HELICON

FALL, 1964

The Staff

HELICON

Awake, AEolean 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)

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Contents

POETRY

Sonnet I

To walk alone in peace and quietude,
And sniff the coolness in the morning air,
And see the azure without clouds — nude,
And touch the fresh, sweet dew on grasses there;
When one has done these things and felt with care
The priceless feel of love for beauty true,
And seen the grace of all those fair,
Then one has lived, and one can say 'I knew!'
For those who have no feel for what is new
Cannot appreciate the tender heed
Which entered all things made and grown by You,
Since they are not alive and have no need.
For beauty is for all to see and praise;
But few have sense enough to find the ways.

— *Sharon-Ann Oszajca*

November 1964

This Wild Life, strange how it came about!
A sort of evolution . . .
Survival of the fittest and the process of natural selection.
Take the Elephant, for example:
For all its width and height, its momentum has failed
In sight of the sure-footed donkey.
Consequently, in its quest for food,
It is forced to take second hands from the Donkey's second helpings.
Who knows what effect this might have on the animal's constitution?

— *Nancy Barry*

La Jeunesse

C'est la jeunesse qui a tout.
En ayant tout
Qu'on désire d'être heureux
C'est ayant tout —

Et la jeunesse a ça.

Ils ont tout qu'ils souhaitent
Parce qu'ils désirent
    tout ceux qui est avant eux:
L'éspace ouvert.

— *Daniel Desaulniers*

Timid, New-Warmed Fingers

Timid, new-warmed fingers
Touched the meadow, tinted pink
The leaves along the grapevine,
Roused the sleeping bobolink.

While a lark among the treetops sang
A lovesong to the earth
And the East and West winds argued
What a single life was worth,
Nature, in her labor pains,
Contracted and gave birth.

The two winds stopped discussing
When they heard the infant's cry
And they flew around the world to wait
For three-score seasons to pass by.

When the springs all changed to summers
And the autumns spent their mirth
To form an old man's blanket,
The winds saw one life's worth,
And a lark sang a lovesong
To the fevered, pregnant earth.

— Clarke Lowery

Ha-Ha

Funny how
where yesterday would fit
the day before
there's only a hole.
Strange, that when two is
one are, and when black is
white aren't.
Odd, how he can, and she would,
if only he said — which he can't
— what she'd like.
Queer, how they are only
while we are not, although
they have only and we have more.
Curious, that all are going
if one ever comes again.

Faintly amusing too.

— Phil Hirons

Futility And/Or Sport

Futility and/or sport
autumn football
the vast halfback
screaming through halloween fields
leaving fantastic geometries
of insurance
behind

— Peter Cook

Day, No Night Completing

When the small fox seeks out its lair in the wood,
When the late-winging hawk streaks the sky
And drops like a stone in despondent mood,
With a lingering, mournful cry,
To the shadows where Day's creatures die,
The voice of my soul holds the note.

Small memories crowd back from the far-removed light:
A stray wisp of hair speaks my mind,
And a fragment of laughter inhabits the night
Of an other life Will can not bind
To the shadows: — fingertips fading from mine . . .
The heart is a strange, cool country.

—Clarke Lowery

Some Other Spring

Love is like a wild fragrant rose
Whose bud, blooming in spring,
Gives to the world a touch
Of delicate texture and joyous spirit;
And to its wearer,
A few hours of charm
And lustrous beauty.
Yet in its cycle of existence
Its petals must softly fall upon earth,
Leaving but a bare stem
To renew its bloom some other spring.

— Anne Budano

Far Up The Loving, Lovely Pinnacle

Far up the loving, lovely pinnacle
Where happiness so rarefied
As to a pleasure nearing pain,
Claw-curled a foul, malodorous mist
Warmed skyward in an ugly clutch.

Gasping, catching in the revered throat;
Mad vertigo, all wild and whirling words,
Snatched up the one of two and flung
From off the eagle-sharpened edge
In tumbling, screaming, rude descent.

Where came the wretched, scaly beast
That reeks of fear and sulfurs up
A fetid breath of self-torturing denials?
Who woke the bastard dragon's past
From old, dismembered sleep?

Frost-crusted, single-summit peak
Surveys now only burying snow:
Persephone smelled dragon-smoke
And falling pulled the ravel-string,
Left bare the lonely soul above.

Reverse Rapunzel! Weave again!
Come, clamber back along the strand
Of flesh to heart. When the damned
Lizard flames his gurgling last —
St. George! St. George! St. George!

— Phil Hirons

Sonnet

If in the awesome stillness of this night
I from my mooring self should part
And drift away like a specter light,
While from the shore, sad of heart,
You weigh with tear diluted power
Your loss against your gain,
Decrying love's brief, dream-like hour
As small reward for timeless pain;
Then neither grieve, my love, nor wish me be refurled
In my once-self, but look beyond my shell
To newborn, whatever form come loping down the world
By silver morning's vast singing swell,
Or night's white stars riding fiery breath —
There I'll be, more in life than here in death.

— David Lawton

Hope Is Lost

Hope, suck not my blood
Nor eat my flesh
To live.
Parasitic animal
Of human minds,
To me wish not
To give
Pulsating floods
Of fogged goals
And dreams.
Do not distort my ways
Of heydays
And of joys;
Set not the lodestar
Of my days to be,
Thou worm of soul
To live
In me.

You cannot think
To die
Before the storm;
Only at the break
Will you be gone —
Disaster strikes
But lo! my bitter foe,
My day of wrath
Is here to stay;
And yours,
To die.

— Daniel Desaulniers

Challenge

Who dares to probe
the mystery of the atom,
Or pursue a world
outside our globe,
Or create nuclear arms
to kill our fellow-man;
I say again, who dares?

For when the mystery
of disease is solved,
And the hungry
of the earth fed,
And that coveted prize
of peace attained;
I say then, one dares!

— Joan McQueeney

I Was Walking, I Heard A Sound

I was walking, I heard a sound
I saw an alley, so dark, so grim
The noise was someone crying,
Sobbing. There in streaked white
face was a clown.
He shook all over with the rapture
of his cry.
The tears making salty, doughy,
rivers down his cheeks.
He sat there huddled near the
red bricks of a building
Unable to hear, to see, to speak
And he cried. This clown
He cried. One would think
his love had died. He sat
so rejected, so hurt, I went
to him to help him. And he said
that no one had laughed, no
one had noticed him. No one
was happy, no one knew joy.
He had failed. He had failed
because no one would laugh.
That was his life — to bring joy and
happiness to others. To bring
laughter and gaiety. No
suffering at all. And he
had failed.

— Jo-Anne Gagne

The Blind Child

The blind child walks in silence,
Yet hears noises 'round.
Noises of the things unknown,
Yet known by words bound
By a hollow brain.

Fashioned on monotony,
Steeps a lacking rind.
Stabbed with oblivion,
Pours a bleeding mind,
Biased, but alive.

Searching hands and pawing heart,
Taught to glower.
Without vision in the soul,
The witching hour
is unending gloom.

— Daniel Desaulniers

Simple Mathematics

One cannot stand alone.
For everyone there is another one
To make two.
But is it not strange
That when two come together
They are no longer two
But one . . .
One which can stand
All alone.

— Anne Budano

A Field of Trees

A field of trees,
velvet grass and
flowers sprinkling
aromas . . . springlike
Sunlit, lazy,
happy times of
nothing to do.

— Patricia Comire

I Fell Asleep And Dreamed Once

I fell asleep and dreamed once
Of the strange vastness of tomorrow,
And of the barren corridors
Leading deeper and deeper into a maze.

I felt the grey, bleak sky
And the cold lonely wind
As it blew across the barren desert
Deep in the canyons of steel.

I heard the loss, the abondonment,
In the child's cry for his mother,
And I sensed the pain, when his answer
Was his echo.

I knew the thought, the compulsion
Of human dignity, fighting for its honor
And I saw the pity of man, still at odds,
As the sun set for the last time.

— William McQuade

The Night, Seeping Wetness

the night, seeping wetness
through its pores to
moisten
the fevered land,
severs
the ties i grasp,
in vain,
to hold back the dark.

shaken, i seek refuge.
throbbing,
vibrating
senses echo defeat.
helplessly, i sink back
into the despairing depths
of loneliness.

— *Patricia Comire*

The Night Walked By On Phantom Feet

The night walked by on phantom feet.
In darkness, lying unasleep,
I heard his footsteps pass and fade.
I saw the shadowed curtains move
And heard the leafy rustling
That marked his fleeting presence.
The wind, his handmaid, murmured soft
And matched her strides to his.
A breath of fragrant air, then gone.

But in my mind I traced his path
Through vacant, unlit streets,
His hollow kingdom, silent and unpeopled.
I heard the echo of his pace
Resound down empty halls;
He made his nightly rounds and fled.

I longed to clothe myself in dark,
To flee the sheets that bound my soul,
Cast off the sleep that begged my life,
And, with him, walk the world.

— *Clarke Lowery*

i had a friend once

i had a friend once,
and that friend, she
said to me, "friend,"
she said, "write something
happy!" and me, i looked at my
friend, who said what she did,
and me, i said, "o.k." but me,
i tried, and all the time nothing
happy happened. "friend," i finally said,
"friend, find me something happy,
something happy to write about."
and my friend she looked at me,
and said to me like i said to
her, "o.k." but when my friend
she came back to me,
to bring something happy, my friend
she didn't have nothing. and
then she said, my friend did, "i
didn't find nothing." and then
my friend she cried.

— *Patricia Comire*

The Hornet

The Hornet
buzzed quickly
from one corner
of the room
to another;
from light to light —
busily
vibrantly
ALIVE;
then alighted
upon
a desk . . .
a hand was raised
a book
fell
with a resounding crash
and time ended
for the hornet.

— *Greg Andreozzi*

Seascape

By the sea where the cliff stands
There is no house . . .

Grey day.

From England's bosom: violent water.
Three-thousand miles of open sea
Tears its edges on jagged rock.

Sea cuts bleed white.

Where the gull swoops
A solitary wound is left.

Cold wind.

The beach broods, a livid scar,
Where no footprint long exists.
By the point, a battered skiff . . .

Jealous sea.

— Clarke Lowery

At The Grave of a Friend — Fruit Hill

It will rain here, friend
More drops than you shall ever know.
Snow will blanket you
To hide the mound — a naked cross.
But now the Spring, friend,
Bears more flowers than you've known.
Mooréd graves about
Will never know how much I lost.

— Daniel Desaulniers

City By Night

Vast desolation
Utter silence
Sweeps in on tiptoe
Conquering the majestic works of man
Silencing the hum of vehicles
Filling the atmosphere with a cold darkness
That pushes lonely man home.

— Anne Budano

Peace That Is . . .

Peace that is that fleeting moment.
The snow drifts higher against the door
— The dull oppression of a smoke-filled room —
To hear the horror of the empty voice
Which calls — A time-A place-A name.

The captor is the body —
The captive is the soul.

— William McQuade

One Day, Walking Down

One day, walking down
the street — stopped
suddenly.
Whirling, twirling, hissing, buzzing.
Loudly laughing in my mind . . .
a thought.

At night, sleeping in
my bed — waking
shuddering.
Scalding, ringing, jeering.
Hateful scenes of past . . .
a memory.

— Patricia Comire

We Two

Strange it seems,
That we should meet once more
Upon pure chance,
Silently remembering the love
We two once shared and
Knowing its spark to still remain;
Yet masking our feelings with a smile
And each silently walking his own way.

— Anne Budano

PROSE

Miss Black, U.S.A.

Sophie always went for a walk when she got into one of those dark cloudy moods. Now, she turned into Cage Street and when that was no more she turned down the hill that belongs to Penury Avenue. She never varied, always took the same darn streets, the exact same turns, and came back feeling the same darn way.

Sophie wouldn't speak to anyone when she made her rendezvous in self-pity. Her thoughts were too deep down to be interrupted by superficial things, like "hello" and "how are you?" She told herself a long time ago that things like that belong to the whites; or rather, someone or something had let her know it in the past.

Some of the New York shops were closing up for lunch but she didn't see them. The conversation within her was blinding: "It's not th' bein' black's the worse thing, it's th' feelin black. They makes you feel so damn black. Knowing you's black, and all you loves gotta be thit way too's burden 'nough. If you 'cept it, why kint they? But nah! They hasta make you feel so black and dirty . . . Like somewhere along th' line the thing thit says you's gonna be a boy or you's gonna be a girl got all fouled up, and th' tape came out readin': You's ain't gonna be neither . . . You's gonna be black. Thit's why I ain't never gonna haf kids. Even 'fore they's got a chance ta be born, they's already marked-branded by th' womb they was in. Yea, somethin' got all fouled up all right, whin a bran' new inn'cent baby kint come inta th' worl' without a reject label already on 'im. Whin' that white doctor slaps that lit'le black can, you's can be sure that cry is one of the few painless ones he gits. The others come from slaps in the faces."

Sophie began to get ridiculous. "Supposin' one of thim there whites with all their smarts invent'd sim kin' soap thit would clean up th' race. Even that wunt be 'nough, though, jist like that there bill wasn't 'nough. Jist said they's gotta go out of their way a bit to let us breathe. Dint say nothin' bout how people feel and dint have no clause thit says they's gotta stop treatin' you like you was one of thim there cows Mr. Wallace butchered in 'is meat shop yes'erday."

Sophie turned on to Midway Heights. She passed a nice little restaurant where white people go. An expensive place and it smelled good from the outside. Was that a colored guy in there? By God, it was! And he was drinking a decent cup of coffee. She felt good for him. "God bless him," she said. "God bless that lucky son-of-a-gun." She began to feel a little better. Maybe that there bill was worth a little after all. The thought soothed her. She never went into a place like that and maybe she never would; but somewhere, some of her people were making it, and that was better than all of them standing still. She felt good. Out of nowhere, though came a honk . . . "Hey, you damn nigger, can't you watch where you're going!"

Sophie turned down a long narrow street without a name. She didn't look up, but if she had she wouldn't have been able to see the end of it — it stretched too far ahead of her. She just kept walking with her head down, eyeing the dirty, black pavement. No, no, it wasn't pavement. I wasn't just a street. It was a long, long, long, dirty black carpet. The white people had made it for their own convenience, and when they were through with it, they had left it there to get dirty. And her? She was the girl they had picked to walk on the dirty, black carpet. She was Sophie Heart, Miss Black, U.S.A. . . . 1964, 1965, 19 . . .

— Nancy Barry

The End

All of a sudden I couldn't remember anything. Who was I, what was I doing, or where I was. As much as I desperately tried to recall, my mind remained a complete blank. It was painful as hell.

Hopefully, I cast a furtive glance at the surroundings. To my left was the sea, its endless waves lapping the sand shore. Opposite stretched a pebbly beach dotted intermittently with small shrubs and tall trees. In front of me, about a mile distant, loomed a gigantic cliff, on top of which perched a lonely little cottage. In back of me I saw nothing.

Being of a somewhat optimistic nature, I made my way toward the cottage. All at once I remembered the bar. Campus Cafe, I think it was called. I suppose it was near a university of some kind. That's right, it was, and I must be a student there. Anyway, I remember the bar, the smoke-filled atmosphere, the solitary table and chair in the corner. And I can visualize myself sitting in that chair, with the three empty bottles in front of me.

Then she was there. She didn't walk over or invite herself or anything, she was just there, talking to me, asking if I had any problems to be solved. Overjoyed at having found an interested listener, I poured forth my usual collection of misery and despair. I smoked too much, drank too much, and paid more attention to my love life than to my studies. She smiled, and offered me a solution. "Kill yourself," she said. "It's as simple as that."

With those words reverberating through my skull (which was in a miserable state), I made my way through the nearest exit and walked quickly down the street. She followed me. I turned right at the first corner and found myself panting in a blind alley, listening frightfully for the sound of her dreaded footsteps. They came. I started to return the way I had come, saw her, and ran back.

What was I running from? A mere female? Was I so far gone that I couldn't stand up and face my fears? NO, of course not; I was young and strong.

Her hand touched my cheek. "Why do you run," she asked.

"Let me go," I demanded.

"Here, here's a knife. Go on, use it. It's simple. One quick plunge and it's over. All over."

"Why pick on me to die?"

"Take the knife," she said somberly.

Hypnotized, I took it, stared into her naked blue eyes and plunged it savagely through her stomach.

Now I am here — scared and cold, shaken and confused. How I managed to stagger to the beach I won't attempt to recall; my mind hurts enough as it is. I looked up — in front of me stood the cottage, amazingly bright against the black of the night. I had to go in, I felt. I must. It was the only course to follow. I walked to the wooden door and stood on the huge doormat which had once spelled HELLO. Now the O was scratched out.

The door opened and I screamed. Inside I saw Satan, standing midst the flames of a great roaring fire, beckoning eagerly to me. I had run stupidly from myself and found this.

Calmly, I crossed the threshold and closed the door quietly behind me. The beginning?

—Thomas Conlon

Character Sketch

The trees had shed their summer finery to prepare for the long cold winter. Leaves were falling from the trees and settling to the nearly frozen ground. At intervals, playful wisps of wind would stir the fallen leaves creating a havoc in the deep inner forest. The sun peeked through the now barren trunks and filtered across the dense forest floor.

Upon hearing the sharp snapping of the dry leaves, the birds and squirrels left their play and ran with fear. From the clearing emerged an aging man who carried a long bough perhaps to aid his fading sense of balance. He looked at the running squirrels and smiled warmly.

He walked slowly and cautiously as he plodded through the dense mat of the forest growth. Limping slightly, he stopped at intervals to marvel at the deep quiet of this still wilderness. At one time, he sat on a huge rock, shaded by an oak, to ease his feeble body and share in this deep solitude.

His beard was thick and streaked with grey. The eyes, emerging from under dense brows, were dark brown and in constant motion as he absorbed the grey trunks set in the brown floor of decaying leaves. His breathing was short and irregular and his chest heaved like a bubble ready to burst. Nostrils flared out like trumpets to catch the crisp clean air. The dark moustache hid a full mouth set into a firm and finely sculptured jaw.

The well worn jacket was spotted and frayed at the cuffs and his trousers bagged at the knees. The cuffs of his pants were not quite long enough to hide the gaping hole in his right sock. Somehow his clothing assumed a certain dignity as he brushed off the dust of the earth with rough callous hands.

He rose slowly from the huge rock and leaned heavily on his cane for several moments. His keen brown eyes watched a solitary leaf as it began its erratic descent to the crowded ground. It fluttered and then landed gracefully, no longer a single leaf but lost within a communion of others.

He emerged slowly from his haven of rest and came upon another clearing where a stream worked its way between the rocks and decaying stumps. He lay on his chest and drank deeply and lovingly of nature's offering. The water was cold and trickled into his thick beard and down the long wrinkled neck. The sun warmed him and he was content upon the nearly frozen ground covered with crispy brown leaves.

He peered into the glassy surface and recognized the telling signs of age — wrinkles set in a quaint but still determined face. He was getting old and he felt a sudden chill as he lay on the nest of moist leaves.

It was time for food and his stomach was impatient in its command. Wearily, he raised himself upright. He walked rigidly and soon became indistinguishable from the grey trunks. A bird chattered as he groped through the thick leaves.

On his way home, he stopped once more in a deserted pine grove — the sanctuary of the earth. Suddenly, without apparent warning, he fell to his knees, clutching his now sagging chest. He tried to cry but no sound shattered the still air. He stumbled to his feet only to fall again like a towering oak. His face was etched with pain and the once ruddy cheeks were grey and quivering. There was a violent thrashing and then silence.

The snow fell lightly at first and then thickened the grey air, swirling through the dark forest. The first flake fell upon the still warm nose and melted as quickly as it appeared. Soon he was covered by the dazzling white blanket and he mingled and became a part of the dead decaying leaves.

—Richard Kiley

One-Act Play

A—I can't see! I can't see! Help me! Please, help me!
B—Hey man, you got trouble?
A—Oh, sir, Please, sir, help me! I can't see anything! I'm looking but I can't see!
B—Hey man, you know what's your trouble? You got your eyes open, wide open.
A—My eyes open? But you must have your eyes open to see. That's what they told me.
B—Like man, you're all balled up. You gotta close your eyes to see.
A—Sir, I don't understand. I was told to open my eyes to see but I can't see. Now you tell me to close my eyes. I don't know what to do.
B—Man, are you out of it! Now listen up, Pops: you wanna see?
A—Oh, I do, sir! I really do! Please tell me how I can see.
B—Okay, man. Now open your ears and listen. First ya gotta relax.
A—Yes, relax.
B—Now ya gotta play it cool.
A—Yes, play it cool.
B—Now snap your fingers; swing it back and forth.
A—I'm doing it but I still can't see!
B—I told you, man, you still got your eyes open. Ya gotta shut them. Did'ja shut 'em? How's it feel?
A—Ooowee! Like cra-zy, man! Like I'm floating! Man do I feel great! And I can see! Oh, baby, like I got the view!
B—Relax, cat, relax. They all get excited when they see for the first time.
A—Hey, man!
B—Yeah?
A—Like I can see but I don't know what what I see means. I mean like what's it mean?
B—Oh, man, are you dumb! Listen up, dad: Everybody *sees* but *nobody* knows what it *means*.
A—Speak up, man! The Word's not coming through.
B—Man, you are really square, like as square as they come! You must have gone to school.
A—Yeah, I went to school.
B—I knew it! I knew it! I just knew it!
A—Man, are you gonna come across with the meaning of this view?
B—I told you, pops. Nobody knows what it means. They just pretend they do.
A—Pretend?
B—Yeah, pretend. See that man over there? He knows he's here; but he don't know *why* he's here. He knows that he can see but he don't know *why* he can see. He don't know the meaning, but he pretends he does. He thinks he *is* because somebody named God "felt like making him." Crazy, huh?
A—Like, you said it. (pause) Hey, man!
B—What's your trouble now, son?
A—Why do we have to have a meaning for being?
B—It's like this, kid: If you don't tell yourself that you exist for some purpose, then you'll go batty trying to find the right meaning. So you find some meaning that satisfies your little heart, and stick to it and, daddy, you're set!
A—Gee, sounds simple. (pause) Hey, man, what's your reason?
B—My reason? I haven't got one. Ya see, I'm one of those guys that goes batty looking for the right meaning. Ya wanna know something? I've been looking for a long, long time, and I've found nothing. I don't think there is any meaning. I think that everything just is, with no strings attached.

A—Hey man!
B—What's it now?
A—I don't like what I see. I can't understand it. It's too much for me. I want out.
B—You want out? Well, once in a while a few like you pop up: you see, but you can't pretend. Well, if you want out I can fix it for you. You see that little black thing? That's called a gun. Put it in your hand and raise it to your head. Now press that little lever. That's it! Man, you got terrific aim!

— Robert Badway

Lonnie

Lonnie walked sluggishly along the street with his hands in his pockets and his eyes fixed firmly on the ground. The black slime of the pavement hinted of the surrounding scene — tenement buildings shoulder to shoulder, broken doorsteps, patched window panes and overflowing rubbish barrels.

It was a foggy, gray evening. It had been raining all day and Lonnie had to avoid the puddles filling the ruts and depressions in the road. He hated weather like this. He hated the raw, damp, penetrating cold. A miserable, lonely and depressing feeling swept through him as he climbed the steps to his house. He knew that inside also, there would be the same raw, damp and penetrating cold. Lonnie's mother was in the kitchen when he came in. She asked him if he had come home for supper and he said no.

"You should come home for supper, Angel," she said, trying to sound concerned. "I left a can of soup out for you."

"Thanks a lot," Lonnie replied scornfully, "and please don't call me 'Angel' — I'm sixteen years old."

Lonnie did not wait for his mother's reply. He went to his room and closed the door. He looked at his two younger brothers sleeping under a tattered and rumpled blanket, and thought "poor kids." He thought of his father squandering money in New York or Chicago or somewhere. He suppressed the feeling of anger in his heart.

The mirror on the wall was cracked, but Lonnie turned to comb his hair in the gray darkness. His mother's nickname for him was not inappropriate. Lonnie was a tall and rather graceful boy with the face of an uncanonized angel. He had large blue eyes under broad brows, sandy hair, and skin pale and clear. He hated his girlish looks and he despised the nickname 'Angel.'

When Lonnie woke up in the morning the sun was beaming through the window. He washed quickly and looked around for some clean clothes. "She forgot again," he thought as he picked up the wrinkled green striped shirt and dirty blue jeans from the chair. When he was dressed, he stood in front of the mirror. He hated the shabbiness of his clothes. "Some angel," he said, mocking himself. He stood back from the mirror and presented himself with the sweeping gesture and voice of a master of ceremonies. "Presenting, Ladies and Gentlemen," he cried, "the great Lonnie, the angel with burlap wings." Lonnie laughed hysterically at his poor attempt at humor, but his laughter was tragi-comic. Humor amid hate could be nothing else.

Indeed, Lonnie was a hater. He sometimes composed mental lists of the people he hated. He hated his old man who took off when Lonnie was twelve; he hated his mother who didn't care; he hated his teachers who picked on him; he hated the buddinsky social worker. But, most of all, Lonnie hated the raw, damp and penetrating cold that he felt so often within himself.

— Joan Connors

The Lady

A lady enters and looks around.
She and the crowd are conscious of each other as she crosses the room.
She greets the host who doesn't notice that her hat's not on straight,
But she primps it anyway.
What's the whispering about?
Is it because she forgot to wear her gloves
Or is her dress so pretty they haven't noticed?
A man saunters in and eventually takes a seat.
She thinks it strange he has his collar up
But doesn't know he needs a haircut.
If only it would begin, if the formalities were over with.
She's dying for something to eat.
As she makes the rounds she turns the gold band on her finger.
She's not accustomed to being early and feels out of place.
Across the room a woman in a woolen white suit looks so at ease.
She's engaged in a conversation that the lady doesn't understand.
She wonders what the woman in the woolen white suit is like.
The priest walks in and begins Mass.
The congregation repeats the old routine,
And is almost glad to be interrupted by the sermon:
"Do not be anxious for your life, what you shall eat; nor yet for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life a greater thing than the food, and the body than the clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they do not sow, or reap, or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you of much more value than they? But which of you by being anxious about it can add to his stature a single cubit? And as for your clothing, why are you anxious? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which flourishes today but tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more you, O you of little faith! Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or, 'What shall we drink?' or, 'What are we to put on?'; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be given you besides."
The lady listens and thinks it the lovliest sermon she has ever heard.

— Nancy Barry

Essay on Censorship

At this moment, there are groups and individuals all over the United States who are controlling, to some degree, the publication and circulation of reading material. More often than not, these people have had little or no training in literary criticism, and many times, they are biased because of their religious or political affiliations. Yet, they dictate, or attempt to dictate, what society should or should not read. Censorship, as a term applied to the activities of these people, is a stifling and detrimental force in our society.

There is nothing objectionable about individuals and groups expressing their opinion of a book, but when, through pressure or authority, they prevent or attempt to prevent other people from reading certain books, they infringe upon the freedom of the individual. For instance, a Protestant living in a community dominated by Catholics should not be forced to adhere to Catholic standards. But if a group such as the N.O.D.L. is active in the community, chances are the Protestant will find that certain books cannot be obtained because, in Catholic opinion, they are dangerous.

It is true that the activities of groups such as the N.O.D.L. have no widespread effect on the majority of society. Few people encounter difficulty when trying to obtain books such as Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales,* Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye,* or Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* even though these works have been listed by censors as objectionable. But if the attempts of these censors to prevent people from reading such works are allowed to continue unimpeded, their power and activities will have free reign to grow. As they become more powerful and control larger areas, their influence will be more greatly felt by a larger number of people, and the result will be a narrowing of the reading sources of the public. Perhaps in fifty years or so, it will be impossible to obtain a copy of the unabridged works of Shakespeare or James Joyce's *Ulysses.* What will the individual do? Will his reading be confined to those books which conveniently fit into the narrow world of the accepted standards of a mediocre majority? Such possibilities do exist and cannot be ignored by any person who respects and understands the value of literature.

However, if censors were well trained in literary criticism, the danger of such an intellectually stifling situation's developing would be lessened. But the point is, most, if not all, of these censors are far from being literary experts. For example, the Detroit Police Department publishes a list of banned books and a list of books deemed objectionable. They bring these lists to book distributors and because of their legal authority, are fairly effective in preventing some books from reaching the bookstands. It is widely known that the average policeman usually discontinues his formal education after high school. How, then, can he be expected to properly evaluate a book when he has little or no conception of the criteria used in judging a literary work? If the censor were a literary expert, such books as Joyce's *Ulysses,* Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye,* and Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* would cause no objection.

Perhaps this lack of training on the part of the censor explains why books are often judged in the light of one passage taken out of context. When the censor pulls parts of a book out of context, he demonstrates his lack of understanding of art, and in the process, insults the artist. When the artist creates, his work is the sum of its parts taken together. Each part contributes to the whole in its own way and should be judged only in the light of the whole work. One would never think of judging a painting or symphony by close inspection of one small part, and basing the judgment of a book on one passage without considering its relation to the whole is just as ridiculous.

However, there is something else about the nature of art that the censor must understand. Art, according to Aristotle, "is an imitation of reality; it holds the mirror up to nature." No matter how much we wish to believe that some things do not exist, art must deal with *real* problems, situations, and people if it is to reflect reality and have depth and meaning. If the artist concerns himself with only romantic and idealistic characters, he may produce a work that is entertaining and clever, but it will lack depth and have little intellectual appeal. Thus, when the censor objects to immorality or the such in a book, he is being unfair not only to the reader, but also to the artist.

Besides having an adverse effect on the reader and the artist, widespread and even limited censorship can be, and in some cases is, a detrimental force in our educational system. It is widely known that teachers have been reprimanded for advocating reading material that either parents, the school committee, the principal or all three believe are unfit for American youth. I know of a teacher who was fired because he included a book on communism in a small library that he had personally created for his students. As another example, a practicum student from this college attempted to include in her lesson a poem by E. E. Cummings that she believed would appeal to the students. Although there was nothing objectionable in the poem that she had

chosen, she was not allowed to use it because E. E. Cummings is a dirty (in quotes) poet. And, of course, an English teacher must not teach literature that is atheistic, anti-Christian, or anti-American in any way, for such things will confuse and upset the student. But do we want to advocate apathy? In order to induce a student to think, the teacher must upset him to some degree. A teacher or a society does not encourage logical and critical thinking by merely making statements like "Communism is bad." The student would be far more beneficial to society if he were allowed to read a well-structured argument for communism and was then aided in discovering the fallacies of the argument and the disadvantages of communism itself.

In other words, the teacher cannot induce the student to think critically unless he is able to present the student with ideas which force him to do so. If we must select literary material to fit into the student's narrow and prejudiced structure of beliefs and values, our attempts to educate and develop the intellect are futile. By censoring in this area, the censor does succeed in protecting the young, but how does he then proceed to protect them from themselves and from each other?

— Virginia Callanan

The Ferroequinologist

I am lounging lazily on a baggage cart at Wickford Junction. This seems to me the ideal place to begin my story of the railfan and his peculiarities. Here, at my favourite country depot, is the same feeling of romance and excitement found wherever the railroad is, be it an underground station on the Metropolitan Transit Authority, a desert siding on the Santa Fe, or the Pennsylvania's vast Summyside Yard.

Yet, universal as it is, this feeling is very elusive. I can describe the scene, but I cannot express the spirit of the place, and it is this spirit which attracts the railfan, and in the end holds sway over him. To appreciate what really makes a railfan tick, try to picture a small country station on a double track main line between New Haven and Boston. Many years ago, this station was painted a peculiar rusty brown. Now it is weathered to a discoloured copper shade and is peeling off in many places, exposing the wood underneath. Its telegrapher's bay is empty and deserted, as is, indeed, the whole station. The windows are coated with country dirt carried along by the passing trains, so thick that you cannot see through them. Little faces, "Tammy loves Mike," and other earthier phrases are etched in the grime. A sign hangs from the roof and plain block letters on either side proclaim this station is "WICKFORD JCT." Just down the tracks from the waiting room rises an overbridge. Disused and scarred by time and vandals, it spans the tracks, linking one weed grown platform with the other. There is no sound save the clank of rails and fishplates expanding in the midday sun. In the distance a pinpoint of light suddenly appears, growing slowly though steadily in size. Gradually we are able to make out a dark bulk behind the warm golden glow. Momentarily, an intervening highway bridge blocks it from view, then it reappears, larger now. It starts working up the long grade past the station. Its mighty engines are shouting, belching pungent black smoke, sparks, and flames from their quivering stacks. Flanges screaming, drawbars groaning, 0419-469-1602-529, four engines working with one will, one heart, one mind, flashes past with horns blaring. One hundred and ten cars rumble by, growling, grumbling, protesting; the ground shudders as they pass. Their speed creates a suction which carries leaves, papers, twigs, and dirt along with it. At the tail end, caboose C-507 carries the markers, kerosene lanterns in the Atomic Age, flickering

madly, recalling the days of Casey Jones and the Chatsworth Wreck. A trainman waves a friendly greeting from the hack's platform, and Extra 0149 West is gone.

On the station platform the sound is still reverberating in my ears. I am dazed and strangely moved. I cannot express what I feel, nor can any railfan. It is something too deep, too personal, too precious for mere words. It is this indescribable something that makes me go out at 4 a.m. to see the Owl and Number 180 come through, that makes me brave fog, freezing rain, and below-zero temperatures to see the last steam run in Boston, to ride the Elevated to Forest Hills, to stand in the path of an oncoming express until I have taken a photograph, then leap to safety at the last possible moment. I don't know what it is, but I do know that I am its slave and it is my master.

— Merle Pierce

Nobody Much

I was there when they drop't the bomb but nobody much give a damn anyway. I was jus' the nigger that run errands for Zeke Conway an' it weren't unusual that nobody pay'd any 'tention t'me.

Four times that mornin' Zeke'd sent me over t'Mort Taylor's store for one thing or t'other an' I was right put out 'cause it weren't no weather for traipsin' 'roun' town like that, even if I was a nigger an' all. We hadn't had no rain in weeks an' the ol' sun was fo' sure a-beatin' down right steady.

So when I come back that las' time with the pack o' cigars Zeke'd sent me fo', I was 'bout of a min' t'say somethin' to 'im 'bout the way 'e kep' sendin' me out in the sun like that, what with all the cleanin' up there was t'be done inside an' all. But I thought betta of it 'cause o' the way Maybelle an' me'd been throw'd outa that other town afta the fuss wi' my las' boss. I been lucky t'get this job an' I couldn't bear t'think what it'd be like t'have t'go home an' tell Maybelle it was time t'move on agin.

I was out a-back when it happen'd. Sure did come as a surprise. Oh, Maybelle and me'd talk'd 'bout it some, but din't rightly seem there was much we could do, so we jus' let the whole thing slide an' put our minds t'gettin' by as bes' we could. I was makin' thirty dollars a week an' i' din't seem like much could go wrong long as I kep' my mouth shut.

Zeke'd jus' holler'd at me fo' takin' so much time emptyin' the swill when the fus' planes come over. I din't know too much 'bout planes but i' sure did seem like these was flyin' awful low 'cause even the fancy glass windows in Taylor's store shook like t'break. I never see planes fly that low afore.

I jus' yell, "Comin', Mistuh Conway," an' finish swishin' the las' o' the potato peelin's outa the bottom o' the barrel. Tha's when the flash come an' when I turn aroun' I see the top o' Taylor's store jus' sorta crumblin' down into th' inside an' those fancy glass windows all stove in. I din' know fo' sure what was happenin' but I knew it weren't good so I jus' duck down behin' the garbage cans as fas' I could. There weren't no time t'get home t'Maybelle.

Nex' thing I know, I hear Mistuh Conway a-hollerin' so I peek out aroun' one o' the barrels an' there he is scramblin' 'roun' tryin' t'gather up the bills that'd got knocked out o' the cash drawer when it got busted. I could see 'im right clear 'cause the whole side o' the shop'd got tore out. It weren't no use tryin' t'gather up those bills I thought. I sure felt sorry for poor Mistuh Conway.

It was pretty hot I remember and people was a-cryin' all over the place but I din't dare t'move. I remember thinkin' 'bout Maybelle an' the kids an' that mebbe they'd find a way t'hold out, but it din't seem like there was much

purpose t'that, bein' that there wasn't goin' t'be much left t'hold out fo'. I felt real sorry fo' Mistuh Conway an' how he los' all that money but there din't seem t'be much I could do 'bout it then.

T'tell the truth, tha's 'bout all I remember. Yes, Suh, tha's the whole story an' it's the hones' truth as bes' I remember, Lawd. I don' rightly know what you goin' t'do wi' me. Like I tell ya, I was there when they drop the bomb, but wha' could I a-done?

— Clarke Lowery

Cawdor House

Henry Cawdor was old and crotchety and he lived in the weatherbeaten monstrosity of a house that overlooked the sea from Donovan's cliff. The house was like Henry: it was old and creased. Long exposure to salt water and the gale force of the Nor'easters that lashed into the mainland from the Atlantic had stripped the paint from the rotting boards and left gaping cracks in the superstructure through which the wind whistled. Henry refused to desert the house.

For thirty years, since the day Henry had returned from sea to find his wife two months dead, he had clung to the house. He remembered the day, sea-bag in hand, that he had walked up the path to the house after six months at sea. The branches on either hand were still wet from the recent rain and the path was strewn with leaves the wind had torn from the trees. He remembered calling Mary's name as he entered the house and he remembered searching room by room when she did not answer. Only slowly did realization settle over him, slowly, as the fog often creeps in from the sea without anyone's being aware until it has enveloped the land in eerie sick-sweetness. Henry went outside, saw the loose shutter, the wet rocks, and knew. He stood for a long time looking down at the sea and the rocks below. Then he turned back to the house, walked slowly inside, and shut the door on the world.

In the early years after Mary's death, Henry's friends from town had come out to Donovan's cliff and tried to convince him to sell the house and move to town, but Henry refused and, as the years wore on, fewer and fewer people ventured out to Donovan's cliff. Now, when he went to town for supplies, Henry saw few faces he recognized. The town had grown from a fishing village to a thriving industrial centre. Henry only stayed long enough to get what he needed and then returned to the house.

Practically none of the new people who came to Whale's Head knew Henry but all of them knew about him. A legend had grown up around the old man. The children from town used to sneak out to Donovan's cliff and try to catch a glimpse of Henry. They would crawl through the underbrush that had grown up unattended around Cawdor House and lie for hours like stealthy soldiers stalking an elusive enemy in order to spy the man. If and when they did see him or even thought they did, they would always slither away immediately until they got out of hearing distance. Then they ran back to town as fast as they could. Unimaginable horrors were alleged to await anyone who was caught by Henry Cawdor.

The women of Whale's Head paused from their shopping in the new supermarkets and whispered speculatively in furtive little groups about just what Henry Cawdor did out there all alone at Donovan's cliff and the old man's name could be heard muttered under the breath of the men from Lawton's Cannery when they were deep in their cups at the Dolphin Inn.

It was late in August when the first hurricane of the season hit Whale's Head. The wind started picking up early in the morning and by noon had

grown to a full gale. Rain came down in sheets all day and the Cannery closed early so the men could get home before dark. By nine o'clock that evening a goodly number of them had gathered at the Dolphin Inn to drink beer and wait out the storm. The wind shook the building and rattled the glasses on the bar. Sometime later it was decided that a fine evening's entertainment would be to get together a party and slip out to Donovan's cliff to see how Henry Cawdor was weathering the storm.

The rain came down heavily as the small group of men made their way through the thick underbrush and the wind picked up whole walls of water and flung them at gale force. The droplets of water pelted the men like so many little pieces of buckshot. They struggled for breath in the face of the wind and when breath did come it was in short, retching gasps laced with salt water. They stumbled and the wet branches along the way raised whelts on their faces. Salt water stung in the cuts. Finally they reached the small pinnacle of land that looked across a chasm to where Cawdor House perched on the brink of the cliff.

Then they saw Henry. He was standing on the spray-slicked rocks that led from the old house to the cliff's edge. He foundered drunkenly before the wind but fought his way back to the precipice where he stood shaking his fists at the raging torrent below and screaming hoarse, wind-stolen cries into the teeth of the storm. The men looked on entranced.

The house was a huge, formless specter looming out of the darkness behind Henry and, as the men watched, it seemed to crumble soundlessly before their eyes like a mountain dissolved in a muted explosion. The roar of the wind made a pantomine of the spectacle as old timbers wrenched themselves free and the fractured remnants of Cawdor House avalanched down upon the old man. As if in a dream, the men saw the debris swept over the cliff and down, down into the sea.

The next day three of the men from Lawton's Cannery made their way back to Donovan's cliff. Their feet made squishy sounds in the soggy leaves underfoot and a gentle sea-breeze carried faint odors of sea-weed and salt. Here and there in a cup in the rock a miniature pool of water glinted brightly in the warm sun. The men walked to the edge of the cliff and stood looking down at the sea. The water sparkled in the late afternoon sun and here and there a piece of old wood bobbed lightly in the gentle swells that licked around the base of Donovan's cliff.

— Clarke Lowery

ZNa4NT KPACNBbIN

It is impossible even to attempt a comparison of intelligent Homo Sapiens, the highest form of earth life, to Apis, a low form of Arthropoda. I will not endeavor to compare them physically, so please don't be misled. I shall endeavor to contrast their essences of life, their philosophies of communistic government. The society of the USSR and the society of the Honeybee are run along similar planes. Analysis of their "rare (?) essences" of government will unearth their chief differences.

The deprived poor to the Soviet society, the proletariat, is ruled by an unnecessary, aristocratically-privileged few. This is more of an oligarchy-dictatorship of government than a worker's paradise. What could be farther removed from Marx's ideas of few (the Queen Mother who is sole egg layer; and the drones, swashbuckling parasites who sponge off the working class) ruled by the proletariat? There is no concession in Honeybee society to a grubbing, capitalistic bourgeoisie as is made in Soviet society. This is the

closest thing to Marx's and Engel's "essence of pure communism."

A Honeybee worker works willingly, she needs no boss over her. Except for the Queen, no one is ever forced to work. All workers work without orders from a commissar or any other slave driver. For her labor, a Honeybee worker can take all the food she wants; she receives a place in a warm, comfortable dwelling and the companionship of her hivemates. Most of the workers in Soviet industry must be constantly prodded and forced to work; the poor Soviet workers get little sustenance in return for their toil. There is tremendous slacking-off, theft and sabotage. Honeybees have no slackers, thieves, saboteurs or "stool pigeon" informers in their society.

The Soviet proletariat must pay tribute in the form of food and currency to the state. This is brutally coerced from them. A Honeybee gives freely of all the fruits (honey, wax, propolis) of her labors to the coffers of the hive. She will even willingly lay down her life for the good of the hive. She needs no "brainwashing" to perform this supreme sacrifice.

Soviet hierarchy discreetly disposes of or "rubs out" the aged, infirm or "revolting intellectuals." They ship them to the Siberian Salt Mines, to the West, or quietly massacre them as Khrushchev did in the Ukraine. Honeybees eject or outrightly sting (kill) the aged and infirm. In autumn, they kill thousands of helpless drones (males), not to curb a population explosion, but to save on precious food. The Honeybees aren't hypocrites, their murder is committed without malice or hatred.

Both societies are atheistic. The Soviet philosophy has a rather poor excuse (if one can call it an excuse) for it: the state is supreme. A proverb-loving commissar once said, "Religion is like a nail; the harder you hit it, the farther it goes in." The Honeybee philosophy has sound reason for being atheistic; they have no organized thought to even conceive of a god.

The Honeybee's life is guided by instinct. She has little or no choice but to follow and conform to her inherited knowledge. Soviet society is not guided by an instinct but is guided by "free" men's minds. If God gave man instincts such as that of the Honeybee's instead of his own volition and self-determination, man would soon cease to be man. Honeybees never lust, greed or want power. This is why their pure form of communism has crystallized its essences into a society which has worked for millions of years — and the impure Soviet essence hasn't worked for even fifty years! It makes one think, "Why do we call all species other than Homo Sapiens 'dumb' animals? Just who is a 'dumb animal?' Who was, is and will be the 'sap' in eons past, present and future?"

Although the Honeybee's work is serious they are a carefree, unworried and untaxed group. The Soviet people lead dull, dead, drab lives. If the essence of these two systems could be personified, what would be the concensus of opinion? In the Russian language, the word "KPACNBbIN" means red. The word is synonomous for the adjective "beautiful." To the rather queerly-formed eye of the honeybee, the color red appears black. What is black to the human eye appears to the eye of the Honeybee to be KPACNBbIN. The two essences surely would say of each other, "Her world is like a KAPACNBbIN, KPACNBbIN rose."

— Wayne Schenck

Revolution - Within

Place: An island in the Caribbean. Four men who have been in a revolutionary movement are now in imprisonment and soon will be executed.

Time: Two and one-half hours before the execution.

Characters:

University student
Old man
Peasant
American
The four prisoners
1st soldier — a medical student
2nd soldier — a fat middle-aged businessman
3rd soldier — a hard-core communist
(members of the government militia)

(The curtain slowly rises, showing a dark, cave-like prison cell. The only light is a beam of moonlight entering the barred window. The prisoners are not completely visible to the audience but resemble moving shadows.)

SCENE ONE

University student: What time is it?
American: Nine-thirty.
University student: Damn, I hate this waiting!
Old man: You will not wish this when you are placed in front of the wall.
University student: I will wish nothing when I meet the wall.
Peasant: Listen to such a proud one. (pointing at the student) You will pray to God for mercy.
University student (laughing sarcastically): You peasants make me sick with your prayers and your talk of God. (The student shouts.) You pray, you pray, and what happens?
Peasant: I b . . . (the student interrupts him)
University student: I'll tell you. Your land is taken from you by the soldiers, and your God does nothing; your children are starving, and God does nothing. You have a do-nothing Go . . .
Peasant (shouting): Stop! I do not want to hear such talk. You have no faith.
University student: How can you have faith in a God who lets your children die of hunger while the rich government officials become richer from your misery?
Peasant: The officials will someday answer to God.
University student (laughs): After they meet a rebel's bullet, the only answering they will do will be to the worms.
American: Who's got a cigarette?
University student: American, what do you think of praying and God?
American: Man, all I want is a cigarette, not an argument.
University student: American, will you ask for a priest before they take you to be executed?
American: Yes. (Turns and walks toward the far end of the cell.)
Peasant: Ah, see the American has faith too.
University student (waving an imaginative gun around the cell): My faith is a machine gun, it has the ability to solve problems much faster than a lot of religious mumbo jumbo.
Old man: You do not establish a good government with a machine gun.
University student (smiling): Maybe not, but you do not destroy dictators with prayers.
Old man: Violence must be met with violence, but after victory the guns should cease, and the good in man's mind must be heard.
University student: Old man, you sound like a philosopher, not a revolutionist.

Old man: I am neither, just an old man who grows weary at the thought of war.
Peasant: All this talk has made me hungry.
University student: Just like a typical peasant. Food, food — this is all you people think of.
Peasant: It is a shame we are to be executed on an empty stomach.

SCENE TWO

(Curtain rises slowly. The university student lights the old man's cigarette and then asks him why he became a revolutionist.)
Old man (shaking his head): It seems so far back. I was a young impatient boy like yourself who feared no one, not even God. Yes, I must have been very young. I wanted to be a writer, but instead I was branded a traitor by the government.
University student: Ah, did you kill an official?
Old man: No, I killed no one. I wrote against the standards of the government.
American: How long were you in prison?
Old man: Five years. Then I escaped into the hills and joined the rebels.
University student: But that was years ago, and since then there have been many revolutions.
Old man: Yes, that is true, and in each revolution I have fought.
Peasant: But how can this be? It is very confusing.
Old man: With each dictator there has been a young man to lead a rebellion. Then the victory and the promises, soon the youthful rebel leader with the beautiful ideals becomes a shadow of the man he defeated. A new movement, and another young rebel ready to lead the cause.
American: And you, old man, you continue to fight another revolution and listen to the promises.
Old man: Yes, another revolution.
American: Why, old man, why?
Old man: I live for the promises.
University student: This time it will be different. The new order will bring equality to everyone. The new order will represent the people.
Peasant: And the peasants, what about us?
University student: Do not worry, everyone shall have equal rights. The new order will not tolerate the rich but will have one social class with an individual's worth according to his ability.
Peasant: New orders, rights, social class — of these things I know nothing. All I want is to have my land back and food for my family.
University student: You shall have these things because the new order's economic system is based on the person's needs.
American: This sounds like the same bull the bearded one told the people during the last revolution.
University student: It is not the same. He was a traitor to his people.
American: It still sounds like the same echo that has been heard before.
University student (shouting and waving his arms): No, no, this is the new order.
Old man: The new order should be based on private enterprise.
University student (in rage): You mean we should be controlled by Wall Street barbarians?
Old man: I mean that our people should have the liberty to select the way they want to earn a living.
American: I agree with the old man.

University student (pointing at the American): Do you fight for our cause, or maybe you are fighting for American Fruit Company?
American: Go to hell!
Old man: American, do not be mad with him. He is young and with this comes the spirit and impatience of youth.
Peasant: I would give up all these causes for a juicy chicken to eat.

SCENE THREE

(The curtain is raised. Three uniformed government officials are barking instructions to several militia men on how the execution should be carried out. Unlike the previous scenes, the stage is no longer cave-like but is now a well-lighted office.)
1st soldier: Why did they select me for this?
2nd soldier (shaking his head): Who knows? Who knows?
1st soldier: This is ironic: I want to be a doctor so that I can save life, but now I destroy it.
2nd soldier: Maybe you will have the blank.
1st soldier: It won't matter, I will still be involved with killing.
2nd soldier: They deserve to die. They are rebels.
1st soldier: They had no trial. We do not know whether they are guilty.
2nd soldier (looking around nervously): Don't talk about it. I have a business and a family to think of. You will get us in trouble.
1st soldier (loudly): I do not want to be an executioner.
2nd soldier (almost pleading): Sh, sh, here comes the ugly one.
3rd soldier: Comrades, you are not smiling and this being such an enjoyable night. Soon we will have the opportunity to do a great service for the state.
2nd soldier (nervously): Yes, a great service.
3rd soldier (laughing): What is wrong with the young doctor? Maybe he is afraid of seeing a little blood.
2nd soldier: He is just tired.
1st soldier: I am tired of all the killing!
3rd soldier: What do you mean?
1st soldier: These men had no trial. The bearded one promised that after the revolution there would be justice for all.
3rd soldier: This is dangerous talk.
2nd soldier: Do not listen to him, he is young, and the thought of the execution has made him nervous.
3rd soldier (looking at the youth): Maybe so, maybe so. Come, let us prepare, it is almost time.
1st soldier: Yes, the time is coming.

SCENE FOUR

(The curtain rises. The stage is once again dark and cave-like.)
Peasant: What time is it?
American: We have twenty minutes to go.
Peasant: Why do they shoot us at such an ungodly hour?
American: What's the difference? Hell, dawn would be just as bad.
University student: The bearded one is very dramatic. I have heard his executions are grand affairs with all the guests being served champagne while the bullets rip into the prisoner.
Peasant: Guests?
University student: Sure, all the rich officials with their painted whores.
American: It is a wonder we are not fed to the lions.

University student (laughing): Then we would be like the Christian martyrs in the arena. I bet the peasant would like that.
Peasant: It is not funny.
University student (laughing): Don't worry, my friend, dying doesn't hurt, only the bullets hurt.
American: Man, would I like to be in some bar getting drunk.
Old man: Do you have a family?
American: No.
Old man: How did you become involved with the movement?
American: At first, I was looking for excitement .Then I discovered I wanted a cause to follow.
University student: American, here, have one of my cigarettes.
Peasant: Damn, damn, the guards are coming.
Old man: We will not ask for mercy.
Peasant: I will think of food.
University student: We will spit in their faces.
American: It will soon be over.

SCENE FIVE

(The curtain rises, and there is complete darkness on the stage. Suddenly spotlights focus on four prisoners standing in front of a stone wall. A drum can be heard and then the militia men double-time onto the stage. The firing squad places itself behind the spotlights and awaits the command.)

3rd soldier: Fire!

— John Ball

Play the Animal

Eighty-eight ivory piano keys: the poor goddamn elephant.

— Thomas Conlon