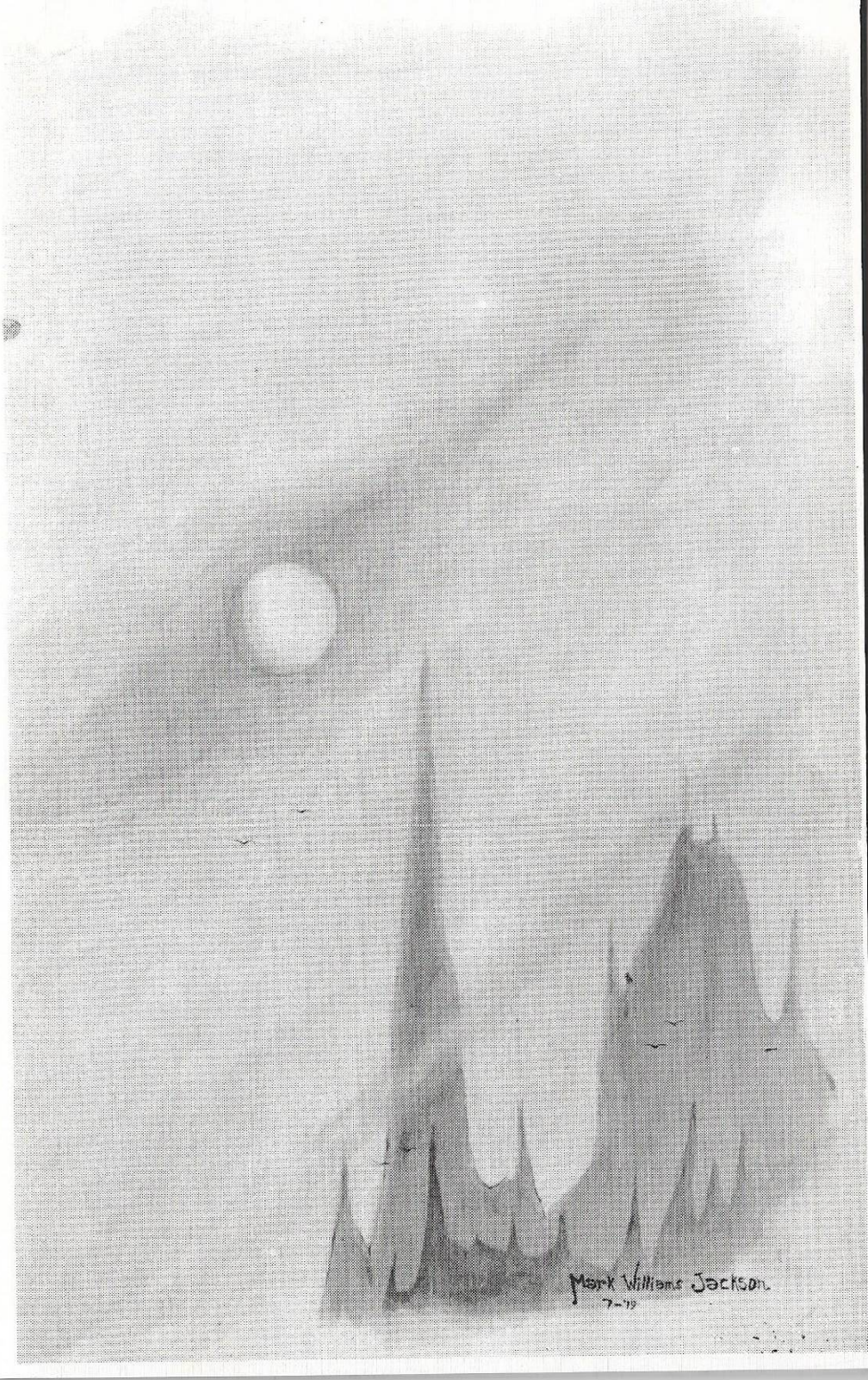
THORN

Dawn is the thorn in the hand
by which we bleed,
daylight embraces merrymaking
labor to warmly carry us through.

Nothing like death, says the man,
to make us feel
useless as hell--or is it useful?
Tuckered to pucker; done in or done.

Dusk is the shadow we send
by mail or phone.
When words of blood stop circulating
Night is the thorn that is worn at dawn.




Mark Williams Jackson.
7-79

Edward Martin Howard III

Edward Martin Howard the third, the name reeked with expectations for things to come. It was a noble name and seemed to speak of kings in far off lands. The number backing it seemed to give the owner all the power of three generations to do anything. Funny, he thought, everyone just called him Eddie.

Sitting aft of the midsection, Edward rested his paddle on the gunwales of the canoe. The canoe was aluminum and painted with green paint which had faded from years of sun and oxidation. Along its entire length were dents and scrapes. Where the paint was scraped, the aluminum shone like old war medals. Mounted at the stern of the canoe on a wooden frame was an electric trolling motor. Edward brought it along to get him through Three Mile Hole.

So far the float trip had been uneventful. The river was low, so much of the spectacular white water was easy to float. The fishing was easy, although they had been small and he had turned all of them loose. His mother had made him promise to bring home a lunker.

The sound of the riffle got louder as the canoe rounded the head. Edward stood up to see the best way to run it. Everyone called this set of riffles Rilley's Sluice. Bob and Nancy Jackson capsized last year trying to run it.

He remembered the float well. Bob and Nancy were in a canoe and he was floating with them in a kayak. He didn't have any problems but Bob and Nancy wrapped their canoe around a tree. Some people said it was easier to float the sluice by yourself because both partners had to be so synchronized. He and Bob worked for a long time trying to free the canoe but failed. Having to walk the rest of the way to the take out point, through an uncut path, they looked very weary when they dragged in that night.

Bob and Nancy used to be good friends of Edward's. Edward was the best man at their wedding, and the three of them had gone to the university together. Unfortunately, he hadn't seen them since they dropped out of school when Nancy got pregnant. Even with the money Edward had tried to lend them, Bob couldn't both work and go to school. The last

Edward had heard, Bob was holding down two jobs and they were having a rough time making it.

The canoe picked up pace as it was caught in the current. Looking down in the swift clear water, Edward saw a gray carp swim across the bottom. The water was so clear he could distinguish the different rocks on the bottom. Soon the gravel bottom was obscured by the ripples from the current. The water was shallow now and his paddle crunched in the rocks and the canoe scraped across the bottom. Digging his paddle into the gravel Edward pushed the canoe towards the deeper faster water which flowed on his right. The stream was banked on the right by a towering bluff, and on the left by a gravel bar which was spotted with cottonwood trees. Up ahead, a spring cascaded down moss-covered rocks in a crevice in the bluff. Where it joined the river the water had a deep grayish-blue hue. Edward felt the canoe get colder as he passed the spring. The river turned to the left ahead and became more challenging. Edward carefully positioned his canoe at a slant so it would line up straight after it passed through the down stream vee of water. Soon the current caught the canoe. He back-paddled on the right to keep the canoe straight. Ducking under some over-hanging willows he made some sweeps on the left to correct his course.

The river turned back to the bluff. Turning the canoe parallel to the bluff in anticipation of the turn, he noticed the ferns which grew in the rock bluff whose fronds draped against the cliff.

The roar of the water became deafening as he passed the bluff and headed towards a small shut-in. The river boiled over the rocks. His muscles felt tight under his sunburned shoulders as he threaded the old canoe through the white water and the boulders. The bow of the canoe ducked under the white froth after he passed through a small waterfall. Using quick draw strokes, he tried to avoid a large boulder on his left. The canoe came to rest on the smooth granite rock. Leaning down stream, he pushed the frayed tip of his paddle against the boulder to free the canoe. The stream lifted the stern of the canoe and it slipped away. Edward immediately back-stroked on the left side and did a sweep on the right to align the canoe in anticipation of a shoot. The keel scraped across a fallen tree and the canoe accelerated down the shoot.

The shoot emptied into a still pool. Edward paddled through the churning water at the mouth of the pool with long hard strokes to keep his momentum up.

Then, after storing his paddle, he reached for his rod and cast toward some reeds on his right. The splash of the feather when it landed scared a bull-frog on the bank which leapt into the water with a low croak. Lazily, he reeled in the lure and cast towards some lily pads. He had just noticed

that the lilies were folding up because it was late in the afternoon, when he got a strike. The rod tip whipped back and forth as the fish struggled on the line. In little time, he reeled in the fish and reached down with his dip net and lifted the small wildly flapping fish into the canoe. After untangling the fish from the net, Edward grabbed it by the lower jaw and unhooked it. Then lifting it high, he studied it. Moving its gills up and down in rhythmic manner, the fish had ceased to flop. The black stripe down its side was flushed from excitement. "Well, Mrs. Large-mouth Bass," joked Edward aloud, "you're lucky you're too small to keep." Then, with a flip of his wrist he tossed the fish back in the river.

It landed in the water, swam on it side for a few moments, righted itself and swam hurriedly back to the water lilies.

Edward had never had too much trouble with girls and, although he had dated quite a bit in his first three years of college, none had really impressed him until he met Lisa. Her energetic, outgoing personality had caught his attention and as he came to know her he found they had a lot in common.

He first met her during the summer while he was pumping gas. When her family was on a float trip and their car broke down, he talked to her quite a while. He still recalled his surprise when he found out that she also went to the university.

When he got back to school he looked her up. It was unusual for a girl to last more than a few weeks as the object of his attention. Edward tried to figure himself out.

She was pretty with long blond hair which framed her dancing hazel eyes and perpetual smile. She always seemed at ease and in good humor. Her smooth and silky frame shook when she laughed. He figured it was first her looks that lured him to be captivated by her sense of humor and personality.

Everything about her seemed perfect. She loved the outdoors and was athletic, enjoyed music and had beliefs that were the same as Edward's. They spent a lot of time together doing all sorts of things. As he got to know her better he found that she was prude enough to be respectable and easy enough to be interesting. His entire senior year he was fascinated and enchanted by her.

Edward cast a few more times over by the lily pads with no success. Then, after storing his rod, and pulling out his paddle he made his way to the end of the pool. The water once again became swift and carried the canoe gently down through a riffle. Edward pulled his paddle through the water and watched as the air swirled and gurgled to the surface. Ducking down under an overhanging tree his arms, hands, and face caught a spider's web. He rolled the sticky web into silk and tossed it

overboard. Paddling farther he noticed the spider whose web he had destroyed. It was a yellow and black garden spider and it sat on the bottom of the canoe, almost looking at him. Edward brought his dripping paddle on board, and tried to flick it out of the canoe. He only succeeded in sending it scurrying up to the bow of the canoe. Smiling at its helplessness, he continued paddling.

On his right was a slew where the water was dark as tea from the rotted leaves that lined the bottom. Two or three leopard frogs chirped as they leapt into the water. As he looked back on the slew, some turtles which had been sunning dropped into the river.

All his life Edward had wanted to be an engineer. So he had planned to go to engineering school after graduating from the university. Although his grades up until his senior year had not been great, he felt he could bring them up if he worked hard.

His first semester his senior year he had had a tough schedule and his grades had been good. He and Lisa had gone out to study a lot, which was one reason, but the main reason was that he wanted to impress her. Second semester Edward wanted to show her a good time. This meant instead of study dates, they went to parties. His grades suffered to the point that it was doubtful that he could get into engineering school. He had applied anyway on the off chance he might get in.

Edward had told Lisa that his chances of getting in were better than they actually were, because he felt ashamed at possibly not being able to reach his goal. Unfortunately, the school took a long time to process his application and return the verdict. For weeks he had to tell her that he didn't have an answer. Finally, he told her that he got in just to give her an answer. She took him out to celebrate that night, and he felt miserable. Everytime she told someone he was accepted he felt he was buried a little deeper. Still he didn't know.

The shadows were lengthening as Edward entered the riffle above Three Mile Hole. He back-stroked on the left and did a sweep on his right to angle the canoe over the shallow gravel. The canoe slipped sideways as the river curved to the left. When it reached the deeper faster water, he dug in with powerful deep strokes and pulled the canoe into the center of the river. Curving back and forth a few times, the riffle emptied into Three Mile Hole.

As Edward floated into the hole, he noticed the water change from clear to a deep green. The water was smooth like glass except for water spiders circling on the surface. Looking downstream he could see the reflection of feather-like clouds framed by the deep green trees that guarded either side of the river.

After considering the time, Edward stored his paddle, and picked up

his rod. He examined the yellow feather he had been using all day, and turned the silver spinner on its nose. Then, after grabbing the handle, he cast over to a spot between a large rock that stood in the water, and some lily pads. Reeling in slowly, he noticed the lilies had closed up for the night. He cast again to the same spot and saw a huge bass follow the feather as he reeled it in. It was a bass bigger than any he had seen before. Making a guess that it weighed between ten and twelve pounds, he set his rod in the canoe and excitedly opened his tackle box and shuffled through the lures until he found a top water lure. It was ugly, he thought, as he tied it on the line. With four treble hooks and four spinners, it was green with a large red eye.

Pressing his thumb on the release he drew the rod back and let the top water fly over between the rock and the lilies. With anticipation he watched the lure float on the water. Then, with a sudden jerk of the rod, Edward pulled the lure towards him. The top water dove and gurgled loudly. He waited a minute and pulled the lure for a second time, making it gurgle again. Eyeing the lure intently, he pulled once more.

Suddenly, the water exploded as the lunker left the water and dove on the lure. The line went taut and his rod bent double as the fish tore away. Quickly, Edward adjusted the stardrag, so the fish could take line. It ran, and stopped. Edward could feel the fish try to shake the lure loose. Edward tried to take up slack. When as quickly as before, it went on another strong run peeling off line as easily as he had reeled it in. It broke water and gyrated its body in another effort to throw the hook. When it jumped, Edward could see how beautiful its flushed body was.

Off on another run, it headed for the deep water on the other side of the canoe, and then before he could bring his line around the canoe it wound the line around the trolling motor on the stern of the canoe.

Afraid the line would break if the bass took another run, he set the rod in the canoe and unscrewed the motor mounts. Lifting the motor into the canoe so he could untangle the line, he saw the rod was about to slide overboard. Acting quickly, he set the motor on the edge of the canoe and grabbed the rod. In the process he tipped the canoe causing the motor to fall overboard. The weight of the motor immediately snapped the light line. With despair he watched the motor slip out of sight, taking the lunker with it. How stupid, he thought, not to go ahead and lift the motor into the boat. That way he would have had it and the fish. He blew his only chance. He slammed his rod in the canoe and paddled with his arms pumping furiously.

Since Eddie hadn't gotten into engineering school, he continued

pumping gas. Hopefully he could get a better job and Lisa would forgive him. If only he could forget the look on her face when he told her that he didn't get in, he might believe it. With a girl like Lisa, Eddie thought, you only get one chance.

The sky was a brilliant red and Eddie could see the rays stream through the clouds overhead. A chorus of bullfrogs bellowed their bass melody. He stopped paddling to swat a mosquito on his shoulder. Ahead he could hear the highway as cars and trucks passed over the bridge. The lights of the camp were hidden by the fog that was rising on the river. Eddie dug in his paddle and headed for home.

Jim Swindler

MIDSTREAM CATCH

The stream flows
molten glass
on shales laid green with moss

Flows so shallow so slow it fails
to catch my cuff
though lapping languid leaps

Entangled banks
rise wet in vine and root
shoot up
in ribbed groined vaults
to burst
in canyon crests of green

And nothing moves but time
through silent
pale wet light

I pluck an empty clam from its moorings
and set it afloat
pontoons adrift in doldrums

I watch the wait
the boat designs a winding spiral
through the pool
and rounds the river's bend

Suddenly silence breaks
eyes drawn up
great wings
now from me silent wrest
silent reins
great gray breast swoops the gap
between the crests
and is gone

A glance an instance
caught in midstream
But now the sun glistens
through the green
the woods are alive
with wind
and everywhere
are cries and pangs of birth

MENO

I sit in my rising strench,
engulfed by the Meno,
wishing Socrates had half the wit
with which to smell his own shit,
as well as Meno's.
Around me runs the din of dialogue
between the clock and page numbers,
one of which will win.
The numbers creep by as silently
as the clock's face unwinds;
and Socrate's summation and the Charmin
unfold simulataneouly.

DE-EVOLUTION

My Pryex dish has broken
And the heel on my genuine, artificial
grained cowhide leather boot has
fallen off
And somehow I wish to be running through
The forests pulling at roots and sleeping
naked for all of paradise to see.

TURMOIL, TORMENT,
AND OTHER MEAN AND NASTY THINGS...

With
with these
with these textbooks weighing heavy
and
and this smile writhing my face
I am tired
Fuck the government, I'm tired
I'M tired of looking for a Moses
every four years, and NO, I'M
not going to war, for anyone's
Swiss bank account
What the hell time is it anyway
my watch stopped Thanksgiving
I am fed up. I'm tired of
plastic aquarium plants and
the other day
I saw some guys get a cat high
I have no guilt, I no longer will say
"He's a good guy" when he molests his niece
Damn him anyway
And so what if I wanna be a rock and roll star
don't tell me I can't
I've tasted welfare and went 10,000 kilometers
over the sea to taste the southern sun
But you can't taste me
I hide under my long hair

A POEM FOR SARAH AND THE PEOPLE

The morning sun rises over the sleepy little town,
Yawning over the lakes as a farmer over his coffee.

All is calm, and the dew fresh.

In the void one hears the arousing of dog, bird and rooster,
The stars fade away as the light in the old wooden house
flashes on.

All is calm, as the shadows fade.

The faithful wife, grown old gracefully, begins the too well
known routine,
Bacon, eggs, toast,—the kitchen a stage, (a rose by any other name...)

All is calm, as the aroma drifts.

The old man stirs in his great oaken bed; sighs, smiles as he heaves
the soft worn jeans on once again,
He looks in the mirror and counts the creases—funny they seem to
deepen after Daniel was lost in the hostile jungle.

All is calm, and his footsteps fade.

On the stage, man and wife dash down substinence with that warm
imported liquid,
Tears well in the old man's eyes as he ponders over the stark yellow
of the yolk—he cannot forget.

His soul is restless, there is a pain in his heart.

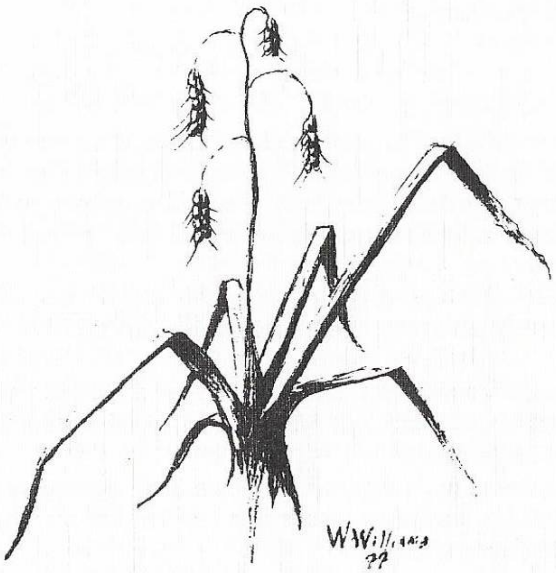
The gentle lady retrieves that mass of black and white-once read soon forgotten,
The old man sighs, perhaps he will soon see a bit of inspiration.

He rests as he sighs.

He reads the printed word--Hundreds of terrorists attacked Jerusalem overnight, murdering thousands of inhabitants and several American tourists,
The old man stops, stiffens, and studies the knob of a cabinet;
funny how it doesn't matter anymore.

He sighs again, and all is seemingly calm.

The morning sun rises over the sleepy little town,
Yawning over the lakes as a farmer over his coffee.



Peter Myers

DIEU 2

The hope of future ages rests alone on you,
Your smile--the unencumbered wrinkles of all time:
As sifting wisps of sage I smell your freshness spring
Like the budding leaves of cool March mint.

I have no poem to offer you, only words--
For as you be my God, I sense your face:
I cannot count the tendrils of your roots,
Nor touch the numbered leaflike veins above.

Karl Ray Lohmar

THE ICE CREAM MAN

Scene:
A street in northside Columbia. An ice cream truck rests on the side of the street in front of an old house. A fat, long haired young man, dressed in white, sits mesmerized in front of the ice cream cone he is eating. He is taking a break before continuing his route. You can hear children playing somewhere up the street.

A drunken old Negro in khaki staggers up to the truck and leans on the counter for support. The young man looks up and smiles bewilderedly.

"Hey man," says the old drunk. "Give me a pack of Pall Malls." The stale whiskey smell comes out with the slurred speech and mispronunciation of the cigarettes.

"I don't have any," says the ice cream man apologetically.
The old drunken suddenly lashes out and knocks the young man's ice cream cone onto his shirt.

"Man, you gonna give me those Pall Malls or not?" The old drunk squints his eyes and leans further over the counter for more emphasis.

"I told you. I don't have any," the young man tries to put on a face of defiance but looks like a cornered rabbit.

The old Negro half turns away and shakes his head. He turns back around with a Saturday night special pointed at the young man.
First music
-A blaring trumpet-

"Be cool, man," says the ice cream man. The young man now has his uncomprehending hands in the air over his head. His face is surprized and scared, dumb too.

"I be cool. Gi'me your money, man. Hurry up."

"I can't, my hands are in the air," the young man says with an air of despair.

"Le'me tell ya something boy," says the old drunk. "You been messin' with me. Now I usually a pretty nice guy, but you got me pissed to where I'm liable to go crazy." He again squints his eyes and leans further over the counter for intensity. He is in earnest.

-Music is now a hazy, wandering violin.-

"Now, what I want you to do is turn on your little music thing with one hand and get out the money with the other. Oh, and while you're at it give me one of those Bomb Pops.

"I only got two hands."

"You messin' with me, man? I got a gun. Just do as I say." The old drunk pulls back the hammer.

"Okay, okay," the young man reaches over with one hand and turns on the ice cream jingle, keeping his eyes nervously on the gun.

"Turn on the radio too, real loud, station KCJQ-97 FM."
The young man fuddles with the radio. After a few seconds he tunes in 97.

"Yea man," says the old drunk, snapping his free hand and dancing. "Yea."

The young man gets out the Bomb Pop.

"Just lay it on the counter, nice and easy."

The young man places the Bomb Pop gingerly on the counter, making sure it's not pointing at either of them. He then gets the money out and hands it all, about twenty dollars worth, to the old drunk.

"Thanks, man," the old drunk smiles and pulls the trigger.

The young man clutches at the counter for a second and then falls to the floor, pulling a copy of **Heavy Metal** to the floor with him.

-Close up shot-
Blood staining the **Heavy Metal**.

The old drunk watches with this grim amusement then picks up his Bomb Pop. He tears off the wrapper and takes a bite off the end. He then reaches into his trouser pockets and pulls out a bottle of Mad Dog 20/20 and takes a swig. He walks off.

-Close up shot-
Gun left on the counter.

Break for commercial.

Curtis Malone

LOVERS

Flesh, like ice cream melting in the dark.

JEWISH CEMETERY IN PRAGUE

There is
no room here.
Bones grind,
setting up a rattle.
Peace eludes them
even in death.

MICHELANGELO AND THE POPES

What began as an assignment
became obsession. Michelangelo,
like Sisyphus, attacked the stone,
but as unable to roll the rock
up the hill; the mountain was the stone
itself. The marble, carved away,
revealed the pitiless visages
of the men who chained him to this task.

MARY MAGDALENE

I came to the tomb
To anoint
His body with spices.
When I came it was opened,
The rock gone,
His body taken, with only the clothes left.
A gardener--please sir, please sir,
Tell me,
What have they done with his body?
Then my ears heard
Mary
And there, he was standing,
Master!

Eagle--
I went to the mountaintop,
I called your name--
You were not there.
I looked as far as possible,
My heart longed for your presence--
But you did not come.
Where have you flown?

SONG OF THE CORPSE

by Sham the Penman

Curtain opens to reveal road running along stage. Other than that stage is bare. A man, CARRIER, enters CL carrying another man CORPSE, in a wheelbarrow. The CARRIER sets the 'barrow down with a sigh, then wipes his forehead.

CARRIER: It's hot work.

After pausing for a moment he takes up the 'barrow and continues on his way. The 'barrow gives a lurch as if it were going over a bump. The CORPSE gives a moan.

CORPSE: Ohhh
CARRIER: Careful now.

The CARRIER continues carefully, but the 'barrow gives another lurch.

CORPSE: What's with the bumping? What's going on?
CARRIER: (stops 'barrow) Nothing sir.
CORPSE: Nothing! Why are you carrying me in this wheelbarrow?
CARRIER: In order to get to your destination.
CORPSE: What's my destination?
CARRIER: Then end of this road.
CORPSE: What's at the end of this road then?
CARRIER: The cemetery.
CORPSE: Why are we going to the cemetery?
CARRIER: That's where dead people go.
CORPSE: Oh. (pause) What?
CARRIER: That's where dead people go.
CORPSE: Yes, I know. But why are we going there?
CARRIER: To bury you.
CORPSE: What! Why?

CARRIER: Because you're dead.
CORPSE: Dead! I'm not dead. Let me out o' this.
CARRIER: Now, now don't argue. Just lie still until you've come to your destination.
CORPSE: You're mad. How can I be thrown among the dead when I'm still talking? Have you ever heard a dead man talk?
CARRIER: Of course, I'm hearing one now. They all say the same thing. "I'm not dead."
CORPSE: You must be completely mad. I demand that you let me go.
CARRIER: Ah now, I couldn't do that. Corpses have to go to the cemetery.
CORPSE: Oh, what am I going to do now? It's hopeless, hopeless.
CARRIER: No, it's not hopeless. Of course you're dead, but that's not too bad. If you're still talking when we get to the cemetery, you could talk to the other corpses.
CORPSE: How did I get here? How did I get in this wheelbarrow?
CARRIER: The same way as everyone else. You died, then there was the wake, then came the wheelbarrow.
CORPSE: How was it that I remember none of this? I wasn't even sick!
CARRIER: How do you know that you weren't sick with amnesia?
CORPSE: But you can't die from amnesia.
CARRIER: If you say so. But I thought that you said that you weren't dead.
CORPSE: I did. I mean I'm not. Now you've confused me. I don't know what I've said or what I am anymore.
CARRIER: See. Amnesia.
CORPSE: Perhaps. (pause) Oh, of course it's not amnesia. I'm alive. It's a dream. That's it, it's a dream. Be a good fellow and wake me up.
CARRIER: I can't.
CORPSE: What do you mean you can't? If you don't have an alarm clock just shake me. If that doesn't work, throw some cold water on me.
CARRIER: But if you're dreaming then I must be part of your dream. How could your dream wake yourself from up from a dream?
CORPSE: Then you must be an impostor. Let me up from here, I say!
CARRIER: I'm not stopping you. You're not dead, lift yourself up.
CORPSE: Hold on just a moment now, you can't get rid of me as easily as that. I didn't come all this way in the wheelbarrow to be shunted out without as much as a by-your-leave. I should think not!
CARRIER: As you wish. But I'm going to the burial ground.

CORPSE: Look, let's forget about the burial ground. (fumbles in pocket) I have some money here. Could I offer it to you to forget about the burial ground?
CARRIER: Thank you. (takes money) But no one forgets about the burial ground. Anyway, we're going to get there whether I forget about it or not.
CORPSE: You just took my bribe and now you're going to take me to the cemetery? Can't I get you to stop a while someplace? There must be an inn around here (looking around him).
CARRIER: There are no inns on this road.
CORPSE Perhaps there are some farmhouses then.
CARRIER: There aren't any farmhouses either.
CORPSE: Oh. Then oughtn't we to go back and find a place to stay the night.
CARRIER: I don't think so. I believe that you're trying to squirm out on me. I don't believe that you want to go to the cemetery at all.
CORPSE: Who me? What would make you think a thing like that? Mind it had entered my mind to put it off like, for a little while. After all, I'm not quite prepared for it.
CARRIER: I don't know. It seems to me that you're awfully anxious to avoid the place. First you say that you're not dead, then you think you've got amnesia, now you've got to stop someplace. It all sounds fishy to me.
CORPSE: Not at all. It's just that I've never been a good traveler.
CARRIER: Well cheer up. You're dead anyhow, and it can't be long to the burial ground.
CORPSE: I keep telling you I'm not dead!
CARRIER: I know. I'm getting damn tired of it too! People would think me mad talking and listening to a dead man.
CORPSE: There! Wasn't I just saying that you're mad. Now you admit it.
CARRIER: No, but if this goes on much longer you'll be drive me mad.
CORPSE: Good! Maybe then you'll be in this wheelbarrow instead of me.
CARRIER: No, sorry. Only dead people are allowed in the wheelbarrow, not mad people.
CORPSE: But I keep telling you that I'm not - Oh what's the use (with disgust).
CARRIER: That's better now. You're making real progress! Just sit quietly until you come to the cemetery. Then accept it when I've thrown you in, and make the best of it.

CORPSE: Will it be cold? I hope not. I don't want it to be dirty either. I've always been in delicate health. You will be carefuly when you dump me out?
CARRIER: Of course. I always take the best care of those who come with me. But don't worry about your health. You look in pretty good shape for a corpse.

CARRIER takes wheelbarrow and exists stage right.

Ray Roberts

THE FIX

I
Squeeze,
plunge,
push me into darkness.
Heroin eyes laugh at the coma-spasm
Lost...
fading,
fated to track my arms down the path of self-destruction.

My friends fix me,
my enemies fix me,
Walter Cronkite needle points my arms to the wall,
while Jesus freaks frisk my soul.

Tho' I am saddle sore
from riding my white horse
I turn her out to pasture in my mind.
    Gallop free among the spring grass and new leaves.
    Take me away...
goobye...

II
Thin sweaty junkie--
glassy eyed,
he vomits yesterday's hot dog
over his sticky shirt.
Fetal position on grey concrete
where he was thrown
after the cops dragged him
from the angry streets.

Some mother's son
with urine stained bell bottoms,
with red lids that hide yellow eyes,
with brown hair in mop strands
soaking up water from the leaking sink.

Yet he lies still,
thin lips drawn in a forgotten smile,
as a siren shrieks in another hot August night.

III
I hear sounds,
they have no meaning.
I see light,
it must be day.
I do believe my horse has returned once more.

IV
THIS IS THE THIRD TIME FUCKER
AN' I CAN HANG YOUR ASS SUCKER.
I can take the key and throw it away
or arrange it so you can leave today.
I notice you're sweaty, are your thoughts getting murky?
Have you ever thought of going COLD TURKEY?
Play it our way and you'll get a fix.
Just narc for us man, and a few other tricks.

V
I am saddle sore and my white horse
has broken down her stall.

    Gallop free through the fields,
    take my parched mind down to the stream...

VI
Red lights reflect off the tenement windows.
Black faces crowd the scene.
Crystallized Cadillac window,
white upholstery with red drops and a stain.

The shots echo off the tongues of onlookers,
as the crowd splits in twos and fours
and the sirens shriek in the hot August night.

VII
Two men were killed in what police estimate to be the third largest drug bust in New York's history. Over six million dollars worth of heroin was confiscated. Police say the bust was possible due to a tip from a junkie. And that's the way it is August eleventh, 1980.

VIII
Thin sweaty junkie,
chewing on a hot dog,
reading a tract some Jesus freak gave him,
reads the tracks on his arms.

IX
My friends fix me,
my enemies fix me,
and tho' I am saddle sore
from my white horse
it is I who buck, my strength is too weak.

Gallop free through the fields going to seed
as death prepares for his harvest.

Dennis Weiser

CORNDOG OPINIONS

I was astonished to learn that friends at **The New Yorker** (as much as by the discovery I have friends there) were unfamiliar with the word **corndog,** as it has recently come into vogue in the context of American rhetoric. While I have frequently identified its glossy pages with mawkish prose and obscure wit, I am prepared to admit my judgement may have been somewhat premature. In the interest of a successful summer Olympics and of securing the speedy release of the hostages as well as overcoming tawdry regional differences, I offer the following explanation of a location and usage that is sure to become increasingly current in this election year.

While lending itself to infinitive and gerund forms ("To-corndog-it-up in these pages, or not to-corndog-it-up in these pages, that...), this **bon mot** is principally a noun: one for which I propose the following tentative definition:
Corndog, **korn-dawg,** n.

1. A food: a hot-dog wrapped in corn meal, with or without cheese. (We are all acquainted with this, I think).

2. A person: i.e., a big or huge man.

3. A person: i.e., a distinctive character, combining incongruous traits (grace **and** clumsiness, bad taste **and** wit, subtle charm **and** gargantuan philistinism) simultaneously in a unique redeeming way. A lovable slob.

The following examples of usage are paradigmatic:

1. "King of the Corndogs" (i.e., Wallace Beery);

2. "Quit corndoggin'-it-up in here--this is the Museum of Modern Art!"

3. "That was strictly a corndog lecture." (In other words, it was Ralph.)

Wallace Beery is, of course, the King or Grandaddy of Corndogs. Of nearly the same magnitude is the inimitable Jack Carson. Next in the hierarchy of heavyweights comes William Bendix. But Jackie Gleason runs a close third as the immortal Ralph Kramden of **The Honeymooners**. ("Hey-y, **Nor-ton!**...One o' these days, Alice, one o' these days--Pow! Zoom! to da moon!") You mean you never wondered why Alice always took him back? You bet she knew.

Semantically, the term seems to have strong affinities with "blimps," a favorite expression of George Orwell's. As, for instance:

The hatred which the Spanish Republic excited in
millionaires, dukes, cardinals, play-boys, blimps,
and what-not...
("Looking Back On The Spanish War," page 209)

"The true corndog is, first of all, a--**big man,**" says Tom Bussmann, a local authority on Corndogdom. "Size is all-important." According to Bussmann's fiat, Jerry Lewis can never be a corndog. But Ted Kennedy has great potential. Even Art Carney as Norton is no corndog, although Bussman admits:

"There is an **aspect** of the corndog about Art, but--it's a frail and pitiful thing compared with Bendix or Carson. He lacks size."

Not all the experts agree. Herme Poipozoide, Semanticist at the University of Chicago, claims another King.

"There is no question in my mind," says this shy, somewhat reserved professor, "that the real King of the Corndogs is: Idi Amin." And it is here that our provocative concept enters the realm of politics.

Look at the line-up of contenders--Republicans and Democrats alike--of candidates and crypto--candidates for the highest office in the land. Ted Kennedy has already been mentioned, but what about Reagan? Can one actually imagine this creature of the media without his glib and pearly smile? Wasn't he the original model for Cleavon Little in **Blazing Saddles**? One has only to think of Calvin Trillin's "Variations" column in **The Nation**--three successive articles picturing Reagan astride a white horse, defending his age--or see **King's Row** to recognize the potential which Corndoggery represents on the American political scene. One is tempted to speak of a flourishing "cult of the corndog"...

For sheer explanatory power, the vehicle is unmatched. What other idea or godword can assemble, in a breath, under a single, as it were, comprehending umbrella, the likes of:

Idi Amin (cannibal, political grotesque, joke on reality); Ted Kennedy (murderer? suicide? test-tube baby? closet economist?); John Connally (bears an uncomfortable resemblance to the late LBJ); Henry Kissinger (a "theoretical" corndog, a phone accent, a future porn film stud); Andy Devine ("Wait for **me.** Wild Bill!"); Joe McCarthy, Spiro Agnew and Tip O'Neill?

Even Orson Welles has his corndog moments, attested to by guest spots on Merv Griffin and the Tonight Show. Or--better still--The Dean Martin--Jesters Celebrity Roast. Consider these names and you will get a glimpse of what is going on. What an array! At last, a reliable test of political liability is at hand. No other criterion so readily distinguishes the radicals and reactionaries, the fascists and crooks, the Milton Friedmans and the Moonies. It is surely on a matter of time before a Corndog Party sweeps the nation in some election year. No doubt many a future grandmother will be humorously remembered by her heirs as having "voted a straight Corndog ticket!"--And not always by mistake, either.

As Bussmann so elegantly, so wisely puts it: "All Corndogdom is but a lengthy footnote to Wallace Beery."

Debra Wilson

RENEWAL

Tremble me, man of old
Shake my foundations, make me act,
flesh of my flesh,
blood and bone of my being,
out of whom I was created.
Be my muse, my Spirit,
fill the hole in my heart,
deplete the void, tear it away.
Sacrifice the empty,
render me whole and fresh,
be vibrant within me.
Spirit of my past,
make your existence felt,
do not leave me desecrated,
do not leave me as I am.
Complete me,
finish my creative process,
direct me to my conclusion.
End me -- as you began me --
in your image.

Michael Locke

A DISTANT VOICE

Mike, Mike, Mike
was the echoed sound.
I of arrogance stopped,
smiled,
waved and talked.
In our conversation
Mike was mentioned eighteen times.
How sweet the name
Mike, I of arrogance.

Our conversation?
I only remember
Mike,
I of arrogance.

THE EYES HAVE WALLS

You're only prints of lions,
not real.
But indeed your stare
makes me uncomfortable.
Your frames seem not
to retain you, for
you escape and chase my imagination.
Back to your frames,
I say, with chair and whip in hand.

AN ELEGY FOR WINTER

Why linger old man Frost?
Procrastination will get you nowhere.

Behold Spring.
She digs your grave, and you -
slowly melt into it.
Your melancholy white soon
turns into a muddy ooze.
The rose that gasps for light
obtains it,
and she buds.
You have lost,
old man Frost,
and you reply, "Mother Nature is a bitch."
Spring replies, "Indeed, so am I."

Scott Acton

LUNCH

You

and

I

a distant pair we are
separated
by time
by words that echo
off the walls
never reaching the interior
distant eyes and far away voices.

I did not digest a word—
hollow, empty space
of bland nothingness
filled my mind.

THE ENTERTAINER

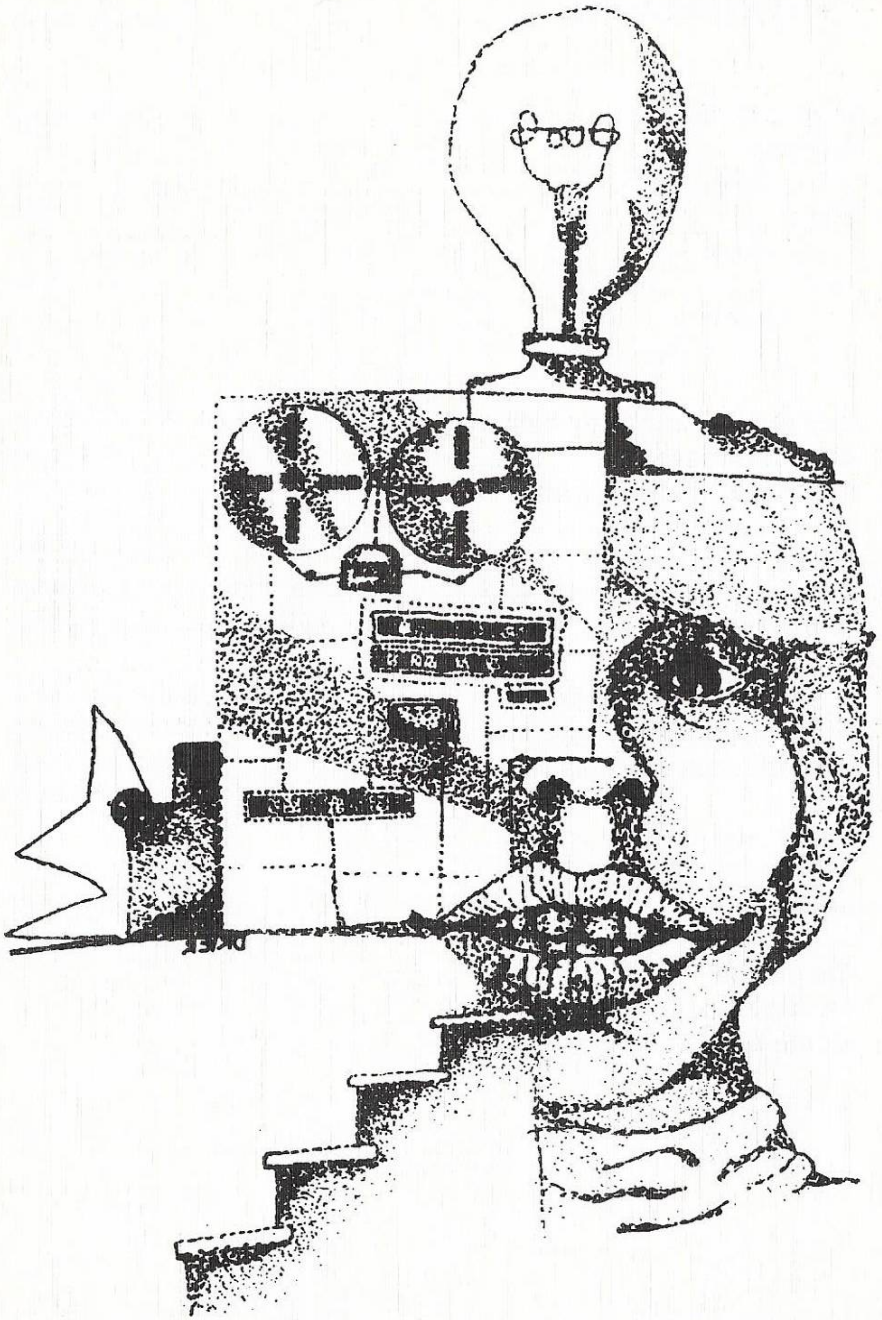
little gray cat
jumping
        here
and
        there
to
        and
                fro

tiny paws precariously balanced
on the windowsill
whiskered nose peeps from
        under the bed
yellow eyes intently
following the erratic movement
of the fish

If you could only know
what happiness you give me.
No admission for your show.

Thank-you
for the entertainment
little gray cat

Thank-you
for exploring
all the possibilities...



SONG

A room lets down the first light.
I stand at the door, awake in my body,
and listen to the music before words.

Hands rise above keys--
a man's or woman's, at work, alone.

If they could find one body--
like extending your life in a long dream--
not my father, not my mother,
not the woman who slept inside me,
not the boy asleep in the next room
who has looked into my eyes.

Air drifts in the branches of trees,
the windows' blue, patient exchange of breath.

THIRTIETH BIRTHDAY

Apples and Oranges, Cezanne

The ghosts
of a boy and girl
lay down over leaves
in piles on a table.

As if they had offered
their lives, they hold fruit
on a plate, in a bowl,
their hands.

Each piece begins
to peel its own light,
but flowers on a pitcher
have darkened.

Outside, the sun
has stood in the trees.
It passes a window,
It re-enters the skin.

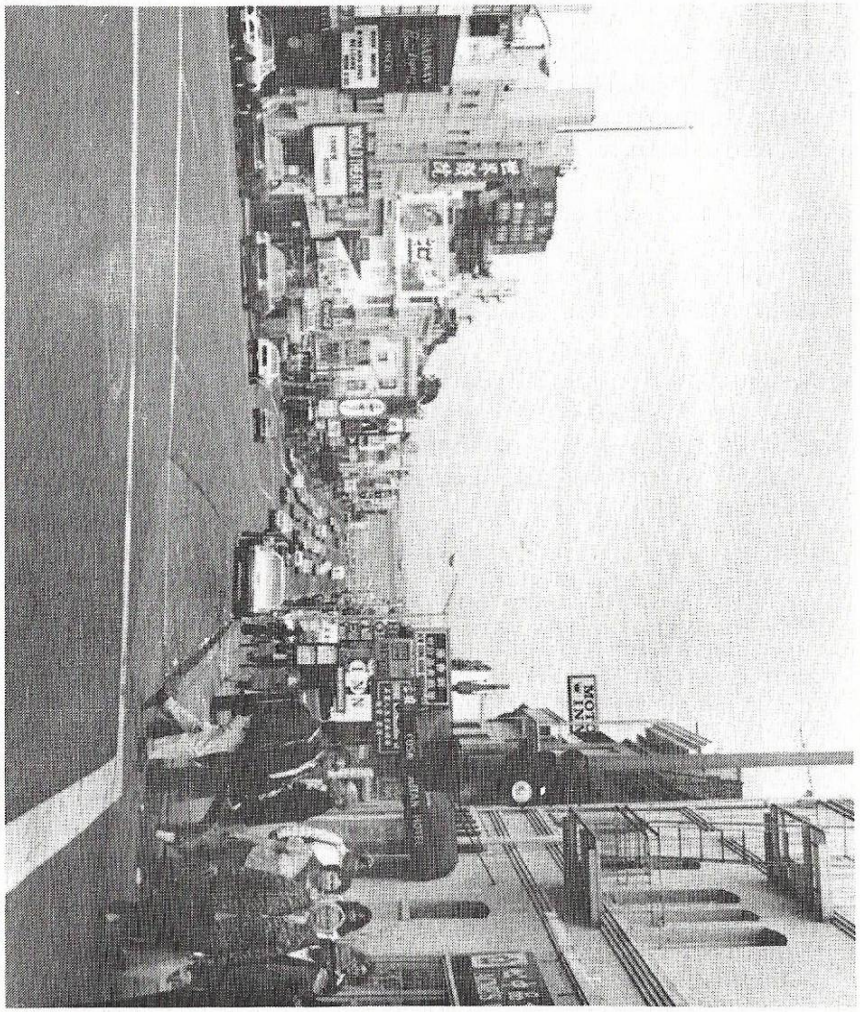
POEM TO MY SON

I dreamed that at a party my friend
had lost his job--or part of it; he went out,
hunted in a bar in town for the night,
and, blazing, became himself an industry.

My father, up early, held himself to the light
like chemicals. Then, covering the stairs to my door
all morning, he removed each one
and packed it in his trunk, slat on slat.

Afraid of death, he passes my friend,
out of work, or in his work if he has work,
in or out of a dream. Under a lamp, quiet,
I have gazed and spoken with these men, loved--

one to one, one over one, only part
of my life, and of your life as I look at you
sleeping. This morning, in December, it's warm.
The shadows of branches topple like sticks.



Mark Jackson

THE MISSISSIPPI ADVENTURE

After the icy water spilled into my paper cup from the employees' cooler, and after I started drinking, I looked up to see scores of open mouths on wet, steamy faces; all their eyes were riveted on my cup. Too bad they could never get any. The queue-house, a structure to hold the waiting masses, was packed, indicating a typically busy summer afternoon--and a hot one at that. The line's coordinated movements made it seem like a single giant, streaming life form.

I could sense that my time was short. I climbed in through the open wall toward my place at the bow. As the last few guests (as paying customers were called) found their seats, I watched a crumpled paper cup drift past the boat while I straightened my hair. I faced the stern and leaned against the bow with my legs crossed.

"Cast off, captain!" the loading-girl on the dock shouted, "and try to bring a few back this time." The expected giggles quickly died down and all supposing eyes were upon me.

Click. On went the smile, microphone and auctioneer voice.

"Good day, my brave and adventurous friends, and welcome aboard my riverboat, the **Juanita**, for what I'm sure you'll find to be a most exciting journey down this the father of all rivers--the mighty Mississippi..."

My job as a tour guide was to highlight the attractions through a continual stream of jokes. I used nauseating one-liners which were funny as a result of their ridiculousness. Henny Youngman became my guiding light.

"Be sure to keep your hands inside the boat at all times, folks, on account of the alligators. Once, I had a school teacher on board who didn't hear me say that. Now she's teachin' shorthand..."

Yuk, yuk, yuk!

Over to your right, folks, we **barely** missed being torn to bits by a treacherous waterfall. A great Spanish explorer named DeSoto was the first to discover this wonder and now we call it...DeSoto water!"

Yuk, yuk!

"Over to your left you can see Pierre and Tony's 'Thick and Thin' sawmill. There's Pierre now, sawing a plank! Seems a shame he's gotta work alone. I guess the others got board and split!

Yuk.

One after another these jokes were fired, relentlessly mocking the animations. Though the spiel remained unchanged, no two adventures were quite the same; there was always something to make each trip unique.

After a period of time, delivering the spiel became second nature, and simultaneous daydreaming inevitably occurred. But one had to be careful. Frequently, I would snap out of a trance to see people looking inquisitively at me with their heads tilted to one side. I would realize my spiel was describing something yet to come and out of sight.

About halfway through the trip, when the riverboat leaves the cave, it finds itself near the shore of the mining camp. One one voyage, there was a beautiful girl wearing a halter (which was not so successfully halting) and I was distracted. Here was what I should have said:

"To your right, ladies and gentlemen, are two panhandlers searching for gold (an animated miner dug at a pile of dirt with a pick--I would call out for directions, but of course he never answered). I guess they're too busy for us, folks, and they're gonna keep minin' their own business!

Yuk, yuk, yuk.

But as I said, this time I was distracted.

"Over to your right ladies and gentleman are two tits..."

I was horrified; what could I do? I knew I couldn't dig a hole in the boat. People were mostly shocked. The men jerked their heads to the right, and "where" was written all over their faces. Some people suggested that what we were seeing looked more like a miner's camp. I agreed. The remainder of that voyage took an eternity.

Maybe what I said that day would have been more appropriate the year before when a lady actually breast fed her baby at the rear of the boat. True, lady, this is a family park, but I think you're going too far! (I never really said that to her). I could not do anything about the situation because I knew darn well that the baby was too young to read the sign prohibiting beverages on board.

The kids gave the ride its spirit. When I hit the deck at the onset of an Indian attack, the kids got right down there with me. Some of them were braver than the rest and ventured to shoot back at the attackers with the pop-guns their fathers just bought them. I judged my performance by the percentage of these little tykes I could make cry; the more the merrier!

I could get adults too. In the middle of the cave when all was black, I would shout suddenly and grab someone's shoulder. This technique

can effectively induce birth or heart failure. Much to my horror, one guy dropped his Nikon camera in the drink after I pulled this stunt. He called me a "royal ass" at the top of his lungs. I told him how truly sorry I was and how it would never happen again.

"Again?!" he gasped, "you're a royal ass!" The management paid for the repair of his camera after I dove for it.

Technical difficulties were rare, but when they happened, the **really** happened.

Early in the adventures, guests were typically astonished to see a four-foot tall "killer" bear who moves his stubby claws and growls ferociously in front of his cave.

During one cruise, after the bit about how deadly a bear attack would have been, a guy in the back shouted, "Hey, he's after us!" Sure, buddy, I thought, what a nut.

But when I looked behind, the bear was sliding along the grass on his belly straight toward us! I ran to the back of the boat and just before I got to the stern, the bear slid into the water and began torpedoing toward us. The crew was howling with approval for what they thought was a brilliant animation. I tried desperately to ignore the swimming bear so I could finish the remainder of the spiel. But everytime I saw it, more tears of laughter would gush down my face.

The trip-wire which engages the animation became entangled in the boat's underwater guide wheel. There was never a dull moment on the river ride.

When I look back on all the fine times I had, one thing still bothers me. I deceived countless youngsters into believing the Mississippi River flows in a giant continuous circle. The joke's on them, I guess.

Yuk, yuk, yuk.

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