



HELICON

The Literary Magazine
of Rhode Island College

"From Helicon's harmonious spring
A thousand rills their mazy progress take."

Thomas Gray: The Progress
Of Poesy

Providence, R. I.

Fall, 1970

US

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Sketches by BRIAN MULVEY

Editors' Message

The book you now hold is, in our opinion, the most representative Helicon in our thirty year history. Nevertheless, there may be those who question the quality of the works presented in our magazine. It must be noted, however, that we receive a limited number of manuscripts of which only the best find print.

In this, our thirtieth anniversary year, we wish to take the opportunity to invite each and every member of the college community to join our staff or submit material for review by our editorial board, for our forth coming spring '71 issue.

Where there is a void
there can be life
From the gathering of the dust of ideas
there can be formed
A universe of thought.
The void must be filled
Lest a vacuum be created.
The essence is there,
in every human mind.

Chris and Charly
Editors

january 20

trying to protect myself from the gas station american night with
candlelight debussy thoughts of little girls and childhood innocence
the beautiful french woman i loved in 1890 lavender gardens and
marble balconies leaning toward the starlit sky of spring.

the sun; john coltrane cries for alice in the still cosmic night;
i am unable to do anything.
the light creeps around the curtains and it isn't the night in my
dreams—
the night of starlit pinocchio wishes and jiminy cricket soft maxims
that stick in the mind way past childhood, sub-consciously.

fauns in the athenian wood, muted horns call from the forest depths;
dark and deep are the paths which lead into the forest,
with dappled leaves and gingerbread cottages and bubbling streams,
where nymphs of extraordinary beauty lie about in the moss.

january 20

trying to protect myself from the gas station american night.

kirk feather

that happy little child feeding ducks from his
hand/ that 'place for kids'/ potatoe salad for
breakfast/ the anticipation of a visit and the
emptiness after leaving/ lying at the foot of the
Jefferson Memorial, entranced by the lights
shimmering in the reflecting pool/ sitting by the
rushing water/ receiving birthday cards from
second grade kids/ 'Kitte Bones'/ that crazy early
morning visit waking you with a kiss, that wildly
surprised look.

In this simplicity lies my happiness,
I cannot force myself to abandon the maker of these memories.

F. John Harrington

Pattie

... chill-rouged cheeks
runny nose
chocolate mouth
ice cream on mittens
dirty knees
shoes untied
socks full of snow
pure love in an un-
knowing mind



Text by Norman Ranone L.B. Sketch by Brian Mulvey

The Gift

I sat staring at a chocolate cream.
The last one in the whole box.
I wondered what was on the inside,
Was it vanilla, or chocolate nut
Or maple cream or orange butterscotch,
Or even butter cream?
And maybe; just maybe, I'd find a cherry filled.

What to do? What to do?
If I eat it I'll find out
What the inside's made of;
But gee! If it's one of my favorites,
I'd like to save it 'til later.
And if its cherry filled,
I'd like to save it forever.
But if I don't eat it I'll never know,
And I might have saved one I don't like.
What should I do?

"... Mommy, you want one of my chooclit creams?"

Charly Totoro

I knocked on your door
I was disappointed
When there was no answer
Although I never really expected one.

I looked to you
I was disappointed
When you turned and left
But I never really thought you'd stay.

I came into your life
I was disappointed
When I found nothing there
Although I never really expected anything.

Joh

The light filtered down through the main entry, causing me to retreat to the darker, more comfortable shadows which dominated the dwelling. Soon, the others would rise, and work would begin, but for now, I could enjoy rest, and no one would know. If The Council heard of this, it would mean sure execution. Imagine, being awake and yet lying here dormant. There . . . see, the routine begins with the maids running to attend the queen. Surely, she must still be contained in her chamber, waiting, expected to be waited upon.

A strange force beckoned me to follow the course taken by these maids, and this I did. Yes, risking the wrath which would be mine when found in her chambers, I disregarded another rule.

The guards! Quickly and successfully, I plunged into the murky shadows and in the same instance, I prayed . . . Yes, I had committed the greatest offense, crime of crimes, I had prayed.

Surely when, or that is if, one of the upper, more respected class finds me, my doom will be sealed. I will be turned in and become even less than a domesticated earthling, then, I would be subjected to the experiments and whims of The Council.

Now, the guards were gone and I continued my journey, more cautiously and consequently more slowly.

I found myself at the end of the first steel corridor only to discover three others, one directly in front of me, another to my left and still another to my right. Each, true to the nature of my captives, was identical to the one before and to the corridor I had just vacated.

The force which had obliged me to venture thus far, again attracted me to the left and quickening my pace, I turned left.

I heard footsteps, turned and saw . . . nothing. Surely my imagination was playing tricks on me, but still that feeling would not leave me; I felt someone was watching me.

Concentrating again on my present course, I stumbled on, stumbling because instinct told me to hurry on.

At this time I noticed the wall, which I had been keeping close to, had developed a slow steady curve to the left. I grew dizzy and thought surely the overseers had notified The Council of my absence and soon they would begin to search. Begin to search and, . . . find.

My groping hands chanced upon a crack in this vast steel vault, and from this crevice came an attractive and faintly warm feeling which, even in my disheveled condition warned me to be apprehensive. Yet, my alerted state was overshadowed and soon overpowered by another more powerful feeling, curiosity. Now, I was curious to explore the secrets contained behind the wall. I searched further and found . . . a handle. This I turned and taking a deep breath, opened the door. At first, the light was blinding, but gradually I could make out a form, similar to my own in structure and somehow familiar to me. Maybe it was instinct, maybe remembrance, or even a flood of emotion which had almost abandoned me, but whatever the cause, I knew that the form before me was that of the one I had loved. I reached out and feeling as though surrounded by a haze, tripped and was instantly swept into a stream of air from which there was no escape.

This was it. They had known all along and silently had found amusement in this, my doom. The steady force of the air current drained me of my strength; and along with my soul, the form faded and dissolved.

Muriel Wild

Nonsense Rhyme

If I were to tell you
about all the things that
I keep in my heart and in
my mind—

—You would laugh,
you would cry,
you would shake your
beautiful head, you would
look at me close (closer than
any time before) . . .

. . . then you'd just walk away.

Cathy Estrella

Touching you
isn't like
touching other people.
Often times
they're crispy
or
they don't even feel
or
they're not even real.
Sometimes
touching them
is a sin.
There's something about
the supple whiteness
of your skin
that makes touching
not like before.
For the first time
it's almost
beautiful.
There's something about
knowing how to touch
which makes it that way
just as
knowing how to be
does the same.
Touching you
is like
touching a sunrise
or a morning star.
It's something I can do
better than
anyone else.
Norman Ranone L.B.

Rain Impressions

How hard it is to think of you on a rainy day.
To look through foggy windows and see merciless little drops
 attacking naked trees.
And spent leaves being swept along the pavement
 by an array of swirling raindrops.
Even the grass, whose very lifeblood is the rain, seems
 to mourn its constant downpour.
If only you were here at my side, perhaps I would look
 with loves eyes.
Maybe then the barren trees would seem to embrace
 the tumbling drops.
And the leaves, the fallen leaves, would appear to dance
 atop the flowing tide of water.
Even the grass might then accept gracefully, each sparkling
 little bead of life.
If only you were here in my arms . . .

F. John Harrington

Then we climbed to
the top of a mountain . .
—the sea below,
 the sky above—
And we knelt in the
cool grass among the rocks.
—bodies close,
 each rejoicing in the
 wonder and the beauty
 of the other—
And suddenly your mouth
was on top of, inside mine.
And now, today, I remembered
the taste of salt . . .

I wonder, were those your tears or mine?

Cathy Estrella

... our fathers brought forth on this continent
a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated
to the proposition that all men are created
equal.

Now we are engaged in a great
CIVIL WAR ...



1963 Dallas Assassination +
1964 Battle of Rochester
1965 Battle of Watts
1966 Chicago Campaign
1966 Battle of Cleveland
1967 Battle of Newark
1967 Battle of Detroit
1967 Pentagon Siege
1968 Memphis Assassination
1968 Los Angeles Assassination

1968 Battle of Chicago
1969 Siege of Harvard
1969 October Moratorium
1969 November Peace
Offensive
1970 Kent Massacre
1970 Jackson Massacre

at

World War

No one wanted war. They all agreed that
It was useless and destructive,
But somehow, propaganda hurled from
Every side changed their opinion.

Then war —

(the smoke of battle and a billion
broken bodies, and so many broken
hearts for each of them)

Taught again the lesson —

But the broken hearts and lives and bodies
could not be mended.

Man paid the price of folly, and for a while,
remembered.

But Mars laughed and stroked his sword.
He knew, how well he knew, how long they
would remember.

Muriel Vaughn Class of 1992
Rhode Island College of Education

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Letter From Beneath a Man-hole Cover (Part I)

Having just been shot down,
I walked away—
By myself—
Alone
Looking through my blood-filled
eyes,
I counted the leaves.
Each was one of them,
And in between
Walked tall, dark men
Who asked me, "Yes?"
But I said, "No."

Then all the leaves, they laughed
at me.

I shouted at them,
Asking why they'd done this to
me:

(You've all been here.
Have I not been good?)
The leaves laughed louder,
And the men turned their heads,
Looking as if I were queer!

At that I ran
as fast as I could
but stumbled over
a log of wood
i landed face-flat
on a laughing leaf
its mouth in a smirk
i felt so disgraced
like a fumbling jerk
i scrambled to my feet
and ran to the road.

Once there,
I used my airplane body
To fly away.
Stopping suddenly, I looked
back:
Some of the men stood
On the edge of the wood.

So I yelled,
"If I ever come back
I'll say "yes"—
I'll do it, yes—
Yes, I will!
We'll laugh and burn some
leaves too.
You'd like that, wouldn't you?"

The people standing 'round
Heard me and laughed
But I didn't care.
I picked up a manhole cover
And lowered myself inside.
Pulling it over me

I shut out the light—
the laughs—
the leaves—
the men—
and the people

Here, I remain,
Until she comes . . .

Norman Ranone, L.B.

February Rain

I smelled the rain
Under the moss;
In the grass;
Across the world.
I felt spring
Come dropping
Out of the
Evening sky.
The warm world smelled
Of damp, new life
That starts my mind
Reeling backward
To springs before,
And muddy feet
Running across
Spongy, damp lawns;
And new, green buds
Breaking out of
Their old, stiff twig—wombs.

Denice E. Mitchell

in sadness
 the unfettered dream
 of
 my loving you
 drifted
 out
 upon
 a sea of memories
 like a lost kite
 only to find its home
 in the
 endless rolling
 of a
 teardrop tide —
 the everlingering voice
 of my life's
 greatest failure

Norman Ranone, L.B.

Sad Day

... and we'll part
 never having made love
 yet loving each other more
 than we've ever another before
 though not necessarily more
 than we ever shall ...

Norman Ranone, L.B.

Beach - Thoughts

By the edge of the sea, where the wind whips thoughtlessly
 over countless waves,
 I think of times spent with her. Times when happiness
 embraced my heart, as the gulls embrace the fleeting
 breeze.

So few were the hours we spent together strolling by the
 roaring surf;
 And neither did I kiss that sailing face nor caress
 those sweet young breasts, for she was not
 mine to love.

I can't lay blame on her for feeding the fire of my love;
 she was faithful to the man in her heart.
 And now? you ask ...
 now she is beyond my grasp, cut from my heart,
 and purged from my mind.
 For now, even this very night, she sleeps beside
 the one she truly loves.

F. John Harrington

Bits and Pieces

In the attic

lie

pieces of childhood

a wind-up train

a wind-up doll

a wind-up music box

all unwound.

In the attic

lie

pieces of a lifetime

a yellowed bouquet of flowers

a yellowed wedding gown

a yellowed christening dress

awaiting color.

In the attic

lie

pieces of a person

hidden away to be forgotten

by all but the grey mice

Or, perhaps, with luck,

by the inquisitive fingers of

a child

Searching for sight

In the attic.

Chris Tsetsi

Birds in flight

Winging so high—

Earthlings gaze upward in awe.

Soaring higher, higher still

Floating, gliding—

Earthlings gaze upward in awe.

Beating your wings

Tiring, tiring

Lower, lower

Touching the ground

Earthlings look down in disdain.

Moralizing, mocking, they leave you alone to die . . .

Yet you'll live on, for a little boy,

An earthling gazed upward in awe,

A child gazed down understanding.

He knows of nature and freedom and bliss

Of lovely blue sky and wind through the hair.

Of running and beating his arms up and down

Only to fall in the quest . . .

But someday, someday

He knows he will soar

Floating and gliding, descending no more.

And then will the earthlings look upward in awe,

Then will they know he alone understood.

Your greatness, your power, your beauty, your love.

Alexandra Barth—Whitcombe

We were talking
about the love we'll never share
despite our efforts
to hold it there
about the stiffness of my made-up mind
so unable to bend
even to the softness of
touching you
about trying not to let
us
become a game

Norman Ranone, L.B.

Old Age Is Hell

The old man sits on the couch re-reading yesterday's paper. It's snowing out, but he hasn't noticed yet. The back door opens and a dark-haired girl comes in with her arms loaded with school books. She slips off her shoes and goes into the living room. The girl speaks first.

"Hi, Gramp!" she speaks loudly because her grandfather is hard-of-hearing.

"Oh, hi," he sighs, "Home early aren't you?"

She replies that her after-school class was cancelled and she came home to do some homework. She goes into the kitchen. After having a snack, she goes upstairs carrying her books.

The old man goes back to reading the day-old paper that's kept him busy most of the day. By now he probably knows every article in it and what page it appears on. After reading for ten minutes he lays the paper on the table next to him and takes off his glasses. He puts them on the table too. He puts his head back against the top of the low-backed, modern couch and falls asleep.

A red-headed boy comes in the back door and puts his few books on the kitchen table. He turns and opens the refrigerator. Taking out the soda, he pushes the door shut. In the dish strainer he finds a glass and half fills it with soda. He puts the empty bottle in the sink. After gulping the soda down he goes into the living room. He sits on the couch adjacent to the one that the old man is on. The old man opens his eyes. He fumbles for his glasses.

"Hi, Gramp," says the boy loudly.

The old man says "hi" and asks, "When did it start snowing out?"

"About noon," is the reply.

"Cold day," says the old man, looking out the window. "The paper didn't say we were gonna get snow. They can't really tell anyway, though. They're just guessing."

The boy agrees, rather than trying to explain about high and low pressure systems and barometric pressure. It would be senseless, anyway.

The boy's grandfather gets up, shakily. Losing his balance, he sits back down. He sighs. He gets up again and walks into the kitchen. He starts talking to the boy, but he's not heard. He turns, sensing that no one's listening and stops mid-sentence. The boy comes out to the kitchen.

"Did you say something, Gramp?" asks the boy.

"No," says the old man. He thinks for a minute, "I went to my friend's this morning. He wasn't home. Must've gone to the store. The car wasn't in the yard."

"Oh," says the boy, trying to appear interested.

"Then I went to the store," continues the old man. "I bought some cookies and a cake and, uh, . . . something else. My friend, the manager, was talking to me. He had his hand bandaged. Said he cut it on some glass at work. Oh yeah, I know what else I bought at the store, Instant Cream of Wheat. I like that. It's not as good as the regular kind, but it's easier to fix."

"Yeah, I like it too," agrees the boy.

"The priest comes in the morning," says the old man. "First Friday, y'know."

The boy seems anxious to leave. The old man speaks, as if just to retain his audience.

"Gotta get your mother at work?"

"Yeah, not 'till five, though."

"They've got chicken on sale up at the store. I thought I'd check with your mother before I bought some though. It looked nice." The old man waits for a reply.

"I think we've got some in the freezer," suggests the boy. "Well, you can check with her when she comes home. I'm going to my friend's house. I'll get my mother for supper."

"O.K. Guess I'll take a nap. Oh, see if the paper's come yet."

The boy goes on the porch and looks on the back stairs. He opens the door and picks up the paper. The old man comes out on the porch and gets the paper from the boy.

"You shouldn't come out here without a sweater or something on, Gramp. You'll catch cold."

"Yeah," says the old man taking the paper and folding it in half. "It is cold out here."

"Well, see you later," says the boy as he leaves.

"Bye," says the old man just after the door closes. He sighs as he walks from the porch back to the living room. He sees a thread on the rug. Bending over slowly, it takes three tries to free it from the fibers of the rug. He puts the thread in an ash tray on the table. Once again he sits on the couch and reads the paper. This time the news is new.

Jeffrey T. Minor

honey suckle

i get to feeling that way

(about half past

ages since i saw you last)

honey suckle sweet perfumed

air

taunts my memories

and

even the soothing summer rain

can't relieve the drought of loneliness

Terry Stasijkiewicz

Reflections on a Relationship

Where do I go from here . . .

I'll ask you that enigmatic line

Oh, but I have asked you this before

The answer—logical of course

Logical, reasonable, maybe even right

'right' that above all lays heavy on my mind

"Years in age, miles in distance"

Coming soon—

Machine that will measure emotions in your choice

of the following:

(1) kilometers (2) feet/second (3) watts (4) quarts

"Positions"—what are the things:

front, back, liberal conservative

Oh! Social. I see it clearly,

Doctor, lawyer, Indian Chief. Teacher—Student

Comprehend now. Definition; barriers

Solution—

Sever, Sever, Sever, Sever, Sever.

"What tho the radiance which was once so bright/

Be now forever taken from my sight/ Tho nothing

can bring back/ the hour/ of the splendor in the grass

and glory in the flower"—Wordsworth

Solution of severance failed. Why?

Reason—only a fool could think that feelings are

governed by the tyranny of reason and logic.

What now, if I may ask . . .

Ah, forget. Blot out, dememorize, exclude from recollection

Orwell covered the whole spectrum in '84

Unperson, Unperson, Unperson, Unperson

But how does one forget pleasant memories . . .

that very different feeling to kiss with meaning/

the peaceful walk on the beach/sipping Scotch/

waiting for you to open the apartment door after

a day at school/the ability to express honest

emotions/drinking white wine/climbing rocks/

F. John Harrington

there he is
yours and mine
ours

together

born, not of necessity,

but of love

I watch him

lying in his crib,

playing with his fingers,

his toys

delighting in all.

you feed him

when he is hungry

and I am in charge

of changing his diapers.

he makes us happy

in what we are

and are not.

and I watch him

sleep

thumb in mouth

head on pillow

small hands, small feet,

tiny

and yet

so much a huge

happy part of our lives.

and I remember

his grandparents

his aunts, uncles,

cousins

and even our friends

who swore at us,

sympathized, scorned,

and wondered

all at the same time

what we were

and were not.

what if no clergyman

blesses our union

and no witness signed

a document?

he is no freak,

but a normal baby,

born of normal parents

who don't need rings—

rings to show their love.

and he is ours

our own small

bastard

our child

our love.

Joh

Suppose . . .

once upon a wednesday

we

(and for no better reason
than us)

loved

like there was no tomorrow.

where would we be

once

upon a thursday—

(refer to original)

Brian J. Mulvey



Text and sketch by Brian J. Mulvey

