
PEGASUS MAGAZINE



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"Just Visiting"
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*** Contents ***

Biography:

<i>Koa I Dang</i> , Chanty Jong -----	3-4
<i>Survival Instinct</i> , Chanty Jong -----	31-33

Photography:

<i>Just Visiting</i> , Ed Davis -----	cover
<i>Untitled</i> , Ewa Maj -----	1
<i>The Barn</i> , Pat Bret -----	5
<i>Day's End</i> , Pat Bret -----	7
<i>Alan I</i> , Pat Bret -----	9
<i>Alan II</i> , Pat Bret -----	10
<i>Fiddle Head</i> , Ed Davis -----	12
<i>Love is Being Together</i> , Laila Kavar -----	13-14
<i>Shining Star</i> , Navaho Cherokee, Richard Johnson -----	15
<i>Father of Shining Star</i> , Little Beaver, Richard Johnson -----	16
<i>Untitled Portraits</i> , Dave Branson -----	17
<i>Up and Round</i> , Ed Davis -----	18
<i>Small Miracle</i> , Arnette Jackson -----	19
<i>Untitled</i> , Anthony Durbano -----	21
<i>The Future</i> , Liza Lynnea Betof -----	23
<i>Patterns</i> , Mary Ann Broda -----	34

Poetry:

<i>My Very, Very First Poem</i> , Margaret Wolfsteller -----	2
<i>Hatred's Voice</i> , Linda Kennedy -----	6
<i>Evening Reverie</i> , Susane Marie O Donnell -----	8
<i>Maternal Apology</i> , John WM. McCormick -----	11
<i>Impression of Mass Expression</i> , Linda Kennedy -----	20
<i>Death of a Friend</i> , Kostas Kotsiopoulos -----	22
<i>Losses</i> , Linda Kennedy -----	29
<i>The Sigh</i> , Kostas Kotsiopoulos -----	30
<i>Untitled</i> , Kostas Kotsiopoulos -----	30
<i>To a Dead Bird</i> , Eleanor Whitekettle -----	35

Short Story:

<i>God's Fool</i> , Maria Kaplun -----	24-28
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—Ewa Maj

My Very, Very First Poem.

I lie in bed, I toss, I turn, I cannot sleep, because
my mind is not smitten with a poem to be written
for English Comp II, it is all so obscure
it's like a leap in the dark and not a good start

I studied the translation of Personification
it is an innate object like copy, body, part, heart
shadows floating
more tossing , more turning

My head is ringing with vowels A E I O U singing
trying to combine them with consonants rhyming
to make sense

I know the interpretation of Alliteration
it is similar sounds like sleeping and seeking rest
for the morning
still tossing, still turning

A Metaphor means, not the real thing
it's a figure of speech like a wheel on a wing whirling
falling, failing, sliding
sighting stars in a dream
sleeping

— Margaret Wolfsteller

KOA I DANG

-- by Chanty Jong

The days in Koa I Dang Refugee Camp in Thailand struck me with force. It was August, 1984. Picture a muddy area the size of five football fields surrounded by barbed-wire fences. Here 7,000 refugees from Laos, Vietnam, China, Cambodia and Malaysia were trying to survive. This mass of humanity was like flies hovering over a garbage heap--clumped and crowded. Some women had Islamic white scarves covering their heads. Many women wore light colorful skirts that reached the ground. Both Chinese and Vietnamese men and women were dressed in dark pants, and most of the time the Chinese wore red shirts. Children in shorts and tee shirts darted about. They all were relatively short and skinny. They seemed healthy, but they had worried and frustrated expressions on their faces. Families of various sizes, four to fifteen members, were provided with a grass-thatched peaked cottage financed by the United Nations. The houses were one room, four by ten meters, with two windows opposite each other. There was no furniture except for one four-square-meter wooden board that served as a bed. These houses were lined in rows of twenty-four with a water tank sixteen square meters at the end of each row. A toilet facility, a building having twenty-four rooms with deep holes in the ground, was situated at the other end of each row. People didn't have any soft toilet paper as in the United States. They had to use anything they could get to clean themselves. After sunset people would light the candles and kerosene lamps provided by the United Nations. This would give the camp a spotty yellow and orange glow. Electricity was only available in the office buildings.

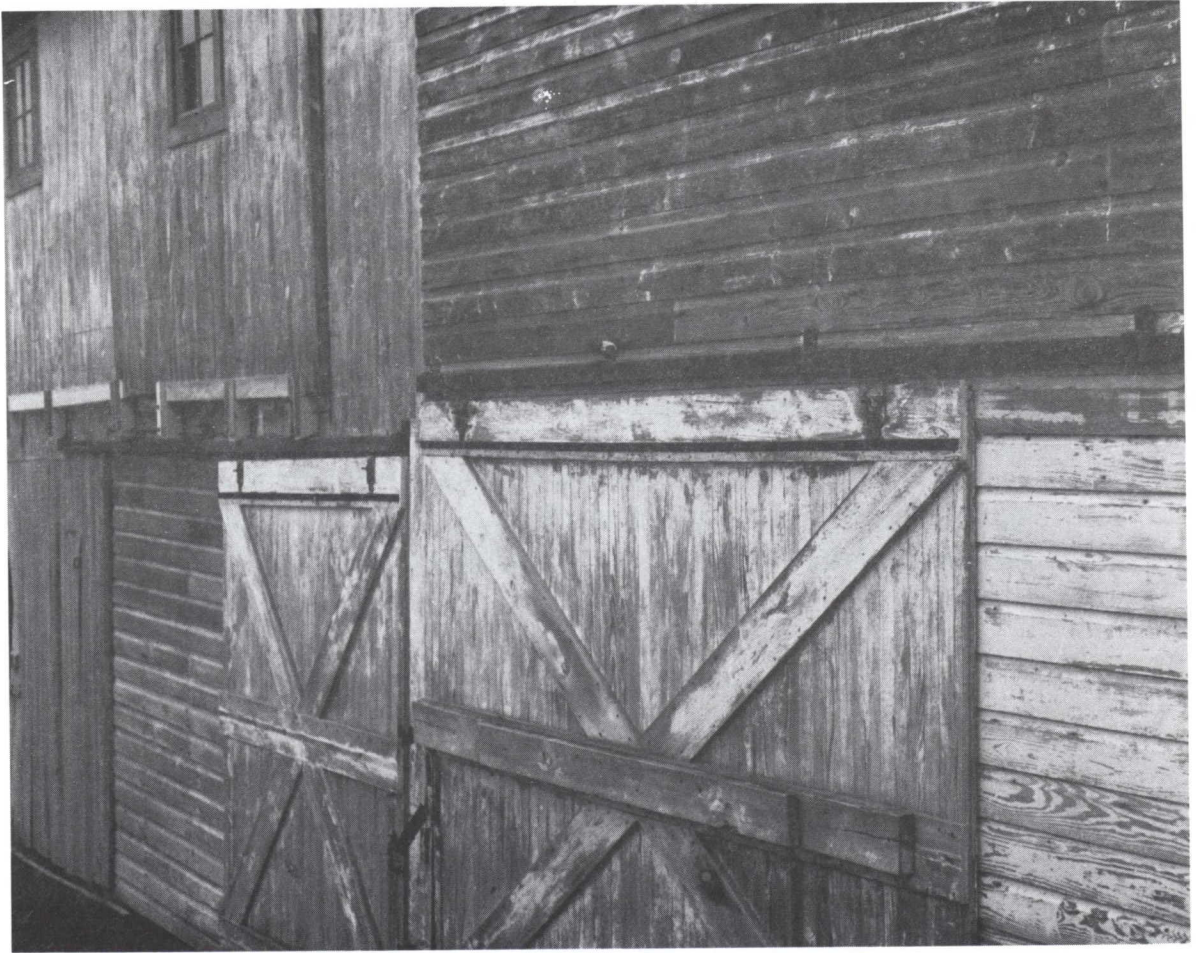
In the southeastern corner of the camp, about 100 Thai and U N officers worked in a tan one-floor cement building (10 by 30 meters) with a blood-red roof. They lived to the west of this office in thatched and bamboo cottages like those of the refugees---ten to a house. To the north of the office was the jail--an open area 9 by 7 meters covered with a peaked thatched roof supported by bamboo poles and walls of barbed wire. Here you noticed unhealthy, malnourished souls, poorly fed so they would want to return home.

Each morning Thai villagers would come to the fence with vegetables like Chinese broccoli, zucchini, cabbage, pumpkin, and carrots, and meat, such as beef and pork, chicken and fish. They sold this to the refugees who set up a market in the center of camp. This market, about half a football field, was very simple. It didn't have a roof or a building. Sellers just sat on the muddy ground when it was raining. When it didn't rain, the ground was very hot and dusty. Refugees' bodies and faces were oily with perspiration and outlines of salt appeared on their clothes. They sat with their baskets of vegetables, rice and meat in front of them, shouting their wares. The United Nations truck from Bangkok brought rice daily and dried tuna twice a week, but this was hardly enough to live on.

Most of the day these people clustered around several houses where people speaking the same language lived. They shared dreams and complained about their fate. Many slaved as secretaries, clerks and baby-sitters, and were paid in material goods like soap, toothpaste and clothing. Their children seemed to be less burdened by this existence. They screamed and shouted to each other playing soccer, volleyball and tennis without a net. They provided the only levity and momentary joy to this inhumane life.

Koa I Dang camp was a dreadful dumping ground for refugees of many nationalities. The indignities of this camp struck me with force.

"The Barn"



—Pat Bret

Hatred's Voice

The Voice of hatred whispers,
"You're not a Jew, a Gay, or a Black.
No, not you, you're better than that.
Aryan, Skinhead, Supremely White,
You know you're right.
So, put them in their places."

As the hatred flows,
Its power grows.

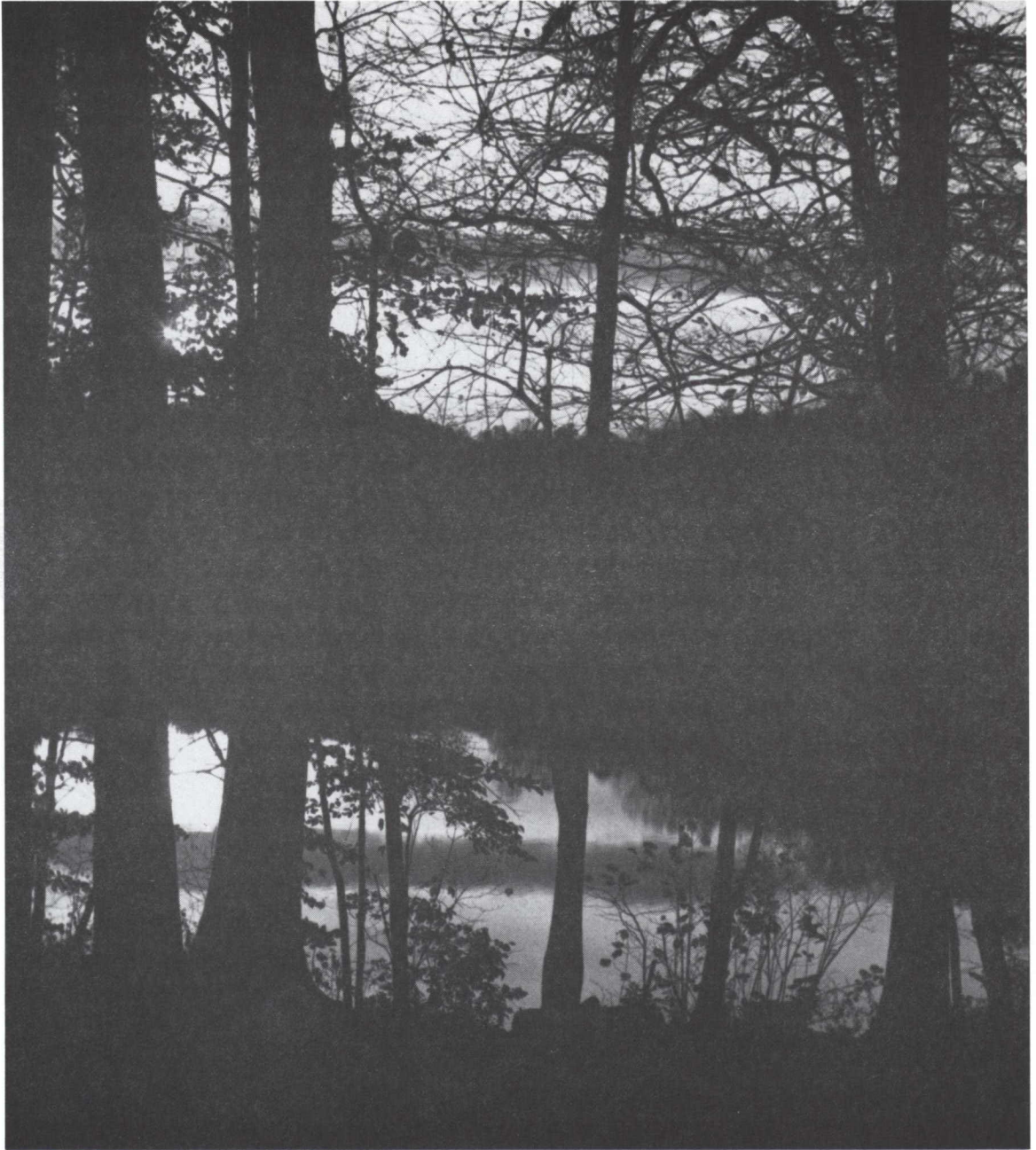
Numbing the senses,
Outweighing compassion,
Unraveling humanity,
Causing destruction.

The voice of hatred whispers
to closed minds,
That listen and hear,
Heeding hatred's call.

As the hatred flows,
Its power grows.

-- *Linda Kennedy*

"Day's End"



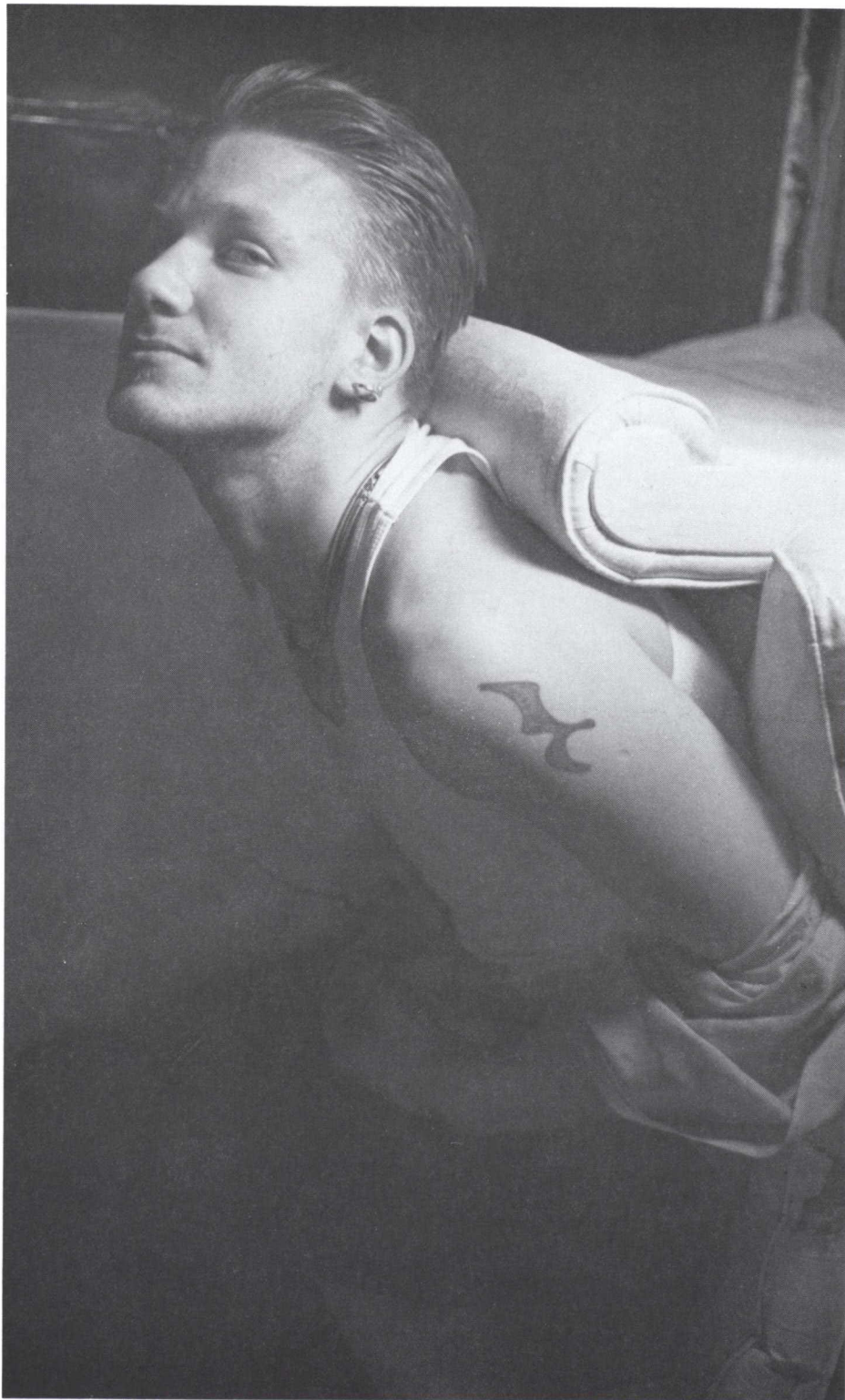
—Pat Bret

Evening Reverie

Pondering the purpose of Planet Earth
in troubled twilight,
I turn tranquil thought.
Sea gulls sweep in silent circles
above somber, sandy silhouettes
crumbled and crushed by calendar tides.
Stars stare down and silently survey
a troubled and tragic, yet tranquil, scene
As man and Earth decay.

-- Susane Marie O Donnell

"Alan I"



—Pat Bret

"Alan II"



—Pat Bret

Maternal Apology

One long arc
about your neck,
fake pearls hooking the cross
that settles briefly
where garden spade
once struck stone

And it having slipped
from your hand,
palm-up now bleeding,
fingers cracked with soil
so close to the real earth...
It is a stranger, free hand now that twists
your hair in nervous little coils

And long walks
don't help anymore,
quick strides almost silent
in wild evasion, the wind fades...

And you will not suffer
them to understand

-- John WM. McCormick

"Fiddle Head"



—Ed Davis



"Love is..."





...Being Together"

—Laila Kavar

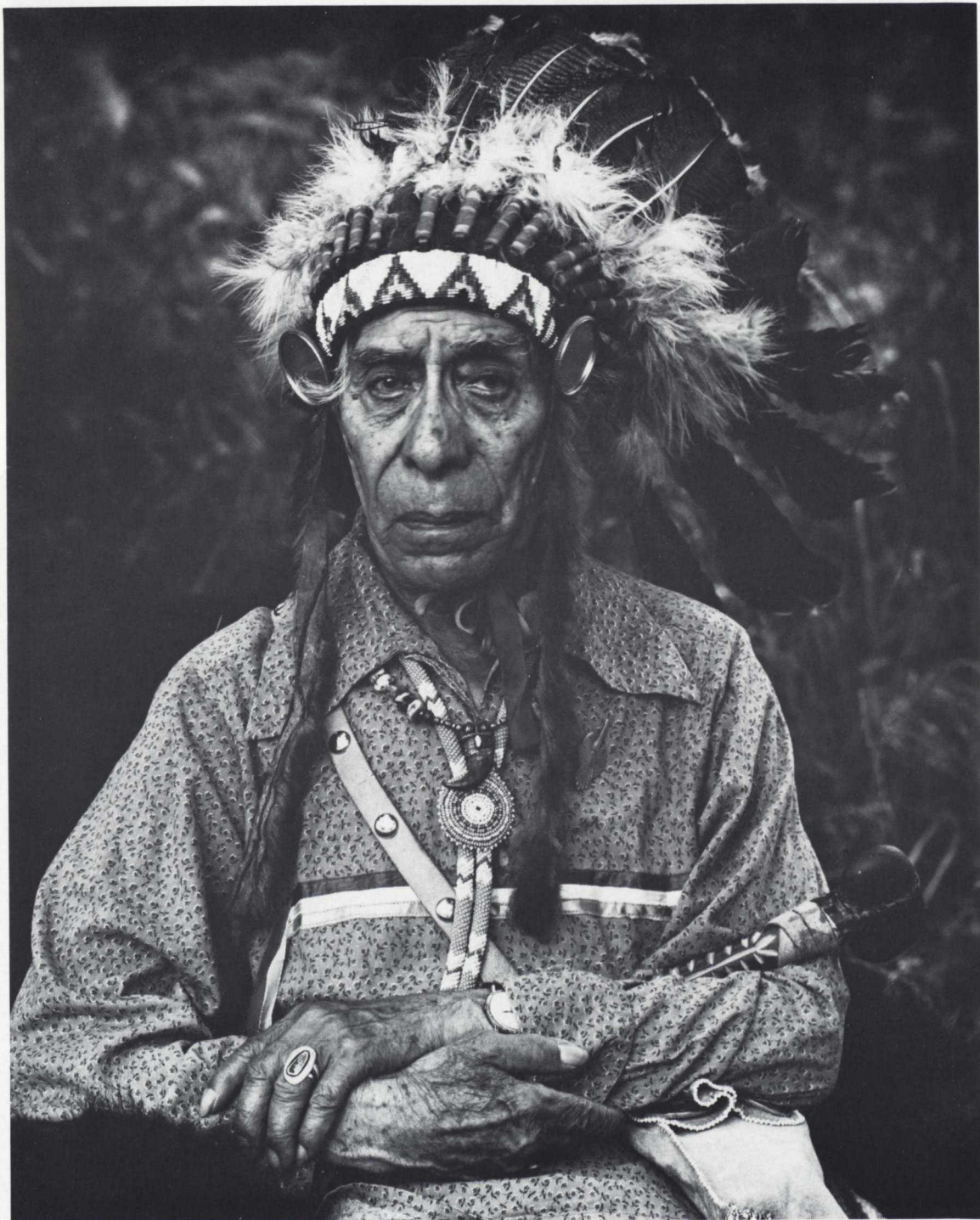


"Shining Star, Navaho Cherokee"

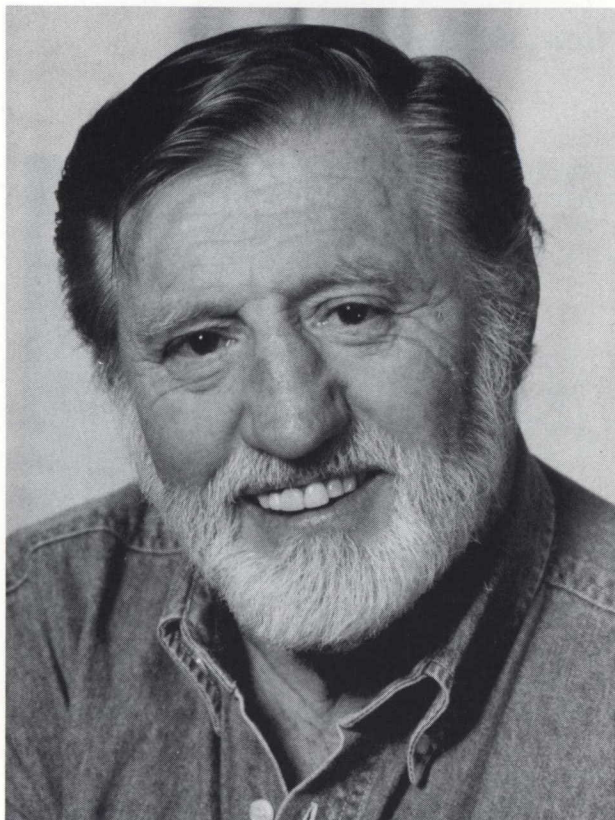


—Richard Johnson

"Father of Shining Star, Little Beaver"



—Richard Johnson



—Dave Branson

"Up and Round"



—Ed Davis

—Ed Davis

"Small Miracle"



—Arnette Jackson

Impression of Mass Expression

Beyond onyx eyes
lies a molasses messiah.
In deceptive disguise,
he stands at his horizon.

Beyond marble flesh
he feels a jet second heat hit,
when his mind and heart mesh
spiraling through his spirit.

Beneath his scorched soul, and writes his reality.
Hidden, is his humanity.
He unfolds walled control.

— *Linda Kennedy*



—Anthony Durbano

Death of a Friend

You look at the sky,
broken heart in hand.
You look at the sky and see a sprinkling of
birds, all different colors.
You see in the sky innumerate
questions and a few answers.
And beyond the sky, the sun.
Heating your face and armor
and melting the snows.
You look at the sky,
but the birds have left you,
and you don't know why.

-- *Kostas Kotsiopoulos*

"The Future"



—Liza Lynnea Betof

GOD's FOOL

-- by *Maria Kaplun*

My name is Boris Kilovski. I'm eighty-three years old. There is not a long time left for me to live. Therefore, tonight, while the storm is outside, and the wind knocks at my window, I want to tell you young people the story of what happened to me years ago when I was fifteen, just fifteen. I'll tell you why I'm so scared every time I see lightning in the sky. I'll tell you what you should never repeat if a similar miracle comes to you some day. My memory is not perfect, but I remember very clearly.

Her name was Nora. She appeared in my class in the winter of ninth grade. Her family had just moved to the town where I lived. Nobody even noticed her the first day she came to class. Really, she was very ordinary-looking. Neither small, nor tall, thin, with a long nose and sparse hair, she would be considered unattractive if anybody troubled to describe her. But in a few days it became clear that she stood out in sharp contrast to the rest of the class. She remained silent when we laughed, and sometimes she smiled unexpectedly when nothing funny was going on. In her literature presentations she always talked about some unknown marvelous world and experiences we couldn't even imagine. She probably invented them and then described them with great expression, with true faith in their existence, and even tears in her eyes. But we thought of her just as an entertainer and were ready to make merry every time she went to the blackboard. She became a clown for us and finally we started calling her "our *yurodivy*" or "God's fool."

However, I didn't think that way about Nora. I felt there was something deep and significant about her, something really important. But I never dared to show my feelings against the class' opinion, until once. It was in zoology class. Nora spoke about the birds with her usual enthusiasm:

"Birds of passage are capable of great endurance. They often fly for days and nights without stopping, even during the storm or heavy wind, and don't lose each other in the darkness.

"But," and Nora's voice became sad, "they die of a heart attack if they find themselves between two lightnings. Oh, it's fearful to be in the night storm! It feels like...."

She suddenly stooped and blushed, The class laughed as usual, just from force of habit.

"Hey!" somebody shouted, "How do you know that?"

"She's a bird!"

"No, she is a yogi!"

"One more *yurodivy's* kink."

"God's fool!"

She didn't move, didn't answer until she was saved by the teacher's voice:

"Kids! Calm down, calm down. The lesson is finished. See you tomorrow."

When everybody ran out, I approached her, not being able to keep silent any more.

"Nora, don't pay attention to them. They are fools. I like what you tell us."

"Thanks. But I'm not offended," she answered. She really didn't seem hurt. "To tell the truth," she continued, "Today I said a little bit more than I wanted, but such a mistake happens to me just once. Usually I get from these people exactly what I expect."

"But why are you telling 'these people' things they are unable to understand," I asked?

She raised her eyes and looked at me severely and seriously:

"They should understand. And they will. Someday."

We went home together that day. And all the following days. We talked and couldn't stop talking, so that often I stayed at her house overnight. Once more she told me about her unreal dreams and thoughts, and read some poems she wrote. More and more often we spent whole days together. But our external life, unlike our internal, almost didn't change, except that now in class there were two clowns instead of one. We officially became a couple.

So came the Spring. After three months of knowing each other we realized that we were in love.

Maybe for the first time in my life I was completely happy. Nothing bothered me except one thing. But soon I dared to ask her the question I had avoided before. I did it during one of those nights when I stayed at her house.

"Nora, do you remember that day we met each other? In class?"

"Surely, dear."

"You talked about birds, about storms, do you remember? Why did you stop then? It seems to me.... you talked about yourself."

It was too dark there to see her face, but I felt her embarrassment, and I knew her enough already to assume this meant a lot. I was waiting.

"You are right," she said after a pause, "Boris, I've never told anybody else about it, but I'll tell you. I can fly."

I didn't understand.

"I can fly, do you understand? I love to fly in the darkness, it's really exciting. I've been flying almost every night since I was a child, but nobody knows about it, not even mom. It's a secret. You understand? Boris..."

"I understand, You imagine how you..."

"No! I don't imagine! I fly! You don't believe me? It's true, it's not a tale. Why don't you believe!?"

"I do," I lied. But I didn't trust her. It was impossible to trust her. Even for me. People can't fly. This a law of nature.

"You don't believe. OK. I'll show you."

She took me by the hand and lead me toward the window.

"Nora, what are you going to do!?" I screamed.

"Tssss, be quiet. You'll see how wonderful the flying is. Just trust me."

We were already on the windowsill, the rain splashing our faces.

"Nora, stop it."

"Don't be afraid, you'll kill us both. Don't be afraid. You love me? Close your eyes."

She held me, and at the next moment I sensed around me a huge headlong moving space.

When I woke up the next morning, she was still sleeping. Very quietly I took my clothes and left the house. The streets were wet and shiny after the night storm, and drenched trees gave me a shower after each wind rush, but I didn't mind anything. I was stunned. I was completely crushed. I was scared.

I dimly remembered the rain and lightning in the black sky, and a huge sparkling city far under us, and Nora's happy eyes. But I couldn't remember us coming back or anything after that. Again, I was scared. What was it? What could it mean? I didn't fly. We didn't fly. People cannot fly! Maybe it was a hallucination? No, it means I'm mentally ill. Or Nora is ill? Could I catch it? We didn't fly! Oh, my God...

I had to share it with someone, I needed consolation, and I ran to the house of my only friend, my classmate, Sashka. He had to understand. I burst into his room and brought down all my despair upon him.

"I didn't fly, Sashka, did I? I couldn't. People don't fly!"

"Hey, Bor, what is the matter with you? You saw a dream. Or... I don't know. Anyway, it's not so bad. I'd like to try it too. Will you take me with you next time?"

"Are you out of your mind," I said. "People don't fly!"

"I've heard of it." He smiled with a jeer, scoffing at my troubles. He didn't understand; he couldn't help me. I shut the door from outside. Nobody could help me.

For two hours I roamed the streets and finally went to school. I was tired, confused, without books and without any thoughts.

The very first sound I heard approaching our classroom was Sashka's wriggling voice:

"...Then he says: 'We didn't fly with God's fool, did we? We are not mad, are we? Flying on wings of love, ha-ha!'"

Humiliating laughs from forty-one mouths answered him.

I became speechless, but forced myself to come in, pale, like paper. Nora stood in the corner looking at me with improbably huge eyes. All sound suddenly quieted down for me and her voice appeared in my thoughts: "I've never told anybody, but I'll tell you. It's a secret, you understand?"

My heart stopped. Only now did I realize what I had done. She stepped toward me, her voice was dead:

"Did you really tell him?"

What could I say?

"Did you?"

"Nora..."

Then it was as if she put on thirty years in a second, and I don't remember how she left.

Sixty-eight years have passed. I never saw her again. Next morning after that fateful day her dead body was found on a vacant lot not far from my house. And nobody could explain what happened to her, because it seemed like she had fallen from a great height, but there was nothing near from which she could have fallen.

LOSSES

(A mimetic poem of "Harlem" by Langston Hughes)

What becomes of a mind misplaced?

Does it zoom out
like a movie scene's end?
Or blister like a burn--
Shrink and bend?
Does it rest like a rusty plow?
Or drip its sweat all over--
like a weightlifter's brow?

Perhaps it lies dead
like a finished meal.

Or does it reveal?

-- *Linda Kennedy*

Untitled

Small ripples in the water,
reflections like computer images
with huge pixels. Light
bending and refracting.
Colors magnified and multiplied --
Hypnotic. The fish swim undaunted.
I forget to breathe,
but I'll remember
from now on.

The Sigh

We're all terminal.
Some of us run to our deaths,
some of us just drift.

-- Kostas Kotsiopoulos

Survival Instinct

-- by Chanty Jong

In 1984, I escaped from Cambodia and found myself in a refugee camp in Thailand. The United Nations rented this camp from Thailand. The Thai government set up a quota of 6,000 refugees. Many people in the camp were there illegally because of these Thai government quotas and regulations. When I arrived in October, 1984, I was an illegal refugee. I found a trashy spot between two houses to hide. After getting permission from those living in these houses, I dug a hole about one square meter by two square meters deep for myself. My neighbor helped me camouflage the hole with bamboo and trash so that it appeared to be solid ground. This was where I lived for nearly two years. It was very damp and dark under the ground squatting in the mud. There was little air and I was always sweating profusely. I could hear people talking, and I was often trembling especially when people walked above me. I worried that the covering wasn't strong enough and that the Thai soldiers, who were constantly searching for illegal refugees, might spot my bamboo pole -- my life support device. I had to struggle to get air through this meter-long bamboo pole with an opening in the end the size of your wrist. It was exposed about two inches above the ground, although it was covered with trash including rancid meat; it was attracting noisy flies. I couldn't let them find me because they would send me back to my country or put me in a Thai jail. I wasn't given food like the legal refugees. Fortnightly, I was visited twice a day by Pat, my neighbor, who shared the UN rations with me, and asked if I needed to use the bathroom. She watched to make sure there were no soldiers nearby. I felt revived each time I came out because I could exercise my body and breathe the fresh air.

In 1986, I was caught by the Thai soldiers. It was Saturday morning, June 9th, at 3:30 am. Pat awakened me, whispering cautiously that many soldiers wearing black uniforms with red scarves, carrying guns with unsheathed bayonets, had encircled each row of houses. They bellowed, demanding all illegal refugees show themselves. I coiled up tensely in my hole. I could hear my heart pounding as if it were breaking through my chest. Soldiers approached my area. After searching the houses, they jabbed their bayonets in the trash that covered my hole. Looking up, I saw the sharp point that almost touched my head. I felt desperate. I screamed, "Help!" The soldiers heard me and became irrational. They kicked the trash violently, revealing the cover, and ordered me out of my hole. I was told to line up with 500 other refugees. I remember it well. It was 12:30 p.m. I didn't have my shoes on, but had to walk more than a mile over burning hot sand to the holding area.

We were packed into the holding area, a sandy field, half the size of a football field surrounded by bamboo. We sat packed together, our sweating bodies touching each other. Here we waited for the Thai government to decide who they would put in jail and who they would send back to their countries. I felt empty and lost inside. I had no one to help me. I was the only one of my family who had escaped. My parents, one brother and one sister, are still living in my country. Tears flowed freely. I didn't know what to do. I felt if I went back to Cambodia, I would be killed because I had run away. The government would say I had betrayed my country.

It was about an hour later when I decided to try my escape. I crawled through the crowd, exhausting myself. I finally reached the fence and tried to untwist the wire and break the bamboo without anyone noticing. Surprisingly, at the moment I was not scared at all. After a half an hour, I managed to break two bamboo poles. My hand was bleeding, but I didn't feel any pain.

I held my breath, squeezed through, cautiously crawled out. Another woman who tried to stand, attracted a nearby soldier's attention. He popped her on the head with a stick. I closed my eyes and expected the same. He hadn't seen me, so I continued crawling. When another soldier stopped me and asked me where I was going, I said I had to go to the bathroom. He let me go. Once in the bathroom, I broke out through the thatched wall and started across a field of crops. I thought I had made it until I suddenly heard, "Catch her, catch her!" Looking behind, I saw two soldiers pointing guns at me and shouting, "Stop! We're going to shoot you!" I kept running thinking no one was in front of me. But then I noticed these soldiers at the gate who warned "You can't get out, my dear." I felt panicky; my energy had left. Then I saw a farmer's house outside the fence. In desperation as the soldiers came closer, I had a sudden thought. The tree! A tree was bordering the fence. I crouched, and then leapt up grabbing the lowest branch and pulling myself into the tree. Then I jumped down outside the fence and darted quickly to that house. I was bleeding and my clothes were badly torn. I tried to hold my sarong together as I ran. Reaching the door, I dashed into the room where people were sitting, and dove under the bed like a bird reaching its nest. The family was shocked by my entrance. They exclaimed, "What was that?" But when I exaltedly pleaded with my hands in prayer fashion begging, "please don't...", they understood and they let me stay there. The soldiers dared not jump up into the tree, giving me time to escape. But they were soon at the door asking if anyone saw a Chinese girl. The farmers said "No!" I was shaking under the bed, while the soldiers rummaged through the blankets, mosquito netting, and pillows. Since they neglected to look under the bed, I was safe.

Reflecting on this period of my life, I am still amazed that the soldiers did not shoot me. I had forced myself to face danger and do what I felt was necessary for my future. I didn't care how dangerous it was. I had to get out of the place where I didn't want to be. In the end I was saved by my survival instinct.

"Patterns"



—Mary Ann Broda

To a Dead Bird

You lie at my feet
eyes glazed unseeing.
A life that's obsolete.
Did you from God's hand fall
through the blue gauze sky,
or fly against the wall
unseeing? Your iridescence
stopped my step, bent my head.
Your purple, blue-green hues
no longer fly. Cold and dead.
Heavens and gardens lose
your beauty. For that loss I cry,
the world and I say good-bye.

— *Eleanor Whitekettle*