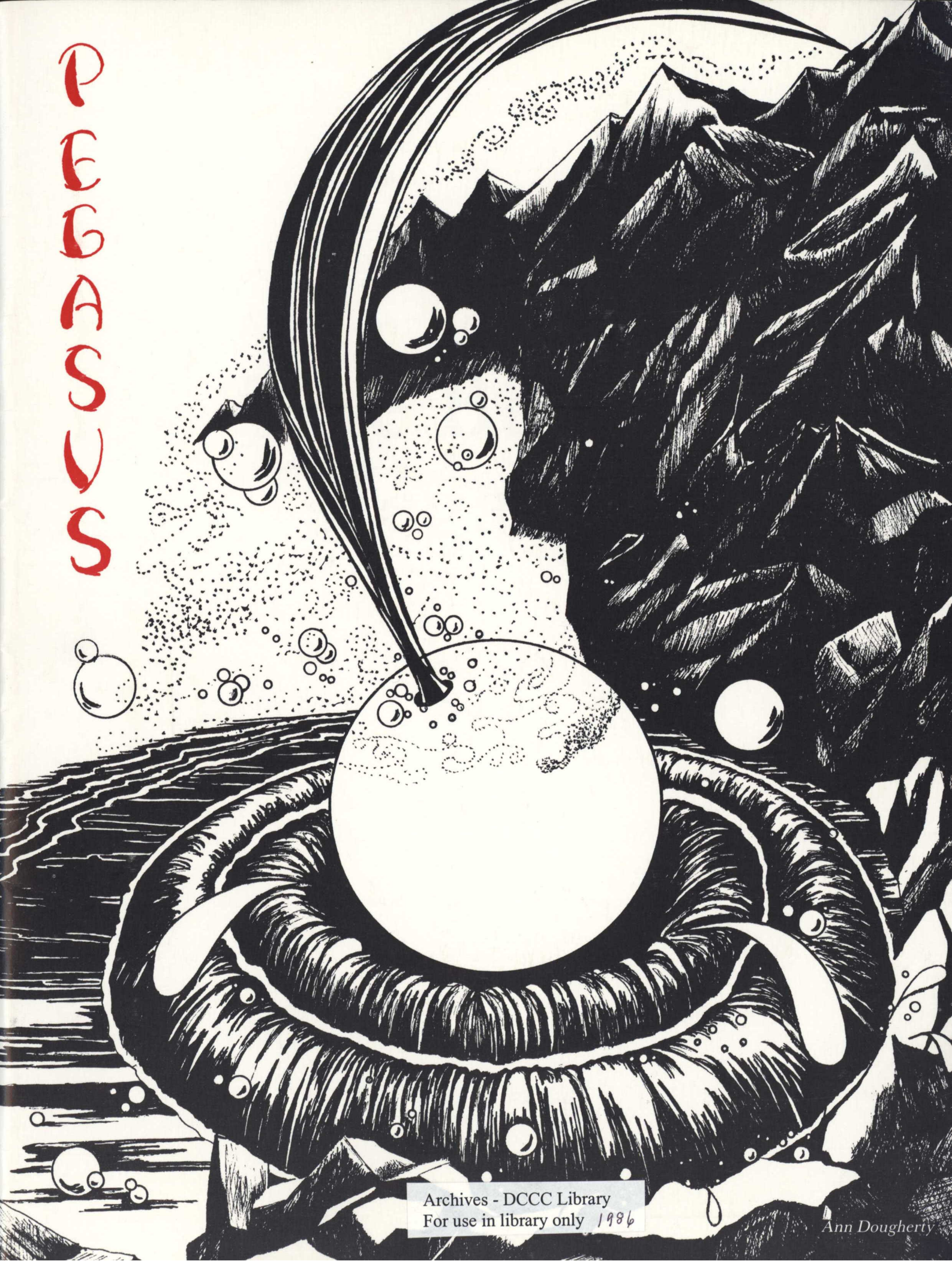


PEGASUS



The Best of Pegasus

**Vol. XIX
No. 3**

**Winter
1986**

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Staff Page

Jeanne Broadwell
Shelley Wisniewski

Editors-in-Chief

Staff

Lien Bischoy

Debbie Brown

Faculty Advisor

Alfred de Prospero

PEGASUS literary magazine is published biannually by the students of Delaware County Community College, Media, PA 19063. The magazine is sponsored and funded by the college's student activities program.



PEGASUS

Whoa there, Pegasus, winged equus,
Let me leap astride.
Take me for a ride high in the sky.
Take me in flights to heights beyond the mere mundane,
 inane,
 profane.
Escape above the Babel towers where rowdy crowds impose
 their words of naught, their thoughts unheard.
Carry me through downy clouds of prose;
 swiftly through tumultuous cumulus;
 through veils of cirrus, wispy, nebulous.
On magic wings, climb higher, ever higher
 where imageries aspire.
And race across a rainbow road of rhyme — —
 all colors, clear, aglow.
Fly fast past empty space and static time
Until, at last,
 we pause on zenith's high plateau.
Stay, Pegasus, and graze the field of stars
 while I alight.
Deep in a bed of allegory, I'll immerse,
Dreamily to laze beside the muse
 whose songs suffuse the universe.

ann doty winters
Pegasus, Vol. XVI
1982

The Enlightened Professor

He seemed like the typical mad scientist you might see in an old Sci-Fi B movie, hovering intensely over a splendid disarray of assorted flasks, beakers, and worn out test tubes. Looking like a sickly apparition, he would shuffle undecidingly from one station in the laboratory to the next, with an overpronounced if not semi-rythymical limp, one foot dragging unceremoniously at abnormal length behind the other. Years upon years of practicing his formulas in the lab, with very little healthy exposure to fresh air or sunshine, had chemically weathered the composition and pigment of his skin to a reptilian-like texture, and full opaque yellowish pallor. When he spoke, the words fell sharply out of his mouth with a biting edge, that compelled only those who barely knew him, to really listen, in bewilderment. The most disarming thing about him was an ever present light in his eyes, of unquenched turbulence.

His name was Wilfred Bolfouse, although his fellow scientists used more stinging terms in which to describe him. They derided him as an eccentric old fool and obsessive lunatic; it was postulated that the aging Professor Bolfouse had finally taken a permanent leave of any intellectual reasoning or bit of sanity ever within his grasp. His latest stream of incessant high pitched gibberish was about insects being the only superior race, and how someday, he would create a mutant strain of ants, bees, butterflies, and beetles. They would be replete with human genes and human biochemical characteristics, which in turn would increase the insects' size and intellectual capacity several thousand times. It left Wilfred's colleagues feeling a detached sympathy, or utter embarrassment at having endured the old fool for so long. Wilfred Bolfouse's stubborn refusal to abandon his freakish theories, ultimately led to his dismissal from the scientific community at large.

After being rejected so plainly by his former associates, Wilfred decided to move out into the nearby countryside, where he could obsorbedly conduct his experiments on insects, without bother or opposition from those that thought him crazy. He would find a suitable place to rent, away from the clamor in the big city. An old white clapboard cottage, nestled in some rolling hills, ended his search. Money to support his existence and research was no problem, as Wilfred had acquired numerous research grants and cash awards in his younger, "saner" days. The balances of these unused monies sat lazily in the city bank, collecting interest.

Days quickly turned into weeks, as Wilfred became acquainted with his new surroundings. The many meadows, streams, and clustered groups of trees, provided the perfect ecological environment for gathering and studying insects of all kinds. There were numerous butterflies and moths, bees, wasps, ants, dragonflies, leafhoppers, and so on. Wilfred was a little lethargic in moving around during his daily explorations, as he had not exercised his withered limbs, or challenged his physical stamina for many years. Every day though, he could walk a little further, and collect a few more specimens. He would periodically travel into the city for more supplies; butterfly nets, and glass cases in which to house his tiny captives for observation.

As Wilfred trekked over meadow and stream daily, slowly, but surely, something important dawned on him. Years of being hemmed in a laboratory, working endless hours had jammed Wilfred's internal machinery. It was as if a deadly rust had formed a tight seal on his outer body, and then seeped into his joints, tendons, and nerves, making him stiff, slow, and old, before his time was due. His very soul had also been affected and frozen by the expectations of others, time deadlines on his walk, and the untimely passing of his beloved wife. Plunging further and further into his laboratory research, it had numbed his emotions to the point where he had forgotten the simple joys and small freedoms he had treasured as a young man. But now, with the gentle breeze blowing softly through his sparse white hair, and the birds in the trees around him rejoicing in an uneven but spirited melody, there was a new feeling of hope surging within him. A sudden insight told him that his idea of creating a new race of insect people was born out of resentment, not insanity. He had secretly wished that these mutants would destroy a cold society that had forgotten Wilfred Bolfouse. Now that he knew it had all been a wishful fantasy, he was quite content to sit on a grassy bank, and watch the sun set over a peaceful horizon.

charles peacock
Pegasus, Vol. XIX
1986

THE CONVENT

Resounding
Far below
the stillness of this cell,
Virgin tongues are whispering.
Nightly through these floors
the sounding bell would rise
to quench their lust
for words among themselves.
Stiff limbs were bent
to kneel again
on mattresses
Immaculately white.

Earlier than morning
their skirts went
swirling
down this stair.
Palms slid,
moistening the bannister.
With soft feet pattering,
they stepped past the evil win-
dow
where Christ ascends at Easter.

They were careful,
tapping along those floors,
not to shake the glass,
which like an egg-case
protects them
from the first, unsure
steps
of freedom.

suzanne tassencourt
Pegasus, Vol. IX
1976

THE SORCERESS

A yellow moon
Lights the sky
And the path where she
walks at night.
Scarlet cloak
and jade green eyes,
she sets the night on fire —
light.
She drifts with the gray mist
and watches the raven
as he flies from the witch's hol-
low.
The crystal glass vial
She holds in her hand
contains a purple potion
And all that is familiar
disappears, is interwoven.
A spell has been cast
and throughout the darkness
the time seems short, fading,
quick to the night.
She leaves the altar
shrouded by a blue frost
and enters into the forest,
claiming it all for her own.

lesley wood
Pegasus, Vol. XIII
1980

THINGS YOU CAN DO IN YOUR ROOM

- . . . dance around clothes,
miss a step,
and not have to laugh at yourself.
- . . . look at stupid pictures of yourself
and like them.
- . . . daydream yourself to sleep.
- . . . scratch anywhere you want.
- . . . imitate your posters
and then go straight into a "concert."
- . . . lay halfway on your bed
and slowly slide off.
- . . . yawn out loud.

jennifer a. lincoln
Pegasus, Vol. XIII
1980

LIVE EACH DAY AS IF IT WERE YOUR LAST

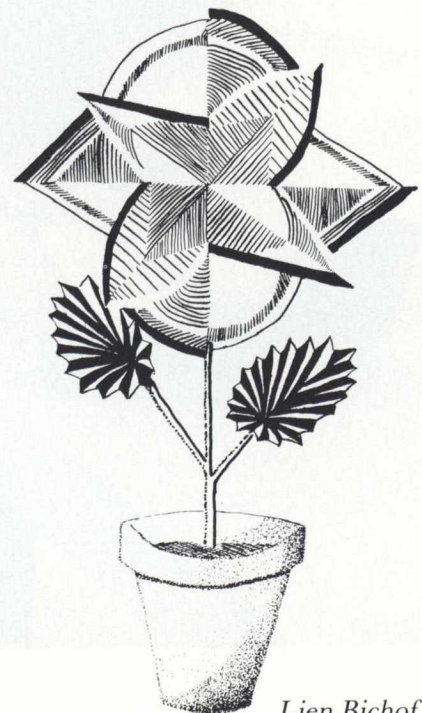
If we are to live each day
As if it were our last,
We'd never get out of
bed.

veronica sarian
Pegasus, Vol. XIX
1986

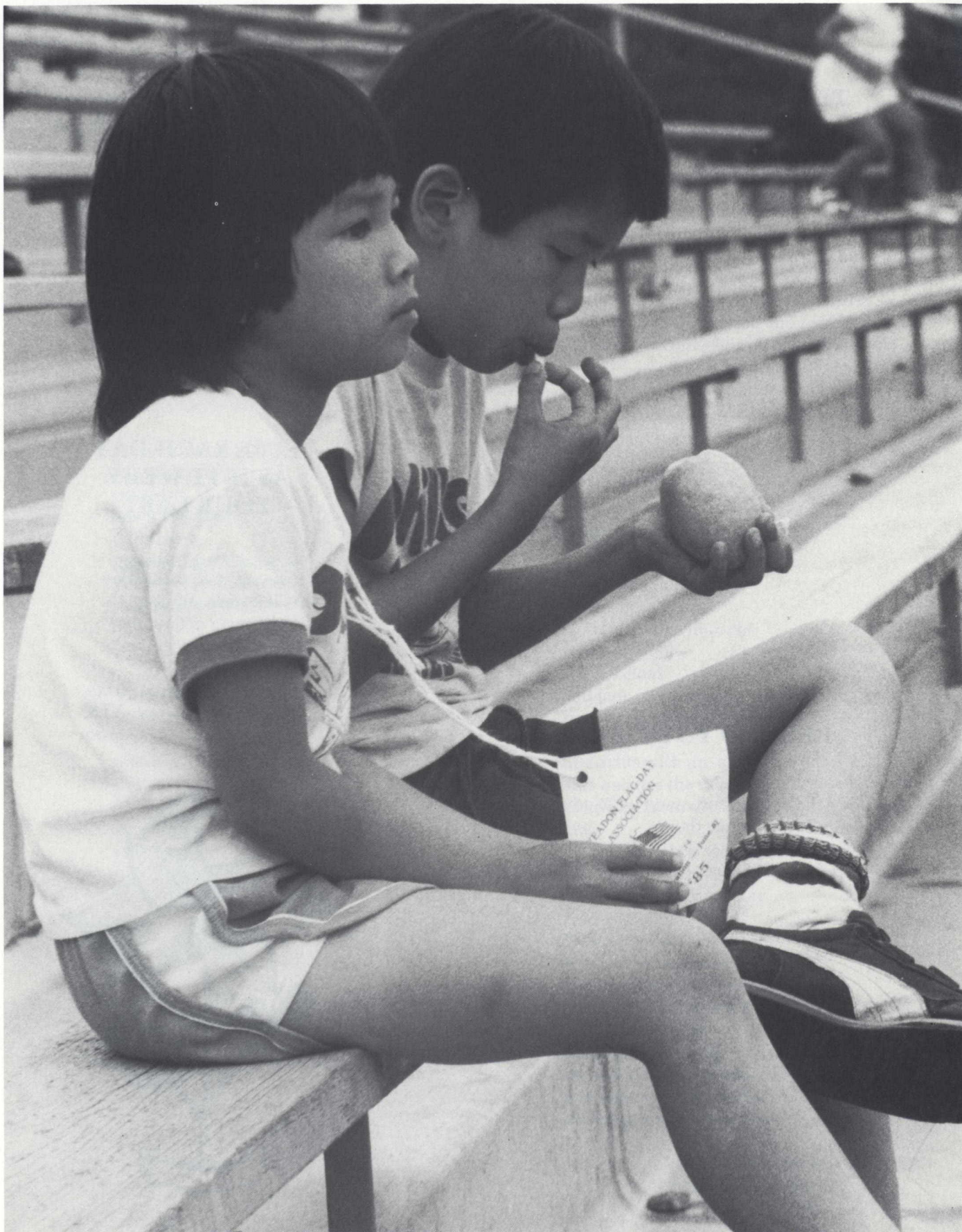
BEYOND YOUTH

When I was young
I admired the wisdom and maturity of adults,
And wanted so to be like them.
The older I get
The more I like children.

veronica sarian
Pegasus, Vol. XIX
1986



Lien Bichof



Jeanne Broadwell

GOODBYE, I GUESS I'LL MISS YOU

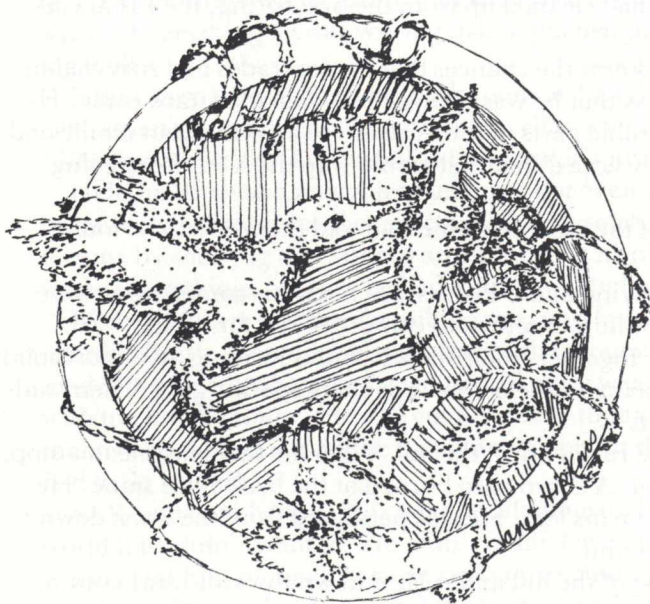
How would I
Have heard your words
Had your words remained
Unspoken.

How would I have seen
Inside your heart
Had your heart remained
Unbroken.

How could I have shared
Your happiness
Had I not shared
Your pain.

How will I tell you
How I've missed you
If you don't come back
Again.

jim mackey
Pegasus, Vol. IX
1976



Janet Hipkins

KINDRED SPIRITS

Kindred spirits
move through the same space but
travel in different directions,
only to meet, there, where the
universe and its wondrous colors
are woven into a single spectrum.
Sailing on waves of the sky,
they disappear, there, where the
sky and earth become one quadrant,
seeking the silent and quiet place
for their rebirth.

They share the sun's path and
follow the shimmering trail
reflected over the water's surface.
Crystal moonbeams of light,
optical illusions flashing out
of sight, only to vanish into the
white mist, are the
kindred spirits in flight.

lesley m. wood
Pegasus, Vol. XA
1981

“MICROCOSM”

The snow fell quickly in large wet flakes. Within minutes, the path he was following was completely covered over. Nevertheless, he stumbled on. He knew that if he stopped, he would die. Either the cold would get him and his frozen corpse would be found at the beginning of the Thaws, or the wolf-like Pistars pursuing him would find their next meal in his flesh. Neither sounded especially appealing, so he ran on.

It had been fourteen years since the colonizing ship had landed on this planet; the new settlers had named it Subros. That was its official name, but it had quickly earned the nickname ‘the Icebox’. It had two seasons, the Thaws which were seventy one days long, and Winter which took up the other one hundred, sixty seven days of the year.

The humans had adapted well to the harsh conditions on the Icebox. There were no native intelligent races; however, there were several species of land animals and at least two airborne creatures that could be hunted for food. Terran food plants grew very well in Subros’ soil, if they could be protected from the cold by means of greenhouses. Only a few plants were indigenous to Subros. One of these plants was the Ruthar, a species of very large coniferous trees, extremely abundant on the planet. During the seventy one days of the Thaws the Ruthar produced three full harvests of a tart white fruit.

A strong wind picked up and the snow blew around him in tiny circles. It made it nearly impossible for him to see. But still he stumbled on. He could hear the barking of the Pistar behind him. Snow was their element; they were gaining on him. He ran on harder.

His mind began to wander. He thought of his wife. She was pregnant with their first child. The image of his wife, heavy with child, only made him run on harder. She was waiting for him to return. Their village had run low on food supplies and had been on very strict rations for the past three weeks. Finally, five days ago, he and four other men had gone out on a hunting expedition.

For three days they had tracked a medium sized herd of Waleens. Yesterday morning they had come upon the herd grazing at an oasis — an area where grass grew year-round because of underground hot-springs. They waited until nightfall, then snuck upon the sleeping herd and plunged their spears through the thick, curly-haired hides of the beasts. Before all of the startled animals could flee, the men had killed or seriously wounded seventeen of them; enough food to last their village well into the Thaws.

The five of them butchered the carcasses right there at the oasis and prepared the meat to be carried back to the village. Only a few minutes after they had cleaned up from the butchering, the Pistars attacked.

As far as he knew, he was the only survivor (he knew the chances that his comrades had survived to be very slim). The only reason he was still alive was that he wasn’t in camp when the attack came. He had volunteered to carry the bones and other unusable parts of the Waleens to a point about a mile and a half from camp and bury them in the snow. They hoped that that would stop the scent from being carried to any predators in the area.

But the predators had already come in search of the meat the wind had told them was to be found nearby.

He was returning to camp when he heard the baying of the Pistars. He knew his companions were either dead or scattered; and it would be foolish for him to return to camp. He ran for his life.

The Ruthar trees were getting closer and closer together, their silvery trunks forming an almost solid wall on either side of him. It seemed that he was being funneled towards some specific goal. Then, suddenly, it all opened up into a wide sloping clearing.

The snow was deeper here and he stumbled. He rolled down the hill. When he finally came to a stop, he lay on his back with his feet uphill from his head. A sharp pain burned at the base of his spine. He knew he was as good as dead now: he couldn’t move his legs. He was paralyzed from the waist down. The barking of the Pistars seemed to be all around him.

He watched as the Pistars plunged over the crest of the hill and rushed down towards him; jaws agape, saliva dripping from sharp fangs, in anxious anticipation of their coming meal. That was the last thing he saw before slipping into the comforting darkness of unconsciousness.

Ronny put the pen down and leaned back in his chair. Well, that was the end of that story. He had just killed off the main character. Only a miracle could save him now.

Hmmm, he wondered, a miracle. What kind of miracle could be believable enough to fit into the story and yet still enough to save the character?

The telephone rang, startling Ronny out of his reverie. He rose and answered the annoyance. "Hello."

"Ronny? This is James," said the voice on the other end of the line. James Thomas, his agent.

"What's up?" Ronny asked. He really wanted to ask why the hell are you bothering me, but he couldn't be that mean to James.

"Do you have anything finished yet?"

"No, not yet. I just ran into problems with another short story."

"Such as?"

"Well, I killed off the main character in the first thousand words."

"What? That's stupid. You know its been three weeks since you've produced anything. You made your first sale to a major magazine and that sold like wildfire. You've got enough of a head on your shoulders to know that if you want to keep the fire burning you've got to produce. Just crank things out then polish them off."

"James, we've been through this before. I'm not a machine that you can crank up to overdrive and have the stories roll off the presses; I'm an *artist*." He emphasized that last word. All he wanted to do was write. He didn't care if he sold anything. He had a burning desire inside him to put words down on paper. Once he had expressed himself, he didn't care what happened to it; he was already moving on to the next piece.

"Well, excuse me, but that's one of the dumbest things I've ever heard," James said indignantly. "I'll call you tomorrow." Then he hung up.

Ronny put the phone back into its cradle. He walked back over to his desk and sat down. Leaning back, he rubbed his temples; a headache was coming on. Well, maybe he would be able to write something then. He always managed to write something James liked after one of his headaches.

(Why the hell couldn't people leave him alone? Why couldn't people understand him? Why was everyone against him?)

All he wanted to do was write; write fiction. He wrote about people, people more real than any he had ever met in his lifetime. He didn't know where he got his ideas for stories or models for his characters. Everything seemed just to 'come to him'. Sometimes he felt more like a historian than a fiction writer. Everything he was writing had happened or was happening somewhere. He was merely recording it all.

If that were true, then in his back room he had the recorded history of an entire civilization. Seventy-seven short stories, twenty one novellas, eight novels and volumes of scribbled notes covering the 1500 year rise of the Trikh civilization, and its final cataclysmic end.

He'd never shown any of it to anyone, not even James. He knew most of it would probably sell, not because the writing was that spectacular, but solely for the sheer magnanimity of it. He could make a fortune by showing that stuff to an editor. But he didn't want or need a fortune, not another one. He wrote those things because he had to. They kept burning inside him until he let them out.

Ronny's father had been a millionaire, and he had made sure that his family was well provided for after his death. Ronny didn't get any of the money directly. His brother and sister got it all. But they made sure he got whatever he wanted. Ronny was the crazy one in the family, so he couldn't be trusted with too much money. He still got his share, though. His siblings gave him \$100 a week for spending money and put him up in the nicest apartment in the city. If he ever wanted or needed anything, all he had to do was ask.

So Ronny was happy. He could be left alone to his writing; never having to bother with the outside world if he didn't want to. He didn't really have any friends. Not James, James stuck around because Ronny lent him money. As near as Ronny could figure, (and he knew this estimate to be dangerously low) he had given James around thirty thousand dollars in money and gifts in three years. His brother and sister weren't his friends. Oh, they put up with him, but he scared them. They were both too

straight-laced to accept his paranoia and other abnormalities.

But he could write his stories, so he was happy. He felt another story beginning to burn inside him. It was about the rise of a new civilization from the ashes of the Trikh. Ronny didn't know exactly what it would be, but he knew he could read it after he was finished. Rolling a clean piece of paper into the typewriter, he began to tap away at the beginning of a new history book.

I put the manuscript down and sat up in my office chair. It wasn't a bad story, not by any means. It was better than a good deal of the stories from out of the slush pile. Whenever things got slow with solicited manuscripts, we pulled things out of the pile and hoped for the best. Occasionally the slush pile would surprise us and produce something worthwhile.

Like this story. The author was no Theodore Sturgeon, no Robert Heinlein; but everybody has to start somewhere. He was young (I took a quick look at the cover letter to check his actual age — 19.) and moldable, and looking for his first sale. (That ever elusive First Sale that moved a writer from just another amateur trying to be Ernest Hemingway, to the exalted rank of 'Published Author'.)

So, I swung my chair around, put my feet up on a small stool and went over the story in my mind. It was interesting, a story within a story, but it didn't really *go* anywhere. There was so much more that could have been done with it. It introduced a good, solid character in Ronny (true, there was no physical description, but in this story, his appearance wouldn't have added anything), but nothing happened with him. The story that Ronny is supposedly writing is okay, too. It holds your interest. It introduces a situation that has a lot of potential-humans colonizing a not-too hospitable planet.

I tried to look at the story from another viewpoint — philosophical rather than just at face value. What was the first story trying to say about Ronny, it's 'author'? Was the whole story, first and second parts, about Ronny?

I finally had to give up tackling it from this angle because it produced some very wild results. The first story, 'written' by Ronny, is autobiographical. One of Ronnie's abnormalities was acute paranoia, symbolized by the Pistar-things chasing the colonist. The colonist was Ronny, the colony was his little imaginary world, and the Pistars were reality chasing after him. ("How much are each of us like Ronny?" I wondered. "Afraid of reality encroaching upon our fantasy worlds.")

Whew! There was a bit more to it than that, but I ended my examination there. Our readers were looking for entertaining reading, not a psychological jaunt through paranoia.

I finally admitted that as interesting and thought-provoking as the story was, it was not publishable in our magazine. But I didn't give it a standard rejection slip. This one I wanted to take home with me and study a little more carefully. I had this nagging feeling that there was more to this story than I had uncovered in my brief examination. I also knew that I wanted to make personal critical comments about it to help this young no-name. Something about his style or . . . or . . . oh-something made me feel that here was a true talent that only had to be nurtured. With the right coaching, this young no-name could someday be a writer.

Folding the manuscript up and putting it into the envelope, I deposited it in my briefcase. Then I turned back to the folder of stories from the slush-pile.

Krlyxxz dropped the papyrus from one of his clawed limbs and sighed. Whoever had written this sure had a vivid imagination. Everyone knew that the Shystyxx were the only intelligent species in the Universe.

david mann
Pegasus, Vol. XIX
1986

GHOSTS

The sound of silence
eaves an eerie chill
no more loudness
from the distant room
or creaking stairs
to welcome a coming
or acknowledge a presence
seems like shadows fall
with a quick turn of the eye
you are expected
out of course
are not there

debbie brown
Pegasus, Vol. XIX
1986

CRYSTAL GAZING

Many things to see
in the crystal shop
But don't touch
Imagine the texture, the shape
But don't touch
"Handle with Care" says the sign
Picture with your eyes
the magical glass
Which shines with the sun
And lets spectrums of light
dance upon the walls
But don't touch
Just imagine.

debbie brown
Pegasus, Vol. XIX
1986

ESCAPE

Night enveloped me
Darkness extreme
Light had vanished
Time to dream.

judith trainer
Pegasus, Vol. XIX
1986

YOU

Sharply,
I remember
blackness,
cold diamonds,
cloud-breath,
leaf-bare trees
feathered against
the moonlight;
cool lips warming
in sweet, hot kisses;
bodies bound in wool
craving touch;
an owl-quiet night,
as deer
softly crushing snow
under small hooves
move away
in silent fear.
Sensual memories
of your face
and the hot smell
of your neck,
pushing July heat
into uncaring cold
as my passion
wastes itself
on a poem.

charlotte luce
The Pheonix, Vol.I
1977

No. 1

My dreams
and my realities
drive toll-free
down
toilet-tissue freeways,
running parallel
forever,
never once intersecting
inside
the Portable Johnny
of my life.

No.2

For so long
as my heart
shall prompt me
to shower you
with my love,
I shall continue
to curse
your umbrella.

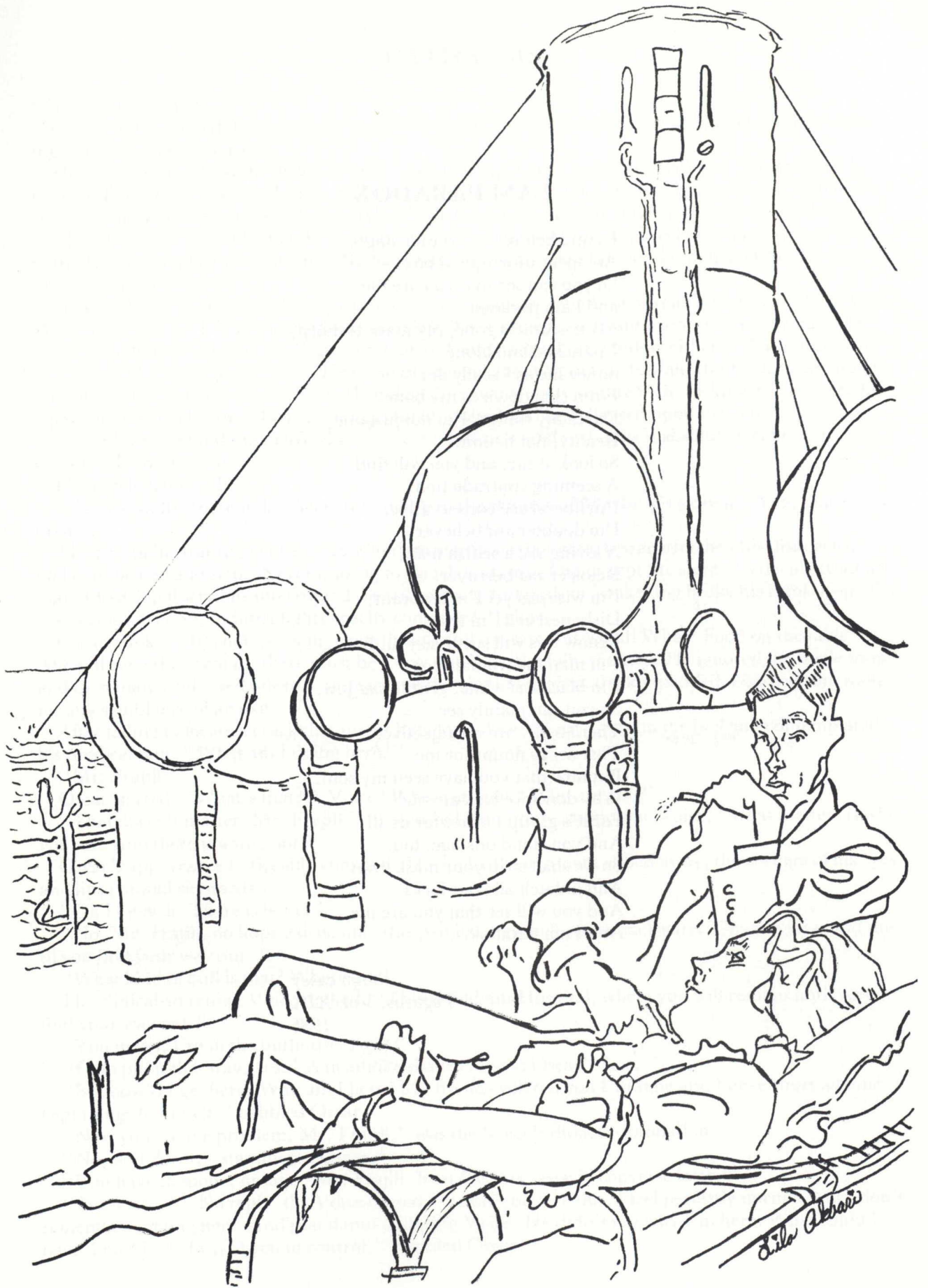
No. 3

Nothing
tastes so poisoned
as a kiss
stolen
from one
who did not wish
to be robbed.

jim mackey
Pegasus, Vol. IX
1976



Michael Myers



I AM PARADOX

I stand before you, center stage,
An open, unwrapped box.
So you can see that you are me
and I am paradox.
My costume's gone, my mask is shorn,
I'm naked and alone,
So see me as I really am
From skin down to my bone.
I'm many things, I'm not just one.
Reality, not fiction.
So look at me, and you will find
A seeming contradiction.
I'm liberal *and* conservative,
I'm doubter *and* believer,
A loving *and* a selfish man,
Rejoicer *and* bereaver.
I'm wise *and* yet I'm ignorant,
Dishonest *and* I'm true.
I know this will surprise you, but
I'm man *and* woman, too.
I'm black *and* white, gentile *and* Jew,
So you can plainly see
There really are no adjectives
That act as nouns for me.
But now that you have seen my soul,
Why don't we look at you?
For it's group theater for us all,
And you stand onstage, too.
So we shall strip your mask away,
And unlatch all your locks.
And you will see that you are me,
And I am paradox.

hugh casey
Pegasus, Vol. XIX
1986

CATHARSIS

"Huh? Where am I?"

Oscar Frajill rubbed the long sleep from his sagging, puffy eyelids, did a double-take and disbelievingly scanned the stark room.

He saw an eggshell-white enclosure that reeked of impersonal hospital sterility. The plastic, high-backed chair under a cheap chrome and glass table, the crude, lidless toilet, the wash basin that only spat out cold water, even the military-style, single bunk bed, all were uniformly colored — albumen.

"Maybe I had an accident and I'm in the hospital. That's it; but, no, I feel ok." He explored his body, leaving no parts untouched. "No bandages, no pain except this goddamn headache. I've got all my arms and legs.

He shakily stood and forced away the oncoming dizziness. Finally he was able to move. "I can walk. Whereinthehell am I?" His gaze slowly searched the cramped, six by nine foot, sunless, womb-like room for a door. "No way out," Oscar moaned, "and no freaking window either, What's going on?"

"There MUST be a way out." He excitedly darted about from wall to wall, frantically searching for an exit. Faster and faster he flitted back and forth, pawing every square inch, seeking release from his eggshell-white enclosure. Oscar's strength finally wilted and he collapsed upon the bed.

"I don't understand this. How'd I get in here if there's no door? This is absolutely craz. . . y. Crazy? Oh no, that's it!"

He punched the wall.

"Padded walls. Incredible! What am I doing in the nuthouse? Maybe it's a dream. Yea, that's it, a dream."

Tired from his frantic, wild exertions and incongruous thoughts, Oscar stretched his disheveled body on the bed and slept. Never ceasing to thrash and turn, Oscar slept the sleep of a deeply troubled man. Occasional screams interrupted the still silence. Intervals of awakening broke his fitful sleep. The always on/never off, indirect lights cruelly continued to glow.

Oscar awoke. "It's not a dream, everything's still the same. It's real! What? Food on the table? Ahha, if something got in, there must be a way out," he gleefully shouted. He ignored the turtle soup and then maniacally, relentlessly, re-searched the vinyl-veneered, thickly-padded, constraining walls for any semblance of an exit.

After failing to locate a crack that might indicate a door, he sat down on the bed and contemplated his predicament. "What am I doing here?"

"Mr. Frajill?"

Oscar started. "What's that? A Voice? Where are you? Who are you?"

"That doesn't matter, Mr. Frajill," murmured the remote, monotone Voice, "what matters is who you are. And there is a way out."

Oscar's appearance noticeably changed. The look of resignation ebbed away; the corners of his eyes and lips pointed skywards.

"Oh I knew it. There is hope!"

"No, Mr. Frajill, no hope exists, only this padded, eggshell-white enclosure. This is your world until you find your way out."

"What kind of bull is that? Where am I?"

The clinical-sounding Voice replied, "This is Bedlam Hospital, where you will remain until you find your way out."

"You mean, I'm in the nuthouse, right?"

"If you put it that way, yes." A deathlike shade clouded Oscar's face.

"But how'd I get here? Why am I here? My friends will tell you I'm sane and I never hurt anyone. I kept things to myself," babbled Oscar.

"Now you see the problem, Mr. Frajill," was the Voice's didactic intonation.

"No, no I don't," stammered Oscar.

"You have to sooner or later, Mr. Frajill. Rest for now, we will converse later."

"But wait. . ." No reply, the Voice ceased. "I don't believe this. I feel perfectly normal, but I don't remember coming here. And that damn irritating Voice. He didn't say why I'm here. What could I have done? I've always been in control," rambled Oscar.

"Mr Frajill?"

"Yes what do you want?"

"You perceived part of the problem again," prescribed the Voice.

"I did?"

"Yes sir."

"Tell me what it is. Help me, please," pleaded Oscar.

"I cannot tell you—you must resolve your problem from within—and I cannot help you. I am only here to guide, not to act as your crutch."

Oscar furrowed his brow while mulling over the Voice's last statement," Hmmm, crutch, I think I see." He said aloud, "You mean, I have to help myself, right?"

"Yes, Mr. Frajill, that assertion stands correct. Congratulations, that is a major step forward."

"But how'd I get here? What'd I do? What happened?" Words rushed hurriedly from his now lively lips.

"Slow down, Mr. Frajill, and I shall explain. Today is November 2. You entered Bedlam, under heavy sedation, October 31."

"Sedation? That explains why I don't remember anything, right?"

"Yes. You would not remember the night of October 31 at the Seashell Bar when you fought a man and nearly bludgeoned him to death with your fists."

Oscar's eyes widened, and he gasped, "WHAT?"

"Please do not interrupt, Mr. Frajill. Now, as I was saying, you nearly killed the man, but several of the bar patrons managed to stop you before it was too late. The patrons had much difficulty trying to restrain and to calm you, so the police came and handcuffed and gagged you."

"Gagged me?"

"I hate him, I hate all you dirty bastards'," the Voice replied.

"I said that? I don't understand." Oscar shook his head before. That's so unlike me."

"Wrong, Mr. Frajill, the alcohol extracted a long suppressed part of you."

Oblivious to that remark, Oscar queried, "How badly hurt is the man?"

"Several broken ribs and multiple contusions, but he will recover. Your hurt is much more difficult to heal."

"I nearly killed a man, groaned Oscar.

A disquieting sickness started deep within Oscar's stomach. He fled for the toilet and hung his head over it. Slowly, forcefully, his stomach twisted and churned while the remembrance of beating the man slithered through the dark recesses of Oscar's brain. He violently retched while clutching the toilet for support. The thought of his violence lingered, churning anew. He vomited again, then he sat on the edge of the bed.

A forlorn figure, Oscar mused, while covering his face with his hands, "I remember it all; even though I was drunk, I was responsible."

Oscar cried, long and hard.

"This is the first time I've cried since I was a kid."

Oscar raised his head. The door was open.

Larry Moulder
Pegasus, Vol. XV
1981

Small Worlds

They ran, screaming, from the bloody scene—
Their lives disheveled; their home destroyed,
Carelessly, in an instant

Panic had struck, and in their frenzy
They trampled the twisted bodies
Or less fortunate victims

Some tried to help those who had been injured,
Carrying or dragging them off
To another place

And the passerby, barefoot,
And smiling at the afternoon sun,
Walked away,
Carefree and unaware
Of the tiny world of the ants
Below him.

john carroll
Pegasus, Vol. XIX
1986

The Web

how delicate is the danger
 that awaits you, how patient
is my hunger,
 as I sit amid my beautiful trap
how fine and perfect are the patterns
 of your doing;
will you admire my handiwork
 as you struggle vainly
while I advance to sign my masterpiece
 with your death?

cliff siple
Pegasus, Vol. XVIII
1984



Tom Langan

The Perfect Track

Gerber strained peas began this poem
with its pungent fermented smell
that took me back to the barnyard;
the rotted hay, manure and
sweat that galloping horses made.
Memory uncoils the tether on the foal
as she lunges out at the rope's
 necksnapping length.
My father
is the pivot of her circumspected run
marked off by line and the reach
of his outstretched arm.
She pants
as she dances her newness into the dust.
Watching her slanted body turn
at every degree of three-hundred and sixty.
I wonder at the countless angles I have made
to meet my father's outreached arm
holding to the perfect track.
Twisting at the neck,
I leaned into an oblong orb that
 out of bounds
brought me a child
with no father to keep him circled in.
My spoon dips into Gerber strained peas,
another circle starts again.

suzanne tassencourt
Pegasus, Vol. IX
1976

“Sunshine”

Come walk
Come run
Come hold my hand
Come touch my skin
Escort me through this day
Come play with me
Come share with me
And listen to my needs
I know that soon, you'll have to go
and take away my light
But I love to be near you
and share in your sunlight
I know I'll never hold you
or change your settled ways
all I need is your smile
and my day will be made
I know you have to go
Though even as you do
I can't help but try to keep you
and dwell in your warmth
It is inevitable
The sun must set
Yet even as I sit here
Watching you go,
I feel an emptiness
Your beauty it is astounding
I can only think and stare.
Now that the horizon is empty
and you've left me bare
I still sit and dream
Knowing you won't be back
But tomorrow's another day
Good night
Sunlight

Tenaglia
Pegasus, Vol. XIX
1986