

HELICON

RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE

LITERARY MAGAZINE

Volume XXIV

Number 2

MAY, 1964

**The Rhode Island College
Literary Magazine**

Awake, AEolian lyre, awake

And give to rapture all thy

trembling strings.

From Helicon's harmonious springs

A thousand rills their mazy

progress take:

from Gray's The Progress of Poesy (1757)

Volume XXIV — Number 2

May, 1964

THE HELICON STAFF

Editor

ARTHUR McKENNA

Editorial Board

GREG ANDREOZZI

STEPHEN GRAHAM

MARCEL DUHAMEL

MARY ROBINSON

BILL MCQUADE

JOHN MCGIVENEY

PHIL HIBONS

ANNE WALSH

Business Manager

DENNIS COSTA

Publicity Director

GORDON ROWLEY

Publicity Committee

CAROL ANN MERCIER

ANN BIDANO

BETTY CAMERON

Faculty Advisor

JOHN J. SALESSES

HELICON AWARDS

PROSE

First Award

"A DARK WIND BLOWING"

by JOHN DBIASE

Second Award

"A SNOWFLAKE ON THE JUNGLE FLOOR"

by ARTHUR McKENNA

Honorable Mention

"A NEW LIFE"

by JOHN DBIASE

"THE TRAIN"

by WILLIAM BARNER
(January Issue)

POETRY

First Award

"NOTES ON FREEDOM"

by GREG ANDREOZZI

Second Award

"ON A WALK AT 3:00 A.M."

by BILL MCQUADE

Honorable Mention

"JOIN YOU? NO!"

by BOB MURRAY
(January Issue)

"A SAGA OF THE DEEP"

by C. A. BARNES

"WHEN I WAS YOUNG"

by LIONEL ARCHAMBAULT
(January Issue)

"OH, WALK ALONG THE PLOTTED GROUND"

by NANCY BARRY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NOTES ON FREEDOM	5	UNIVERSALITIES: A PARABLE	16
by GREG ANDREZZI		by POLLY E. KEENE	
OH, WALK ALONG THE PLOTTED GROUND	6	ON A WALK AT 3:00 A.M.	17
by NANCY BARRY		by BILL McQUADE	
MARCHING MEN	7	MIND OVER MATTER?	17
by GEORGE M. SAKO		by POLLY E. KEENE	
IN THIS—THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS	7	MY EMPTYNESS	18
by WILLIAM BARNER		by WALTER HAYMAN	
ON THE MORNING AFTER	8	SHARDS FOR HIM	18
by PHILIP G. HERONS		by ANN FRANCIS WALSH	
WINTER'S CURSE	8	DINNER	19
by MICHAEL CAMBERS		by CHARLES ABOSAMARA	
A MODEST PETITION	9	PRANCING CACOPHONY WHIRLS ABOUT US ALL	20
by ARTHUR McKENNA		by P. G. HERONS	
SEPARATENESS TORN	9	A NEW LIFE	21
by JOSEPHINE ZUCHOWSKI		by JOHN DeBIASE	
SNOWFLAKE ON THE JUNGLE FLOOR	10	THE GIFT	22
by ARTHUR McKENNA		by ED FAHEY	
OH, THAT SAD DAY, THAT SAD DAY!	11	THE DOVE OF PEACE WAS FLYING HIGH	22
by NANCY BARRY		by W. J. McQUADE	
VANISHED IS THE ERA	11	TO A RED, RED ROSE	23
by BILL McQUADE		by MAUREEN F. BLAIS	
LIGHTED LIFE	11	CAPE COD LOST	23
by HOPE M. COLOVITO		by JOSEPHINE ZUCHOWSKI	
CE QUI EST DU DOIT ETRE PAYE	12	ON CENSORSHIP	23
by FRANK L. BEAUDET		by GEORGE M. SAKO	
THE UNIVERSITY	13	ON BENDED KNEE	23
by GEORGE M. SAKO		by C. A. BARNES	
A DARK WIND BLOWING	14	HUMAN NATURE	23
by JOHN DeBIASE		by JEFFREY VERNON WEBBER	
WHAT'S TO WONDER	16	A SAGA OF THE DEEP	24
by PAUL HATHAWAY		by C. A. BARNES	

Notes on Freedom

It was my very first sit-in.
There were two negroes and myself.
We took seats at the counter, and I ordered a milk shake.
"That'll be thirty-five cents" said the man behind the counter.
I looked around at the crowd that had gathered,
And suddenly I had a sick feeling in my stomach —
I had forgotten to bring money!

In a prosperous Southwestern city a prominent banker said:
"Our freedom is precious. We must constantly be on our guard
against the insidious plots of the thousands of Communists
who are in our midsts."

In a courtroom in Washington, D. C., a college student
praised Fidel Castro as the father of the True Freedom.
And in a tar-paper shack in Appalachia an old man
said he didn't give a damn.

The Organization was determined to uphold the New Freedom.
Yesterday they burned the Senator from New Jersey
for suggesting the return of the Graduated Income Tax.
The Supreme Court had been abolished and its members executed.
It was replaced by the house Un-American Activities Committee.
As Secretary of War I had just turned in my first report.
They informed me that they had just received word that my
father had been a Democrat.

It's cold out here, and this rope hurts my neck . . .

At the open end of the alley the Atlanta sky was a mixture
of purple and orange.

The early-evening neon glow reflected from rain-
spattered streets made an eerie pattern in the alley.

The wet, dirty pavement was littered with beer cans and
bits of paper.

Near the back door of a cheap restaurant stood two un-
covered garbage cans, their contents spilling over.

The pleasant smell of burning wood led one's attention
to a small cross which lay smouldering on the ground.

Next to it lay the bleeding, half-naked body of a
young negro, face down in a dirty puddle.

Three blocks away in his hotel room Sam Cooper
realized for the first time what he had done that day in
the name of God, Freedom, and Southern Honor. He
let his white hood drop to the floor and reached for
something under his pillow.

The shot could be heard three blocks away in the
dirty alley. But the young negro couldn't hear it.

The Governor told the good citizens of his state
 That he was the defender of their freedom . . .
 And they cheered in patriotic frenzy . . .
 And somewhere in the distance a bomb exploded . . .
 Freedom had been defended against the vicious onslaught
 of four little girls . . .
 But a few days later the stains had been washed
 from the walls of the church
 And the conscience of a nation
 And the Governor began once again
 to speak of freedom

GREG ANDREOZZI



Oh, walk along the plotted ground
 Above all kinds of men,
 Tell me who's the greatest now,
 The greatest of all men?

Show me which grave is the largest,
 Where does the best rain fall?
 Show me which grave lies the deepest,
 The deepest of them all?

On which urn the grass is greenest,
 Where the wildest flower nests?
 Over which the air is sweetest,
 So much sweeter than the rest?

Did I hear you say they're all the same,
 The men, the graves, their size;
 That Benedict's on that same plane
 As that where Lincoln lies?

That so like are one and all,
 Would not disturb their sleep
 To change one with the other,
 So lawful is the deep?

Oh, walk along the plotted ground
 Above all kinds of men.
 Tell me who's the greatest now,
 The greatest of all men.

Nancy Barry

Marching Men

Sometimes I dream of marching men
 with hard faces and rifles held high,
 None of them are smiling while red-stained bayonets
 are gleaming . . . in the early morning sun
 of Anytown, U.S.A.

While New York, Chicago and Boston lay
 Silently where they once loudly stood,
 The men keep on marching
 with hard faces and rifles held high.
 Kicking up dust.

In my dreams, I stand there with the pounding
 of their heavy boots in my ears,
 holding a tattered flag whose stripes
 have been torn.

One of the marching men, a lean young fellow
 spats at me and my flag
 And doubles me up with his foot in my stomach.
 With nauseated regret, I reflect upon carefree days
 when I thought it smart to dislike
 John Birch.

George M. Sako



In this — the best of all possible worlds,
 It delights me to see that you are the best
 Of all possible people.
 For all times

Supremely best

None other!

And I can see that you, the best were created
 By the best of all possible
 Gods.

And are a major part of that god,
 Although he can only attempt to be a minor part of you.
 Despair not — he has a lot
 To learn.

It inspires me to see you who are
 The best, By the Best, in the best
 Do so much splendid work.
 Amounting to the best of all possible
 Tiny hills of nothingness.
 Strange! This is the best of all.

William Babner

On the Morning After

With the exception of strong-willed individuals who never let a drop of liquor pass their lips, most people on one occasion or another experience the nauseating and nerve-racking condition known as a hangover. Such a gruesome state may be caused by inhibiting Scotch, martinis, wine, beer, or even the author's favorite indulgence — Southern Comfort manhattans. The occasions for thorough intoxication may be wedding receptions, wakes, cocktail parties, or solitary drinking. Regardless of the type of liquor consumed or the social excuse for drinking, the result remains a horrible feeling which often leads one to think that dying on the spot would be better than enduring the tortures of the morning after.

Those who cannot boast or be ashamed of surviving the harrowing hours of a full-blown hangover have no idea of its ramifications. Upon awakening, one finds his eyes plastered shut with a sandy substance which he can well imagine to be the recrystallized remnants of the eyeballs he is sure the alcohol dissolved to leave the empty, aching sockets in his head. Then, as awareness filters down to the mouth, one discovers his tongue to be twice its normal size and coated with a furry mat resembling the closely-packed hyphae of a fungus. Returning taste makes one wish it had not, for the foul stimulus from the buried taste buds is best compared to the odor emanating from the slimy cellar of a recently-fumigated old house.

Torture is just beginning, however, for as soon as one makes the mistake of sitting up or standing, the troop of little men toting twelve-pound sledgehammers who hid themselves in his skull during the night take the change to a vertical position as a signal to start smashing their way out. At the same time muscles all over one's body commence creaking and complaining about the awkward position in which one fell asleep or passed out. To make misery complete, one's stomach attempts about now to surge upwards from its accustomed place, and that noble organ of digestion gives one the feeling that it contains *not* the often-described butterflies, but instead a dozen or so hairy tarantulas casting about for a suitable site to sink their fangs.

Can one survive this dire predicament? Yes, if one is very cautious in his movements and even more careful what he feeds the spiders down below until they have been digested, he will usually live to suffer the consequences again.

Philip G. Hiron

Winter's Curse

The cold day breaks on barren ice;
No creature moves in the cold, stiff air.
Trees raise their arms to the sky
To relieve them of their wintry
Burden. Their trunks and limbs are bare;
All their strength does not suffice.

The grass is gone, its green is spent;
No life on this plain can be seen.
A haunted region of ghostly dreams
Is all that remains. Even the beams
Of a radiant sun has lost to a fiend
Its glow, a glow for which the field was meant.

The lea o'er which the haze has spread
Quakes as crystals of frozen mist appear
On the barks of trees made nude
By autumn's wish to make life crude.
And ice on the skin of trees so near
Makes winter's stay a time of dread.

Snowflakes fall like frozen tears
From a cold, despondent sky.
Some find homes on the cold
And hardened earth and mold
Themselves to every twig; some fly
From place to place, nowhere to adhere.

Naked limbs, like fingers drumming,
Beat a rhythmic tune. The wind blows
With hearty blasts like an evil
Spirit sent here by the Devil.
But through this pain all nature knows
Someday shortly stormless Spring is coming.

Michael Chambers

A Modest Petition

"College students are a bore."
Said a certain administrator.
"For petty things they enjoin to riot;
Intellectual freedom is no diet
On which to build character."
"Low on the rung of the register
Do these students find their status;
These words, of course no malice
Do they mean," said another
Who was also an administrator.
"Take heed of authority now,
And gently take your bow
Standing straight and proud
Be not one of the masses loud,"
Said another of this clan.
In phrases pure from the student band
Returned these words in professional fashion
From one now choked by near-tear passion,
"My leaders right or wrong
Should echo loud in gala song,
For we are students here
Who should not turn to leer
At foibles not intended.
Your opinion is not demanded
So give it not thus freely,
And let this end so happily."
"Students of the world unite
And grant administrators one last bite."

Arthur McKenna



separateness torn
isolation worn
love remains
the great white mushroom
in fields of thorn
LOVE is a great white mushroom in a field of thorns.

Josephine Zuchowski

Snowflake on the Jungle Floor

... ants, ants, ants, all over the place! Running, walking, stopping! Nuts to the ants! If only I could fly toward the sun in an airplane. Bruuum... bruuum in a plane with six big motors and nice shiny... I don't know why this world is so stupid, but... Well then again it's not so hard to take. After all, it always snows in the jungle. I know that for sure. And I know why, too, although no one believes me.

When I told Dad, he laughed, "You idiot! How could it snow in the jungle? The temperature there never falls below freezing. It's always hot, sticky. There's no snow in the jungle," he said in a gruff voice.

He always talked to me that way. And I remember what mommy used to say whenever he did. "Ha, ha," she used to scream, "You jack..." Ha, ha, ha, oh it was so funny. But that never worked out too well. He would get mad and beat her when she made fun of him. I remember one of those fights. That was the night those two men in white clothes came in with a long... stretcher... I think that's what they called it. They took mommy away in a long white car which made a loud noise as it went up the street. And then two policemen came in and took daddy away. Aunt Em came over to pick me up and took me to her house. She is a nice lady, but she didn't take care of me the way mommy did... I wonder if lions sink all the snow... I'll bet those funny birds at the zoo get all their colors from being in the cold. Mommy always told me to cover up good in the cold so I wouldn't turn blue...

Oh that stupid wind! I wish it would stop blowing. Blow... yah... "Blow hard so that they'll all go out, or your wish won't come true." That's what she said. Mommy put seven candles on that cake. My first cake and my first party... that seems so long ago. And we had ice cream, candy, soda and presents! Lots and lots of presents. Everybody was having a lot of fun until daddy came home drunk. Mommy shouted and daddy roared so loud that everybody went home and I hid under my bed. That was the last time I had a party. It was such a nice party until he came home.

He came home drunk many times. Mommy and daddy would always argue when he came home that way. "You're a great father for the boy while I have to scrounge money from the neighbors to feed the boy and myself." Then he would roar, "Shut up, you bitch. If you weren't always on my back about how much money

I make, I'd be alright. But no, not you, you can't shut up. Blah, blah, blah, that's all you do. I never get any peace." Sometimes they would yell at each other for hours... I'd like to throw a snowball at a lion. I bet he'd like it too. Ha, ha, ha, I could probably throw a rope around his neck and have him pull me around through the jungle on my sled.

Yah, cousin Andy and his sled! That dirty little... I should have hit him that day. "Be a good boy, Chuck, don't be sad. You'll only be worse off." Dear Sweet Aunt Em! That nice little boy of hers! He didn't have to bully me and make fun of me in front of all those kids just because I'm smaller than most of 'em. He was just like that drunken old man of mine. He and his pack of lion cubs! It's too bad I didn't get even. I wish I could get even with all those kids who always made fun of me! All the times they laughed and bullied me around. Oh, if only people would leave me alone like I am right now.

This is something new for you isn't it, Chuck. Yes sir, all alone like the proud lion in the jungle... no, there really isn't too much to be proud of though. Like the day you came home from school with the note from your teacher:

Chuck has not been doing good work. I wish you would have a talk with him.

"You'd better not let your father see this, Chuck," mom said. Then we had a long talk, I don't remember what we talked about, but when dad came home and found the note by accident, he got real mad. Mom screamed when he tried to hit me. This was the first time he had ever tried to hit me. He was drunk as usual. When he finally dragged me out from under the bed, he started to hit me hard. I felt myself being knocked toward the wall. When I woke up in the hospital she told me that she had knocked daddy on the head and had left and that we were never going to go back home again.

The next time I saw dad we were in court. The judge was dressed in a long black gown... he looked real funny dressed that way... he never smiled either. I had to sit up on a big chair and tell about home. The judge looked at me and asked, "Do you know the difference between the truth and a lie?" "Yes," I said. Then he told me, "All we want you to do is to tell the truth." Daddy got very mad and jumped up screaming awful names at me a few times, but the judge told me that no

one was going to hurt me and that I had to answer the questions. When we were leaving the big room, daddy yelled at me, "You little beast! We wouldn't have all this trouble if it weren't for you!" Was I to blame for all that happened? I didn't do anything wrong? did I? Oh, who cares as long as I can go to the jungle where there's lots of snow. Cold and clean, that's what snow is like. Real cold and so very clean. I like to see it fall. Mom once told me that I was like a snowflake because I was so delicate. Why did she have to die. Why? Why? WHY!

I can still see her in my mind, laying on the bed in the apartment. Cold and white just like snow. If only I could go back inside and kiss her on the cheek and see her eyes open like I used to do before in the morning. She would smile at me when I did that. She'll never smile at me again. I don't want to live anymore. I want to die!

Oh, those stupid ants! What are you looking up at me for. Stop staring up at me you fools! I want to die do you hear me? What are all those people doing down there? Ha, ha, I wonder if that great big lion father of mine is down there. I hope he is. Now I'll show him. It's going to start snowing in the jungle in one minute. Ha, ha, ha, I won't be an idiot any longer.

Arthur McKenna



Resolution

Oh, that sad day, that sad day!
But how were we to know?

The crowds that had cheered him,
The crowds that had loved him so.
The yellow rose of Texas,
A token of that state,
Was made red by blood in Texas
Thru underserving fate.
Let us make this soil unfertile
To breed such hate in men.
The red, red rose of Texas
Must never bloom again.

Nancy Barry

Vanished is the era
When life was a
Honeycomb of passion.
Now it is but a
Routine vagueness.
Past thrills are
Now empty memories—
And the dreams gather dust.
The vitalness of life,
Once ever-present
In ever-friends, now
Fades to dull acquiescence.
The tiger's roar of adventure
Turns to the cat's purr of habit.

Bill McQuade



Lighted Life

Tall and crimson stands the waxen stick
In an antique holder black as night.
Straight and regal is the waxed wick
Bright and hot atop it shines a light.

Light to warm cold hands and hearts.
Light to chase the dark and fears.
Light by which to read God's book,
Light by which to face the world.

Luminous
Radiant
Effulgent
But flickering, flickering, flickering...

Hope M. Colacino

Ce qui est du doit être payé.

Bonsoir Monsieur.

Il y a longtemps que j'entends vos pas qui approchent de ma maison.

Cette maison, vous la connaissez bien, car mon épouse, elle aussi, a suivi votre appel.

— Oui, mes affaires sont en ordre et je suis prêt à vous rendre tous les fruits de ma vie.

— Mais non, ce ne sont pas des bagatelles.

Appelez Diane, ma feu épouse;

elle vous dira ce que j'ai fait pour son bonheur.

— Quoi? Elle n'a rien à dire!

Diane! Diane! J'ai besoin de toi. Parle pour moi!

Elle ne vient pas.

Eh bien, auriez-vous cru que pendant vingt ans j'étais sa vie?

Maintenant, elle ne chante pas même mon nom.

Bah! Je n'en ai pas besoin.

Je suis un homme important; en effet,

ma parole porta grand respect parmi mes associés.

Dès que mon ordre fut donné c'était chose accomplie.

Jour et nuit je me dévouais à mon travail

(pause) et pour qui?

Pour elle, tout pour elle.

Les premières années j'arrivais à la maison

aux petites heures et très fatigué.

Elle avait pitié de moi et disait:

"Ne travaille pas si dur, je t'en prie."

C'est vrai, nous ne nous voyions presque jamais.

Après tout, qu'est-ce qu'elle voulait,

il fallait vivre, n'est-ce pas?

A peine d'arriver, il a même fallu que je coupe les dépenses.

Femme ingrate! J'ai tout fait pour elle, et maintenant,

Voici comment elle me récompense.

— Des enfants? Nous n'en avons pas voulu.

Je lui ai fait comprendre que les enfants nous mangeraient tout mon salaire.

— Non, elle ne m'a point répondu;

elle savait bien que ses murmures étaient inutiles.

— En vérité, j'étais heureux et elle aussi.

Nous avions chacun nos habitudes.

Pendant que je travaillais elle sortait tous les soirs et...

— Oh, je ne sais pas à quelle heure, je rentrais après elle.

— Qui sait. Voir ses amies? qu'importe.

Elle n'aimait pas rester seule tous les soirs.

— Beaucoup d'hommes? Pendant quinze ans!

Ah non! Pourquoi a-t-elle fait cela? et dans ma maison! N'était-elle pas heureuse avec moi? Je lui ai tout donné. Pauvre Diane, combien elle doit souffrir maintenant. Mais, tous hommes coupables doivent payer pour ses fautes. Monsieur! Où allons-nous? Ce n'est pas le bon chemin, le chemin de la Charité est à droit.

Il n'y a rien qui pousse sur cette voie sauf ces vains arbres tortueux débordant de fruits pourris.

Oh Dieu! Regardez ces troncs. Ce sont de pauvres misérables tordues d'angoisse!

Quel endroit effroyable! Monsieur, où sommes nous?

(Pause) Monsieur? (Pause) Monsieur!

Voici une autre âme pitoyable qui - - - ma foi! C'est Diane!

Si elle demeure ici (pause)

Oh mon Dieu - - - Moi aussi! !

FRANK L. BEAUDET



The University

They say that this is the place:

for the intellect to be nurtured

for the mind to be nourished

for the soul to be enriched.

Here, fed a steady diet of direction and purpose —

Are the stalwart bodies, wayward and meaningless:

waiting for words to point the way

waiting for knowledge to soothe the ache.

And as empty as they came, they leave

Hollow like rotting logs in the shade, but:

Not trudging crookedly as dying bears do, but:

Forward and straight, with an aim they plunge —

Seemingly in a trance, just so many zombies.

George M. Sako

A Dark Wind Blowing

From the dark horizon of my future, a sort of slow, persistent breeze had been blowing toward me, all my life long, from the years that were to come. And on its way that breeze had leveled out all the ideas that people tried to foist on me in the equally unreal years I then was living through.

—ALBERT CAMUS

Aside from his needing a haircut, nothing was particularly noticeable about his appearance. It was an exceptionally warm day for October, and he pulled himself, hesitantly, over the shadowy pavement in the direction of the newly-constructed college library. (Nothing is worse than physical pain when it cannot be escaped. Intense, throbbing pain, growing sharper by the minute, was all he felt—all that he had been feeling for hours despite the morphine. He strained against unconsciousness. All was white—the walls, the ceiling, the floor, the nurse's costume, the bed, the sheets, everything—white. All was sterile, untouched. All was uninfected by those things, those numerous things, which are part of people's lives. His wife was there by the bedside, but it didn't matter. It had never mattered. And still, he strained and was uneasy in his bed.) On either side of him the campus sprawled, the white of the modern rectangular structures contrasting sharply with his low dark figure. He had been late getting out of bed, and the sun's heat forced him into a slump, from which he would not recover for the remainder of the day, as he neared the box-like library. Climbing up the steps to the patio, a part of his mind was apathetically aware of the day's mission—those uncompleted class assignments. It had been another Sunday morning; his father screaming at him ("go to church!"); his younger brother killing his senses with the blaring sound of the television; and his mother—the stereotypical, chubby Italian woman—losing herself in the endless preparations for dinner. (Woman—linking life and earth, plucking from the tree of knowledge, and beginning the chain of suffering human existence and rebellious triumph—how ignoble have you become? Man is laughingly nailed to the cross, each generation feeling the nails pierce its hands, and, were he to ascend, another cross on another plain with another teacher on hill would find him. His eyes were heavy now.) Now, in the afternoon, here he was at the library—that solitary, imposing entrenchment of civilization standing on the temporary ground of time.

As he entered the building, the freckle-faced librarian at the desk leisurely glanced at him, caught his stare, and turned back to her work—she had seen him on other such days. A moment later, in the smoking lounge, he

opened a book and began reading. At the rear of the room two students, a boy and girl, were painstakingly whispering to each other. It was as if they were to be severely punished if they dared to speak openly—conspirators from another way of life. (Somewhere, it stands laughing, mocking us with time—is it so conscious? Striving to stop the grin, knowing we can never do it, but continuing still, content and anxious with our attempts—why? An oxygen tent was brought in and placed over him—he protested but to no avail.) He prodded through the first few paragraphs "learning theory is delightful", and so forth—until he found himself reading words. He would either suffocate or fall asleep if he stayed. The stifling heat of the room gripped him by the neck. Once more he was outside the white and gray mausoleum, and, leaning against a railing at the far end of the patio, he became alert to the countless birds perched in a nearby tree as they filled the air with the sounds of their insistent screeching and swayed the branches with their momentary weight. (Pain, like nothing else, brings that intense consciousness of life—that realization of hopeful loneliness—until death, if heard, reminds us of our impotent desires and desperation. Deception, by its nature, chatters up the living room while leaving it seemingly bare. Always later, eternity—that unseen, gnawing simplicity overshadowing our self-innocence and lying beyond our comprehension—makes itself unmistakably felt through the stark, gray walls of our dying room. Slowly, we walk forward, our broken bodies bent lower than before, as we measure the length of each step so that we may forget it in our anticipation of the next stride which may never come. His wife left for a moment—he didn't notice.) On a bench directly in back of him, sat the girl. He would not have seen her at all, were it not for the glistering black hair which fell lightly over her shoulders—girls were blue-eyed blondes these days. As he lit a cigarette, a light breeze blew the smoke into his eyes and made them burn. As his thoughts inevitably drifted back to himself, the girl with the dark hair moved toward him and asked him for a cigarette. He wondered if that were all she wanted. "Here you are." "Thank you . . . are you a Senior?" "Yes." "I thought so," she was a bit hesitant,

"I'm a Freshman this year." "Oh." Her skin was not quite as dark as her hair, and her face, though not extraordinary, was attractive enough to hold his attention. She asked why he never smiled—she had seen him a few times before. "I never really thought about it much," he said. "Oh," she replied half-heartedly. There was a pause as he lit her cigarette. He felt uneasy and preferred to be alone. She was arched over the railing, looking at the ground. Her body—she was quite slender and wore slacks—blended with the landscape and, yet, maintained a peculiar distinction of its own. Seeing a book in her hands, he asked in a sudden rush: "What're you reading?" She turned toward him, her heavy deep-set eyes dominating her expression: "The Stranger" . . . by Camus, I just finished it." He was startled but pleasantly so. Attempting to gauge her feelings about the novel, he commented that Camus must have been a very unhappy man: "don't you think so?" "Aren't we all?" She said in a tone which deflated him. (Born into unhappiness, having life to begin with, knowing sooner or later, we'll lose it . . . even though we feel immortal—what we cling to so dearly will be taken from us. The essence of mankind—the guilt of not acting in accord with our origin and fate. His wife returned.) She continued: "What distinguished Camus isn't that he's 'unhappy' while others are not, but, rather, that he faces the basic desperation and, for that, is less 'unhappy' than most of us who would wallow in lies. His discomfort was showing as he motioned to leave. In words tinged with displeasure, she asked: "Are you afraid of me?" He was visibly shaken and almost gave in to an urge to run from her. "Oh, I've got homework to do." Serenely, without effort, she spoke softly: "Why not call me by my name . . . it's Janita." He could not resist her. "I'm sorry, my name is Albert . . . no relation to Camus." Then: "Do you come from this city?" "No, we moved here recently from New York." He was interested: "Whereabouts?" She turned away from him and said: "We lived on 118th Street for as long as I can remember. The houses weren't very pretty." "Where do you live now?" he inquired. "South Providence." He retorted sarcastically: "Oh, I see you've come up in the world." He regretted these words as soon as they came out. "I never thought I was down," she replied with a remarkable calm. "I welcome the world on its own terms . . . It can't keep me away." "Ha, I can't get far enough from it." He was fooling but he was deadly serious. She spoke again: "Nothing you do means anything to anybody." "That's true," she responded, "but whatever you do means something to you, for yourself . . . doesn't it?" His mind was going in all directions at once and, yet, it did not matter because each line of thought came out to the same thing: "It's

meaningless—empty—nothing matters." She looked across the fields surrounding the library without focusing her eyes and rejoined: "What you say is the truth—a hard truth—but what are the alternatives? Religion? Suicide? Escape by rejecting ourselves? Oppose life—because it will end? Foolishness! We'll all lose eventually. We are something—enjoy whatever pleasure that brings and revolt against the suffering. . . . But always know what you must come to, and rejoice that, though you know it, you still live." After a slight pause in the conversation, Albert said: "You're a Pagan." She drew her eyes to his, smiled as a child would who has just deceived her elders, and said: "How very insightful of you, Albert. The gods of the heavens are all my friends. . . . We must all be Pagans to be free . . . to help and love each other for the sake of an unfettered existence—of an uncluttered living." Now, Albert was gazing over the land about him—it was multicolored and rather pleasing. He said: "I believe you . . . always have. I've been too busy languishing . . . weeping, to look. I guess . . . I guess I have no right." His eyes fell back on her—she was neither slave, nor master, but an equal, a companion—his only hope. On a strange Sunday, as the noon hours passed by, the gods were treated very kindly by Albert and his newly-found playmate.

His eyes saw only white—they were fixed on the ceiling. (The birds filled the air with their screeching. They were deatening, and the dark-haired girl sat in back of him.) Mary, the imbedded lines of her face more pronounced than ever, sat by her husband's bed and watched a nurse who had just entered the room with another bottle of colorless liquid. ("Goodbye . . . will I see you again?" "I suppose so," she smiled.) His pain had, finally, become unbearable. He knew what must happen but strained against the thought of it. (He wondered, walking away from the library, why he had not seen her before—she was beautiful. He had been too long . . . too long at the wrong altar. He would always be losing and had to love without hope.) Everything in the room twirled around him as she slowly closed his eyes to the white, blank ceiling above. (He had not eaten dinner, and he felt the emptiness of his stomach. He started the car.) He exhaled his last breath. His wife's tears could not touch him. The night outside was clear and harmless. In a park on the other side of town, two people sat on a bench as they laughed, talked, and argued. The stars were calm and beautiful—and cold. The gods were everywhere. In the early hours of morning, Albert had ceased to be concerned. His eyes had opened as if in reflex—they stared at the ceiling.

John DiBaise

What's to Wonder

What's heaven . . .
Little girls with pink ribbons
In their hair, about in Springtime
And up at seven, indulged in innocence.
This is heaven.

What's hell . . .
Nighttime deep down in the dark dell,
That's hell.

What's bitter . . .
Lost love, lost face, to live and be
Out of place, to long for the song
And hear just a twitter.
Very bitter.

What's sweet . . .
A love's lovely kiss and a blush
After the feat.

What's nice . . .
A pretty girl and love.
That should suffice.

Paul Hathaway



Universalities

A Parable

Before time began there were three spirits. The first spirit looked around him and said: "I am the center of the universe. I will shine upon it and nourish it and make it beautiful." The first spirit became the sun.

The second spirit felt the warmth of the first and knew that it was good, and he saw the light of the first and was filled with wonder at its brightness and he reflected its glow. The second spirit became the moon.

The third spirit looked around him and saw the sun and its light and the reflected light from the moon and said: "Here is nourishment and warmth and light. I will take all and give nothing in return." The third spirit became the earth.

Polly E. Keene

On A Walk At 3:00 A.M.

A street light hangs barren
Against the blackness,
An outpost to some truck
Highballing to some noon hell.
A train's whistle cuts
The heavy night air.
Louder it grows—then gone,
Gone forever—lost—save to the romantic's heart
Lights flicker in an all-night
Laundramat—Oh God—
Save us from
"Dirt Backwash!"
A blue sign flashes
Against a blank white-washed wall—
Jesus saves . . . Jesus saves . . .
Then home again
And to my room
Where I can sit
And listen to the grass grow.

Bill McQuade

◀ ◻ ▶

Mind Over Matter?

How strange mankind is
to unleash the particles of matter
for their power
when he hasn't even tried
to learn the meaning of the power
that's within him
let alone to utilize this force.

How blind he is
how blind
Blind Mankind.
Matter
is all that matters.
Never mind
Mind.*
In this government
of the people
buy the people.
Matter
is all that matters.

Polly E. Keene

*According to Hindu belief, the soul of man resides in the unconscious of the mind. It is in this dual sense that the word is used here.

My Emptyness

hallow
follow that hallowed hallow hell
Tomorrowtoday.
tell me about the place,
face to face, knowledge's embrace
It's Empty

Walter Hayman



Shards for Him

you are my drunken godlessness,
reeling about in the sea draught of wine,
occasionally to stumble onto your bed of nails
only to dream that I am come to satiate your thirst of
death,
will measure out the dryness of your life
with smooth sea-tottering cups.
though when you wake, you hurl me head-long
into the blind of a hurricane's loveless eye.
afterwards, only to say:

oh, I remember you,
like the trickles of chiffon
we tumbled
the liquid lace of delicacy.

so rise, up from your bed of nails,
and, if you must, find me.
And though I wear red grasses,
can rainbow the pale of your wounds,
I tell you I am long after the storm,
am not calm,
and have died many times,
far far from the sea.

Ann Francis Walsh

Dinner

Damn! Do I hate to eat alone. Should 'a called Bill
or Mack. Ha — funny . . . just like before.

* * *

Al — Joe, Joe — you got the flowers?
Joe — No. Mack, Judy's cousin, is bringin' them.
Al — He'd better hurry up — it starts in twenty minutes.
We were supposed to be there ten minutes ago.
Joe — Look, don't get me started; I said he'd get here.
I know we're late. Damn-it, do 'ya think I want to
be late for my own wedding?
Al — Aw-right, aw-right — sorry. I know you're nervous.
What guy wouldn't be right before his wedding?

* * *

Judy — Joe — Joe honey . . . do you feel all-right?
Joe — Of course Judy. I'm O.K. — fine — just a bit
tired. Guess I drank a little too much.
Judy — Do you want me to drive? I mean, I really
wouldn't mind.
Joe — Judy — please don't go henpeckin me already . . .
not on the first night anyways. I said I was O.K.
Judy — I'm sorry Joe — You really don't think I'm hen-
pecking you . . . Do you?
Joe — Nah — I was just kiddin.

* * *

Why the hell do I always end up sittin next to some
fat slob for — s-enough 'ta make your stomach turn.
That's right lady — stare. So what if I'm sittin alone.
'Ya think I've got no friends or somethin? Old Bitch!
Al — Here's Mack. C'mon Joe — We can't keep 'em
waitin at the church.
Joe — Yeah — Wait 'a minute Al. First want 'ta get a
look at this place. 'Ya know this is the last time I'll
be in this house a single man.
Al — Yeah — yeah. There'll be plenty 'a time for the
tears later on . . . C'mon now or we'll be late.
Mack — Hey! You two guys comin? Haven't got all day
'ya know.

* * *

Judy — Joe — wasn't it a wonderful wedding? I mean,
everyone seemed real happy, and even aunt Maud
said she had a good time.
Joe — Judy, you get 'a couple-a drinks in your aunt
Maud an she'd have a blast at a wake.
Judy — Joe, how much farther do we have to go?
Joe — Not too far honey — maybe seventy-eighty miles.

Judy — Wish we were there already. Is the place big?
Joe — Hon, wait'll you see it — "A beautiful honey-
moon mansion," . . . that's what the brochure the
travel agency sent us said.
Judy — Joe . . . I love you hon. I — I — I really can't
explain it, but you're just so good for me.

* * *

Glad that old bitch left — little more of her starin
an I'd 'a told her right where to go. Funny — never
thought I'd end up sittin in a lousy cafeteria eatin
dinner just 'a week after I was married. Boy, is this food
rotten — tastes like shit.

* * *

Joe — Hey! C'mon Mack — take it easy, slow down.
What 'ya tryin to do — get us all killed? At least
wait till the wedding's over with.
Mack — If you guys didn't screw around for so long in
that house we'd 'a been there by now.
Al — Well there's no use in speeding now — Look, we're
here and the bride's car didn't even get here yet.
Mac — It's not supposed to be here stupid — Joe's sup-
posed to be here first.
Al — Maybe that's what's wrong with these weddings.
'Ya know — why don't we be different 'an enter
after the bride . . . huh? That'd be funny — huh
Joe?
Joe — C'mon, knock it off you guys. Can't 'ya see I'm
nervous awready?
Mack — C'mon, let's go in 'an stop foolin around.

* * *

Just doesn't seem fair — rotten garbage — stinks!

* * *

Judy — Joe — you're so nice and warm. Why did you
get a place so far away?
Joe — Hon, that's the only place within drivin distance
. . . and besides, Bill and Gail went there on their
honeymoon 'an said they had a ball.
Judy — I know they went there. Did they really break
the boards holding up the bed like they said?
Joe — I don't know — But if I know Bill, the hot shit
wasn't kiddin. Sorry hon.
Judy — Joe — honey, can't we stop now? I mean . . .

* * *

Al — Now don't forget what the priest said Joe — when
the organ starts playin, you march down real slow
and wait for the bride. Savy?

Joe — I know, I know, Damn — wish my knees would stop shaking — Any place we can have a butt around here?

Al — Don't be funny — we're in church 'ya know.

Joe — Ha, funny how at this time last year I swore I'd never get married.

Al — Yeah — you traitor.

Joe — You're just jealous that you didn't get Judy.

* * *

How the hell can people eat in this garbage pail day after day and still have a stomach. I'll tell 'ya, it's the last time I'll ever eat in this dump.

* * *

Judy — Please Joe . . .

Joe — Awright hon — I was just thinkin the same thing.

Judy — Joe, shouldn't you pull in off the road, I mean — suppose somebody sees us?

Joe — Judy honey — it's eleven P.M. Nobody's gonna be going past here until tomorrow mornin. Even the kids with hot rods wouldn't fool around on these curves.

Judy — O.K. hon — just come over here.

* * *

Mack — Joe, she's the most beautiful girl, I mean bride I've ever seen.

Joe — Yeah — Boy, I really am a lucky guy. You've got the rings — Haven't you?

Mack — Of course — You only reminded me ten times already. What kind of best man do you think I am anyways?

* * *

Judy — Joe, Joe — I love you, I love you . . .

Joe — Judy don't talk now — don't talk — just love me — love me . . .

* * *

Al — There's the organ; let's go.

* * *

Joe — I take this woman to be —

Judy — I do.

Joe — I do.

* * *

Garbage — God-damned garbage. It shouldn't be this way — it just isn't fair.

* * *

Judy — Joe — those lights! — We're gonna be —

Joe — No! No! Judy duck . . .

* * *

God-damn — do I hate eatin alone.

Charles Aboamra

Prancing cacophony whirls about us all

Preaching in its undulations great respect

For wants above our needs.

No *Lorelei* so dulcet ever wooed,

Nor enigmatic portrait ever lured,

With such an eerie force young legions

To the beetling cliffs of indulgence,

To want is fearful, frustrating, and

Much worse; "To be or not to be" pales

Before the prospect of have-not.

Vast reaches of unknown unfold their inky wings

And fly into our shrinking faces — RECOIL!

Ascetic? What is that? Denial is the grossest

Evil most can conceive, and future in the galaxies

Is shriveled by mere discomfort.

Puny we shall eternally be, UNLESS . . .

Or BECAUSE . . . or UNTIL . . .

We MAY awake (or snore and dream) to

Oneness.

P. G. Hiron

A New Life

Can't I walk where I will? Is it so bad to lie down when I want to? Is it so earthshaking to sleep a restful sleep when I have a need to? I will be alone to hear myself breathe, to follow each inhalation with a severe self-consciousness — to see nothing else but the undulating spiral of my life's precarious continuum. What will I be, you ask? Do I know so little or have you, in understanding so much, forgotten the little upon which our reality revolves? Would you have me negate the penetration of an inward universe? Do you know what you ask? (Look forward: to them struggling — how nicely they deprive each other of their lives and minds, how wonderful it is to hurt each other. Behind these crumbling bushes, charging up these furious slopes, being hauled over these dead oceans and seas — the occupations of the soul? I can no longer bear to look. The cowards will be the ones who fight the last battle of righteous glory.) I watch great flocks of birds and, as I observe, they, quite suddenly, fly away from me. I know that the joy of being close to them does not come from a desire to dominate them but, rather, from my needing them to be what they are now and will be later — they glide away so gracefully. (Look forward: I see blood running — and it is not only red blood. It runs right to the gutter and settles in the shallow dirt, and is carried off by a hard rain fall. The blood seeps out from a blackened tree — a burned out tree is bleeding.) I finally see the water falling — I see it close to me. It falls to an amber plain beneath the cliff and meanders off to an unconscious, waiting sea. (Look forward: I see, with a treacherous clarity, the tracer bullet's path — I see the heartless streak of startling, Judas-like, deathly light approaching. My death, though it comes at any instant, will not be such a betrayal.) I peek at the sky above, and it reproaches me if I do not go to a place far away, where I can know of the things so far within, yet overhead. But, still you ask, what will I be? (Look backward: I won't be my father's Jack and I won't be my mother's Jill. Say what you like, I'm gonna be a fiddler's wife and fiddle all my life. "I swear I don't know what's wrong with him. Stop reciting that stupid rhyme or I'll lock you in your room!" I don't care — I enjoy the words. "Go to your room!") I hear a little girl singing — her voice flows like a violin. She reaches up into heavens — she tries to go beyond. She feels the urgency of her attempts but cannot tell me about herself. The sound of her voice may be all that is needed.

Sometimes I feel the wind around me and, often, it blows so strong that it knocks me down and deranges my mind. But I always get up in time to catch the gentler breezes and to hear their whistlings through the countless limbs of the trees nearby. (Look forward: I see a wide-eyed baby, in its crib, expecting some milk. The Statue of Liberty is in the room. I see her kill the crying thing with her fiery torch. The letters "GE" are stamped on her forehead. She is a caricature, a pretender of the real thing. She is a lousy fake who hates expectant kids — she is the debutante with a respectable smile and the torch turned upside down. Should I pluck my eyes out?) And, still, what will I be? I hear a mountain in the mist and it tells me what I must do: I must fill my lungs with air and let out a bellow that all of you can hear. And I do it. (Look forward: I see them coming toward me! The robot of Liberty, the corporation's imagery, the big bust, motherhood with its skirts pulled down low, ice cream and candy, home-made cakes and bombs, shiny Chevrolets, and "God" — they are surrounding me and pushing me to an artificial death. I must flee to preserve myself, but where? I must be alone. I must have life.) From the mountain top, I yell out with all my might: DO YOU HEAR (I'LL BE A FIDDLER'S WIFE!) I'LL MARRY WHOMEVER I WANT TO MARRY AND I'LL DREAM MY OWN DREAMS! I CAST YOU OFF AND EMBRACE THE GREATEST SANITY I HAVE EVER KNOWN. (Look backward: "What's bothering you? What is it — can't you tell me? Why don't you mix in? Why are you always alone in your room? What's wrong with you? What's wrong with you? Are you listening to me?" I WANT TO HEAR MYSELF — TO HEAR WHAT I'M SAYING AND TO HEED WHAT I AM. I LISTEN TO THE FUTURE RAINS UPON MY WINDOW AND I CATCH THE ODORS OF THE COMING SEASONS. AND I AM FRIGHTENED — I AM EVEN FRIGHTENED OF THE HERE AND NOW. BUT THAT IS NO MATTER, FOR IT WOULD NOT CHANGE THINGS IF I WERE NOT. I WILL ALWAYS BE — FOR AS LONG AS I LIVE — WHAT I ALREADY AM — ME. AND, YET, I ALWAYS AM BECOMING MYSELF — BECOMING MORE OF ME. AND THAT SIMPLE FUTURE INCLUDES EVERYTHING OF VALUE — AND NOTHING OF WHAT YOU OFFER.

John DiBisce

The Gift

The only evidence of the active world was the sound of an occasional auto humming by on the highway. Frank Daniels was comfortably stretched out on the bed inside unit 26. For the rest of the world outside this was an ordinary February evening. For Frank, tonight was special.

He had been here many times before to enjoy a temporary reprieve from reality. Pleasure was here in good scotch, a cigarette, the pleasant, soft murmur of the late night music, and the physical freedom of nakedness.

Pleasure had been here in the form of the woman who usually shared these retreats with him. She was no longer a part of Frank's essence, but tonight she had more meaning for him than she ever had when they had loved together. It was she who had released him from the brittle shell of bitterness and taught him the little things of life that had the power to give joy.

He had never understood her. It had been a game with him to accept her belief that it was such things as giving or receiving a gift that made life joyful. She loved gifts. Like a shy little child she would give Frank a poem, a flower, or a colored stone. It became more than a game, though, because after a time he gave her small gifts, and he could not explain the strange warm feeling he felt when she would smile with her eyes—only her eyes.

It did not matter that he could not understand her. He loved her and wished only that somehow she would understand his presence here tonight—to understand how the gift he had in his bag had more meaning than any of the past gifts. Only he could understand; just as only he could understand the truth about everything.

No one had had more ups and downs than Frank Daniels. He had been up as high as General Sales Manager of Lindholm Incorporated and down as low as number 74362 in the alcoholic ward of the state mental hospital. For 36 years the struggle for self-realization had gone on. Success was as easy to achieve as failure, but failure always followed success. No endeavor proved to be exciting or important enough to satisfy that cancerous disease of boredom; yet no frustration had been strong enough to prevent him from going on in his desperate search for himself.

The doctors at the state hospital had convinced him that drink only helped him to lose himself. They had,

during therapy clinics reaffirmed Frank's belief that life had a purpose. After his discharge from the hospital he decided his purpose was to find the truth of things.

Hints about the truth came in the form of the girl who taught him the warm meaning of a gift; other hints came when he faced the reality that there was one field in which he was less inclined to desert because of boredom—the field of music.

There was no rhyme or reason why his music and his woman slowly smothered the formerly unsatiable urge to search for something else. Somehow he changed. There was purpose to his life. Whatever it had been that could not be satisfied in him was buried in him or gone. The challenge to improve himself in music grew greater and greater as his playing improved. There seemed to be a ratio between his musical improvement and his awareness of the joy of being alive.

He smiled as he opened the gift. Never had he felt such fulfillment and peace as tonight. Tonight he had admitted that he had found the real truth—the truth that his search was for this thing he found in his music, the truth that the recent injury to his hands was real, that he so quickly lost his physical capacity to play, that he could never understand this new endeavor tonight.

His crippled hands lifted the gift he had bought for himself. He stared at it and wondered how many people in the mad world outside were searching for the truth he had found. The muzzle of the gun felt cool in his mouth, but he was dead before he could taste the powder.

Ed Fahey

The dove of peace was flying high
One fine day in spring.
He landed—looked around
And then he flew away.

W. J. McQuade

To a Red, Red Rose

Scarlet valleys, crimson peaks,
Cradled velvet laps,
Beauty's hailed these loveliness—

A masterpiece perhaps!
Enriched by mellow stalks of sun,
And gilded by the breeze,
The pearl of nature's cunning, yet
The damn thing makes me sneeze!

Maureen F. Blais

Cape Cod Lost

in the distance gray clouds
are closing over
a white-capped sea
and cares are rushing
like cars
to cross broken white lines
scrub pines and sand dunes
returning
to sentinel solitude
and I away
from warm
peaceful chaos

Josephine Zuchowski

On Censorship

You mustn't read Fanny Hill,
her spicy ebullience may taint your soul.
So speciously promulgate the intransigent censors,
the self-ordained overseers of American morality.
Priggish and self-righteous, the unknowing intruders
seek the abolition of wickedness in literature.
Forgetting, the fools, that the real evil exists
only in the minds of men.

George M. Sako

On Bended Knee

On bended knee, I look to you
And say:
"Will you be mine?"
But you look down with tenderness and say:
"Will you get up?"

C. A. Barnes

Human Nature

We all appreciate the spring
from winter's bondage freed;
The first mowing of the grass
what pleasure it does bring
But comes the heat of summertime
we sing a different tune;
Oh to have a little snow
To cool our sweltering clime
And when months hence the snow does fall
are we full satisfied?
Only the first snow storm is fun
The shoveling ruins all.

Jeffrey Vernon Webb

A Saga of the Deep — or Who's the Captain

The captain strode the gleaming deck,
His pirate's heart aglow.
The cold spray splashed his booted feet,
His tread was firm and slow.
Then suddenly the look-out cried,
"Ahoy! A ship I see!"
The captain roared his dread commands
And gazed far out to sea.
"Yea, polish up your cutlasses,
Hist up that skull and bones,
We'll get that treasure in her hold,
And send her down to Davey Jones."
His unsuspecting prey drew near,
A Spanish galleon bold.
And well the pirate captain knew
That she was bearing gold.
"The grappling hooks! The grappling hooks!"
The pirate captain cried.
"Come, bring 'em up right now! Ye hear?
Soon we'll be o'er her side.
There! Now we've got 'em tight and fast.
Over when I say three!
We'll get all the gold they have
And show them no mercy.
Now, one, two, — " The captain stopped
Before the count of three
A voice had from the cabin come.
He went there sheepishly,
Resigned, the pirates took their hooks
From out the galleon's side.
They haul'd right down their jolly flag
And bitterly they sighed.
Amazed the Spaniards watch'd their work.
Oh, why this sudden halt?
Had magic from that cabin come
To soften that old salt?
"Now why did you forsake our gold?"
A Spaniard sought to know.
Up spoke the grizzled pirate's mate:
"Aw! The captain's wife said 'no'!"

C. A. Barnes

