


1973



POETRY and PROSE

—
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1973

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MAGAZINE

DELAWARE COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



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THE SURVIVOR

another morning traces behind the
 scuffed black shoe of night
I remember other nights
nights worn comfortably
nights that fit my body like a
second skin

 these nights are gone
now there are new ones in their place
it is these nights I fear; they are
deceptive; they appear no different
than those other nights who
shared my bed

 yet they ache
they are dark strangers
 I do not know them
 nor care to

 yet they give me no rest
my eyelids scorn sleep as
 though it offended them
this

 is an endurance test
I endure the agonies of
breathing walking

 walking without a break
and somehow I still manage to live
the first morning sky of
these mutant nights was an
injury smeared across the road
this sun was not my old friend who
 circulated shining the

 perfect host but
something else

 some bastard offspring of
the new nights

 I cowered
afraid it was judgment day and

when it was not
stood and shuddered and wished
that it were

dear George

David died June 23

perhaps

someday

I will wear my experience like an old
war wound
but for now

I can only stalk my emptiness
pushing my spindly legged feelings
until they are crying and raw to
find their way through the cold
horror of these new nights
the nights that hold no promise
and spit out that same stale
sunrise every day

SISTERS

Mildred or Bessie or Brook
awakes inured to the fact
that perhaps three times during the day
she will want to die
it is as much a part of her routine as
going to market
or taking a shit
(with cigarettes, magazine, and
locked bathroom door)
or
wishing she would never die
loving every minute of it
until
she finds
there is nothing to do
but plant her head with

pink plastic bulbs and
wait for it to bloom
Lacey or Lucy in her white gown
awakes to turn off the alarm that is
driving her mad
(crackers she calls it)
by the time her foot no longer shudders
to meet the cold of the bathroom floor
(or potty as she says in mixed company)
she is no longer the Etruscan dancing girl
of the night before
standing at the mirror
the dead princess
stuffs her breasts into white cotton
and props them up like the pillows on a sickbed
then performs a bastardized Bavarian schuhplattler
to be continued
into the kitchen
and throughout the day
until the strong perfume of semen
is replaced by chicken fat and spices
and someday
Rita or Sharon or Rosie
will die.
her legacy of recipes
left lying in a green metal box
the days of her life
neatly indexed
for her daughter in college who
will never use them
and Mildred and Bessie
Brook Lacey Rita and
Rosie
and finally
Lucy and Sharon
will rest in peace

MY WEEK IN REVIEW

She settles her obligatory truce
 at my back door and
 waits to enter
she waits without thinking
savoring the moments free of thought
she waits while the buzzer cuts coldly
through leftover smells of morning
freezing even the already cold coffee
that sits impassionately upon the stove

through the crude web of curtain
 i see her small face
brutalized beneath its plastic hair-roller halo
 the eyes heavy with martyrdom
her fingernails are clean and
 she is young

breath paused
 the coffee waits
 for accompaniment
 of cakes and icing

she
always
has pink pale edged boxes
 full with rococo cakes
you were never allowed to eat
 as a child
devious Borgia baked cakes
 laced with advice
her lips are hung with homilies
whose caress is like the cling of sweat
this friendship is an intrusion
calling me from my books and

Contemplations
which are real
 into reality
and once again i confront death
 as i usher her into
the kitchen of my despair
her body's ripeness
offends the black rosette of my mind
that has so long ached to be a flower
she is so young
how can i tell her she is dying

i offer her a drink--
 as penitence
 laughing

i imagine
 grabbing at her breasts and feeling no
have i grown old?

tonight i will cry
 cry because i cannot stop the chain
 of events in which we are linked
 like an embroidery stitch
 cry because i am already suffering
 with an uneventful death
 cry because i have grown old

taking my limp heart in my hand
i will wipe the kitchen counter clean
water the abstraction of
 plants on the windowsill
leaving my life
 dry
 uncomplicated
 dead and free

and i shall wear widows weeds
 for my lost life
 and the lives of others

ANDROMACHE

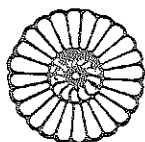
a premonition of death
sits in your chair
even while I hear your laughter
in the room beyond

i try to imagine us
together tucked tight into bed
fat with age and caring
your hand
resting with easy familiarity
upon the terrain of thigh
laid out before you
your mind treading water
in channels of sleep

at day's awakening
when my dream begins
to become a shadow
i selfishly
turn my eyes inward
praying i'd be first
at making the crossing

MY LOVE IS A SORCERER'S CIRCLE

my love is a sorcerer's circle
filled with potions to make you limp and lazy
you will sleep with Egypt and be rocked by the Nile
my arms wrapped round you like slender reeds
forming a basket to see you safe through slumber
and find you standing erect come morning.



UNTITLED

we all have a place
that is empty of something
we left along the way
mine screams the shape of a child
who was wild with dreams
yet never lied
when she died they said it was
after all for the best
they said she was crazy
they told me not to cry
not to mourn the two dreams murdered
in one so small
she had chosen the anonymity
of having no secrets
and in the end she remained
a mystery to all

IMAGINE A WALL

throw your heart hard at me my love
it will bounce back like a ball
tossed against a wall as a child's whim
while i remain unmoved
who once would have crumbled

do you remember when the bonfire faded
we cleared away the ashes
and had to drain a bottle of whiskey for warmth
all that was left behind
were a few potatoes baked burnt on the earth

winter now
spring is a memory i cannot recall
as it is hard for those alive to imagine death
so it is difficult for the dead to remember living

melancholy fits me like a new shoe
i find it attractive but it aches at times
sometimes i feel sore and used
like the soles of feet that have crossed the mountain
yet i bring no good tidings
and the peace i possess is not to be admired

EPHIGENIA

showing secret places
she alone had touched
to thirsty eyed strangers
whose breath steamed the room
this child who had never bled as a woman
was now to shed her blood for man

POLYPHEMOS

i envy your unwavering eye
which ventures neither left nor right
though your vision be somewhat
limited
it is nonetheless succinct
i envy you your ignorance
for it does seem to be blissful
those decisions you are exempt from
are mine by default
context is a concept
you have no need of
comparasons are
for others to make

perhaps living really
is a dying art
and yet
if your straight seeing
could be mine
i would not want it
not that i'd mind

the blind pleasure
but i would mind
the pain that i'd miss.

on blinding white sheets
we sleep back to back
who once slept belly to belly
the arms have come unentangled
we keep them to ourselves
in our cool dry bed
the room we sleep in does not respond
to the regularity of our breathing
nor do we stir
as our lungs suck steadily then expel into the air
the cold hush of tired love
punctuating the awkward silence
how have we come to this
who in the morning
once woke damp with love's dew
our bodies a twisting vine of caress
our patterns weaving themselves
into the fabric of the sheet
lips whispering the air alive with sighs
wrapped and balled up in wonder
we two were who have come to this

GEORGE T. SPILLANE

EPIPHANY

There was a time
when (including for my time the time when no time was)
my window tree
threw off her green cape
and dizzily danced and swirled
in billowing russet
recklessly
flirting

with the whirling wind.

But now
 she strains against
 the wind grown restive
 and clutches
 a golden shawl
She knows
 that tomorrow
 the wind will crack
 its cruel whip
 tearing the remnant
 of her once
 proud gown

Now shredded
 leached
 faded
 brown
And she will stand
Naked --
her aging limbs
defiant
 silhouetted
against a cold, barren sky
And I can see

Beyond the window
through the tree
your body--the size of nothing
 against
 the violent, violet sea
And then
for the very first time
I saw
what you saw
when you looked
 not at
but through me.

CINQUAIN

The tree
 swirled her green cape
 swayed and danced with the breeze
 now clutches her golden shawl
And waits.

HEAR ME

hear me
my voice is yours
only louder
my hands
are groping over a history
written in braille
trying to feel in darkness
an absense
and know a truth
close your eyes and see me
hear my words
that have been lodged like bones in your throat
feel my body your prodigy
in the moment between midnight and after
know we need not grow older
if we grow like flames
lighting our lives
dancing bright flares across the black night sky

THE FINAL CONCERT

the end came
 before the beginning-
 the blow too brutal
 the bottle smashed
time saved
 now lost-
 the loss uncomprehended-
 darkness driving me
down cobbled-skulled alleys
 wandering

where blue and yellow bruised tears
flow through inkwell-stained gutters
of impotent

frustration

which rips with fleshless fingers
at cardboard curtained hope
and lays bare raw
ulcerous reality

barbiturate orgies ease

the pellets of pain
which flake liked chipped ceiling plaster
and dissolve into gray creases of
remembered nothingness:

a wingless bird
a fruitless tree
a silent sound
and you and me

SUSAN WALTER

‘ _____?_____’

because it was mute
drawing me out
The land drawing me out
The sea drawing me out of myself

because a constant movement
works a miracle of erosion
on the face' wiped clean
features back to zero

cruder and cruder
the continents

perfect blanks of color
harsh blows of unimagined morning
working backward to the single
the original unhuman morning

I could not stop
changing with the continents
flowing with the pace of days
always unimagined
always the same day

SILENT SHADOWS

They lay flat and straight
against dust roads
in late afternoon serenity
charcoal gray darkness
muted by the blinding sun
stretched out in stream roller perfection.
When blackness envelopes the world
and only a lonely street lamp
secretes light
shadows become little last ghosts
swallowed under the thickness
of night.

RAIN

And when the rains came
That summer
Someone said that
it would be the end of the cherries
and that the rain
would green the grass.
I nodded,
half believing.
The pounding on the roof became louder
and the city bent its head
to the force of the rain.
The parks would be empty , the
watery phantoms swinging.

in the swings.

I set out

bare feet splashing in the puddled streets
the rain water falling down my back.

I saw him there again,
his smile dripping off his face
with the rain,

joining the rivers in the grass

And as I spoke

I felt his smile brush
against my feet.

GRANDMOTHER'S QUILT

Watercolor print on a faded quilt
of tulips and grass green stems
swelling pink roses-orange stemmed
rainbow splotches-undefined lines
milk-white linen bed sheet
tediously fastened to goose down
soft warm cotton cover
with cool shell buttons
smelling of violets and summer sea air.
Grandmother rose at dawn
to watch sandpipers pick for food
at the tidelines.
Drinking thick coffee rich with cream
in an organdy night gown
meant for a bride
her indulgence-only I would see
Passion clothes
behind locked doors.

DEFINITION

Love is a response ability.

OF A WINTER

The trees in naked clusters sway
In a quaking, black baroque ballet.
The limbs in brittle clickings scratch
Against a greying, slate-like patch
Of sky. A frozen water-thread
Runs white within a granite bed.
A lake of icy desert groans.
It thrusts decaying, whitened bones
Of fallen birches on a strand
Of lifeless, winter-frozen sand.

A silent man watches the tomb
And fashions hope in the lifeless womb,
But shivers at nature's cyclic plan
That makes a single season man.

GENERATIONS

Petiole dames,
shrugging their frames
down the hot sand,
pause then unhand
scumble to lips
pinched at the tips.
Shivering off
leaving a trough
graved by their toes,
they, with gilt pose
bray to the guys
watching their thighs.

Shorelines are bold.
Not like the old

times in the sun.
Now all the fun
prostrates the thing
likely to bring
joy to the clan
Adam began.
All's in decline,
Rift by design--
sensuous breach
toed in the beach.

VISIONS

The star
like infinity's oil lamp,
 hung by Nature,
lights the misled -- Comus' lady said.
and
The moon
like a white-bellied frog
 lays stars
by the zillions -- Huck Finn said.
and
The sun
like a vermillion-tongued tiger
 swallows stars
with the clouds -- Amy Lowell said.
but
Stars and Moon and Sun
 are verbs
and everybody conjugates -- I say.



AUGUST

The hay we pitched, heavy with day,
breathed its summer through the loft,
and locusts scraped their metallic whine
across the yellow afternoon.
Job, our hand, had vanished like dust
after the last load to the barn.
Pop wore lethargy like sweaty
dungarees, but he owned time,
and he gave it generously.
"See if Barnum will take your line
for supper," he said to Paul and me.
We found our poles and flew like chaff
in the wind. Barnum with his black O
mouth shaping scorn would be swaying
into the current, eyes jellied
bright to catch our shadows. Two
years we had known him; we once
had him hooked, so he knew us both.
The meadow grass snapped beneath
our feet and our hats, held like pans
before us, clattered with grasshoppers.
Down past Andy Smoker's -- his bitch
braying insolently -- we stopped
at his spring house for a cool drink.
We daily drank innocence than.
There in the cool light, on the floor
of weeping stone, Andy's girl,
Sarah, lay naked and white
as Barnum's belly -- and Job, brown
like soil, the two, patiently entwined.
Paul's eyes rolled like a cow's
in birth. I laughed, and shyly we bowed,
much as if we had intruded on
a praying couple or nude wraiths.
Paul, at fifteen, smote the ground

with his fishing pole, and he strode
across the meadow, hissing words
about the beast with two backs.
And I, at ten, had thought ... and think
I saw some summer mystery.

SUZANNE MILLER

YOUR EYES

Your eyes, mellow and tired, search my countenance
for some trace of your long-deceased companion.

Can you find it, grandfather, in this mass of shivering
protoplasm with eyes of sad, broken dogs?

It's only me, but you can pretend - if it brings back
memories of vanished youth.

I'd be pleased to be mediator between the one who once
you loved and yourself.

Smiling distantly, you say "Your hair is beautiful, just
like your grandmother's used to be."

Your heart has borne a tragedy these many years, her death
at an early age.

Maybe in some way it was lucky. She never lived for you to
see the entrance of white upon her locks.

As we stand at the threshold of bidding goodbye, you touch
my face intently and turn to leave with a far-off sigh.

"Goodbye" (I do not call you grandfather).

DEAR RICK

The old folks fade in the dimness of the barroom light;
Mirages shimmering in bleak-fogged mirror that they face.
They know of life - some hide in chosen ignorance.
We laugh through our tequila sunrises, for we are young.

P.S. I see myself one day, facing my own image
night after night as they do.
Will I be able to laugh - a solitary figure on a
broken barstool?

UNTITLED

It rouses my heart to hysterical heights,
commencing then to pride-depreciating dips directed
downward toward depression.
This ... lack of affection -
I would be yours if it could be.
Lord only knows it needs be.
Think solely of self-satisfaction available - Me.
Let me provide what providence demands in search for
fulfillment:
I wish to shelter - I want.
I want to covet - I need.
I need to love - I do ... love you.



HEAR THE CHILDREN

Hear the children scream,
the angels and demons battle.
Art is dying, tell them
trees are purple, not green,
scream it ... lose your voice,
and learn the sea is a grey reality.
The stars have led the wandering
seek the newness of foreign
ports and faces
while sailing out on open seas
in search of freedom, seek the
the haloed moon
and windy places, all
are inviting to the senses.
Yet they remain ...
in irons,
despairing this port, the
vestibule of a dream.
Flashing edged smiles
and armor plated defenses,
beneath, the brazen shield,
all beauty and promise surrenders.
The keepers of their faith that knew
their peakings,
their flights of poetry, imagination,
weep the windless dying vessels,
in irons
they feel the sludge covered anchors,
the barred vision,
the darkening dreams,
nothing ...
When childhood is too soon ended
When you cry the forging of your chains

POEM TO THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

Your White collar and cuff lace
is wilting from the heat
and the sweet release it was before
to fill tubs up high
when to touch and feel was sore
and breasts were the only islands
those days are no more.
The White burden of virtues and grace,
of preaching your own Christianity,
Are the diamond mines a flourishing economy?
Is Elizabeth Taylor thirsty?
You're being murdered on the islands, elite,
but the continent laments
moving huts and tents
in search for a cooler sky.
Listen to crying children meet
the wake of another long day.
Wonder why, as
cattle are dying
and the earth is cracked
and drying in the sun,
Africa is thirsty?
Wonder why
Superiority
is a poor substitute
for afternoon tea
and cakes?

FOR GRANDFATHER

When the stout sage
father of my family
first came to stay
We were filled with apprehension
and a strong feeling of misgiving

that the steely blue eyes
Scrutinizing our every move
were filled with disapproval
and set upon changing us with religion
and weaving his silken fine tradition.
Before,
When he was self-reliant
and lived alone in "Little Ireland"
a dying immigrant island
in the midst of the swirling, rioting
sea of the city,
We felt nothing more than a
"Sunday, stay for dinner,
See that grandfather gets a ride home" concern.
And not long ago
When the old man would relate
his thousands of "days in the life",
We never much listened,
finding the dotage dull
and the doctrine covered
with ages of seemingly
He was hard of hearing
anytime a pointed question was asked,
Although it didn't matter,
We found his accent too solid
and his jargon mystifying
"So we did",
but nodding our heads
and occasionaly smiling,
We pretended to understand.
When he came to stay,
settling in the room
empty since the wedding,
the evolution began to take place.
First, the room acquired that queer odor
symptomatic of old age,
the furnishings dated the room
early 1900's,
and the palms and crucifix,
"God Bless This Home", and a poem in a gilded frame

called "I'm the daddy of a nun" adorned the once
poster ridden walls.
Like a referee, he blows the whistle on sundry disputes,
Talks politics and Watergate to anyone at home,
Calling them "a band of theives and liars," And
we realize this to be the worst he's seen
since Teapot Dome.
He loved our Puppy, but thought her spoilt
rotten,
So he trained her, and changed her,
now she listens only to him.
He hammers nails into things,
supervises all of the jobs,
And once again feels he is
"the full boss" of a family.

MAUREEN FLANNERY

EVOLUTION

And when I look up to see
 large white holes in my ceiling
 then I surely know that it must be
A shoe box
 when I was small
 feeling like the King or God that I am
Poking sunlight through cardboard lids
 letting grass hidden beings breathe
Do bees drink water?
I know that I am an ant or the molecule
 stuck on somebody else's
 left armpit
Is the moon where
 sperm escape to reproduce?
quietly and stupidly
 as the gardner snake
 we wait

until some green monster releases
us from the four corrugated walls and
meanwhile I shall lie confused
 between my sneakers
hoping that
 gripping fingers don't pull me from
the corner to thrust my senses
 to unknown space.
The punched stars may be my only source of life
 but, what if I should
 get stuck with
 a child's straight pin
or even
 his curiosity of death?
A shoe box is fine
 until I marry Thom McCann
 and breathe again.

BECOMING LOST

Becoming lost in a wave length
of a xeroxed time table
and the cardiogram
tells lies to my heart.
If the disappearing spirit
cries out my names
Will it put together the correct
ingredients of a medicine
curing...
lonliness?
I'm out on a limb; a green apple
in July
I'm just not fit for applesauce.

SILVER STRANDS

Silver glittering from each strand of the tired
red-yellow curls
with my arm leadened heavily by laced frocks
and weathered jewels
packed securely and neatly within
my frayed wrinkled leather case.
Coins and green paper slips engraved meticulously
with values and worthiness of
The Times
sickle in my brothers' hand...
And mine, clutching memories with my
millions of insured security.
My locks, long and wrapped high about the head...
My goal; and my eyes
undimmed and sparkling... I am beautiful.
I am eighty... and spend long minutes
wondering...
if someone will take my luggage
and
turn down the bed sheets.
I wonder if the bell-boy will with furtive
imagination strip me naked to grey marrow
and see
the whole of me
again and wish
that he were only twenty years...
older.



QUARTET

(Chesire Hunt Country)

I. The Blue Bird

The bluebird dive bombs through the trees,
A flash of indigo.

Cautionless, in frenzy he
Windstalls above his foe:

A mammoth, garish, loud machine
That moves relentlessly
Through once sun-silvered, silent woods
Toward his nesting tree.

Behind the monster lies a swath
Of trees felled, earth now bared,
And some prescience tells the bird
His tree will not be spared.

And so with flailing, flashing wings
He flies to rash attack,
With piercing, scolding cry he thinks
To drive the demon back.

Sweet songster, how alike we are
To play this deadly game;
We fight the monster that we see
But never know his name.

2. Fright

From the thicket by the roadside
With a thunderous burst of wings
And strident cries of real alarm,
A frightened pheasant flings
Himself headlong into the air
And beats a strong retreat,

Escaping from the peril of
My footsteps in the street.

Exploding there so near at hand
He fully frightened me
As much as I did him--a jest
But one of us could see:
I had no gun, nor bode him ill,
Nor he, no means to do
Me harm--and yet we both, as one,
Instinctively withdrew!

3. The Hunt

The hunters stand upon the hill
Outlined against the sky,
With scarlet coats, on burnished steeds,
They wait the frenzied cry
Of hounds that find the scent again,
Of horn's terse 'tally ho' -
And standing thus upon the rise,
They etch a sharp tableau.

Proud folk upon proud beasts they are,
In quest of nimble prey;
But fox and I both cringe to hear
The horn call 'gone away!'
He leads them on a desperate chase,
These knights in crimson mail -
A game for them, but for the fox,
His life if cunning fail.

4. Our Ring-Necked Pheasant

We called him "Cripple-foot" for he was lame
And dragged one foot behind him when he walked;
(He once had borne a hunter's hail of lead)

Now, Lord of all that he surveyed, he stalked
Our farm, our woods, our lawn; these his domain,
And we were glad to have him chatelain!

Statuesque he'd stand in dawn's soft light
His feathers irridescent in the sun;
He'd strut and prance and arch his neck and hurl
His stentor's cry to challenge anyone
So foolish as to doubt his boundaries
Or woo his flock of hens with flatteries.

Season after season, when the hunters came
And first gun sounds would pierce the early air,
Cripple-foot would vanish and for days
We'd wait with waning hope that he was there.
And each gunshot--we'd hear it fearfully--
Afraid each time, this time it would be he.

Then with the season's closing and the dawn
Would come again his peerless, raucous cry -
Undaunted by his lameness or the danger,
He had returned and called us, "See, it's I!"
Oh yes, proud bird, oh yes, oh yes, we hear,
And greet your voice with greater joy each year.

ROBERT DAVIS

UNTITLED

Some part of myself is lost
a part of me that kissed the wind
and smoked the burning autumn leaves
Still my eyes see these things
but now they pass them off
as occurrences that came in this
season like overcoats or sweaters
you know, like it's snowing
so it must be winter.

WE SHOULD SMILE, MOMMA

Eyes that say, love me
A woman's eyes
yet not a woman
hey! Momma, we should
smile more often
We've seen the leaf ships
embark on seaward journey
the sunset burning gloriously
into the dark
we've heard the children crying
through eyes gone red with rubbing
and seeing only the noise
of the mouth and the compassion
from which to draw some nectar
hey! Momma, we should smile
when the evening has come
and dinner has gone down slow
eyes shut-down for sleep life
we should smile more often

HERE IS YOUR QUIET

Here is your quiet, MaMa
Where the voices are gone
and the emotions run as deep
as the river styx
Here is your voice, MaMa
weaving
the leaves into webs against
my skies
simmering slowly down and rooting
me here in sunlight, quiet
and simple like bees to pollen
Here are my hands, woman
that have wandered down your thighs
that have closed your eyes to tears

and turned your mother's fears to dust
blown into empty rooms.
One finger to touch
one eye to see
one feeling to have
to live and love with
my quiet, my hands, my mouth,
and my eyes.

ALFRED dePROSPERO

'WASTELAND' REVISITED

April warms memories
brainlocked since
mulatto years lost;
who did I love?
where did I go?
Years of coma
block even one name;
Philos loves Sophos
they exchange
rotten forget-me-nots.
Barracks, rooms,
streets of
self-liquidation-
and who thought
it would live?

Only to rain
warm on the roots
of the hair
only to wind
smelling of apples.
Dead nerves
do not come back
as easily as iris, yet,
in things said
Aprils ago-
inlocked since
mulatto years lost,
in blank who's and why's,
years of no name,
memories grow.

BROKEN POTS

I made myself a student,
that I might know, and learn and grow;
this time my teacher teaches me to feel,
to see my metaphor as clay and sphere,
to shape and spin upon the potter's wheel.
All pots should be round, I thought.
and quickly found it's not easy to do;

you must center the clay.
The first pot collapsed-and the second, too.
Unknowing fingers pressed through
the walls of clay. The third pot fell,
eccentric, broken,
so I took it from the wheel -
pulled up the sagging walls,
pinched, shored, stretched,
trying to do with love and will
what only craft should do.
My teacher smiled, regarded the
crest-fallen ball of clay and said
"your first pot."
If only in words, I know this today:
there are many broken pots to be made.
I would go to the wheel again
to open the clay-to listen
(it's supposed to sing as it whirls away)
Let the walls collapse, who cares?
I think I know now,
there is more room in broken pots.

BLACK MARBLE

The night is black
and it is final;
all is - or is not
when it wraps the cast
like a theatre curtain.
Who fears its promise
that there will not be
another tomorrow?

Where the slender arms
dancer's hands that drew
flamingo necks, things
that slithered black?
The white wall,
my world, was you.

Each child I show
this shadow art draws well
the terror that
walked in the halls;
each innocent
makes monsters too.

God makes his plagues anew,
and us? We refill the hotels
that never sleep
with dead souls.
Outside, the erratic snores,
outside cicadas chirr;
within, meerschaum air-
memories of black marble
hands in early beds,
the portraits of the dead.
The temple smells
of cut flowers -
no one can live there.
In its corners, the whisper
"What can I do?"

NIGHT

midlife yawns
spreads softly
I have felt it
in my bed
the dawns
come quicker
there is less
of the child's
wonderment
at the size
of the night
conquered
by silence
by the rains

TWO SANDPIPERS

Here I sit and watch
those hungry little fishers dart
and peck relentlessly in the tide's edge
and wonder if they pause to love,
or loving, die-so dear the price
of distraction here. But they
do not seem to notice me, an idle man
musing on their endless feeding
and thinking of love.

MARY MERRYLEES

AN AUTUMN EVENING

Clear and cool the air - and so still.
Thin ribbons of smoke unroll high
And spread the pungent, tangy smell
Of burning leaves
Around the trees and fields, and my house
And higher still - the stars stare at
Each other - coldly.

A small, sharp bark breaks the
Stillness into little bits;
It rises ... as cool and clear as the
Air ... and almost hits the stars
Then - silence glides down the gray
Smoke ribbons
And the evening goes on from
There
Clear and cool - and so still --

CHILD'S PLAY

My house shook late last night,
My dog barked in utter fright,
I jumped up in the night,
and looked out my window
and saw ... no light ... (why mommy?)

THE MORNING

The Morning
with the chirp of early birds-
wakes the sun, and reminds him of his endless job,
to rise and give the autumn leaves their placement
on the frozen earth before
The Spring reveals once again the sun,
m
e
l
t
i
n
g
the frozen winter's earth,
takes the t
h
i
n
thaw of spring far away,
till once again, it begins...
all over...





LINDA VONA

BEHIND THE CLOUDS

rising sun to moisten the sky,
the waning moon dries up the earth.
silent droplets of stars
hide behind the clouds,
whispering
that it is time to see you . . .

GO DOWN FIRE

go down fire
down from
climaxing mystery
that gave all
energies
to receiving fanatics.
go down to
redness from
everythingness
become one instead of all
you do not deserve
mesmerized audiences
so go down.

FORGET WE WILL

we the life givers
do hereby declare
to give life
to whoever we want.

deformed you may be
so you will not be born.
too long your life may be
so you will die.
cry you may for fear
of experiencing, and,
having experienced,
cry for having done it
so we will ease your pain
by not giving you the chance.

we know the best for you
best is that you not even
show your face.

we will carry you not too long
in our bodies
or our minds
forget about you we will.

we the life takers-away
do resolve to
waste anyone who
gets in our way.

JOE PIORKOWSKI

QUESTION ON MY MIND

If
the academic, athletic, artistic,
handsome, home-loving, humble,
responsible, rational
gentlemen
cannot find love,
And if
the average, loving
human being
cannot find fulfillment or happiness,

Where does one find his raison d'etre?

BROCK PALMER

ASTRIC TELEPORTA

A tiny star
Really silver sparkle-sand
Burned
Shining a ruby speed path

Disintegrating the atmosphere en route
Naturally a growing crystal
Now in infinity an invictable pear sized shaped glass
Chew it, it will never suffer.

Even the ants or roach larvae
Walk its tip-toe surface, with dignity
Hearing the corination
Waiting for the silli-rocket launch.

Dressed in burgundy velvet waist coats
Ballet silver slippers
Mini-minis-coolyou-ler coachmen
Moon surface explorants
Natives by a thousand yearnings.

Supper taste gourmet direction

A celebrael historetricol banquet
Sands 'n' sun, 'n' sands sans moistaha.

SARAH BOOGY

ANNE THE STALWART

Anne was an Oasis
that saved me in a summer
When I was alone
and wished it would
would end soon.
She was truly a friend.
I came to know things well,
perhaps better than she ever realized
as well as knowing myself
through the telling
of my own sad stories.
Sometimes I felt a bit scrutinized,
a feeling that she did not always approve,

but rightly so,
I could see that as I changed.
I have only bitter memories
of that hopeless, helpless self
paralyzed by each conversation's
deepening awareness, I felt
terrified in waters of such
unknown depths.
There was a vast ocean
of differences between us,
she, struggling with the tides,
and I
barely yet in water was unable
to understand situations
encountered before only in sad novels.

E. J. DUFFY

MANIPULATED

What makes it
That maple leaves
May fall and be raked away
While ivy must be cut-
Still live-
And cannot live
Contently
Within the bounds
I lay.

THE DOLL

MARY YOUNG

There was nothing she could do to bring the doll back. While she slept, he had come in the early morning, taken the doll from the corner of the crib without disturbing her or the baby, and burned it in the incinerator. He had invaded her life, stealing a memory that had stretched for almost twenty years.

The doll had no permanent name. Baby was the way she thought of it. The doll was plain with only painted on hair; it was so old. You couldn't bathe her in a tub because only her arms and legs were rubber. The body was cotton with a broken whistle in the tummy. The fingernails and toenails carried chips of the red polish she had put on as a teenager. The doll never responded to her desire for it to grow, and finally it was left to sit and fade.

After her marriage, when she had found the doll in the apartment at the bottom of a box, roughly packed, junk thrown in on top of it, she had been too excited about her husband to show it any care. It should have been wrapped in tissue, especially boxed, and safely stored. When she had been taken from her parents' home by social workers and settled into the little room provided by the charity of the Dominican nuns, there were only a few best clothes to carry, and the doll had been a very important passenger. When the nuns were cloistered together she had slept with the doll. It was good to be taken into the warm community of convent life, but just when she needed them most — at night — they would shut the door to their rooms and leave her.

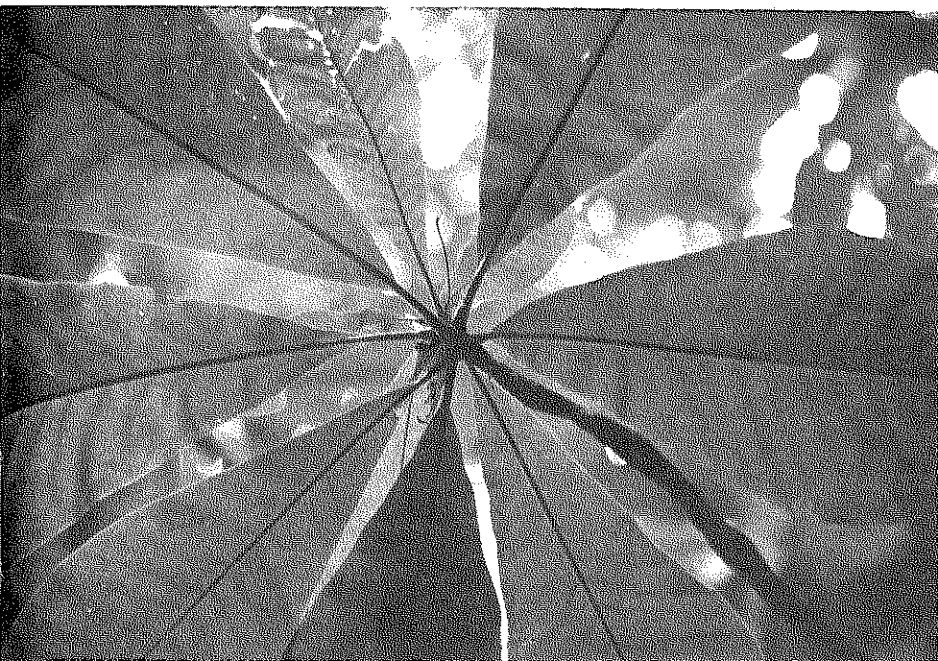
She had nagged her husband to put the crib up two months before the baby was even due, using the time to dress the doll in tiny new clothes, laying it on the soft sheets, carefully covering it with a satin trimmed blanket. As soon as he would leave for work, she would get the doll and rock it, believing it was real. She'd been right to keep it, and she knew she would always have it, sharing it for a time with her children, but retrieving it for herself someday.

But he had taken it from the crib and destroyed it. Why?

Was he jealous? Did he know that as long as the doll sat there she would speak her thoughts to it and not always to him?

"You took it. My doll!" she'd screamed at him.

"You're an idiot. Crazy!" He slammed the door and left her alone in the apartment.



Brock Palmer

OUTER INSANITY

CAROLE DETWEILER

As I approached the ticket counter I took one last look at the train station I had passed through daily for years. I noticed the fine markings on the marble pillars, portraits of the men who had founded our fair city, and the blank faces of the people who were waiting for friends or relatives to arrive from some distant place. I stopped at the magazine stand to buy a roll of peppermint lifesavers. The man at the cash register looked at me and smiled; it was a smile I can't erase from my memory. He had a small mouth that curled at the corners, but his eyes never changed. They didn't sparkle or wrinkle. He didn't mean that smile at all. I paid him for my mints and walked over to the ticket counter, where a small man stood behind iron bars. His bald head shone dully under the fluorescent bulbs on the ceiling and his round spectacles reflected my face back through the bars. I told the little man my destination and asked him how much it would cost. "Emotions and ten cents plus tax," he said. I emptied my wallet onto the counter and gave him every last cent I had. Without a word he handed me my ticket and then turned away.

With nothing left and someplace to go I boarded the train and took my seat among the other passengers. When we got underway, a young conductor with a noticeable limp walked up the aisle. I could hear the clop-shuffle, clop-shuffle as he neared. I had placed my ticket in the slot on the back of the seat in front of me. I watched the conductor; he was wearing a heavily starched white shirt which made his complexion very pale. As he drew nearer I made out the initials O.I.R.R. on his cap. After he took my ticket, he stood beside me for a moment. I don't know why but he made me feel uneasy. I looked up at him but he didn't turn away. His steely icy-blue eyes blinked almost sympathetically. I thought he was about to cry. After he walked away, I heard the young man say, "Such a shame. Such a damn shame." I didn't care what he thought, after all, it wasn't my fault I had to make the journey. I felt very cold and insensitive toward everything. The man next to me was only trying to be nice when he

offered me a cigarette, but I ignored him. I couldn't understand why I reacted as I did until I recalled what my fare had cost me. I felt good; numbness, without being dead, or frozen.

The train ride itself was boring. The scenery was dull. We passed a few orange groves and a lot of farms, but they all looked the same. The only sound was that of the wheels passing over the tracks. The rhythmic clickty-clack put me to sleep. When I awoke the conductor was standing in the doorway looking at me. "Next stop, Outer Insanity. End of the line," he announced.



BECAUSE

JACK KARMINSKI

Summer sun. Green grass. Soft, cool breeze — trees, gently swaying. Hungry jaws gnawing at a steak bone. Romping, running, playing, happily freely — freely . . .

It struck like a swiftly moving dagger — long, black. Wheels screeching. It made its move cunningly, accurately.

Oh God! The pain of waiting. How every second seems like eternity. The waiting. Not a sound. The pain. The time. And I helpless, watching every second. — Please let this crime pass over as quickly as it came. Maybe there's a chance — It's just a mistake — it's just . . . Do something!

SHE'S DEAD!

I wanted to erase the memories, numb the pain as I stared at the puddles of blood. No! God! I heard her muffled cries of pain, her gasping for life.

WHY?

THE LAST ALLELUJA H

SUZANNE MILLER

This frustration and cleanliness have been scrubbing my intermittent sanity for years, it seems. Were I free to move, I would raise my hands to my eyes, and viciously claw my eyeballs to their barest tissue. By doing so, I would no longer have to bear the sight of these white, padded walls, which gleam with the brilliance of flying saucers in the night, and fill me with a lustful craving for the Man from Glad. My movements, however, are restricted by a coat-of-no-arms. To wear this jacket feels like a prolonged process of consumption by a Boa Constrictor.

There is a spider in the corner by the dresser. It's been here as long as I have, moving up that single strand, and sliding back down, merrily spinning his web. He doesn't know I see him, nor does he think I know that he intends to kill me with his deceptively attractive snare. I never realized how cunning spiders are, until I became roommates with one here at the asylum. Yes, weave your deathtrap. Soon you will fill this immaculate room with your malevolence, and suffocate me with your evil pastime. But I will go down fighting, I hope. "Teez Dayan, Ben Zonah," I scream, for screaming has become my hobby, and my throat would now feel strange without that raw itch. As a matter of fact, the itch has become quite pleasurable, so I continue to holler the latter, international curse in seven different languages, throwing in a few more profanities here and there. "Damn you, spider, I still have a tongue, do you have ears?"

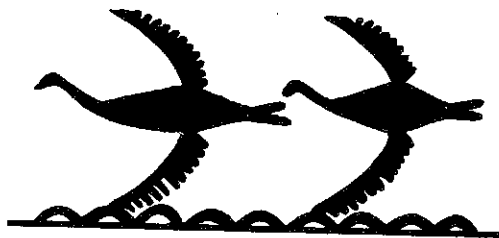
The spider quickly descends into a vase of plastic rododendrons — dusty, smelly plastic flowers. I remember a garden with every imaginable flower. The sun was there. So was I, I think. It felt so nice to be warm. The sun baked the flowers and the earth. Their scents mingled with my body odor, and I would lie in the garden for hours and breathe. It all seems like a dream now, as I inhale the scents of Pine Sol and anesthesia. I want to smell the earth again. Oh, it's all so confusing . . . I don't know anymore, I only hope sometimes.

I can vaguely hear the tolling of church bells. One, two, three . . . no more. Three o'clock. The clock on the dresser

says five. It must be slow. Or is it fast? Maybe the church bells are wrong. But is it A.M. or P.M.? If I could just look out a window, I'd know by the daylight or darkness, but the shades are drawn, and the overhead light is always on, and breakfast, lunch, and dinner are always the same. I remember the church bells. Seven tolls on Sunday. Enter the priest. We all stand up. Allelujah, Allelujah, we all sit down. Holy, holy, holy, get down on your knees and pray. Frustrated boredom and stifled yawns. I have to scream once again. "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are filled with thy glory, but your glory is doom, and Jesus, Mary, and Joseph shall die in battle along with all the king's horses and all the king's men, and Humpty Dumpty has shattered along with me, your servant, and nothing will put us back together again, no, Lord God of Hosts, not even your Holy Spirit, for he always was and always will be a ghost. A ghost who haunts and ravages my soul, and my spirit, and my veins, and yes, even my mind — this haunted house of a mind.

By my clock, it will be time for another mass soon. But is it Sunday yet, or has Sunday already passed? wonder how many Sundays have gone by without my kneeling in that pew? I wonder where the hands of the clock will be when the spider finally . . .

Madman, please, where am I? Where has all the time gone? I'd like to leave, but I've been here such a long, long time.



ESSAY:

COMMUNICATION IN AN ADOLESCENT UNIVERSE

ALFRED dePROSPERO

What is of greater urgency in adolescence than freedom? The young person yearns for freedom to explore the worlds of the senses and the intellect, a yearning that frequently breeds conflicts with the ever-present social restraints.

Observing adolescence at this stage is particularly painful to those teachers who serve as midwives to the emerging promise of young poets, mathematicians or philosophers. No sooner is the spirit of creativity revealed than the child dons his "mask." The flight for freedom begins simultaneously, and rapidly drives the burst of promise underground.

The difficulty of communicating with adolescents rests in the inability to recognize the real pain of adolescence — the lingering sense of promise. Did we **become** the ideal of our adolescence, or was the tender shoot driven underground during the headlong flight for freedom?

We have been sensitized to the aspect of sexuality at the time of puberty, but the child who puts on a mask to hide his sexuality may remove it later with far greater ease than the mask with which he has concealed his spirit.

In the Anthroposophical view, spiritual identity is delivered on the wings of the mother tongue. In the ability to communicate, the soul is born. While the child is inarticulate, he remains undifferentiated from his world. The infantile 'me' yields to that view of self represented by 'I.' And it is this view of 'I'—the innermost self—which often must be concealed in the struggle for freedom. The ironic part of this is that the adolescent puts on this mask to **protect** this innermost self.

In the classic fairy tale, for example, we can see the symbols of this adolescent drama. The isolated young person is threatened by some unknown and terrible power in the form

of a dragon, or demon, which would keep him from realizing his true self. Sometimes, as in the Cinderella tale, the demon is a witch-like step-parent, an authoritarian ogre who corrupts the proper spiritual role of parent. The youth is able, however, to remove the mask when the magic figure of a princess, or, in Cinderella's case, a fairy-godmother appears.

Many of us familiar with the literature of the fairy tale miss the idea of 'the right person.' False suitors who, by some trick or ruse, would gain the princess' hand abound. They are recognized and rejected and the protective mask remains on until the 'right' person appears. The point is that the impostors are self-serving; they want something in return, frequently the fruits of freedom in the material-worldly view.

Adults who have buried **their** tender shoots of promise, **their** adolescent ideal, often experience only the part of the adolescent struggling for freedom, never understanding the true nature of the adolescent mask. They and their words are rejected as impostors.

I have suggested that, in the Anthroposophical view, communication holds the single possibility for deliverance from spiritual isolation and lifelong denial of the ideals of early adolescence. If young people were able to find that rare person in front of whom they might reveal themselves among friends their own age, the time of adolescence would be a vastly different experience. It may be that the young need the old for this, and too many of those supposedly beyond adolescence are still struggling for freedom themselves.

For many adolescents, school provides them with the **only** opportunity to meet with adults who even begin to take their youthful ideals seriously. For most, I suspect, school is just something to be dutifully endured as a daily dose of social medicine regulating the freedom urge and the teacher just another adult dragon preventing the birth of the beautiful child of the spirit in the kind of adversary relationship from which neither adult or child may escape.

The loss of the ideal and the flight for freedom suggest nothing more than a painful prelude to utter isolation. The loss of the ideal in America can be seen most readily in our mistrust of intellectual thinking. Many of us have accepted an inevitable gulf between thought and action. Thoughts are

declared cheap in slogans such as "Actions speak louder than words." The more the chasm between our thoughts and actions opens, the more we become exiles divorced from our moral commitments.

Where is the adolescent searching for freedom? And how? Consider two periods of recent American history, the Depression of the 1930's, and the Beatnik Era of the 1950's: the first shattered the illusion of perpetual material progress for millions of Americans; the second demolished the last dikes withstanding the flood of the unconscious which began with the advent of psychoanalysis. The uncertain, but vastly influential theories of relativity are allowed to swirl through the ruins; the prospects of moral reconciliation are thrust further into the dark orbit of a human memory which has declared itself of a singularly temporal nature.

Where else is the adolescent to quest for truth? Escaping to the streets of European or Indian cities? Escaping to communes? Some stop playing school and house and head off to set up a woodworking shop or pottery. A lecturer I heard recently remarked "the skilled hands of the craftsman are more spiritual than anything one may find in a university."

One thinks of the prospect of "escaped slaves" deserting what D. H. Lawrence describes as "The Old Masters" in Europe for the prospect of freedom under the new master, democracy, two-hundred years ago.

To the Anthroposophist, communication is imperative; so long as what we think and say has little connection with our actions, the ideals, the promise of adolescence will remain hidden from us. The Princess, hidden from the view of the corrupt, will go unrecognized. We will continue to withdraw into fear and anxiety not knowing why the Apollonian day of reason, of clearly defined rational power, is being merged into the night of irrational Dionysian anarchy.

Concluding postscript: Precisely at the time in this century that psychoanalysis and the theory of relativity appeared, there emerged in Europe the body of thought set forth in modern Anthroposophy. It is incomprehensible that the modern universities have completely overlooked the wisdom of Anthroposophical teachings, but, with few exceptions, they have. If the reader is inclined to examine the literature of Anthroposophy, he will find a rich source of ideas and inspiration in the hundred-plus volumes by the founder of this

movement, Dr. Rudolf Steiner. Steiner, apart from his writings on the philosophy of spiritual activity, founded a system of education now flourishing in the Waldorf Schools, some twenty of which are operating in the U.S. Steiner is also known in Europe as the official and scholarly editor of Goethe's scientific writings.



Brock Palmer

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