

HELICON

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HELICONIDAE*

CHARLY TOTORO

Editor

CHRISTINE TSETSI

Assistant Editor

DANIEL ORSINI

Faculty Advisor

SANDY MORGAN

Layout Editor

PAULINE GELINAS

Secretary

JANET SELINKA

Secretary

KATHY DEMOIA

SUE SHEA

JOH RICHARDS

KAREN CONLON

JEAN DESJARDINS

KATHY NELSON

PAT DESMARAI

CAROL CARDARELLI

KIRK FEATHER

FRIENDS

We of the staff thank all those who have submitted material to the magazine.

*Helicon is a mountain in Boeotia, Greece; believed by the Ancients to be the home of the Muses, who were guardians of the arts. The people of Helicon were known as Heliconidae.

WE ARE HELICONIDAE

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

First and foremost, I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who made a commitment to *Helicon* and have carried it through. More often than not, especially on this campus, one hears the words, "Sure, I'll help you, I'm with you all the way," and such is the case until the time for work comes around.

Special thanks, along these lines, go to my Assistant Editor, my Secretaries, and my Layout Editor. The work of these people, make the position of editor a gratifying and enjoyable experience.

Also I wish to thank Mr. Daniel Orsini, our faculty advisor, for his guidance throughout the year.

For the first time in my career with the magazine, over the last two years, and from what I can gather, for the first time in over five years, an entire staff has put together *Helicon*, rather than two or three people. For this fact, and this staff, I am thankful.

There are some individuals who question the creditability and necessity of this literary work. One of their main complaints is that it provides for a few individuals a mode of expression and for more students than should be, simply something to carry home one day near the end of the second semester.

Unfortunately, with these individuals, I am forced to concur, for if I had my way it would be the many who contribute and the few who carry something extra home some spring day.

As to the creditability of this magazine, I need only say that the college experience is not whole if one does not find himself, or at least define himself, within our society. Perhaps the best way to find one's self is through self-expression. I submit that there is no better mode of expressing one's self, than through the arts. *Helicon* provides for all a means of expression. The fault is not ours if only a few individuals take advantage of this opportunity. However, even if only one person were to find a means of expression through this magazine, then *Helicon* would be more than necessary.

If you the student body care to give *Helicon* the material, *Helicon* can return to the early precedent of two issues per year.

I am highly optimistic for a greater calibre of material in *Helicon*; the trend toward better quality is, in my opinion, obvious beginning with the issue you now hold in your hands.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Chris Tsetsi, currently my assistant editor, who will join me as co-editor next year.

Chas E. Totoro

Our Own Private Oblivion

The bay window held a picturesque view—
The fire crackling beside.
I stared out across the bowled valley,
To the peak of the mount,
Counterpart to that which holds
Safe and secure, my abode.

Creeping ever slowly I perceived,
The clouds, stalking and stealthily
Grasping the unprotected peak
Unable to muffle its wind-spake
Cries for help.

The sky turned gray with sadness,
At the coming of the first winter storm;
And the dead grass and foliage
Shed their apathetic yellows.
And turned a violent brown of rage.
To think! that they should be shrouded white
By the nature-made counterpart, to fall that night.

I turned my eyes to the village below
And watched as people took to tasks
Half protective, half expectant.
They too, saw the cloudbank perched
Upon the mountain's crest, as a crown on a monarch's head:
But more joy than fear into this they read.
For the 'hustle and bustle' of Christmastide,
In the village shops does now preside,
"And won't it be so nice to have a white Christmas?"
As if such were the exception rather than the rule.

My reverie was disrupted
By the aromatic mist of the coffee pot,
Filtering itself through the house;
And by the approach of my wife.

Many were the years that we spent in this house
And many were the 'first-snows' we had viewed.
It was now a dozen years,
Give or take one or two,
When on a Saturday ride
We happened to decide
To park the car and talk of the future.
The day on which we put together an adolescent dream,
That save future generations,
Has come to pass.
It was on this very spot where I now stand
That we watched our first 'first-snow' together.

All the plans and dreams, now fulfilled,
 Except the children we had willed
 When those seventeen year old 'steadies'
 Sat; at that very moment ready
 To be wed, but knowing better.
 Never have I seen one so capable of love
 For another, and especially for children.
 And to so be deprived.
 Makes nature seem depraved.
 For this was her fondest, deepest wish.
 Of all the dreams; cruelty is that, this we couldn't accomplish.

In the beginning; our consciences were tried.
 For days at a time she cried.

Then we thought all her love
 Would gain a focal point,
 For that miracle which we both
 Prayed for incessantly
 Appeared about to be fulfilled.
 When she told me, my spine was chilled.
 At last we were to have our child;
 Or rather, I should say, apparently.

Andrea Marie was stillborn.

Her spirit was defeated
 Courage quite depleted.
 The reason . . . "God only knows."

We have lived in this house since
 The summer of graduation, whence
 We attended City College
 Upon the royalties of my first manuscript.
 And from then to now we have shared . . .
 The joy and sorrow of our lives.
 And we have stood in the bay window
 On the day of "first-snow".
 Arms about each other, we have watched and shared.

Usually our vigil is silent.
 Words not needed for communication,
 As awestruck we would watch
 The layer of white purity
 Slowly ascending 'our slope,
 Until the white which was purging clean
 The city, the sky and the earth,
 Enshrouds our little domicile

At this point we would draw
 The curtains and turn to the fire.
 And we would sit with our coffee
 And let the snow descend on the outside world.
 While we were warm and comfortable—
 In our own private oblivion.

Charly Totoro

A Way of Life

She entered the coffee shop, took a seat at the counter and nervously looked at the clock on the far wall. 9:45. Briefly, she thought about her family. Carol, aged ten, and Mark, nine, were both home sleeping. Wonderful kids, and yet she wished that she was childless. Her mind wandered to David. Yes, he was a good provider. He gave his family whatever he could afford from his moderate earnings. He was kind to the children and loving to her. But still she was dissatisfied. The burning spark of love that had brought them together eleven years ago was now out cold. Cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing, sewing and other chores had made married life a nightmare.

"If it wasn't for the children I could be unrestricted. No, it's too late to think of that now. They're my children and I owe it to them." But nevertheless, she knew that she had needs and desires which could never be fulfilled at home.

9:55. Four boys entered and sat on the opposite side of the counter from her.

"Not me; I'd never want that one, she's nothing but an old bag."

"Look at that face. Her makeup is an inch thick!"

"She's just your type, Bob."

"No, sir, look at that mop. It looks like she hasn't combed it in ages!"

The waitress brought their orders, and they became engrossed in eating. Their idle talk subsided.

10:00. Three girls entered. They were gay and enthusiastic about dates and formals. They also chattered about upcoming exams. Once in a while one of them would glance at her, frown, then quickly resume the conversation. She sighed, "Oh, to be young, free, and to enjoy life to its fullest capacity." She touched her hair, once gleaming with radiant highlights; her fingers ran through what was now mousey brown straw.

10:06. "Maybe he won't come. Maybe he got tied up somewhere. Oh, please don't let him come!" Her mind wandered on and on. "No, this isn't the right thing to do. I can't go on like this. I owe it to my family. Besides, I know that he, like all the rest, isn't really interested in me as a person. Sooner or later he will start making excuses why he can't see me. I hope he can't make it tonight."

Her thoughts were interrupted by a middle-aged couple who had just come out of the movie across the street. Even though it seemed that they were married for many years, one could see that they loved and respected each other.

10:16. "He should be here any time now. No, I can't stay here. I'll go home to my family where I belong. This isn't the kind of life that I really want. I'm tired of making excuses." She slowly looked around her. What were people thinking about her?

Just then she heard a car pull up outside. She recognized the familiar walk. The door of the coffee shop opened behind her. Someone sat down beside her. She looked up into those warm gentle eyes. She knew no difference between right and wrong. The people around her had faded away from view. His strong hand softly clasped hers.

Blindly, she walked out after him, unaware of the condemning looks cast in her direction.

Elayne Ricci

Insight

Everything is me, and I am everything. I decided, yesterday, that things I am not interested in do not really exist. Since I discovered this truth, I've felt better. After all, I can't be accused of ignoring things I don't want to see; all I have to do is explain that those objects, situations, or even people, are nonexistent. It's quite a simple philosophy, when you think about it. Life is so much easier this way.

My only problem is non-existent people. They try to force themselves into my world of limited, but supreme, existence, and, since they are non-entities, they just don't belong. They are hard to get rid of, though. The regular insecticides won't work, but I'll come up with something. Perhaps I'll have another real being help me.

You know, there are no problems in my reformed society! Aha! Because of my theory of "limited sight" they do not exist. (Other people have used this part of my theory before. They usually gain high status in governmental positions. Maybe I will someday, too. After all, I am very tolerant of things I wish to see. And I don't have to be tolerant of things that don't exist.)

I do have another problem — my eyes. They're just not following directions. I told them that they could stop seeing cases of poverty, starvation, and slaughter, but they sometimes do, anyhow. But, I guess the matter has been partially solved. These things, according to my new philosophy, are only false images — delusions — and don't exist in reality. Decidedly.

But, in turn, my eyes have refused to see the light! Very uncooperative. And stupid. I'll come up with something to remedy the situation. If the other real beings could see, they'd find a way to help me heal myself. But they're going blind, and none are qualified to operate.

Christine Tsseti

Un Portrait de Claire

the lady's in waiting —
biding her springtimes,
stumbling into a March gale;
brown eyes gazing from behind percale
to the pale pale of the moon.
crystal jewels nestle in her molasses hair
— an April rain rests there.
soon a May sun
twirls the strands into honeyed braids.
green permeates the voice
... yellow, the laugh.
a careful gaze will disclose
the bells in her eyes.

the lady's in waiting —
carrying with her the scent
of lemon peel and mint leaves
through the summer days ...
gazing coolly into the wind-chimed nights.
is she a disguise for June evenings —
with buttercups' croset her breasts
and elm branches in her palms
and tea roses tangled in her lap
and clover round her ankles?
shining and lithe, the needle waltzes deftly
with the ivory fingers
and an old owl appears.
soft, summer moons ride her shoulders into fall.

the lady's in waiting —
holding the last limp field flower;
the moss round her lips making her
September smiles earthy and brown.
gazing from her tower to the amber forest
where autumn is hating the birch
moorish gusts tumble her thoughts and curls —
their patens like the descent of a brittle leaf
she surrenders her Bowery thighs to the
October fog.
her fingers press 'gainst the hesitant heart of an oak —
a late November thunderstorm washes her neck and wrists.

the lady's in waiting —
waiting out her winter.
gazing from a mantle of ginger-nuts and beaver.
she takes a snowy walk with satin footfalls
... holly dangling over a cold ear.
chestnut brown, her eyes search out a snow bird
and his frosty flight holds her crimson attention.
a slow blink flicks a snowflake from her eyelash ...
a slow smile sheds December's fire and ice from her cheeks.
candy canes dissolve, now, where once lemon drops deliciously melted.
she sits with her curtains parted to your gaze ...
her galaxy eyes brimming over with the sea ...
her enchanted forest mouth wooded with the pine ...

... Lady Everything.

Kathy Nelson

F. M. DIRGE

You weather like the crying sand
Or a viper newly shedding,
Winter holds us with withered hand,
Trapped in white and frosty bedding.

Now only
the grass
can heal.

R. St. P.

Perhaps,
When fields have turned to green,
I will love you.
But not until then.

Chris Tsetsi

To write on the air
The pressure must be light.
The rainbow ink in the wind-propelled quill
Requires a delicate skill.

Carol McCullough

DEATH

It comes quickly
and turns living bodies
into dust
and living souls
into memories
for friends left behind

Joh Richards

the show

The stage is empty now
the curtains closed
the players raised
It's over
the actors home again
to their differences
Different somehow

An audience applause
echoes in the deepest wells
of my life
They see, feel, enjoy
for a moment it holds them
and then home again
But the players never go home again
"Home is where the heart is"
their hearts are where each other
loses his oneness and becomes
the magic, the glow, the love

Paradox, perhaps
Becoming a person by losing identity
The actors are the real people
And all that is left are the tears

It's over — all over

Brian Mulvey

Through the sticky spider webs of clever conversation
 Beyond the witty retorts
 To the vast uncharted land behind your eyes
 I have journeyed briefly.
 Yet I know my way there—
 Once in a dream I had been there before
 Shadowy shapes dwell there, potentially dangerous
 They did not threaten me, for there was the way to my home.

Scarcely had I entered this magic land
 When a chasm opened.
 I narrowly missed tumbling in—a tenuous thread of—what shall I say?—
 Belief?
 Kept me from disappearing.

Now, searching for the bridge to cross the abyss,
 Do I seek it in vain? Does it exist for me?
 Or is it hidden, lying in invisible repose, awaiting the one for whom
 it will appear—leading to the journey's end.
 The end of a journey which I ache to complete.

But wait, not to complete, not ever to complete
 For ten thousand thousand selves lie behind your concealing eyes—
 selves I have not yet met.
 Will I meet them?

Carol Mc Cullough

Time
 Comes and goes
 Comes and goes . . .
 Always.
 Until all that is left
 Are the worn-out gears
 Of a clock
 And broken hands
 That point to infinity.

Joh Richards

Infinity
 Stretches on
 touching all
 keeping none
 promising
 nothing
 Yet
 Expectations
 Rise
 and
 Fall.

Muriel Wild

fourteen

Cathy Estrella

Kirk Feather

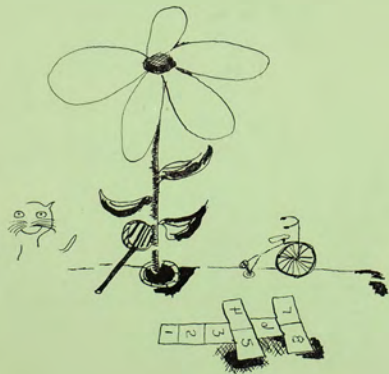
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Kathy Nelson

Carol McCullough

YOUTH

See
daisy petals
sunny, white, sacred
Wild
growing in loveliness
one with feeling
beautiful in
simplicity
Perfect.



Text and Sketch by Kathy De Moia

Keats as the Frustrated Escapist

John Keats, one of the major poets in English literature, experimented with many literary forms during his short writing career. His first attempts at writing eventually resulted in the publication of his early "sweet" but sensuous poemss. Later he wrote the epic poems *Endymion* and *Hyperion* and narrative poems such as "The Eve of St. Agnes" and "Lamia." Another distinctive literary form which Keats explored was the ode.

The ode, which often serves as a descriptive and philosophizing vehicle, is written in the relatively free form of lyric poetry. Keats' odes are generally of this descriptive and philosophical type. Also, the poet takes full advantage of this looser and freer form in order to expound upon his subject clearly, and, more importantly, naturally. It is in Keats' odes that one can most readily see traces of his escapist philosophy. Keats sees clearly the misery, the pain, the sorrow in life; he yearns to escape to a world of beauty, of perfection. His desire to flee from the mundane is reflected in his odes. Keats believes that one can escape the tragedy in life through, for example, wine, song, and poetry. He also frequently implies that one can alleviate suffering, and thereby escape reality, through the observance of beauty. Keats grasps at this ideal kind of rescue from the world, but he does not, in the end, deceive himself into believing that this "rescue" will always be possible. He does, in fact, realize that the escape can only be temporary. Though the exploration of the fantasy world is of great importance to the poet, he always recognizes the need to face reality after his fantasizing. Consequently, I believe that Keats can rightly be called a frustrated escapist.

The poet's attempts to flee from the realities of life and his final decision to accept them are indeed obvious in his odes. For instance, in the first stanza of "Ode to a Nightingale," Keats catches sight of the beautiful nightingale which may be said to represent the ideal world. In the second stanza, he tells of his longing for a magical "draught of vintage" so that he

might drink, and leave the world unseen,
and with thee fade away into the forest
dim . . .

and thereby

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget . . .

The weariness, the fever, and the fret . . .

Keats yearns, then, to forget the sicknesses of men who "hear each other groan" and the tragedy of a youth's death. Then, in the third stanza, he abandons the idea of drinking and decides to turn to poetry as a means of escape from the real world. He states:

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy

He follows the nightingale to a forest of great beauty and listens, enraptured, to her song. Keats changes his "escape mechanism" again, in stanza six; this time he realizes that death can easily take him away from a world of sorrow to the nightingale's world of beauty. He longs for death more than ever, now, in this moment of ecstasy:

Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
to cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul
abroad

In such an ecstasy!

But, as always, Keats awakens from his reverie. The word "forlorn" reminds him of reality; he says:

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!

The poet thereby completes his "flight and return" cycle from reality, to fantasy, to reality again. The nightingale, the symbol of beauty, or the symbol of the ideal world, loses its potency as the decoy which leads the poet away from the real world. The bird fades, leaving the poet alone and somewhat confused:

... thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream ...
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

In "Ode to Psyche" the poet creates a mental paradise which serves to divert his thoughts and attention away from reality to fantasy. He describes this paradise in this way:

Far, far around shall those dark-clustered trees
Fledge the wild-ridged mountains steep by steep,
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lull'd to sleep ...

Keats, then, again escapes from reality through the appreciation of imagined beauty. However, the poet later realizes that this mental paradise, set up in "some untrodden region" of his mind, does have its own faults, because there are limitations to man's imagination, creativeness, and inventiveness. We see Keats again, here, as a frustrated escapist.

In "Ode on a Grecian Urn" Keats compares and contrasts the unending beauty captured in a work of art, the urn, and the brief glimpses of beauty and happiness found in human life. He describes the figures on the urn as:

For ever panting and forever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high sorrowful and cloy'd,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Keats realizes that the beauty of the urn, because it is immortal, cannot be compared, in all fairness, to the ephemeral types of beauty which we find in our daily lives. However, the poet does bring to the reader's attention the fact that the appreciation of beauty can result in the alleviation of human suffering. In the last lines of the ode, Keats offers a philosophy in which all men may find comfort and solace; he says:

When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
'Beauty is truth, truth, beauty,'—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

In conclusion, Keats' odes are, in general, similar in theme. In "Ode to a Nightingale," "Ode to Psyche," and "Ode on a Grecian Urn," the escapist theme is quite obvious, and various examples can be pointed out in each of these works to support this idea. Keats does indeed believe that one can escape the "pain of living" temporarily; however, the poet also always acknowledges the inevitability of an eventual return to the real world. Therefore, one may call Keats a frustrated escapist.

Christine Tsutsi

... and it never seems to fail:
the day always comes

when

poets become

english teachers

and

ballet dancers become

belly dancers

while

the sportscar enthusiast

still argues

10% more chrome!

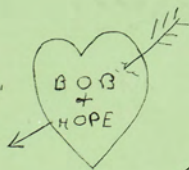
Norman Ranone L.B.

Graffiti is the opiate of the masses

physics is alive
and living in the basement
of Alger Hall.

STRANGE!

Beware of
the
"STRAIGHT
PEOPLE"



Add your
own...

20

$E = mc^2$

Suck of woe!!

Rhythm method:
Vatican Roulette.

Do your
thing!

Jacques Cousteau
goes down

XXI

BB
wears
supp-hose.

you dummy!
st

x-rated pictures
are for kids

Die a little
Boycott AIR!

Ban the world

Note: We thank anyone who may have unknowingly submitted

these gems by way of the campus walls and desk tops!

solitary afternoon

eyes meeting
hands touching
sudden hope brings despair as it is said
thinking alike in every respect

carefree, alive, young and
happy yes, so very very happy

the crowd is no longer with us, yet i hear the laughter
as it surrounds
probably my own yet
its too good to believe.

water rushing under my feet _____ ice
numbed
by
happiness

i feel no pain only pleasure for he is everything,
all.

all that i've ever dreamed of.
he says he will be mine forever; he did say so and oh
how i am believing him
sudden hope only brings despair as it is said

sitting alone realizing that i no longer need anyone, he is me,
i am him. we are one. i am happy — i will be forever.

eyes meeting
seen only through my tears
yes i remember it quite
well.

silly tears shed over what?
rocks?
sand?
sea?

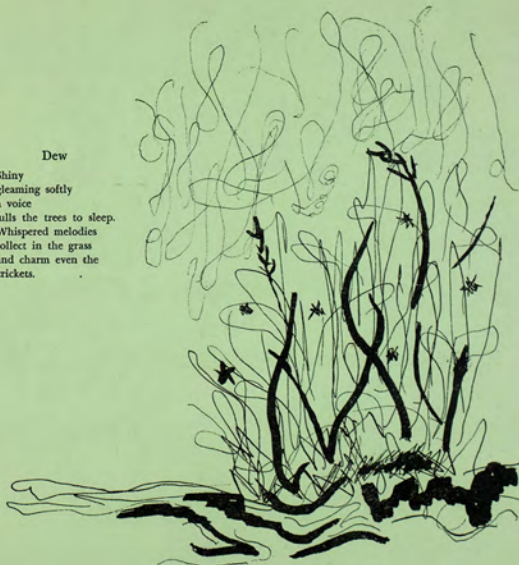
no, for him
no me.
we were one

one, the number before i met him
while i was with him
and now
what is said? about despair?
sudden happiness, non. a farce.
a fool never falls in love in one day
that's solitary
solitary . . . the laughter
the beach
my tears

Debbie Soares

Dew

Shiny
gleaming softly
a voice
lulls the trees to sleep.
Whispered melodies
collect in the grass
and charm even the
crickets.



Text and Sketch by Kathy De Moia

Tale Of Love

Cool fingertips, brushed by the breeze
Red, tingly cheeks in the snow.
Laughing words meant to tease,
Oh, please, please don't go!

Only a soft yellow moon,
And mysterious trees so low.
The time came much too soon.
Oh, please, please, don't go.

Your face, so very warm.
And mine so sad and low.
I cry, before the storm,
Oh, please, please, don't go.

The owls sit and talk,
The night just whispers on,
It was here we used to walk.
And now you are gone.

Jeri

false summer

walking so close
feet touching the ground, together but separately

eyes gazing, trying so hard to look lovingly
hearts beating
hands held fast
they stare, those eyes, playing so abusively with each other.

hollow sounds of laughter
solitary beaches
lifeless pleasures

water, water, water

not from my eyes

we loved each other
we trusted, oh how we trusted

help me, i'll help you
love, yes we did — do — did

unhurt, unafraid
one single step
one hand
one lonely heart! mine.

Debbie Soares

Hand in hand we walked along the shore
Warmed, not by the rays of a burning sun,
But by a feeling of belonging.

And I would look into your eyes and smile
And you would laugh at my smile,
And I would laugh with contentment.

Our footprints in the sand lay side by side,
For our strides matched,
As did we.

And, now I walk along the same beach under the same sky,
And I smile at the memory —
But cry at the sight of a single pair of footprints
In the vast expanse of sand.

Chris Tsutsi



Photo by Joh Richards

I was alone, once,
Drenched by the rains of solitude,
Immersed in the waters of alienation.
Unapproachable
Unreachable
Distant.

You came with the sun,
And the rains ceased,
And the waters receded.
Our lives touched and intertwined,
And our minds met and exchanged thoughts.

I am alone, again.
The rains now fall,
And the waters swell.
You have gone with the sun.
But I do not despair,
For you have left the moon behind —

Chris Tsetsi

A Lover Lost

She used to be here, but she comes no more.
When I pass this place, my mind
Recalls times I've been here before.
Why do I come back?
Is it her I hope to find?

No place can, with this glen, compare.
Its beauty is second only to hers.
I hear her call, but she is nowhere.
Why do I come back?
Am I plagued by a lover's curse?

When I near this dell my heart begins to race.
Oh Heart, why do you pound so?
You know that you shall never again feel her embrace.
Why do I come back?
Do I hope to hear her soft, "Hello"?

From this spot our love shan't adjourn;
But still for her I crave,
Pleading, begging, crying, for her return.
Why do I come back?
I come to pray beside her grave.

Charly Totoro

Realization

He was driving the large car down Park St. and she was sitting on the far side of the seat, near the door, talking at him. I say at because he drove silently on, seeming to ignore her tirade.

Suddenly he stiffened as she said, "... yes, yes you have given me everything a woman could possibly want, materially speaking. But it's just not enough. You don't talk to me, you don't hold my hand anymore ... we don't even sit close together, and ..." She fell silent as he interrupted her and said, "I've always been here, I've never moved."

And she turned to the window and cried.

Karen Conlon

A Thought

Isn't it odd ...
How quickly a dull reality
Becomes a cherished memory?

Chris Tsetsi

to joan

a little flower
 sitting cross-legged
head lowered
 prettily sits in the morning mist
 product of the long night's depression

april showers
 bring may flowers
may may shower showers
 too long its rains may
 drown sad little flowers

growing up, little flower,
 take care from the elements
and their power
 may may rain
 crushing you below

a little flower
 sitting cross-legged
head not as lowered
 gently lifts the morning mist
 with the inner glow of her love

Brian Mulvey

Moratorium

Huddled alone,
In a corner unlit,
A cryer reads the page,
 Congressional report
Busy with film,
And two thousand watts,
A worker lights the shade.
 Pawtucket Times
Weary with war,
In paddies and hills,
A killer feels unthought.
 Dang Nang
Angry with all,
But most with himself,
A leader speaks distraught.

"I WON'T BE MOVED,
THE WAR GOES ON
DON'T SHAKE THE BOAT,
DEMOCRACY'S GONE!"

R. St. P.

extinct —

too soon the laughter dies
the eyes close
the heart that was once mine stops
beating
the body so cold
oh! so cold!

extinct —

i see her once again
garden
moonlight
lips
caress
mine all mine
how?

extinct —

we trusted each other
love — trust
trust — love
until the end
oh what a disaster
accident???

extinct — red,

oh, i love the color red
why, yes of course i believe you
you're forgiven

extinct —

it wasn't really me you know
it was him
KILL oh KILL
to
extinct!!

Debbie Soares

I almost —
held
a bubble,
Shimmery

Shattery
fragile.

Achingly delicate.

A snowflake
The wind
A ripple
A reflection
A sunbeam
A magic place
A secret
A heart
A soul
A dream
A bubble —
Proximity means certain death.

To dare to try to grasp it
Means it will surely break
Leaving only a memory
And barely enough moisture for a tear.

Carol McCullough

Looking Glass Lake

Come here.
Take a look.
Tell me.
Do you see a man,
calm, gentle and placid,
full of integrity, order
and control?
Do you see him
or do you see
the troubled ripples of his doubts
or hear the swoosh
of the ebb and flow of fear?
Is the lake's water muddy and gray
or is it clear and bright?
Come here.
Take a look.
Before the morning mist
Swirls upward and takes it all away

Karen Conlon

Follow—
Because you refuse to lead.
Succeed—
Though you lack ability.
Bargain—
Because alone you're helpless.
Triumph—
Though you deserve to fail.
Live—
Though you despise life.
Join the exploiters of civilization.
And, finally, die—
Knowing you were one of the parasites.

Chris Tsetsi

In The Last Strange Hour

In the last strang hour of the night
I reach out for you.
You are warm under my touch . . .
I smile and sleep,
for you are near, my love.

Karen Conlon

Waiting

The rain beats a song on the roof,
as I sit near the window
waiting . . .
The hands of the clock move on relentlessly,
marking the passing hours.
And still I wait . . .
At last, I hear a car, a door slammed
and footsteps on the stairs.
I lower my eyes to my knitting
and keep my hands busy
until I feel your presence in the room,
then I look up innocently and say,
"My, but you're home early."

Karen Conlon

'cross the blades
of some ole ant's roof
the fireflies dart
aloof
colliding with a moon beam or two
weaving
like needles
sewing the night to the edge of a dotted swiss sky

one cricket called
through the entire blazing show
with the sterling glow-worms keeping time
cordially brushing the willow with their sighs
hanging in the air by paper wings

the navy of the night
jostled by the flight
of the flying ladies
glowing within the green fern's hair
tousling her tendrils here and there
the lovely sisters shine upon the
ivy's climbing face
in their tangling trip
how the beams create a maze
what a light show for the june bugs
what a spotlight for the spider's lonely journey
what a night light for the dew to hurry in by

Kathy Nelson

A single individual stands there —
Suspended in the blackness on the battlefield of life,
Besieged by his fears,
Pierced by his memories,
Bombarded by his doubts.

Nevertheless, he remains nearly unharmed,
Shielded by his armor of self-control and his visions of self-worth.
Suddenly, the blackness envelops him
And destroys his weapon, Ego.
And the spectators at the battle witness the destruction of a man
Who had the audacity to believe in himself.

Chris Tietzi

S. of C.

(For infrequent words not listed below, please consult your Funk and Wagnally Watermark. Makers of toys and other such delights guaranteed to tempt the mind and heart alike.
Uncle Remus' cabin of fun and frolic in the wild
Red Riding Hood and the Big Bad Wolf
Once there was a little girl whose name was Joan
and Joan heard voices crying out in the dark
could lonely night and she was alone in the age
of ungratefulness and she tried to be good but
the blue birds of Paradise flew up her nose and
she cried tears of joy or was it sorrow?

Karen Conlon

Sudden, weighty stillness.
Leadens, pregnant silence.
Intensified sound and smell.
Inflicted awareness
Pierced by a lance.

Relief.

Deflated anxiety, deep breaths are no longer stifled
And merciful tears can fall.

Carol McCullough

All is quiet now.
The ticking of the clock has even faded into oblivion.
I can hear but the droning of a nearby plane
flying to a "far-away".
Every so often, a creaking noise will reach out to me
as the house settles.
It is so like the same restlessness that is
sounding and resounding
throughout the hollow in my heart.

Kathy Nelson

Loneliness

I dreamed of an empty street,
Of a long and lonely way,
With no one there to meet,
And nothing left to say.

A sorrow of great depth,
Which words cannot express,
Depression that has swept,
And shall no longer rest.

In walking this lonely world,
So cruel and hard and cold,
Where screams can go unheard,
Sanity is hard to hold.

The roaring silence fills,
The long, deserted night.
You can't escape with pills,
This dreaded awful plight.

No good is running, screaming.
Crying shouting can't be heard.
People walk on just seeming,
As if nobody has stirred.

Yes, loneliness is bad,
And scary and most frightful
And also seems so sad,
That it goes on past nightfall.

Jeri



Photo by Job Richards

Light, Color and a Prism Sometimes

The youth climbed down the tangled embankment to the more level field that sloped gently down to the brook. Behind him a black asphalt road crossed the brook at right angles and forced it through a culvert. Undismayed, the brook emerged from the culvert rolling and gurgling off downwater. A thin wall of energetic plants jostled together along the edge of the stream like playful boys waiting for a parade. The youth peered at the water momentarily through the plants, watching its erratic fluid movements, and then walked downstream alongside the prankish water-growth. Cicadas hum-buzzed loudly in the afternoon heat as he strolled on; he had been told long ago that they cried for rain or a cool breeze to ease the broad day-heat. It was certainly hot as he went along, the tall field grasses were burned yellow-brown; but for all the bright yellowness of the day he could not locate the sun. Strange. It did not seem to be in this sky; like it went away somewhere and left only its heat and light. Strange again. We tell directions from the sun — where it is in the sky. But he had the brook so it wasn't important. The brook bubbled and tumbled on, living its moment here in one spot and instantly rolling to the next. It cared only instantaneously for one pool or little waterfall and was as quickly gone. Nothing stayed for very long, always leaving before the others behind. The boy went on. Now the water-growth widened and thickened into frequent stands and then wide belts that flanked the little brook and grew more and more dense. The boy pushed through the tangled brush and fern and skunk cabbage; he avoided recurrent patches of briars as best he could, getting a few scratches on his bare arms and hands but coming through it well nonetheless. The air grew greener as he penetrated farther and farther into the thickening growth. The little stream still flowed on in its unity, slowed down considerably but still in one body. Once the boy came into a tiny grassy clearing by the brook; he felt excited in his insides, way down. What a good place!! He undid his shoes and pants and took them off, then his shirt. It was a thrill to stand there all cool and shivery with nothing on. Nobody could see you; nobody could know. He savored the thrilling feeling of it, dancing and running around. Delicious! But the afternoon was wearing on and so he must move too. He put on his clothes and pushed on into the growth. Now a forest was

standing up around the brook and its growth. The air deepened and darkened as the heavy roof of limbs reached over the brook and the boy. The boy trembled a bit and moved on quickly, urgently, like the brook. The gloom of the forest was darkened by the hushed oncoming of twilight. The afternoon died gently in a soft breeze that carried it out past where the brook was headed. Faster and faster the brook ran; steep rockslide hills, grey and hard, rose on either side of the stream. The forest was lifted up by the hills, forming a vault high overhead, encasing a large heavy weight of dark air. Ahead, up on a knoll, the boy saw a great aged oak tree, dead and barren, with gnarled and twisted boughs silhouetted against the last feeble skylight. He had tired quickly as the afternoon wore out and now the climb to the tree looked awfully difficult. He started up, slipping and banging himself as he went. He sought the tree even if it was dead. Upwards, to the tree. At last he crawled over the top onto the barren circle of ground surrounding the tree. He was exhausted and hurt, he panted and shivered, but he crept to the great bulging and rooted base of the oak. He curled up in a hollow formed by a root-arm and closed his eyes, too tired to care where he was; to fear. After a long time of silence there was a movement on the opposite side of the tree. A horrible creature, black wretched face, red eyes that glowed a sinister light, a foul slobbering mouth, all working and writhing in anger and hatred, crawled out of an ancient black hole in the oak. The beast was shorter than a man, but it was hunch-backed and had long twisted awful arms; it was clothed in filthy uncured leather which rotted and stank foully. More of its kind followed it out, perhaps a dozen or more, and they crawled around the boy grinding their hideous black teeth. They clutched him and dragged him towards the black hole, but he didn't wake up.

As the gray sky lightened over the old oak and distinct forms could be made out, a small boy's body could be seen huddled naked against the tree's base. The face was smooth and the eyes stared upwards innocently into the treelimb. The boy stared and stared and stared.

R. D. Watts

Sadness.

It's a quiet thing

Made to order for the individual,

Interrupted by the condolences of a bumbling but well-meaning
friend.

The agony of listening to sympathy

In your sadness,

And of hearing how this has all happened before,

When you know your sadness is unique.

Chris Tseti

