

WHARFTOWN IN WINTER

Spewn
from the salt-frozen
sea-shingled
darkness of
an icy
dream,
the snoring streets
whisper in the naked
slumber
of night-driving
dawn, and
wake in the yearning
prenatal cavity
of morning's
bellygreen thighed
blossoming
of pregnant sleep.

Dennie Willmont

TO SPRING
or, REVIVING THE GODS

Spring came yesterday
which event was hoped
might loose dessicated
poems from the grip
of an antiseptic fist
(since I am unaccustomed
and in terror of such
said sterility)

And the sun flew among trees
like a voiceless bird
leaving the twig-shadowed ground
crossed with bird prints of light.
And I, like an augurer,
studied these signs
waiting for poems to sing
from the steaming guts of the earth.

But March ground is hard.
No bolts of thunder break
at my ritual altar;
nor would I praise
a misogynous Muse.
Therefore I offer
a few bloodless lines
to the new season.

Sherry Lougheed

winner of the sigma tau delta prize for short story

NO DREAMS * NO TEARS * FOR ALBERT

Albert Rich was a quiet man, quiet and unassuming. He looked as though he might have been born wearing the thick glasses that he was never seen without. Albert led a peaceful life, with a minimum of disturbance; the only exception was the dream that plagued him.

Every night, it was the same, or almost the same, dream. He was always at the edge of the escarpment, and there were always the featureless faces that told him not to leap, "Don't jump; DON'T JUMP!" they shouted, while their arms pushed him. Every night they pushed him, and he fell, screaming, but he never hit the unseen bottom. He always woke up, just before his plummeting, paralysed body seemed about to splatter itself among the unseen horrors in the blind pit. He never actually saw what was below the edge, but in the few seconds of half-sleep at the end of the dream, he imagined, sweating and twisting the sheets, what awaited him. Albert could never remember the details of the dream in the morning; he only remembered the spent agony of running, without moving, in his sleep, and felt the wet sheets against his arms and legs.

The dream had started a little over a year ago, only about a month after his marriage to Polly. He and Polly had known, or had been aware of, each other for several years, but their courtship had been sudden, swift and quiet, as suited them both.

Albert Rich and Polly Allen shared, along with a half-a-dozen other employees, a crowded office in the building of a large accounting firm. Albert had been with the firm for five years, Polly only three. For three years, a cursory greeting in the morning, and a stiff "Goodbye" at five o'clock, were the only words, other than those required in the course of business, that passed between the two. This routine would probably have continued had they not, quite accidentally, happened to share a small table in the office cafeteria.

Albert went through the line and bought his lunch. This didn't take long, because he always bought the same

things: a bowl of soup, vegetable if they had it, a cold sandwich (the one included in the special), one cup of coffee, "Double-cream, please", and an apple, for the busride home. After he paid the cashier, he picked up his tray, and went to his table; for five years he had been sitting at the same table, a double in the corner, and he thought of it as "My table."

The cafeteria was crowded when Polly got there, and by the time she passed through the line, carefully deciding what she would have for lunch, all the tables but one were filled. She picked up her tray, and looked around, "Oh my, where will I ever find a seat?" She eventually spotted Albert, alone in the far corner. "There's that nice Mr. Rich; I wonder..." Holding her tray carefully above the heads of the seated diners, she picked her way through the maze of chairs and tables.

"Hello, Mr. Rich--Do you mind if I sit with you...I'm afraid this is the only empty seat in the place," she said, pointing around the room with her tray, as if to confirm her statement.

He looked up, startled; it was the first time in five years that anyone had asked to lunch with him. "Oh--ah, certainly, Miss--Miss, ah, Allen. Uh - of course." He stood, awkwardly, while she removed her meal from the tray. When she took her seat, he retrieved the napkin she had dropped and sat down, spooning his soup nervously.

"Thank you, Mr. Rich."

"Quite all right, quite all right..."

"Oh, no--why if you hadn't been here...well, I would have had to eat standing up, I'm afraid," she laughed.

They ate the rest of the meal in silence, and while he drank his coffee, Albert read the paper he had bought that morning (he always bought a paper on the way to work and read it at lunch). When he put down his empty cup and started to fold his paper, Polly grabbed the cup, and stood up.

"Let me get you another cup of coffee, Mr. Rich."

"No, no--I never..."

"I insist, I hate to eat alone, and you were so nice about letting me sit with you..." She turned, then turned back to ask, "How would you like that?"

"With double-cream, but...but..." he stammered, but she was gone.

They had lunch together for the rest of the week, and by the third day they were on a first-name basis. On Saturday of the first week, they went to a movie; after the movie Polly took a cab home (at her expense), and Albert walked. At the end of the third week, Polly invited him to her flat for dinner, and, leading him into thinking it was his idea, proposed to him. She, he actually, accepted, and three weeks later they were married.

Everyone at the office said that it was a perfect coupling; two quiet, timid people like Polly and Albert should get along perfectly. "Why, they probably even have matching prescriptions for their glasses."

They also thought it would be a perfect marriage. Albert enjoyed being with Polly; they seemed to have so much in common. Their conversations were so interesting, and he really felt comfortable just talking to her; he had never felt at ease with a woman before. He really hadn't thought much about the marriage bed and its attendant responsibilities; he supposed that it would just come naturally. Polly had different thoughts. She was, or imagined herself to be, an extremely volatile woman. She was small and mousey and even looked a little gray around the edges, but she was sure that there were great, untapped reservoirs of passion boiling over inside her. When she and Albert were married, she thought that her, so far unresolved, fantasies (at the reception, she blushed, just to think of them, and the few guests passed it off as a maidenly blush, or perhaps the wine) would finally be realized.

On their wedding-night, after both had passed the first embarrassment at being in the same bed together, Albert found himself unable to satisfy her.

"I...can't. I just can't," he moaned. "Maybe, maybe it was the wine, I'm not used to it."

"Of course, dear, it was the wine," she said in a small voice.

"I...I don't know..." He sat on the edge of the bed and smoked a cigarette, looking at the floor. "Let's get some sleep--maybe later--maybe tomorrow..."

She nodded, and smiled a tight smile, then rolled over and buried her face in the pillow, crying. Albert lit another cigarette, and sat with his head in his hands.

Later did not work, and it wasn't the wine. The short honeymoon went badly and ended on a sour note. They went back to the city and moved into his old flat, furnished with twin beds. Nights were Hell, especially for Polly; she felt cheated...

..."Albert," she looked nervously at the ceiling above her bed, "Albert--I've been thinking--"

"Thinking what, Polly?"

"Well...maybe you should--should see a doctor?"

"A DOCTOR, WHAT IN HELL FOR?" he sat up and yelled.

"You know...Maybe it would help..."

"NO! There's nothing wrong with me!"

"Albert?" she pleaded.

"We'll talk about it later," he said, but they never did; he wouldn't hear of it.

Then the dream started, and they both lived through it each night. Albert stayed awake late into the night; he thought that maybe the nightmare wouldn't come in such a short time, but it did, and he was only more tired. He rolled and kicked and twisted each night, and the faces that he couldn't quite see pushed him with their arms, and he screamed until he woke himself up.

It wasn't just the screaming that kept Polly awake. Albert frightened her; she had quit her job, and now Albert called in sick all the time, and he stayed home for days at a time. He sat in the livingroom all day and muttered to himself, and he yelled at her, for little or no reason. She thought that they would both go out of their minds if something wasn't done.

He was sitting in the living-room; his head rested on his arms, folded across his drawn-up knees. She walked to the back of the chair, and put her hands on his shoulders.

He pulled away, shrugging her hands off. "WHATTA YOU WANT? GET AWAY FROM ME!"

"I want to talk to you."

"Well, TALK--nobody's stopping you!"

"Albert, I said before that you should see someone. Well, now I think it's time..."

"YOU BITCH! You mean a psychiatrist; you think I'm CRAZY!" He whirled and grabbed her arm. Shaking her violently, he screamed, "I'm NOT--I'M NOT!"

"Albert, you're hurting me," she whined.

"I'll HURT you--teach you to call ME crazy!" He hit her, and found a release; almost overjoyed, he hit her again and again, rejoicing every time his fist struck the soft, oozing flesh. She passed out, and Albert ran from the apartment. He walked the streets for hours, crying, and when he returned, contrite, she, with most of her things, was gone.

In the days following, Albert was lonely; there was no word from Polly, and he had no idea where she might be. Soon, though, he slipped back into his familiar pattern of bachelorhood, and even the dream ("Thank God") failed to torture him. The nightmare's absence was short-lived. Loneliness returned, and with it the dream, and it now had a greater intensity than he remembered.

Albert had never been a drinker, but now he needed help. He sought strength in bars, and found a temporary respite from the cold eyes of reality. The dream persisted, but he could forstall it with alcoholic images and wanderings. The arms were weaker, and the voices less insistent; he continued to drink.

Albert didn't quit work, and he wasn't fired; he simply stopped going. He spent his days, and nights, wandering from bar to bar, till he couldn't stay up any longer; then, somehow, usually made his way back to his apartment and passed out. He roamed the city both from boredom, and in search of an exit that always seemed to slip away just before he got there.

One night Albert groped his way through a part of town he hadn't seen before. He stumbled into the first door that was shadowed by a glittering sign that bore a promise of escape. There was laughter, and the music from the juke-box blared loudly; the void began to fill.

He slumped at the bar and ordered a drink. The juke-box halted abruptly in the middle of a song, and a small combo started tuning up in the corner. Albert wiped the teared

smoke from his eyes, and peered around him; something was wrong; he could sense it. "Sumpin' funny here...awful funny ...don' know..." he muttered. An imploring sax screeched, and a girl ran up onto the small, raised stage. Albert stared. She began to dance, slowly and sensuously, and as she bumped and ground, the customers hooted and applauded. Albert stared silently. The dancer teased the crowd; she plucked and pulled at straps and buttons, but revealed nothing. The crowd's frenzy grew, and Albert continued to stare, fascinated.

Voices came from behind him, "Christ, she looks real," said one.

"Yeh, I'd like ta git into that--she's some fine queen," answered his friend, "probly jus' like a broad, only..."

The voices drifted off, and Albert, in alcoholic confusion, tried to understand what they were saying. "Jus like what?" he mumbled, "Real...Watta they mean, real?"

Shouts from the audience brought his thoughts back to the dancer. She was starting to strip, and the crowd was at fever pitch. As Albert watched, thick ropy saliva choked him; he swallowed again and again, like a drowning man, and he wiped his palms across his thighs to dry the sudden sweat.

The dancer swayed and writhed, and Albert shook his head to clear it. "No! She...she isn't... She's not..." He knew now what the men had been talking about, but he couldn't take his eyes from the grinding body. The dancer's gyrations were more insistant now; she (he) rocked back and forth wildly, and in one swift motion, tore the remaining shred of cover off and threw himself to the floor.

Albert jammed his hand into his crotch and doubled over, moaning. "I'm not--I'm NOT," he cried, "Oh GOD, GOD--NO! no..." He looked toward the dance-floor, crying, and sudden panic seized him. The ones who were dancing pumped their arms up and down, and he couldn't see their faces. The faces were blurred, featureless, and their arms coiled and pushed in front of them. He froze, watching them, and the dream--the nights of sleepless agony--flashed in front of him; he saw the bottom of the pit for the first, horrible, time. The arms moved toward him pushing, and the mocking voices

pleaded with him. Albert turned and ran screaming into the night.

The dancers continued to dance, singing and screeching with the wild, explosive music; they heard no screams, and saw only themselves.

Three days later the police found Albert Rich's body floating face-down in the river. It might never have been found if two small boys hadn't noticed it while they were playing near an abandoned boat-dock; no one had reported it missing.

The body was finally identified by a small, gray-looking woman who said she was his wife. She shuddered when she saw the bloated, water-swollen flesh, but she didn't cry then or at the funeral.

Earl W. Barker

STREETS SWELLED WITH SHOPS --

Shops and streets
Owning their inhabitants
Canon

The Lower East Side

A whole city
Drunk
On Bowery swill

Amazed--I walk amazingly
From
San Juan
To
Delancy St.

And then
Around the world

To a land
Where
I cannot understand
The laughter.

E. W. Barker

winner of the maude carveth pym prize for poetry

POEM

dumbly watching the blinding exit,
the laughing sun, winking over her shoulder,
where light is wrapped in sackcloth
and the empty hour rolls in, I wonder

what it means, your leaving?

the tiger has soft feet
and hooded eyes to close between us.
I hear a lamb singing quietly
as vicious paws pound through

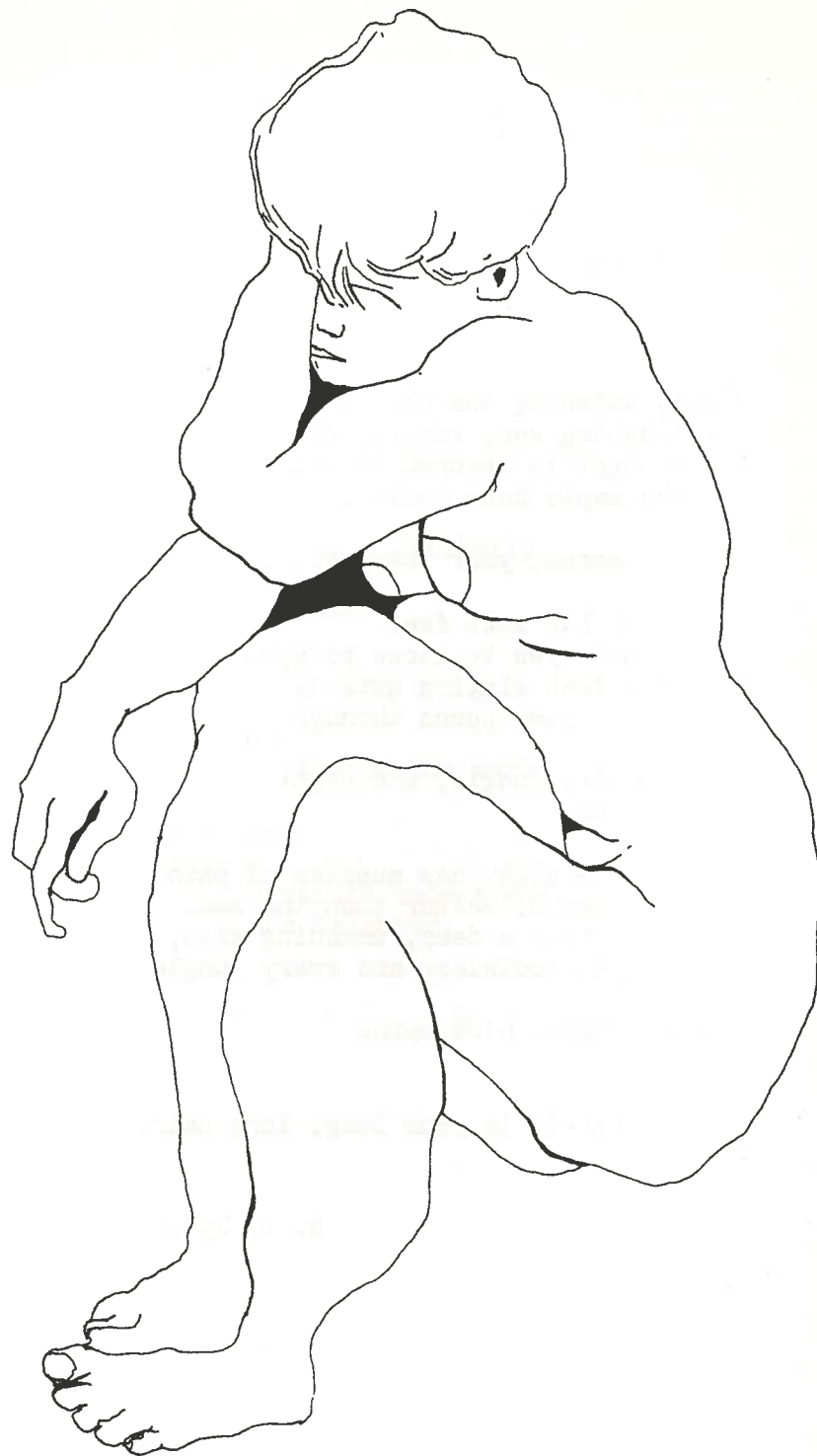
the shredded jungle, and night
inhabits me.

the tiger's night has muscles of pain
and long teeth, whiter than the sea,
but dawn, with a deep, unending kiss,
turns night toothless and every jungle

is one bright, blossoming
eden,

wrapt securely in your long, long hair.

H. P. Wyndham



I

I shrink
From the dampness of flowers.
I trace
The tiny ridges of
An imprint
Of ants.

II

Who is this
Usurper of my wealth,
This
vagrant of the grass?
Who claims this pawn;
By whose jest does he arrive?
Where does his Olympus abide?

III

Shall I be
Maimed
by the fragrance of lilacs?
Or appalled
By the faults of a leaf?
By the intrusion of
Heartwood?
Mind,
Forbid
but token concern...

Jan McReynolds

A VIEW FROM THE WINDOW

Awakening to silence, being awakened by nothing more than sleep's end, Geoff lay curled around his pillow, clinging to it with a teddy bear passion. A draft of cold air had crept into the room during the night, leaving his throat raw and his nose congested. The bedroom smelled of perfume mingled with the stale, crusty odor of cat droppings that lay here and there throughout the apartment. The animated taste of the odors knifed their way deep into the raw canyon of his throat. Geoff's eyes surveyed the chipped and cracked stucco ceiling that hung breathlessly, seeming about to collapse upon the bed at any moment. On seven day leave from the army, Geoff welcomed this, and all that civilian life had to offer. Grinning madly, he seemed to mock the tattered ceiling as if enticing it to come crashing down on top of him. He bit into a heave of air, suppressing a yawn as he rolled over to the edge of the bed.

The sun broke through the latticed window, casting patterns of cross-hatch on the floor. Anything, he thought, anything was better than those dull, vacant shadows in the barracks, those inanimate and ever-present odors of brasso, bootblack, and starched fatigues. Odors that deafened the ears. Odors that made the eyes water. Odors that pierced the skin and swelled the pores already filled with the mingling sweat of fellow animals. Odors no Friday night soap or Saturday night beer could wash away. Anything was better. Anything, even cat shit.

A slow deliberate scratching came from the bedroom door. The door swung open as two brown-tanned kittens pranced into the center of the room. They bantered with each other playfully, becoming one complete ball of fur tossing about on the sun-drenched floor. Geoff laughed as he tapped the black wrought iron bed post, bidding them to come. They bolted for the bed like two thick-legged, earmuffed, fur-capped children on a frozen lake sliding, tumbling across the slick linoleum floor. Geoff watched intently as the kittens struggled in vain to climb the quilt that dangled so tantalizingly from the side of the bed.

"Up you go, young fellers."

Lifting them onto the bed, he bore them under his chin, laughing again as they snuggled around his neck, pawing at his ears. Grabbing them behind the neck, he swung them above his head. They hung there suspended from his hands, big-eyed and helplessly mewling. How perfectly they fit into his hands, as if they belonged there. Their tiny bellies squirmed in his hands and he could feel the rapid heart beats pulsating gently in his cupped palms.

"If this were the jungle, we'd fear each other, stalk each other...slowly..." his grip grew tighter, "...slowly... waiting for that right moment..and then..then..." The kittens squealed as their legs shot out from his hands.

Releasing his grasp instantly, he lowered them to his face kissing each one softly on the nose.

"I'm sorry, little fellers, Uncle Geoff squeeze you too tight?"

Hugging them to his breast, Geoff crawled out of bed, tiptoeing across the cold floor. Holding the kittens in the crook of his left arm, he raised the window, holding it aloft with his free hand.

"There it is you, dear little buggers, the sun-fed world in all its glory. Our world. Everything belongs to us little fellers, because we belong to each other. Just think of it, kids, the crowded streets, the traffic, the huddled buildings, the horizon, yes, yes, my God, look at that horizon, gleaming like native gold, raw ever-lovin' gold, just think of it, kids, all ours, every last tire, brick, lawn, field, mountain, all the way out and even past the very last ounce of gold. Screw the barracks, screw the firing ranges, screw the tanks, bombs, nerve gas, bayonets, cuz' when it's all over that streak of gold out there is gonna be seen by someone, somewhere, whether he be a shit digger or a slave owner, a saver or a killer...all of it, all of it is ours, just us three because we got each other. All of it with no more questions about who's right and who's wrong, about who's got and who hasn't, because we've got it and we're right... cuz we can see it. There, just look at it, kids, look at it, it's all ours."

Lifting the kittens up to the open window, their eyes were shut, their heads dangled limp and lifeless. Their necks were broken.

Geoff's hand tore from the window as the pane crashed to the sill, shattering onto the floor. The pain ripped and slashed his insides as he staggered backwards, falling to his knees, his forehead bowing into the bridge of his nose, already moist with tears. The dead kittens out in front of him slithered between his fingers, dangling momentarily, and then fell to the floor amidst the pieces of broken glass. He rocked back on the rear of his calves, his hands like claws shot up to his head, while in the dimly lit hallway a young couple, squinting their eyes, attempted to read the name plate scratched above the doorbell, answering the ad in the morning Times which read:

Kittens for Sale
Contact Mrs. Geoffry Tyler
Apt. 29 Lovers Lane

Tim Greene

jon adams; drawing: "the four horsemen"



SKETCHES

woman,
as I climbed from your loins
into blueness,
to burn and thrash
under the stars,
so shall I burst
the world's tight womb
as death, tireless midwife,
spanks me into newness.

to follow with definite finger
lines of softness under your eyes
is to sink into an all-embracing deep
where love and lust
lie swirling on the skies.

wild rush into the bushlands
of blinking lights and buses
hauling two-million staring faces
fish-eyeing you through eyes of glass,
all shimmering, disappearing into
the throbbing, whirling void:

we are all alone
in a forest of faces.

when spring,
between bright, hanging lights,
and windy sounds of torment
sends out green confusion
in an earthy bed, I wonder
if I perhaps got off the right bus
on the wrong planet

Then suddenly,
I see your face.

the grinning faces death has--
the comedy of it:
that black hand frisking you
of breath in a dark alley,
and your lung pockets
already so worthless.

H. P. Wyndham



carol jacobs; engraving

VERNAL SIGNS

A mare, running a field in brisk March wind
Mane flying
tail flowing in a streaking comet trail
white coat reflecting shimmering sun
feet creating spring thunder on late frozen ground
I see behind, where she has blocked my view
my love
in white dress billowing
wind swept blond hair glowing
calling me to come

William Storck

CHRISTMAS

Looking for the half empty,
amid tarnished tinsel trash,
I tripped and fell again.
And waiting for the subdued crash
saw the angel's light go out.
Leaving me
alone
in an unlit world of green.

G. V. Kennedy

SINCE SHE LEFT

Tonite, for the first time
in months. Ah well,

an antidote to separation, a
paeon (to her?) of

little relief or result.
Then scour your

self with loneliness: wash
waves of it

thru your belly like cleanser
for the lack of other

substance in other bellies.
Wake, wipe up

the remnants of a shorter,
happier affair.

Brian Richards

THE WITHERING

Not the turning of a leaf,
I think, but something
more rooted
makes me say,
"Take care."

For I have greened in the sun's
first shining; no bastard
light has
made my hue
more rare,

but once I dredged my girth from
the clenched roots of earth
(before the
sun became
more fair.)

All my growth has gone to green:
the green sapped out of
withering
limbs. Oh love,
take care.

Sherry Lougheed

SUPERBA

as the
final king
proud
she is
more than
but
with Tarquin
proud
haughty a
tyrant

Brian Richards



Trio

I

Purple-fleshed Priestess
Shedding your sacramental robes
By glowing footlights,
Fuming candles on the altar.
Writhing-thighed,
To glittering chants
You gesticulate
Masturbate
Holy passes to draw
Your waiting acolytes closer.
While their eager eyes enter you
You wait
With a laugh.

II

Tender-skinned Bride
Shivering at the altar-
Your
Fluttering eagerness
Shocks you.
To hide from God's eyes
Which peek from behind the lilies
You kiss a stranger
Close-mouthed
Before the altar;
And wait
Dry-mouthed
For the darkness
For him to rend the white gown.
You too
Wait
With a laugh.

III

Blowzy-bodied Whore
Surely an offering of human fructescence
For the sacrifice.
The glittering-eyed novice
Dull from devotions
Offers a libation unto you
And poises
Like prayer
Above you.
You wait
With a laugh
For the Holy Ghost.

Lynn K. Dvorak

AFTER YOUR WEDDING

Tonite they showed films
of the boardwalk. I watched; &
looked for you. In

Lyly's song, Cupid lost his
eyes finally in the
game of cards, everything

else become the evidence
that spins my room. The books
you bought & gin,

your mouth & brown
thighs tossed easily into
us

The eyes! The eyes are last
to go. O cannot
hear & touch you, I

taste the dancing whiskey
the gulls burn in the sun

O Love! Has she done this to thee?
What shall, alas, become of me?

Brian Richards

A POEM HEARD

Walked down
to sea

black with
night but

with confusing
star points

still made
visible;

brain bleeding
for the music

some quote as
issuing from

some celestial
orchestra, the

only sounds were
slaps of dew

gathered at my
feet

already weeping
for the surety

of some other ears.

Jon L. Adams



bruce zamchek

CONSIDER, LOVE

the ways
of have
are various,

the truest
tastings
bittersweet

& one does not
recant
a sharing:

to love
in small ways
is the
beauty of
one blue violet
in the
lonely grass.

Sherry Barba

PORTRAIT

A blonde,
a pale blond,
in a sweater,
an off-white sweater
smiles, and laughs
then pouts.
And again laughing,
tugs at her hose,
with upflashed gray eyes,
a blonde,
off-white

G. V. Kennedy

HEY COLLEGE BOY!

Hey college boy!
You all look alike and dress the same.
I don't even want to know your name.
Well, not all, but most it's true.
You can't travel unless there's two.
English Leather, in all weather;
Jade East, West, North, and South.
Your minor, intelligence,
Your major, mouth.

Dennis Stanhope

ELEGY

That day I ran through mud-soaked leaves
to touch your life, and missed it by a breathing,
the end of loving struck the start of grieving.

The Requiescat broke the gentle song you gave;
our moon-left mornings darkened to the grave,
until the light came back in endless empty dawn.

Alone. Mine was a singular despair
that wandered touchless through the peopled streets,
through nothingness, not thinking on retreats.

And yet one dawn when trees stood bared memoriam
and life was worn by moratorium,
I dared another touch against the end of loving.

Sherry Barba

SATORI

Jinsei nana korobi
Ya oki

Such is life. Seven times down,
Eight times up.

He stooped at the pool.
Clouds flashed silent under him
stirring white water.

Jon L. Adams

HOLLOW

is the color
of my true love's heart
breaking softly over me
like lipping waves
murmuring on a thousand shores
of womanwanting men.
And after a morning's frothing,
her water smoothes the sharpness
of my tongue-rocked thoughts
lightly tossing my sea-spasmed vanity
in her practiced womanhood.
And I,
meekened in the kissing
wetness of her strength,
cannot quite fathom
how she (in the
depths of our surging
she-sprocketing
embrace) can
writhe in the windy grasp
of another's
tear-broaching
beach.

Dennie Willmont



tony byrd; woodcut



tony byrd; woodcut

GREEN FIRE

I want the snow
to die, to melt
like an Ozian witch.

I want the earth
to drink brown sugar

that we might hear
the steaming loam boil
like green fire

that we might feel
grass hot as emeralds
leap from the loam

that grass might look
as green as grass
in a field of poppies.

I want to walk
among grass with you
disremembering
dead witches.

Sherry Loughheed

THE KAMCHATKA EPISODE

It was well into winter when they closed the Kamchatka whorehouses. I know because I can still recall those cold blasts from the west coming in from the Sea of Okhotsk and driving the cinder into my razor cuts. They led the women from the tin hut to the line of trucks that were going down the peninsula to Cherny-Yar. Some of them were carrying a few of the possessions that they had managed to accumulate during their tenure; others took only the clothes they wore.

This was no time for name dropping. Mikhail held the key to the ignition in his poised right hand, ready to insert the brass without looking. But I could not hold it from him.

"I saw the Avenger when we left Cherny-Yar this morning."

Mikhail held back the keys and turned with a snap of his burly, red neck.

"They wouldn't dare."

The hard wind increased through the rest of the day, and by the afternoon it had whipped up the sea along the coastal road. Nevertheless, a strange pall of silence leveled the sound of the crashing breakers, a stillness imposed by the thoughts in the minds of those of us within earshot of the sea; the roaring, bumping vans turned along the low road that wound its way through the semi-frozen Kamchatkan landscape, and on the crest of each halting bump Mikhail's thoughts fixed on the Avenger. I could see it when he didn't curse at the jarring of the trucks' and the bad road.

It was a much colder winter when we first came to Cherny-Yar. Mikhail had carried my bag from the railhead because I had suffered a sprained wrist in a fall from the platform back at Omsk. He led me into the new billet and promised me the bunk next to his. Later, when he received his sergeant's rating, he made sure that I was his second, always receiving whatever favor he had to give.

In March he met Androuchka. I know it was March because he was busted to a rating on the last day of the month for stealing the truck to drive up to the house. They had caught him in her bed and dragged him all the way back to the camp in a trailer. He kept up his visits and always told me

of their plans to get together after the war. She favored him over all the soldiers in the sector. After they gave me Mikhail's rank and job, I managed to keep one eye closed when he would bolt for the fence and the road north nearly every other night.

The road was wet with the warmth of Cherny-Yar's traffic. Soldiers braved the spray from the convoy and stood alongside the road watching without gesture. Our vehicle led the way out of town and turned onto the road that led up the hill between the camp and the town. We turned again near the peak and came to a stop.

"They wouldn't dare do it. The Chinese aren't that close to us."

I turned to him, my face expressing more than I could say.

The permanent freezing of the tundra to the north cracks the ground with spring's thaws, but where the Kamchatkan land juts into the warming sea the erosion is more constant. The land is sprinkled with ravines and gulleys caused by the intermittent rain. On the hilltop the erosion that we saw was man-made, with dirt-caked spades standing in piles of freshly turned earth. The Avenger, Comrade General Alexei Subharin, stood atop one of the piles casually toying with one of the tool handles. Mikhail stood next to me, looking at the architect of the Kahzak purges with the contempt that I felt in my detached pain.

Over the dying whimpers and the silencing staccato of burp guns, I saw the Avenger's forehead, furrowed like the land with wrinkles. They formed a cascade of fleshy smiles.

Jon L. Adams

MOTHER KNOWS

That there will

Comaday

When
Sweet

MaryRoseorRuth

Will
Experiment

And learn the truth
Of Love and Lust:

We don't want to hurt you,
But -- We must
We must.

E. W. Barker

HAIKU

Xeuxis -- paint some fruit
Make grapes that baffle Robins;
I will pay you well

E. W. Barker



A ZEN ANECDOTE: THE MASTER'S GROANS

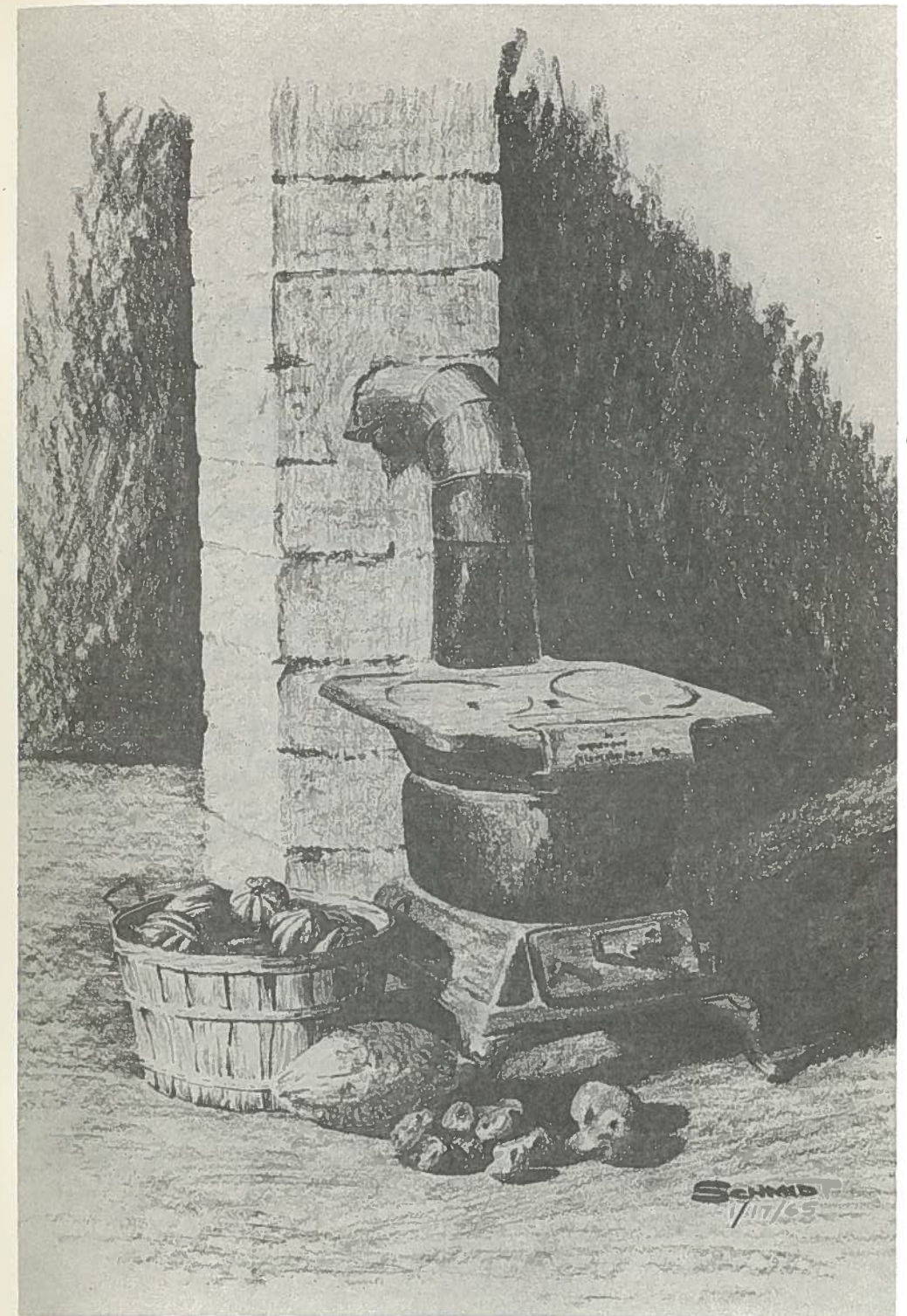
(invented as a koan by the author in order to discipline a capricious thought)

Whenever the master's great bowels moved, the noises of his obvious indisposal carried throughout the vast monastery and frightened the monks in their fear for the health of the great teacher. On the occasion of one such event, a visiting monk was heard to say, "Ho! What great noise is this, profane to the peace of absolute silence, that dares to issue through the master's empty halls?"

The great master, upon hearing the shout, replied immediately, "It is the noise that empties the master's halls!"

It is taught that upon hearing the exhortation of the great teacher the visiting monk achieved his satori.

Jon L. Adams



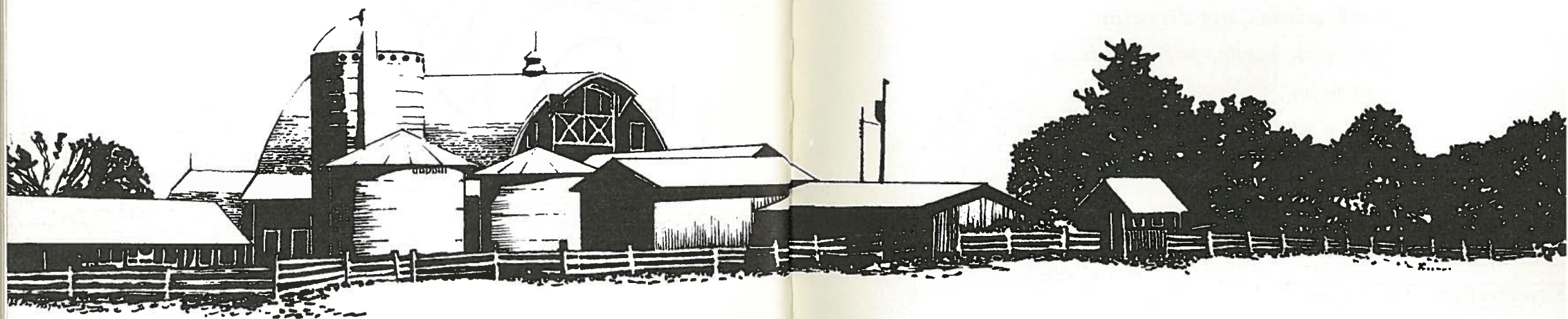
jack schmidt; drawing

UPON READING WAR CASUALTIES

The papers have blood on them,
not so red as when it drained
from that head in the foxhole,
but red enough to stain my fingers.
A smell drifts off the print:
the smell of skin, mud-weary
sagging under khaki, the bullets
clutched in small, clotting wounds.
I am sick. I light a cigarette
and try to read. But a face,
death-glazed, stares from the paper,
whispering of how last night,
as I was warm sleeping, a mortar
found him, mud blasted up,
steel shattered in, and he yelled
to a god I've never yelled to.

H. P. Wyndham





*or set upon a golden bough to sing
to lords and ladies of byzantium
of what is past, or passing,
or to come.*

william butler yeats

*inkstone
spring 1966*

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&

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