

druid's cave

Thanks to our advisor, James Scrimgeour, for all the Monday nights.

Druid's Cave is a journal of student art and letters published fall and spring at Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois. Its publication is sponsored by Druid's Cave creative writing club, which meets every Monday night at 9 p.m. usually in the Founder's Suite at the Union. Anyone interested in creative writing is invited to attend these meetings, which are informal discussions of student works.

All submissions were judged anonymously, with no judge voting on his or her own work.

The spring issue will come out near the end of April. The deadline date for submissions will be late February or early March. The exact date will be announced. Submissions may be turned into James Scrimgeour, 423-E, Stevenson Hall.

Selection Board: Rob Koehler, Mary McAlpine, Richard Nowak, Todd Tecumseh, Bennett Theissen

Editor: Dominic Suprenant

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Druid's Cave

POETRY

Gregory Brosofske	5-7	[Holding my mother.] [It's been nearly a year.] Being awake, sleeping and waking up
Rob Koehler	8, 9	i visit debbie INTERLUDE
James Carter-LaRue	11-13	[morning tea rushes through him] May Waystation
Mary McAlpine	15-18	At the Governors House August The Spoils [On leafless days her breath is gray]
Trish Kircher	21	En Attendant Le Metro (Waiting For The Metro)
Laura Mackey	23	[I like the feeling]
Dominic Surprenant	28-31	Hatteras Eddas For a current lexicon Denouement to Marriage
R. Brown	32, 33	[I love those men,] [i was determined to attack my enemy directly,]
Lance Gregory	34	Breakfast 2:05 a.m.
Bennett Theissen	47-51	WRITING BY FLASHLIGHT FOR ARTHUR RIMBAUD [Bubble checked woman] PUNCH RAGES
Richard L. Teegarden	52	The Analysis of a Conversation
Todd Tecumseh	59	[red-white-blue]
Rich Nowak	60-64	WASTE Once again the Plants OH, I REMEMBER THAT DAY [And then just as I was about to light the pipe,] NAM

PROSE

Michael Masters	24	SNIPS AND SNAILS AND PUPPY DOG TAILS
George Kunke	37	<i>from</i> Braclet, a novel
Dominic Surprenant	55	Mutatis Mutandis

ART

Paul Stutsman	4, 19, 20, 46 and Cover
Karen M. Hendricks	10, 53, 54
Donald J. Karcher	14, 35
Kimberly Wojik	22
Dan House	36



Paul Stutsman

Gregory Brosofske

Holding my mother.
She was screaming on that
victorian New Jersey couch.
Explosions of street music
dinned- 'daddy's dead'

I can remember you,
the aorta hospital,
and my hand.
Its fingers flipped like
thrashing at windows,
the thousand windows,
And in one
you grinned like george washington.
Your cracked hand was like a terra-cotta vase.

Now, in this sun,
there isn't anything at all.
Just a turn-pike sound
like steel and glass crashing in on itself
your stone sinks three inches
under the rapture leaves.
My veins are thick
in the sun.

I'm a black crow clawing at the root of your stone
in dry earth
the underside of a dry fall.
The undersides of trees
are twisted
like crippled crosses.
I can hear you.
You're walking.
The sound enters your shoes
and stops there.

Your face is open.
Everything open.
Your white eyes aren't blue.
And there's no sound.

It's been nearly a year.
I've spent the day
running dragon-backed stairs,
rising in elevators
 (my own little ascension)
hallucinating in elevators.
And the tic in my left eye
 giving me away
everyone knowing that *you* call me your lover
 you call me your angel divine

Why not call me your dinner?
 -my monical eyes
 looking like pepperoni
 looking like small circles of spiced meat
but they're not,
 they're just holes of void
they're really black holes looking like negative moons
reminding everyone of a hug of black crescent
rising above a bath-tub sea of mumbled love phrases.
And all my friends in the coffee shop?
They're talking about you.
them pouring their sugar saying "She's good enough to eat"
and all the while *I'm* the only ass bit cat
who remembers the true crucifixion,
the tear of jesus flesh
in a lone point of raw space.

And now, as we lie here in this quill night,
you roll over to me
to watch the snake around my waist,
the snake that looks like a *real* alligator belt.
 Well, it isn't. It's a snake.
And below our tense and tight bellies the sheets part
like ritual veils.
Everything is ripped aside,
just raked open like leaves from a lawn
crackling
like the white-hot tic of clocks
with hands pointing everywhere

Being awake, sleeping and waking up

—'20 class A cigarettes.

There are two left.
Cheryl went to bed.
I should wear black tomorrow,
 watch dogs gnaw,
 scare nuns,
 throw a frisbee like a grenade.

—Lying in bed I feel
there should be some stigmata,
some jesus steel to separate
my hands from wrists,
some religion to make me
into a red orchid
laying on a sand hill.
Why doesn't something cut me?
 (I'm too afraid to do it myself
 so I pretend visions.

—It's left.
There is the slight movement
of my breathing.
The walls aren't my father's face.

Rob Koehler

i visit debbie

Beautiful

day
impassionate
grey clouds hover
low over gold cornfields
spread mist fine as dust
in slow motion silver swirls
cicadas sing
autumn wind fingers

pass

cool
over my face
through my hair

in white letters

the black stone
asks what
comes before and
after being
i sigh

down the lawn
among the other
graves, two roosters
a barnyard white, a rust-red
pimp-strut
scruntinize greenblades
for food
one eye on me calculating indifference

a dank languid breeze
rattles sapling leaves
rising from silent earth
i pick the white wildflower
growing

at her feet

brush a spider
from its face

INTERLUDE

beet colored
lips stringing drool
twitch as she listens to
receding feet

slap
damp
concrete

one stocking

torn, shoe gone to hell knows...
purse is near
was ignored
warm clinging
crimson vines

creep

between mouth and chin

throbbing
elbow scrapes

scream a little more

because its raining

night watched paralyzed with
fascination absorbing her sounds
magnifying his size
stretching time

until it

snapped

saw no seed

waited long minutes

began

gathering dark robes

and misty veil

to wander on through the park but
paused

listening
to the converging
crescendos of
heartbeat and foot-
fall



Karen M. Hendricks
"Sooty Too"

James Carter-LaRue

morning tea rushes thru him, thin brown blood. his eye
his tongue dolphins in sun. he knows the broad palm of th
floor, the strong scent of salt. dawn ripples the waves of h
the dreams return, unconnected phones blare raucous tr
derelict cats mince thru the crewcut lawn, and always he is r
running.

there comes calm before noon, a small space, a cartoon
simple lines surround him, black and white, everything sim

he sleeps the afternoon away, in violent dreams of voice
ting for him, changing him—he is running—but each step a
face, and he wakes wondering if these hands - tentatively touc
lips in the night - are truly his.

May

she is ninety-six years old. her body is a wound.
one day she wakes in her nursing home bed
and *closes* her mouth. refuses food and word.
a team of nurses armed with tubes come and open her up.
language denied, may bleeds thru her eyes,
a cold accusing blood that follows the morning orderly into the room.
his first day - "make sure her ties
are tight." small white sheets, wound strips hold her hands
behind and to the side.

why? he asks the bustling nurse.
because she pulls out the catheter and I-V
tubes. she'd die.

hello may, he says.
are these too tight?

she turns her head to the wall.

two weeks later, the skin of old men has dried to his fingers,
his eyes sacrifice the price of the young.
he's ordered to the demonstration.
Mrs. Turpin, voice rasping reveille,
shows the routine way to give a bath.
five aids, two orderlies stand and watch
naked may scrubbed by two brusque hands and a damp sponge.
"you've got to be sure to get the groin." may tries to close her knees,
Turpin scolds and holds her open.
"and brush those teeth." may bites. when the lesson is over,
they file quiet out the door. the last to leave, he covers
her twisting form with a clean white sheet. "i'm sorry may."
he takes her hand and holds it to his lips.
she lies for once still, with shame, relief

disbelief.

he turns once more at the door.
her face is proud and calm as a dignitary's.

the night crew straps her up in a wheelchair.
sometimes he comes to sit with her and speak.
he stays till her eyes clot
with cleep, then carries her like a tired child to bed.
always he touches his lips to her hand. one night she calls softly
"don't leave." he kisses her lightly on the mouth and stays till she sleeps.

as if night waits for the earth to smile before it descends,
as if death waits for the dying to grin before it extends
its arms, she dies, very late in the night.
no one calls him.
the next day the bed is naked and gaunt.

waystation

1
walls fall. the stench of summer rots the planks - a grey steam.
the naked child runs untouched by sun, runs white, waving his arms,
eyes bright green semaphores. tracking down city streets, he hurtles
to the sea.

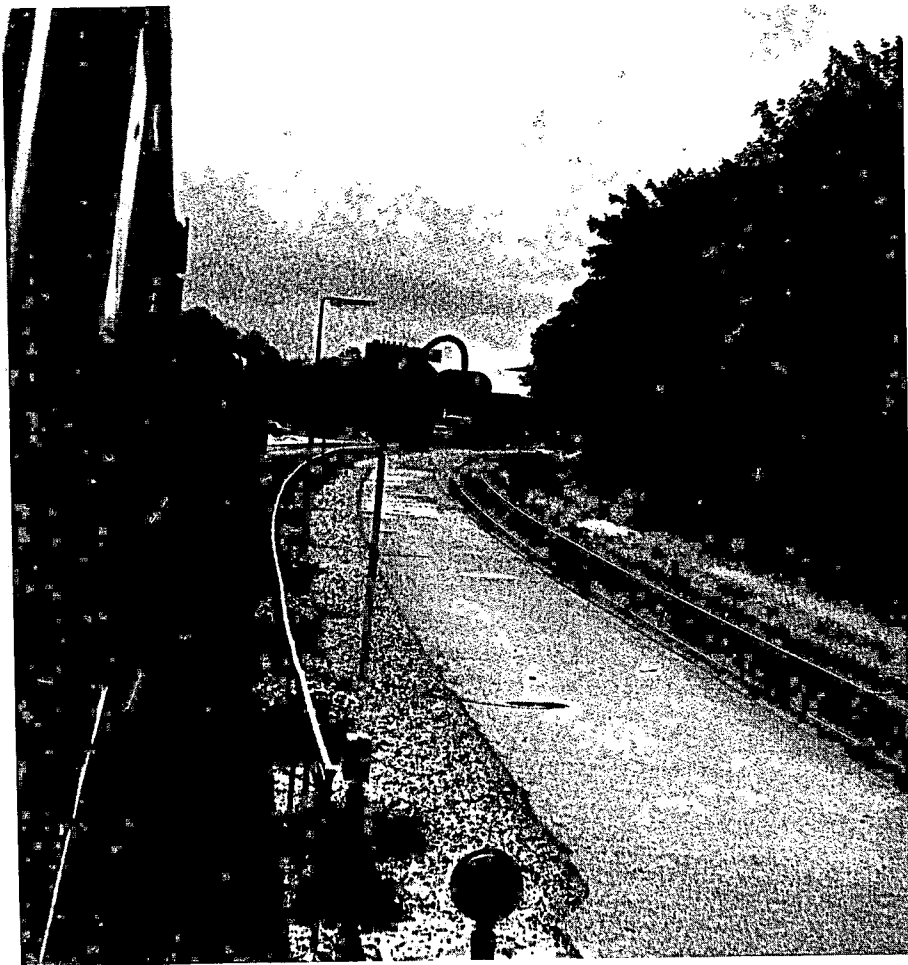
three wise women come to collect his clothes.

2
the floor weeps. piles of paper and indistinct leavings of geese.
the boards clatter with the incessant music of insects, unseen.
a tree masquerades as broken bolt of lightning - impotent smile
beneath the bland tears of sky.

3
the women stand, their eyes huge and empty. the tall one stoops
to pluck a sopping shirt - she cradles it and coos. the dark one
shakes the mud from a yellowed handkerchief. she folds it into her pu
the youngest holds blue jeans in two taut arms, just stands and stares
at the torn blue pants.

4
his feet fresh fallen leaves clog with sand, he grinds to a stand
still. an ache wheezes his thighs, he discovers the blood on his calves.
with round white nails, he scratches.

the moon rakes the beach - but by then he's asleep, rolling sponge
near the water, tossing in his dreams.



Donald J. Karcher

Mary McAlpine

At the Governors House

Bill the janitor
is a half crazy man
But
he has a key to everything
He knows
where miss betsy keeps
her dirty books
and that
mr. west keeps his whiskey
in the bottom left hand drawer
but janitor Bill didn't say nothing
he didn't want nobody being angry
at him
he just kept sweeping and smiling
TILL
one hot july afternoon
ole Bill got too excited and
exposed himself
let his wrinkled old doodle hang out
right in front of miss betsy
who shrieked in terror
i guess
nobody could reckon why
he did that
being so dirty and all
Janitor Bill is up at the courthouse
saying crazy things go on
down at the governors place
judge parker is gonna have Bill
locked up in the looney bin
where he always should have been
i guess

August

A ferris wheel
in a cobweb carnival
sits in a summer slow field
surrounded by blue chickory
and queen anne's lace
the unpainted gray wood
rots around the rusty frame
southeastern winds turn the wheel
slowly spinning
it spins

The Spoils

Mr. Johnson
from the gov't
works in my office

He wears the same dandruff
on the shoulder
of a dark blue suit
everyday

He sits at his desk
waiting for phone calls
and people to frighten

Mr. Johnson
waves his position
like a sword
scaring the secretaries

who sit close to the typewriter
punching buttons
and hitting keys
sending out messages
for help

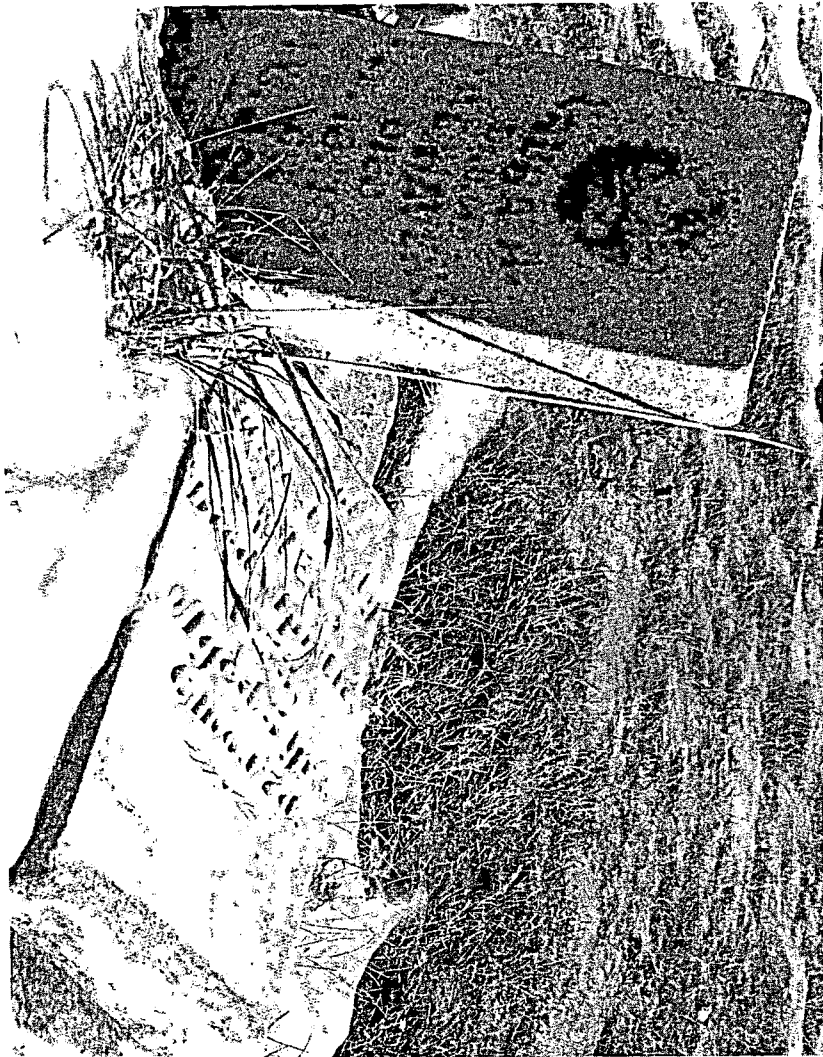
On leafless days her breath is gray
Her words and spiders hang in the corners
She walks past trees
naked limbs spread dark in the cold

Once laughing I touched a hand
I held her hand
Reached
for an apple
that now lies rotted

Near funeral house I see her
Winter white her eyes stare through branches
Apples in her hand
to trade for my children
Her fruit is seedless
she trades for my children



Paul Stutsman
"Illustration of Age"



Trish Kircher

En Attendant Le Metro

En attendant le metro, il n'y a que silence
Brouillard, gris, gris partout: l'heure c'est juste et tard.
Par fois un homme se couche ici et les femmes bavardent—
Maintenant avec les regards fatigués du temps.

Monde des chiens, des vies pour nous sans importance:
Le passé tient trop, mais toujours quelqu'un le garde,
Revenir dans les rêves, comme la mort départ.
L'esprit va—perdu et libre, mais dans quel sens?

Au milieu d'un nuage, dans un monde souterrain
Les Veux vides, coupants, ne restent jamais comme les trains.
Les Vieillards savent que la vie peut goûter du sel.

Deux dans les vestibules vastes, sombres—ami. . . ennemi—
Vont l'un à vie dans mort, l'autre à mort dans vie
Avec un oeil noir, la poche pleine comme la poubelle.

Waiting For The Metro

Waiting for the metro, there is only silence
Foggy, grey, grey everywhere: the hour is right and late.
At times a man sleeps here and the women gossip—
Now with stares tired of times.

World of dogs, of lives for us without importance:
The past holds too much, but always someone guards it,
To return in dreams, like death departed.
The spirit goes—lost and free, but in which direction?

In the middle of a cloud, in a world underground
The empty eyes, cutting, never rest like the trains.
The old (bums) know that life can taste of salt.

Two in the vast, darkened tunnels—friend. . . enemy—
Going, one to life in death, the other to death in life
With a black eye, and pocket full like the trash can.



Kimberly Wojik
"1976"

Laura Mackey

I like the feeling
on
chilly mornings
of
pulling my night-dress
up over
my head
(the coda of sleep)
and dwelling
in that
slender tent
of
warmth
just
before
it's off me.

SNIPS AND SNAILS AND PUPPY DOG TAILS

ONE

My twelve year old son Jim came home from school today with bruises about his face. When Kathleen asked him about the bruises, he explained that he had stumbled and fallen on the playground. She doubted this, of course, but did not persist—I had long ago accustomed her to secrecy.

Jim finished all of his dinner. Had the house been crumbling around him, still he would have eaten. Kathleen watched with approval this indiscriminate consumption of meat, potatoes, and broccoli. The bruises on his face were light, and already beginning to fade.

Later that evening, I went to him in his room, where he sat in bed reading. As I approached him, he closed the book and pushed it away from me.

"Did you really fall on the playground?," I asked.

"Yes," he said, and I did not question him further.

TWO

"Never start a fight," my father told me, "but never run away from one, either."

THREE

When I was Jim's age, I was in the seventh grade, too. Seventh grade was different. I learned that during one lunch hour, early in the year. Everyone was milling about on the too-small playground. The eighth-grade boys were engaged in their favorite lunchtime hobby: beating up the seventh grade boys. I was content to hide until I saw one of my friends, a little guy named Joey, getting beaten up on the playground by a big guy named Dave Hughes. I ran up in best hero fashion and grabbed Dave. He struck me with the back of his hand, knocking me to the ground. I stayed there. Even as a child, I had brief flashes of wisdom.

My shot at retribution was not long in coming, though. When it rained before school, we had to wait inside the auditorium instead of on the playground. Joey and I sat in the front row. Dave Hughes sat behind us. He started calling us names, telling us we were chicken. Joey saw that I was getting angry. Don't start any trouble, he told me. Dave shoved me. I grabbed his arm and yanked him over my chair. We grappled in front of the stage. There was a sell-out crowd. Most cheered when I slugged Dave in the leg just before Mr. O'Ryan broke us apart. Dave limped as we walked out of the auditorium to the principal's office, and we both cried.

FOUR

The difference between men and women is that after a certain age, women will cry in the bathtub, while most men will only cry in the shower.

FIVE

When I was a junior in high school, my best friend was Craig Stoner. Craig was in love with Lynn Brooks and his own body. During his junior year, he took lessons in Karate and advanced necking, albeit not from the same teacher.

"Why are you learning Karate?," I asked more than once. Craig would inevitably reply by wrapping a paternal arm around Lynn and explaining that he wanted to be able to protect those he loved.

Craig learned quickly. He was always eager to demonstrate *Kata*. His reflexes were as incredible as they were indiscriminate. One day I walked up behind him and tapped him on the shoulder. Craig spun around and snap-kicked me in the groin. I jackknifed and sank to my knees.

"Craig," I muttered from the floor, "why the hell did you do that?"

"Gee," he stammered, embarrassed, "I'm sorry about that."

SIX

Dave Hughes had a lot of big friends, but Cal Ross was by far the biggest. Cal was easily a head taller than anyone else in junior high. He could have been on the basketball team if he hadn't beaten up the

coach's son a couple of times when they were both seventh graders.

SEVEN

During summer vacation after my first year of college, I worked in a restaurant—I always worked in restaurants—and made love to Bess, the foot-doctor's brown-eyed daughter.

Bess was young, soft, and yielding to the touch of my dishwasher's fingers. She was not so lively, and did not say very much, but I did not desire her company for conversation. When her parents were gone, which was often, we made love on her elevated bed.

When she took me home to meet her father, he was drunk, as, I soon realized, he frequently was. He shook my hand and sat me down on the couch, then proceeded to remove my shoes. He had to examine my arches, he explained. He said that he examined the arches of all his daughter's boyfriends, although Bess did not confirm this.

EIGHT

Craig Stoner continued his Karate training with undiminished enthusiasm. There was always something which I was half expecting to happen, but it still surprised me when it finally did.

Someone standing behind Craig put a firm hand on his shoulder. It was the moment of combat which he had been training for. He spun into a roundhouse kick, sending Lynn Brooks five feet off the ground.

NINE

One day Cal Ross caught me in the tiny boys' john off to the side of the cafeteria. With the first whack, he muttered something about how I shouldn't pick on his friends. After the second whack, he grabbed me by the scruff of my neck and announced he was going to stuff my head in the toilet.

As we reached the entrance to the stool, I grabbed the door and braced myself to break away from Cal. He swore, knocked me over the back of my head, and I stumbled. I pulled myself up by the handle of the paper towel dispenser. Somehow, I managed to kick at Cal, then flew out the door and did not stop running until I stumbled and fell on the playground on the other side of the school.

When I got home, Mother demanded an explanation, which I

gave by way of saying that I had fallen on the playground. Later on my father saw my bruises and frowned his obvious disapproval. He asked me how I got the bruises on my face, and to him, also, I explained that I had fallen on the playground. As he walked from my room, he turned back for a moment, then apparently thought better of whatever he was going to say, and left me in the darker corners of my room.

TEN

On the day I watched Father being lowered into the ground, it occurred to me that we had never talked about a lot of things. For months afterwards, I wanted to call him up and tell him everything. Dead, he might have been a better listener.

"Just what is your problem?," my wife kept asking me. She never really found out. I do not know whether that was more her fault or mine.

ELEVEN

My son came home from school today with bruises about his face. As I applied the cold compress to his wounds, I asked him what happened. He shrugged and said nothing.

Tonight I cried in the shower.

END

Dominic Surprenant

Hatteras

Back and forth and back the waves break
The ache eases now, at night Tomorrow
There will be orange rinds in the sand
And prints where claws have been The sea moans

Like winter, the wind shifts over the Atlantic
Thunder, and cries of gulls Let me say:
Still I do not need you You hold your hands

In your hands, and hold me a mirror.

Eddas

Smoke, clouds carved around the snow of mountains
And the cold ocean do not know or care
This sea, this season, after so many years
Is not limp as much as old.

Iceland had a mythology, there were
Great winged beasts who were gods
They charted the battles
The deaths, stoned grooved axes, fog
On the fiords and fires and ashes
Crumbling among cracked rocks.

Today, a salad of kelp dries on the sand
The waves wash in. I turn & smoke.

For a current lexicon

Words should have a beauty, an edge
There are references that I could cite
Water turned cool in the tub The tarred rocks
Between the ties of tracks Broken spaces
Strewn with stunted bushes Letter read
When night comes

And though pages must be searched for facts
For years when single moments happened Actual places
You have been And the pictures that move across
And back Still I have stood on a bank
Watching water drift in a river
Turned dark from mud

Then the sudden bitter needs, a searching for things
Put away long ago The dust scared up
From old shoeboxes And the fear that winter
Will come colder than you remember

Incense, buttered crescents, and my themes
Yellowing in a corner drawer I don't know
Just what to mean

Denouement to Marriage

The various hands of a certain clock, or stroke
From a remembered song, measures out the minutes
We move in. You promised me love was a warm place
To go, a sunny kitchen with yellow cotton curtains

A bedroom with a southern window opening on a tree
Lost in summer's green complacencies. Still,
Your detailed salad seems tasteless in the place
Of an older one: A bar, a drink, a blue mirror

At 2 a.m. Swirled gold sheets around the waist
Of a strange woman. Or a cigarette smoked at some
Odd hour, listening to the rain, lingering
Out an assortment of lusts. I have brought my dreams off.

R. Brown

I love those men,
the masters,
who are strong but gentle;
whose eyes obtain their strength
from flights of birds
that issue, wings beating,
from the southern sky's deep throated wail.
their mouths seldom move
except to open silence
and their limbs depend
on earth to shoulder
the sun each day.
their presence is invisible
as the changes of the year
and in their eyes
an ancient child is smiling.

i was determined to attack my enemy directly,
so to prepare myself i stored up images
of art, music, poetry and science
only to discover that i could not move;
i could no longer feel my opponent.

it became necessary to expell these demons
so i began composing Leviathan
and dreamt of Attis, Osiris,
and Shiva's earthen heel descending,
and from Ymir's rotting corpse
arose a coven of dwarfed beings
all intent upon regaining their stature
speaking so many tongues
that i imagined they were laughing.

in my rage i gave them names
and imposed grammar upon them.
i thought then that i had won
but they began to worship me.
"fiends" i shrieked, "you're free, you are free".

but they could not hear
for my name was suspended
on their lips.

Lance Gregory

Breakfast 2:05 a.m.

Coffee hot, ice water cold,
at least for the moment.

"Today's special, jesus on the half shell."

"I'll have a corvette, with leather please."

"Praise his name, love him."

"Hang him up, honey."

"I know whom I serve."

"Good, bring me more coffee."

She seemed upset as she walked off,
maybe she'd had a vision.

"Let's blow this popsicle stand."

exit bathroom sniffing,
in the car as i hold out my hand,

"What holy virgin on the cash register?"



Donald J. Karcher

George Kunke

from Bracelet, a novel

Reverend Rabbi Minister Julious Rosepick is just finishing his sententious eulogy for Snapshot Coloure (a dog), when Zilfourd Coloure (Snapshot's owner) burst to tears. These are not tears because he will miss Snapshot. Those have been spilled for the past two days. Today Zilfourd is upset more because his wife Loretta has chosen not to come to the funeral service. That the six status animals of Bracelet are groomed, sheared, and powdered for the funeral matters not to Zilfourd. Zilfourd counts fifty-two at this morning's ceremony; nine white caucasins, six breed of animal, his pet rock, and three dozen chrysanthemums with a card that reads: "Best Wishes from Dr. James, Jime, Clep, Clepper's Animal Hospital and Farmed Chinchillas. 454 Accupuncture Drive. Office Hrs. 8-5, Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri., & Sat., Ph. 666-3344. Appointment Only! Absolutely No Emergency Cases Taken!!"

Dr. Clepper whispers to Zilfourd. "Ole Doc Kippard told me that you would really appreciate it if I came to Snapshot's funeral; so he took my place in this morning's golf match with Landerson, Radfly, and Oliver." "Yes Jim, thank-you so very much for coming this morning," utters Zilfourd. "Snapshot will never forget your doctoral services."

Mellisa (who spells Melissa, Mellisa) Winzor and her over hyperactive schnauzer (Franz) are especially impatient for the eccentric eclectic Rosepick to finish his service. Sylvia Landerson's cat-party starts five minutes after the funeral. Mellisa whispers to Jackie Radfly. "Franz can't wait for Popcorn's (a cat) birthday party to begin. You know my Franzie is the only animal besides Pirihna (Popcorn's brother) that has made all of Poppies parties. And last year Pirihna didn't even have a piece of birthday cake. Jackie where's Boras? (a cat) I mean Barena?" "Oh she's still not mentally sound after her sex change. I mean his sex change." Zilfourd stares at the ladies. Consequently Jackie doesn't start talking about her other cat, Paperclip, who also is getting restless. Roseclip is finally delivering his last words to Snapshot. "May his soul rest in piece." . . .

. . . "I got a piece of that son of a bitch!" Dick Landerson shouts



Dan House

after driving a "Faultless" golf ball two hundred and seventy yards down the "Big Bear" of The Bracelet Country Club Golf Course. The "Big Bear" is the five hundred ninety six yard number five hole of The B.C.C. "Good shot Dick." Says John Radfly as he tabulates the score on his new all purpose two hundred and three dollar ZIB3 calculator. John bought it solely for golf. It's his fourth or fifth favorite toy. Today's match is Landerson and Radfly against Frank Oliver and Dr. Stanley Kippard. Ten dollars a stroke to the winners. "Boy John, if I would have taken up golf in college instead of swimming, I'd be as good as Jack Nichlaus." Dick steps on a bumble-bee and thinks of Michael Zarley. Five nights past Dick unmercifully battered Zarley, who is still unconscious and in The Braceletville Hospital. Dick thinks of Zarley about ten times a day. The doctors at Braceletville don't even think of Zarley ten times a day. . . .

. . . It's ten o'clock. Loretta Coloure is now just arriving at the Landerson estate. She is with Jean Claude Paul Pierre, a rented poodle. The dog's "sir" name is actually Francious, but Loretta wants to call it JCPP with an accent on the two p's; So she names it Jean Claude Paul Pierre. The other ladies have been birthday partying vivaciously for fifteen minutes. They just finished hearing a taped recording of "Happy Birthday" Popcorn as Loretta makes her dramatic entrance. Loretta immediately notifies the girls that her two very own toy miniature poodles will arrive in a cage, from New York City, at precisely eleven o'clock. "Girls, could we wait until my babies arrive before we open the presents. I'm sure Mona and Lisa would love to see the excitement on Popcorn's face when she gets her presents." "Oh of course we'll wait Loretta." The girls all verbally agree. The honorable Mellisa Winzor doesn't want to agree, but she goes along with the other girls anyway. Many times Mellisa fears that she will some day be thrown out of the elite clique of Bracelet. Actually Mellisa doesn't have to worry because all the other girls have the very same fear. . . .

. . . "Fore!!!" Frank vehemently screams in his high voice. His third shot on number seven almost flogs a small old female Braceletian on the thigh. "Watch out lady!!," yells Frank. "You'd better mix another vodka and olive juice Frank," warns John. "Only this time double the vodka." "No," Frank shoots back with a strained voice. His green eyes have a strange vindictive look. "Maybe I'd better quit the vodka today." Frank thinks to himself, "I could probably quit vodka, but never olive juice."

"Frank," instructs Dr. Kippard, "just quit lowering your left shoulder

when you swing." Kippard feels confident about today's chances of victory. Dick and John lead by six strokes, or sixty dollars. Dick can already taste the free steak dinner that goes to the team with the most birdies. . . .

. . . "Oh my God!!!" The ladies all scream vociferously as they see a multi colored mina-bird laying in a box of lennox china with a note on it that commands to "Open Immediately!!!" Franz is barking viciously at the unconscious mass. The ladies are fretting and squirming around wondering if the bird is dead. "Is it dead?" shouts Patricia Clepper. "I'll call my husband, Dr. Clepper." The doorbell chimes. "Oh here's another note," cries Sylvia. "It says: Happy Birthday Popcorn. I hope you enjoy your new playmate, Ziegfried. Sylvia Ziegfried is a very intelligent bird. He will awaken when the barbituates wear off. Love Furilla Meyerworst. Grandma, mother, and once the wife of the late Ludwig 'Bismarch' Meyerworst. Again, love, from your loving mother." Sylvia is deeply touched. Her girdle is killing her. Pirihna begins hissing at the bird. The doorbell again chimes. Mellisa answers it. Sylvia wonders if her maid (Margaret Shell) is in the bathroom. Mellisa comes back in the room and announces. "Girls it's Dr. Clepper and Zilfourd." "And my pet rock," adds Zilfourd, who then proceeds to flash dozens of photographs without even saying hello to the ladies.

"Oh Dr. Clepper, Franz has been feeling much better since you put him on that low-fat diet."

"Why I'm glad to hear that Mrs. Winzor."

"Hurry Dr. Clepper, come and see this bird," shouts Sylvia.

"Well Sylvia, birds aren't my specialty, but I'm probably the most qualified one here," says Dr. Clepper while pulling out his stethoscope.

"Zilfourd," says Jackie, "that was such a lovely sermon by Rosepick."

"Why thank-you Mrs. Radfly," Zilfourd says.

"Oh call me Jackie, you poor soul."

"Look the bird is moving!!!" screams Effy Turk. Everyone jumps away from the table. Zilfourd flashes six photos of the bird. He knows the ladies will want many pictures of this year's party.

The bird opens his mouth and says, "Hi, my name is Ziegfried. Happy Birthday Popcorn. I want to be your pal. Hi, my name is Ziegfried. I want to be your pal."

"My what a pretty birdie," says Jackie.

"I'm a pretty birdie. I want to be your pal."

John Radfly.”

Frank is speechless. He wants to kill pigeons immediately.

“Frank, lets poke fun at him because he’s an alcoholic.”

“But Kip, I drink too much too.”

“But Frank, we could say that you have nutritious, organic olives in your drink. We’ll just commit a little white lie and say I called Dr. Wong, and he said that olives are nutritious. I’m gonna call him about something anyway. Besides they did have ten drinks to your two anyway.”

“Stan, don’t you think it’s a little unethical to bother a guy when he’s trying to shoot?”

“No Frank. Can’t you see that were using the element of psychology. It’s testing the opposing player’s pressure stamina.” Frank looks dumbfounded. “Besides Frank, there are no ethics when one is gambling. Perhaps we could say things about Michael Zarley.” (Kippard is the only one who saw Dick mutilate Zarley. Consequently Dr. Kippard is blackmailing Mr. Landerson.)

“Hurry up you two,” shouts Dick. “Let’s go tee-off.” . . .

. . . Sylvia is little teed-off at John Radfly for telling Jackie Radfly who told Loretta Coloure about the I.B.M. mice. Sylvia is now deathly afraid that her two kitties will get electrocuted. “Oh Effy these pajama’s are just a cats-meow,” says Sylvia. The ladies all laugh. “Poppy come and see what Aunt Mellisa bought for you. Look Poppy a certificate for one years supply of fish from my husbands hamburger chain.”

Popcorn stares at the certificate. Pirihna walks slowly out of the room. Jackie notices and wonders if he will come back in for a piece of tuna-cherry cake. She then smacks her own cat for misbehaving.

Sylvia has finally finished unwrapping the gifts. They are: Two electrical mice, a pair of pajama’s, a year’s supply of fish sandwiches, a two hundred dollar pair of sunglasses, a paw-nail file kit, a two inch artificial paw, (Popcorn’s left hind foot is half off.) a turquoise necklace, and a quadrophonic stereo with a television in it.

“Oh my husband Dick will be so happy to see all these fine presents.” Sylvia tells Margaret to bring in the cake so that they can sing Happy Birthday. . . .

. . . “Oliver if you don’t quit singing, I’m gonna bust your god-damn skull,” shouts Dick.

“I don’t have to shutup,” quips Frank. “I’m minding my own business. I can sing if I want.”

Dick gets ready to shoot. Just then Stan says, “you know, that lifeless golf ball reminds me so much of Michael Zarley.”

Dick misses the ball. “That’s a stroke,” shouts Oliver.

“God-damn it I know it’s a stroke. You worthless olivehead,” says Dick.

Frank laughs. The tactics seem to be working, as the Landerson/Radfly lead is now only eight strokes. Dick attempts to shoot again. He does. The ball goes directly in the water. Kippard and Oliver start clapping. . . .

. . . The ladies all clap as Sylvia blows out the candles for Popcorn. “Happy birthday Popcorn. I’m a pretty birdie,” says Ziegfried, “I want to be your pal.”

“Look!” shouts Pat “Lindsey and Aphrodite are kissing. This could be wedding bells.”

“We could have Rosepick marry them on T.V., beside the William H. Bracelet Memorial,” eclaims Mellisa. (W.H. Bracelet is the founder of Bracelet. He choked to death on a lobster shell, when he was showing off his ability to eat lobster shells.)

Zilfourd abruptly stops flashing photos. He shouts, “Ladies, please let me have your attention. I want all of you level-headed women to sign my petition. It’s for my dog, Snapshot. It would enable him to have a better burial I want my Snappy to have his rights. He should be allowed to be buried beside the Bracelet Memorial.”

The ladies start in a mad uproar. They begin screaming, “animal rights. Animal rights.” Ziegfried also shouts, “animal rights.” Suddenly Pirihna dives on top of the tuna-cherry cake. Sylvia screams, “Pirihna, you naughty kitty. How could you do this on your own sister’s birthday? You jealous, mean kitty. Moma’s gonna have to spank you for this.”

“Oh Sylvia, don’t hit her. Isn’t red his favorite color?” pleads Effy. Zilfourd starts taking pictures again, while Dr. Clepper passes out the petition for the ladies to sign.

Effy and Jackie begin gossiping. “Boy am I ever glad that Sylvia didn’t invite Gertrude Sound and that ugly hound Dippo,” exchanges Jackie. “I was gonna invite Lucy Terwick, but I found out that they eat bologna,” says Sylvia.

“Oh God,” snaps Mellisa, “we don’t even allow it in our store.” (Winzors own a grocery store with a sign that reads: “We have the most expensive food in Pennsylvania.)

“Sylvia, are you sure they don’t have the bologna to feed the fish,” asks

Jackie.
"No Jackie, my son Jeremy said they acutally eat it."
"How disgusting," sneers Loretta, "well my babies are going to eat nothing but the very best." She pets the dogs, then jumps up saying, "I'm gonna take my babies for a walk. Would anyone else like to go along?"
"Oh I will, says Pat, "my Lindsey needs to stretch his legs.". . . .
Two hours later. . . . Dick is totally infuriated and intimidated. With only one hole to play he and John are only up by ten dollars. "Dick, why are you so violent?" asks Kippard. "Perhaps you should visit a psychologist to find out why you have such pent-up frustration."
Dick tries to ignore Kippard and gets ready to shoot.
"Maybe he's right Dick. I went to one when I was at Duke and it did me a lot of good. I think," says Frank indecisively.
'Oliver. you're too far gone to help."
Dick starts to swing.
'Michael Zarley is too far gone to help too," snaps Frank.
Dick smashes the ball fifty yards too far and right in the woods.
'Son of a bitch!" screams Dick. "Oliver I'm gonna kill you!"
'Oliver you're never gonna use one of my calculators or computers again," yells John.
'So, I'm planning to buy a calculator anyway," taunts Frank.
'What the hell do you need one for?" shouts John, "That's the trouble with this country. Some people have to have everything they see."
Kippard puts his shot four feet from the pin.
'Great shot," says Frank.
Dick tells John to say, health food fanatic, when Kippard shoots.
'Good idea, Dick."
'I hate that s.o.b.," says Dick.
. . . . "You know Jackie, it's so nice that our husbands get along so well together. They always have such a good time on the golf course," says Sylvia.
'You're so right Sylvia," says Jackie, "We're so lucky to have such stable minded husbands."
. . . . Dick begins slamming his putter into the green of the B.C.C.'s eighteenth hole. "No we can't have lost this match. I protest the antics employed. There must be some mistake in the score," shouts Dick.
'No Dick. There is no mistake. My calculators don't ever lie."
'We win! We win!'" Frank begins shouting and dancing around,

"Duke has upset Penn State. (Dick was a swim star at Penn State.)
"Here's your ten dollars Kip. Good game," says John.
"Pay up Dick" insists Frank, "I'm gonna frame this ten dollar bill."
"Oliver, I'm gonna frame your ugly skull with this golf club." Frank laughs. Dick begins chasing Frank, swinging his club at Frank's head. Oliver begins screaming for his life. "Help me you guys. This guy is insane."
Dr. Wong comes running out of the clubhouse. John makes a spike-string tackle on Dick, as Dr. Wong applies a full nelson.
"Landerson, you're crazy," shouts John, "You'd better visit a psychiatrist."
"I have full control of my senses," contests Dick
"I'm glad you don't have full control over your body," quips Frank.
"Let me go," screams Dick.
"Asso, Mr. Landerson," says Dr. Wong.
"What did you call me?" yelps Dick.
"I'll let you go, but if you do anything else, I will have to resort to my expertise in judo or karate," explains Dr. Wong.
"Okay, just let me go. I'm alright. I have full control over myself. Nobody got hurt. As long as no one got hurt, there's no reason to say I need a fuckin psychiatrist."
"Well all I have to say," says John, "is that anyone can think, but anyone can't operate a S747BQ600T computer."
. . . . Again the ladies are screaming as Pirihna is attacking the poodle cage.
"You brute," screams Loretta, "get away from my darlings."
Effy and Jackie get their cats and leave.
"Bye Sylvia, we really have to run, but it has been fun," says Pat while grabbing her caleco cat.
Mellisa gets Franz and leaves.
"Girls please don't leave. Please come back. Pirihna didn't mean it. The party isn't over yet." Sylvia runs upstairs crying.
"Hi, my name is Ziegfried. I want to be your pal. I'm a pretty birdie. Animal Rights for all. I want to be your pal," yells Ziegfried.

WRITING BY FLASHLIGHT FOR ARTHUR RIMBAUD

The inkwell is dry tonight.
I am not writing a poem.
I have placed a flashlight
behind the inkwell
so that it casts a
shadow across this page.



Bubble cheeked woman
 sitting in the window
 beckoning to me with a bandaged hand
 The dog that I'm walking
 pisses on a police car
 and I drop the leash & straighten my tie
 The jewel in the sky
 pours honey on the pavement
 and I stare into those opaque eyes
 She puts her hand on her throat
 I put my hand in my pocket
 clear my throat
 mutter my querelous reply
 Suddenly my dog is hit by an El Dorado
 a soldier on the corner starts
 laughing
 at the blood

the wind picks up its tempo
 blowing smoke across my vision
 and the woman takes to her feet
 pours her gown down her shoulders
 slips me the
 look
 of cool indifference
 and disappears behind her curtains
 The soldier taps me on the shoulder
 I turn to his dripping grin
 and the sledgehammer
 cracks
 my jaw
 sidewise

and
 the kaleidoscope
 vision
 washes
 polarizing
 specks wet liquid rush wide
 and the electric glows recede
 to the cheek
 of the bubble faced woman
 giving me a rosebud kiss
 and acclaiming me a hero

PUNCH RAGES

Dirt farmer father German extraction,
 Indian lady mama railroad vein,
 wartime blues, American hurrah
 to the success of Big War guns &
 Phillipine shellshock
 (address book of exotic Hong Kong),
 sailors & soldiers bent on homesoil kiss
 & good job, driving brick truck
 in Middle America,
 family desired by woman childless.
 Adopted, I am the answer to swollen hopes,
 arriving unknown from dirty orbital universe,
 WACs and hospital.

Reaching mind closes toward no thing,
 thing being center of some men's minds.
 I balance highwire edge over dark warm pit.

Constant urge.
 Procreant urge.
 To identify self calling out in a silent way
 to other contact, touch, existence.
 Clarify, generate, answer
 questions of will and why.
 The planet gave me my answer
 but I passed it by.
 Refuge came, courses, surges,
 streams of conscious flow, books, words,
 holy symbols, God, cinema, music,
 creaping into myself.
 Refuge gave me an answer
 but I had to find my own.

Climactic shake ooze and sweat
 in arms of female flesh love battle
 climbing sand hill fifty foot high
 tumble spill down laughing as we cried
 the point of contact reached
 explored ignited wrestled exploded.
 Birth of warmth and instant loss of dimensional hangup, timestopped lo
 love the Sweet Angel,
 but love the eye of inspection,
 scrutiny,
 40

spotting the flaws in character within
both of us,
me the elm tree,
you the rock,
me the penman,
you the postman.
you the only you that I have ever had.

We became two worn torn
steaming hands of human flesh
that sealed together,
seemingly healed together,
but ripped apart in fierce bed battleground,
still life, landscape with figures,
but except as art could not flourish.

Garden wilted, hysterical nights of rainy streets
& silence, chasing your car up Hamilton,
panting, watching you drive away
as I become bloodmeat gelatin on pavement concrete.

Escape into railroad loneliness,
shoulder against window
watching those trains ride those rails,
eyes red in electric light,
chasing the moths,
mind fried by weed & acid.

*Train keeps a-moving,
lights keep a-rolling,
I keep a-rolling, a-rolling on.*

Spilled out against sky like aurora borealis,
reemergence after cocaine smackdaze,
thriving newlife, role reconstructed,
away from German Indian,
candle gotta-stay-lit,
wind blowing from opposite direction,
warm rain, barefoot in mud,
toe suck squish,
running heavy across green intellectual atmosphere.

Arms & beds familiar friends,
slither hair pie in out,
and I rest my head easy with long blonde hair,
ever dancing, ever twisting,
everburning coal eyes slashing bright
as I fed on such sweet tender energy
reviving my stir to new conquests
of ladinights & sleepflesh.
Stirred till carpet pulled, lost no balance,
strutted mindful into more universal period
of careful discovery, amazing, simple.
Forefathers strongarmed in support,
quest identified, new unification,
new identification.

Roads of lions and tigers,
darkness to the rear,
warm dry wind blowing my hair,
naked, flushed,
I bear the upright bottle
and drink in bloody burgundy.

Chaotic shuffle,
loosening,
whip,
flying arm over arm to calm and safety.

I am the Eagle-man,
with wide strong wings to sail the wind,
with wide open eyes to see my way in all the ways.
Anchor scratches across the ground,
ink scratches across the page.

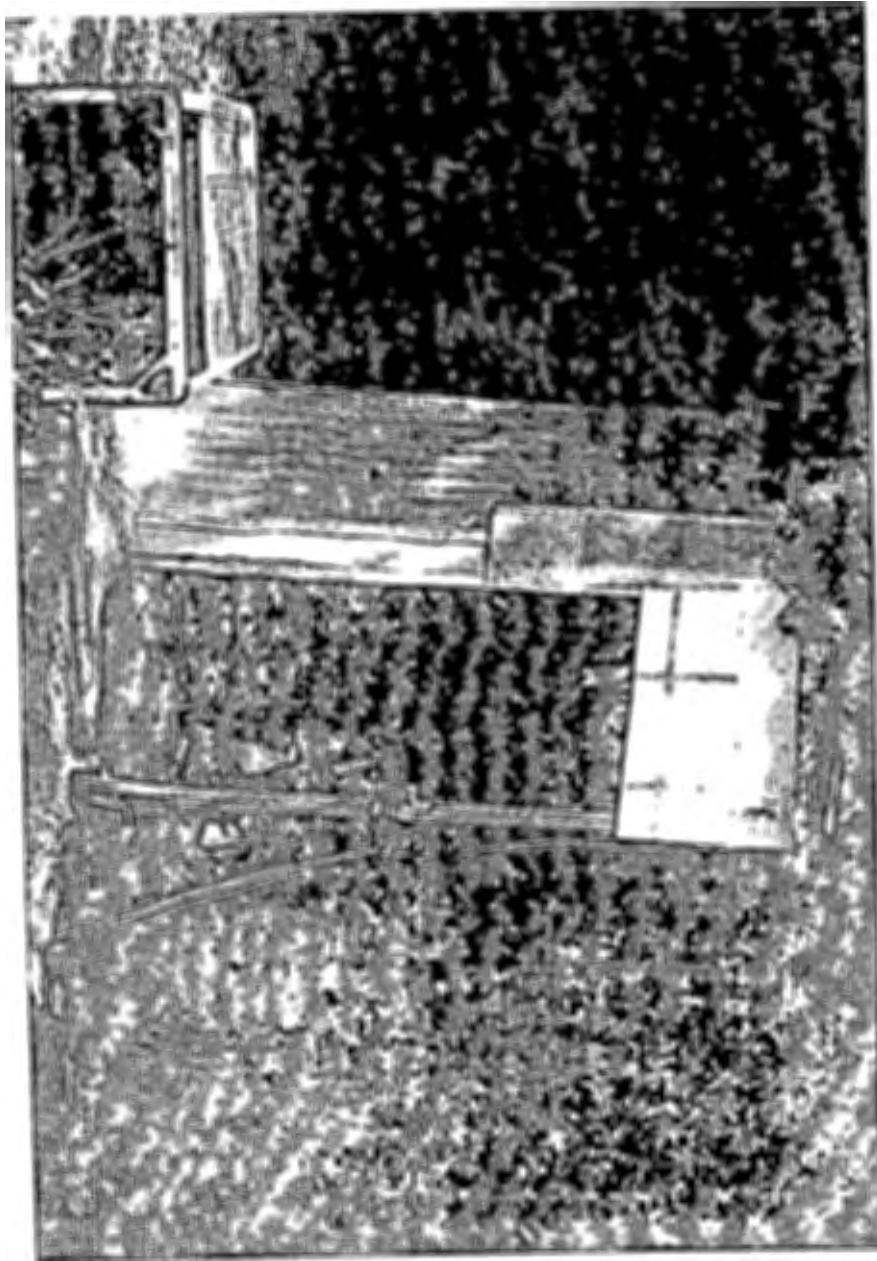
Mutatis Mutandis

NOT BEING ABLE TO PAINT is recognized as among the most serious problems with which we in the field of psychoanalysis are faced. It symbolizes a serious omission in the maturing process, with obvious sexual—advisedly, I add, homosexual—implications. The procedure I used in a patient I recently treated demonstrates the germane points of the only therapy I believe relevant to these types of cases. However, this paper concerns itself exclusively with the first consultation of the treatment, in which I exhibit the firm assertion of authority which must be shown to elicit meaningful responses. A later tome will cover the treatment *in toto*.

The patient's name was Variance Mute. He was a successful well-paid producer of a popular daytime television series. However, Mr. Mute, or Variance, as I came to call him, was an extremely neurotic man, approximately thirty-five, when the treatments began. I was to learn over the course of our consultations that he masturbated frequently, often to the fantasy of adolescent maidens performing fellatio on him. Note the girls Variance imagined were very young; it is particularly important. It implies Variance was truly interested not in the opposite gender, but in the boyish features of his imaginary nymphs. Of course, the act itself was not uniquely heterosexual. While engaging in this onanistic activity perhaps three times a week, Variance continued to copulate with his estranged wife, to use prostitutes, to smoke marijuana regularly, he failed to keep his checkbook balanced, this despite his per annum salary of thirty thousand dollars plus, he composed highly esoteric poetry. These are of course only among his major symptoms. There were a veritable argosy of lesser ones. But the paramount index of Variance's disorganized mental and psychic state was his total inability, and concurrent disinterest, in being able to paint.

: : :

EIGHTEEN MONTHS AGO Variance Mute walked into my office a ruined man. He wore faded denim slacks, a tie-dyed T-shirt with



Karen M. Henricks

COCAINE stenciled across the front in orange day-glo. On his wrist hung a copper bracelet, of the type advertised as a cure for arthritis. His right [-R-] ear was pierced, and in it, a small gold-ball earring. He was smoking thin cigars, and was badly in need of a shave. His pepper-coloured moustashe was disheveled, and it completely covered his upper lip.

He walked into my office and sat at a lounge chair next to my desk. I extended my hand. We shook solemnly. "Hello," I said, "I'm Doctor X."

"Doc," he said, neglecting to introduce himself, "It's crazier than hell out there."

I would not have guessed then that he was unable to paint. There were no overt signs that his neuropathy was acutely affected. His garb was outrageous, clearly out of keeping with his status and position. Still, I am an open-minded man. I indicated with a nod that he should use the monogrammed ashtray on the endtable as his cigar ash was threatening to fall. I looked towards the window. The velvour curtains were tightly drawn, of course.

Variance exhaled smoke heavily. He rubbed his moustashe. He shook his head. "Doc, I don't know where to begin," he began. "I don't know, Christ, every day is another defeat." His voice trailed off, and his eyes strayed nervously around the room. Variance attempted to peer into a darkened corner opposite my desk. I noted to myself that my initial impressions were that Variance was reasonably adjusted; he had no clear definition of his self, as manifested by his irrelevant dress; he was unsure of his worth, and that of his job. He was, moreover, frightened and insecure. As I say, Variance, by these qualities, can be shone to dove-tail nicely with the needs of society. So routinely, expecting nothing, I flicked a concealed switch in my desk. The corner Variance had been glancing at was immediately bathed in light, illuminating a drawing table on which was set a palette of oils and a square of good quality canvas. "Mr. Mute," I said, formally, "please go and paint now. Don't feel inhibited. Paint whatever you wish."

"Huh?" Variance acted befuddled. "What the fuck, man,?"

It was then I began to suspect something. "Go paint, please," I instructed again, calmly. Variance swiveled the lounge around and looked at me. "What the hell's the matter with you, Jack?" I noted Variance's agitation. He continued. "Look, Doc, I come here because like everything else I do it's chic. You hip to that? Okay. I need a

shrink, right? I come to you. See, I got everything else. Debts up the yin-yang, a busted marriage, a crazy mistress. My actors can't get it up and the actresses complain all the men just want to doddle'em. You make sense out of it, I sure as hell can't Everyday, Christ, I go to the studio, the actresses come up like a gaggle of geese harping about how they're only treated like objects. All that feminist shit. And don't get me wrong, hell, they're probably right. It's just that it's all theater. You know? All sham. Guise. Bullshit. I get so fucking tired. So I come here to get forty-five minutes of quiet and let some asshole listen to my problems for once. So what's this painting shit you're giving me?" He lit up another cigar. "Christ. Paint. My ass."

I had listened to Variance's insulting monologue without a trace of frown or discomfort. I did not yet completely accept that he could not paint. I mistook his hesitation for a kind of insinuating coyness.

"Mr. Mute," I said, "in order for me to make an adequate assessment of your present condition, I need to see how you paint. I don't believe in hiding facts from the patients I am treating. So: the reasons I need your painting is to see what colors you choose, what patterns of figures and archetypes emerge and re-appear. It is a routine test which I've devised and it is becoming standard in the profession."

"You mean a glorified Rosharch test?"

"No, Mr. Mute, I do not mean that at all. The Rosharch test has been dropped from serious interpretive consideration."

Variance was hardly listening. He tapped his left [-L-] foot nervously on the floor. I played over with myself how much to tell him.

"Look, Mr. Mute." He glanced up at me through a haze of blue cigar smoke. His eyelids drooped. "Now, listen," I said commandingly, "this test is designed to show you how worthless artistic endeavor is. It illustrates how bad our individual and collective aesthetic is." Variance cracked his knuckles and yawned. I began to shout. "Usually when one paints there is an indiscriminate use of colors. They're not cohesive. They're dead and stilted and lifeless!" Variance began to regard me with suspicion. I stood up and grabbed him by the collar and began to yell in his face. "Damn you, listen. Painting reminds the painter how worthless his art, and hence he himself is. As the art serves no function, the painter sees he has no function. He is worthless! Worthless! Worthless!"

Variance pulled away from my grasp. He adjusted his shirt. "Look, doc, I don't give a good god damn about your theories. You're loonier than a bird. Now look. Calm down. Smoke a pipe or stroke

your chin or something, and I'll talk for awhile." Variance sat back down. He cleared his throat.

"NO!" I fairly leapt over the desk and kicked over the lounge. I pulled a leather sjambok out of my flowing surgical robes and beat Variance senseless. I tied him to a straight-back wooden chair and positioned it near the painting table. "Paint, you smug god damn effete elitist bastard!" His head was bobbing near his shoulder. A white tip of cartilage glistened through his nose. His eyes were open, and only the whites were visible. Blood trickled from his ear. "Paint! Paint!" I screamed like a madman. I grabbed Variance by his moustache and slammed his head into the wall. It made a hollow cushiony sound.

Still, he would not paint. "Igor," I called. My assistant came in, limping and hunch-back. "Lock that bastard up," I said. Then I straightened the room. I turned off the painting light. In my calendar, I neatly wrote in Variance's next consultation. I showered and changed into my suit.

Then I went out to lunch. The pigeons were waiting in the park.

Todd Teumseh

red-white-blue
three-color advertising
anemic stars bleached
in the fabric
hanging limply
in the afternoon sun
until 3 p.m.
when the sun set behind
this education building
a fly buzzing
near virginia
jumped
as something
in the heart (if it has one)
of this gold-edged pole
pulled the flag
back into its womb
like a noodle
slurped into the' mouth
or like a Betsy Ross robin
pulling rosemary's baby
from the earth by the head, upside
downward
in photoelectric majesty
it was devoured
the way John used
to stuff paper napkins
into his mouth
in restaurants
when he could get a stranger
to watch (Funny as Hell)

Rich Nowak

WASTE

Bears do shit in the woods
So we're killing them off
And the bugs can kill us
Had better waste them too

The earth is dirty
Cover it with cement
But the earth seeps through
Wet and moldy cold

Pump out the petroleum
And bury the moos and snakes with
Tar

The air is alive with bacteria
Kill them now
Get going faster
Fill the air with sulpher smoke

Pour on the waxed paper

Peal off the mask
the Plastic
Down to the dirt
the Earth
And there's nothing left

The rats are everywhere
and the roaches

Once again the Plants

The heart leaf is a die hard,
just exactly like the Sears and Roebuck battery
Heartleaf reached down to the Quaker Oats box,
and old Quaker blinked his eyes, and said
"Good God it has been a long time,"
and I said "God Damn."

Old Quaker stepped out of the box,
and started to walk toward me.
I sat up
and gripped my pencil,
and screamed, "Jesus Christ."

He stopped about half way across the room,
and then began to speak. "Amen, . . ."

I stabbed him one hundred and 3 times,
and fell asleep.

OH, I REMEMBER THAT DAY

Let me tell you about it.

Well, I was sitting there listening to the stereo.

You know the sort of lazy day,
falling asleep I think I was.

The cat was all the company I needed.

(knock knock) "It's not locked, Lance"

And a policeman powdered my unlock to pieces.

I freaked, you know what I mean.

you go home and swat flies,
don't you know what I mean.

That surge of strength you get when you look,

and see the ant hill gone,

and all the little black flecks

smear'd in the dust.

And then just as I was about to light the pipe,
this guy comes and asked me for my card.

I set down the pipe and sip some Coca-Cola, and ask
"Which one?"

He doesn't smile, just looks down at my dusty face,
and asks, "Are you in the Union?"

So I stand up and pull out my wallet,
and show him my genuine Dodge Scat Pack
"Run With the Pack" card.

Signed by my mother and everything.

He just doubled up his fists,

and we're gone, "Six Pack" on the side.

NAM

i've never been there
really
but
i've touched
pictures