ECLIPSE
Eclipse magazine is published annually in the spring by the students at San Fernando Valley State College to provide a permanent record of writing, graphics and photography done by students enrolled during the current year. An institution cannot create art; at best it can merely support it. The hope of the Eclipse staff is that this magazine, though published by an institution, is not primarily a reflection of this institution, but is instead a record of individual experiences and insights.

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"The Cello Student," engraving by Barbara Mann
eCLIPSE

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He placed his right hand against the steaming glass and rubbed with his palm a clear cold sweating circle. He peered out into the whiteness: birches, birches, birches, stripped brown and barren and thin by winter starved deer... a fine sketch, easy enough to do if one knew how. (Tree limbs like the fingers of an old crone clawing at the storm) **Something to do...**

"Ann. Do we have anything to draw with? Paper?"

His question was a thunderclap to her ears. (He hadn't spoken a word all day, less than five words in the last two days) Now he barks a question (It was a bark: clear, loud, singular, startling). She patted her feet on the floor, stopped the rocking chair, too startled to speak, stopped sewing, stopped humming, and looked at Abraham.

He turned away from the window (steam was covering the clear wet circle again, shutting out the sketch, shutting out the wall of winter, turning his thoughts back to those other inhabitants of the cabin, and in his mind he could already see Ann stopping, turning, curious about his question, thinking he must be mad, as surely he must be) and he looked at her face and asked again, blushing and trembling slightly, "Do you have anything to draw with? I would like to draw."

"No..." **But I must give him something to do because he is a man, a strong man, a man who has to have something to do;**

"Abraham" she announced, "I am going to make bread." She set her sewing materials on the arm of the chair, steadied herself and rose, walking quietly to the pot-belly stove. (She had learned in her twenty-one years to take tiny steps like the educated women from the coast).

"Abraham, fill the stove for me." **Making bread will take my mind off it.**

Hands that have wielded axes, ferry poles, law books, trembled nervously (the girl's voice almost a whisper). **I love you Ann I love you.** The words scream at the top of his skull, pound at the base of his brain but no sound issues from his lips. **This thing, this act of adoration I do for you dear Ann. Fool fool Lincoln. Tell her, tell, tell, tell.**

Ann watched him bend over the wood bin like some huge gaunt grasshopper. **He certainly is an awkward looking man.** (Abe picking up even-cut lengths of birch and walnut wood, another, another, and another as rapidly as his wilderness-tempered hand could act and with one swooping movement thrusting them into the belly of the pear shaped iron cooker and heater).

She reached up to the cabinet Mr. Rutledge and his oldest son had built to take down the yellow bowl for mixing. Abraham caught sight of the form of her bosom against the functional lines of her dress (brown gingham she had sewn last autumn when the yellow corn was sweating in the sun and Ann rocked back and forth, back and forth in her woven wicker rocking chair and the warmth of life trickled beads of sweat on Abraham's forehead while the muscles in his arms twitched from the shock of chopping, chopping, chopping wood for the Rutledges. — The wood he grunted at and stuffed in the stove and stirred the coals of in the fire to bring the flame blue and alive against the coldness of the deep snow outside).

**Abraham Lincoln. Ann Lincoln. John McNamar. If John doesn't return for me then Abe. Abe stays to hold my hand and loves me quietly. Say it. Say it Abraham to me and I will say it to you...**

Here in the white silence broken by the stirring of the wooden spoon against the clay Indian bowl as Ann Rutledge stirs yeast into her bread Abraham looks away from her to the tightness of the cabin, their winter world: the nine people sleeping snoring buzzing coughing dying of croup in the narrow world of the Rutledge cabin in the winter of 1832.
TWO POEMS BY KAY TERRY

GREY AND GOLD AND RUNNING RED
IMPROMPTU ION PRISM PRINTS
ESSENCE AND ECHO DAILY FED
MORNING LOOM, CHAUVINIST CHINTZ.

TWILIGHT
WHEN SULLEN, DUN QUIESCENT DUSKS HERE VEIL
THE INTERIM, AND FAMISHED SHADOWS STRAIN
THEMSELVES IN WEARY PATTERNS CROSS THE LANE
AND HOUSE, NO LONGER FLOWERS FLAY AND RAIL
THE DAY, BUT JADED, GAUNT AND GREY GROW PALE
AND SILENT, WAITING. CROSS THIS DYING PLANE
AND BARELY SMILING WITH A MILD DISDAIN,
OUR LONG DEAD FRIEND SETS SIGHTLESS NIGHTLY SAIL.
THE ONSET OF ADOLESCENCE CRUSHES MIND-PURITY, FILLING IT WITH READY-TO-BURST NODULES OF QUERY DOUBT CHILDREN STAR-GAZE AND PONDER ORIGINS THE UNSTRAINED BRAIN CREATES NO MISERY

TRACY GORDON

Photo by Peter Flint
ALWAYS A MEMORY

The subtle caves of human thought are
Rare indeed, as nurselings of immortality;
Gazes look on her in beauty, and desire life.

Passions I have surely known, but now rise
Higher with the breezes of her passing
As she dares to enter; I also dare, and we
Are one; the smile she sends transcends all
Others, while I await her foreboding as
Our bonds strengthen in mutual rapture.

Her pedestal awaits, while her master and
Servant long for the age to love, for myself
But a portion of her time would subdue.

Robert Fields

Ink drawing by Ferne Stalford
THE WORLD'S SAD TALE

If Mundus weren't allied
   In a planetary system,
What planet would've cried,
   What sun would've missed him?

Old Sol doesn't need him,
   Takes energy to feed him;
We people should seed him,
   But most'd rather bleed him.

For such impropriety
   from our human society,
If he could, shouldn't Mundus
   Long ago have shunned us?

---

SUMMER AGAIN

When summer comes
I empty from my mind
The scholastic garbage into
Watery cans and drums

At the ocean where
Water, water everywhere
And not a chance to think
I sift sand through my fingers
And know that I have touched
   seen
   smelled
   tasted
   eternity

The eternity of my summer is just
Three months living. The wind
Will come and blow away the grain
Of sand that I thought was
   forever

I feel my mind's stomach being filled
With the cerebral waste products
Of my mentors’ egos
Nine more months my mind will erupt
   And
   summer again

---

Michael Burrs

Tracy Gordon
ON PREJUDICE

SITTING IN THE SHADE SOBBING —
IS THE LITTLE BROWN GIRL.
A TEAR SLID OFF HER FACE,
AND FELL TO THE EARTH
WITH A SPLASH OF RESENTMENT.

THE EARTH IS BROWN, TOO, LITTLE
BROWN GIRL.
NO NEED FOR TEARS.
IN THE END WE ARE ALL
LITTLE BROWN GIRLS.

DORENA KNEPPER

Photo by David Gladstone
A slim figure, clad in an oversized sweater and absurdly short skirt, swooped upon him, hugged him rapturously and then settled on a chair, with moccasined toes curled about its rung. The girl smiled. She had pretty teeth and when she smiled her eyes shone.

"Dad is it alright with you if I take Steve to the Sock-Hop on Friday night? My date has to work. Steve said it's okay with him if I get your permission."

Trying to keep the anxious expression from his face, he groped for some excuse to postpone answering her question. Glancing quickly down at the disorderly mounds of paper scattered on his desk, he replied, "Bea honey, can we discuss that at dinner, I'm expecting a phone call."

Bea grinned and said, "Okay dad, see you at dinner."

Her pony tail flip-flopped as she turned and blew her father a kiss. The door swung shut behind her.

Judge Davis sat motionless, staring at the closed door. He was proud of his children, Bea a sophomore in high school and Bob in his first year of college, but at this particular moment he realized that somehow he had failed them.

With a weary motion he pushed his chair away from the massive oak desk, reached into his vest pocket for a cigar and thoughtfully lit it. The cigar smoke mingled with the gathering shadows and only the scratching of a branch being brushed against the window by the wind broke the silence.

This had been a trying day, and now to be confronted with this. It seemed like several lifetimes since he had been able to forget the business of the day and relax in the evening. Even during the years of his private practice he would go over in his mind what he had said and what his client had said; wondering if there was another approach, an alternative plea, or a precedent case which he had earlier failed to recall. The idea of justice to all had almost become an obsession.

His law books were second only to his Bible, for in them was to be found a way of life, a creed, a moral philosophy. The law books were strict but flexible. He often thought of them as responsible parents. He used the ideals of his law books as a guide for his role of parent; but now he realized that ideals alone were not enough.

"Where did I make my first mistake? Instead of insisting on a private school, should I have let them go to a public school and learn as children that there are injustices and dual standards? Or maybe just a few well chosen words that first day Bob brought Steve home and proudly introduced his new found friend. I was too proud though, I mistook innocence for tolerance. After all, wasn't he just doing what I had taught him to do? I told the children to choose their friends for their personal values."

They became friends the summer Bob was nine. The first thing every morning either Bob would be up and waiting over at Steve's house, two blocks over and one block down, or Steve would be outside our house swinging on the gate watch-
ing for Bob's window-shade to jump up. Sometimes they were pirates, transforming mother's old garments into costumes worthy of Captain Kidd. One whole week they spent hammering and sawing disreputable looking boards which magically, to them, turned into a tree house from which they regally surveyed their world. They shared hot buttered popcorn at the Saturday matinees; and the top secret confidences only best friends can share.

One very real interruption in their make-believe world was Bea. Wherever their long gangly legs would take them, her short chubby ones tried to follow. At first they called, “Go home baby, baby, baby.” She would just stand and look after them, tears in her eyes and on her cheeks. As time went on, though they disdainfully ignored her, she began to be a part of their play. The three of them were always together.

That summer became a pattern for the years that followed. The boys teased Bea unmercifully, collaborated on their homework and became the best passing team St. Michaels had ever had.

Just last month he had been working at his desk when he found himself reading the same sentence over and over as the loudness of the phonograph invaded his thoughts. Going downstairs to the family room, he stood quietly watching Bea trying to teach Bob and Steve the Twist.

Bea's dark hair hung down her back, her legs moved, her hands moved and in time with the music she danced faster and faster forward and backward. Both boys intently tried to imitate her movements until their feet became hopelessly entangled and the three of them collapsed into chairs with breathless laughter. In a moment Bob reached out and put on another record and as the slow muted music filled the room Bea and Steve wordlessly started dancing.

A feeling of uneasiness enveloped the Judge as he watched their supple young bodies swaying together to the music. Almost smugly secure in his pride, the first prickings of doubt came as a disquieting surprise.

Tonight he knew his doubts were justified.

The Judge's thoughts were interrupted by a gentle knocking at the door.

“Yes,” he answered.

“Dinner is ready sir,” the housekeeper replied.

“Alright Mary, thank you.”

He glanced at the clock on his desk, it was 6:30. Bea would be waiting, expecting a simple answer to a simple question. It couldn't be a simple answer though. Bea is a sensitive girl, he must choose his words carefully — but she's a sensible girl too, she'll understand. Our race has come a long way in the past one-hundred years, but more time must pass before the ideal of equality for us becomes a reality.

The Judge rose from his desk; the hands of the clock said twenty till seven. It was time to give Bea her answer.
Drawing by Stephanie Lipney
Push back the smoke
Let the camera begin
But the film lies unopened
Its bareness a sin.

The film is free
Its supply — endless
And yet
it's a gift
Its possession — priceless.

Why do the cameras
stand so idle?
Why cannot they begin?
Their keepers live
as dead sardines
Enclosed
in a private tin.

And still the smoke
engulfs the film.
So few can it dispel.
The priceless gift lies wasted;
Why is life such hell?

Conrad Melton

Within my cell wall
I ponder
dream
meditate

Upon Life, Death
Anything
My mind should create

I wallow in despair
disgust
self-pity

Sadly, it seems
My mind
Dwells on ME as an entity

Dorena Knepper
THE TABERNACLE OF GOD by Alma Greenwood

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God."

The room was pleasantly warm, the heat of the autumn day slowly leaving it as the sun moved to the other side of the house. In the mellow light the room looked almost inviting; the streaks in the old wallpaper didn't show, and the scratches in the old bed and dresser didn't look so white. He sat on the blue and white quilt on the bed and let the peculiar feeling of peace engulf him for a moment. Then he closed the worn Book and held it in one hand with the forefinger holding the place. After a time he walked to the window and raised the shade to gaze out toward the valley.

God is so good to us. Even in the new world we'll keep the beauty from the old — those maples on the hills so golden, the oaks so fiery red. We have so much more than we deserve.

He lifted his face toward the sky and began to pray, silently forming the words with his lips. He had been doing that for the last forty years, and it was a very pleasant thing to him. He took his time.

* * *

The stars were beginning to fade, but the full moon still hung pale against the sky as the black silhouette of the city gradually grew more distinct. After a few more minutes it was dawn, and the intense serenity of the landscape was overwhelming. Nothing moved, of course, but it was not a picture of horror; rather, one of complete and resigned finality. The skeletons of the buildings were empty in the sky, melted crooked.

The great seared wound where the air base had been was surrounded by a blackened pile of crumpled pavement, as if some careless giant had thrown away a wrinkled paper. The wreckage of the huge planes was scattered miles away; there had been a few pieces along the road. Several of them were only twisted and charred, but many had melted into unrecognizable lumps — huge metallic amoebas.

Near the airport the buildings were flattened with their steel girders melted in the heat, or they had been laid flat by the sheer force of the wind from the explosion. Beyond the immediate area of the airport a few walls were caved in and a lot of windows were shattered, but it did look habitable. It was possible that someone in a shelter could have survived the radiation — if there had been any shelters and if they had a six months' supply of food and water.

Few cars were on the streets, but then the people had been quite systematic about it, for the most part. Those who had survived the blast went methodically to the aid stations for their sleeping medicine. The lines were long and relatively quiet; the few hysterical women were gazed at with pity and mild disapproval. At the front of the line they got the little white paper cups with the deadly lumps of sugar. “Don't touch it! Just put it in your mouth and chew it up. All you'll taste is the sugar.” It was much better than feeling the pain when the radiation began to eat away at the body cells.

At North Fulton High the trash cans were still standing where the people had tossed the empty paper cups. One of the cups still held its lump of sugar — probably left by a frightened child. Later some little girl would wake up to find that she could not arouse her parents, and would wonder why she ached so.

Sickened by that thought and the stench of decaying bodies as he approached the center of the city, the young man turned and ran back down the empty street toward the car.

* * *

He got out of bed, chest still heaving, and his bare feet made heavy slapping sounds across the oak floor. He settled the feet into tired brown loafers, then pulled on underwear and the gray bermudas. Fumbling with the button he looked back at her still lying on the bed.

Gentle woman, don't be afraid. Just know it is the will of the Lord for you to bear children now, and know that we must try. As long as we do His will, He'll take care of us.

Illustration by Robert St. Vincent
He took a hesitant step toward the bed again, but changed his mind and turned toward the corner behind him. A length of pipe was suspended diagonally across the corner, and on it were several rusty hangers holding his mongrel wardrobe. He took a shirt off a noisy hanger and slid one wiry brown arm into the faded sleeve. When he had the other arm in the shirt he rearranged the hangers to leave Sarah her half of the rack.

In the bathroom he buttoned the shirt. Then to kill the time he looked absently toward the faded mirror, felt the stiff gray beard, ran his hand over the coarse hairs on the back of his neck. He ducked his head to peer under a flaw in the glass.

Need another haircut pretty soon, but can’t complain; Marietta does real well. The trim’s even, but just over that ear there’s a rough place. In front of the other ear, too, but not as bad. The tanned forehead wrinkled as he craned his eyes upward into the mirror, but he couldn’t see the balding spot. It was there, though — his hand could feel the slick spot — about the size of a fifty-cent piece. Later he picked up the broken comb and painstakingly arranged the long hair to cover the bald area. There wasn’t really any sense in shaving since the whiskers were so white. He thought of that as he brushed the lather over his chin, but he went ahead and shaved anyway. It wasn’t too much trouble, and he liked the thick mustache clearly defined.

When he had washed the cup and brush and left whiskers in the basin he walked into the hallway and looked in the bedroom door again. The space under the window shade let a narrow shaft of light in across the room like an arrow pointing toward the bed. At the end of the arrow the film of dust on the floor showed up more plainly. Sarah moved drowsily, and the blue and white quilt over the top sheet rearranged itself over her.

“It’s eight o’clock, Sarah,” he said. “Marietta’ll be wanting help with breakfast pretty soon.” Her head turned slowly on the thin pillow and she smiled at him, but she didn’t start to get up yet.

As he walked down the hall the loafers made an uneven rhythm, because the right one was stretched and didn’t stay up on his heel.

Maybe forty-six is too old for her to have children, but it’s the Lord’s will, I know. As long as we do His will He’ll take care of us . . . Marietta ought to be thinking about having another baby now, too; their child is already four months old. Hope I won’t need to speak to Carl about it again, though. Maybe they’ll decide for themselves in a few more weeks. If I can only convince Carl about what we must do. Dear God, please help me . . .

When he reached the doorway he stopped abruptly, shielded in the screen door. Beyond the shadow of the porch he saw them sitting on the sagging steps, outlined vividly by the bright green of the sunny yard. Over the blue blouse Marietta’s head was a flaming orange in the sunlight; Carl’s hair was a dull, oily brown. His powerful back and arms were a deep brown, and when his father saw them he winced. They were not brown from work in the fields, but from lying in the sun all summer. Such laziness should certainly be punished, but how can you punish a grown man?

He discreetly dragged the loafers over the floor until Carl looked back and saw him. Then assured that he wasn’t interrupting anything, he pushed open the squeaking door and stepped down onto the porch. He caught the door to keep it from slamming and eased it gently back into place, merely drawing out the noise of the hinges. He walked to the edge of the porch and saw that they had the baby with them. It made him uncomfortable.

“Morning,” Marietta said without looking away from the child on her lap.

“Morning, Marietta. Carl. How’s Steven today?” He smiled and hoped his voice sounded enthusiastic, but didn’t move to go near the baby.

“Steve is just fine, aren’t you, Sweetie-pie?” she said, more to the baby than to him. She jiggled the baby’s chin with a red-tipped forefinger. His chubby face screwed up into a smile which delighted his parents, but his grandfather looked away.

Abruptly he edged the slender legs around them on the steps and strode out into the green and brown yard. He moved aimlessly toward the dirt road in front of the house, his hands in the pockets of his bermudas, eyes on the ground in front of him. His forehead wrinkled into a frown.

I wish to heaven I could like that baby. He’s really as beautiful a child as you could want. Funny the way things
turn out, though; when they first told us Marietta was pregnant I thought we had to have a boy to preserve the family name. And sure enough, it's a boy, all right. But a lot has happened now — it would have been better if it had been a girl. How can we be expected to love a boy baby when we need girls so badly! It took a few seconds for him to remind himself that the will of God was greater than his own ideas. Wanting to think of something else, he looked toward the valley.

Suddenly the sounds of voices drew his attention toward the porch again. So the boys are arguing — well, at least that much is still normal. Can't remember when they didn't yell at each other half the time. It used to worry me, but after all, it's natural for boys to disagree. He watched as Carl strode into the house and Marietta followed with the baby. The younger man stood and watched them go.

The father sighed and gazed out toward the end of the road. He looked absently toward the sky and realized absurdly that he was scanning the horizon for planes going to Atlanta. He looked down.

"Dad?"

He turned, startled, and looked into eyes magnified behind thick hornrimmed glasses. The boy was thinner than the father, and not as tanned; but except for the glasses and a shock of heavy black hair he might have been his father thirty years earlier.

"They've started eating breakfast and I said I'd come and get you. We'd better hurry. They said they wouldn't wait." Alfred made a move uneasily toward the house and waited for his father to follow. The older man fell into step with his son.

"You had another argument with Carl, didn't you?"

"Yes sir. I guess we don't see eye to eye on anything." He paused and looked in the direction of the road. "But then we never have." They went a few paces in silence; then the boy stopped and peered intently toward the speck where the road met the horizon. "Did you see anything down there, Dad? I thought I saw something move!"

The father's eyes kindled suddenly with comprehension. "Where's Mark?" he asked. No answer. The boy began walking rapidly and pushed at the thick hair on his forehead.

"Well, Alfred?"

"Well, gosh, Dad — I — he's gone off."

The older man stopped walking. "Wait a minute," he said. "Where'd he go?"

The boy stopped and turned to his father. They were almost to the porch steps now and could hear the ugly sounds of breakfast from inside the house — forks scraping over plates, coffee cups half-dropped into their saucers. Carl was saying something to Marietta and they both laughed. Then a dish crashed on the floor and the baby began to cry. An odor of burning bacon grease came with the noise.

"Listen, Dad, please. Don't think too harsh of him. He's just a kid. And they only wanted —"

You abominable fool! You call your brother a kid and you only two years older! Uncontrollably he trembled with rage and fear, and didn't know which. "Where did he go?"

"Well, he went to Atlanta, just to see what it's like."

"But why?" He sank down onto the bottom step, immediately aware of the warmth of the wood in the sun.

Alfred pushed back his hair again. "Well, Carl sort of told him to. They wanted to know what it was like, and he couldn't get away because of Marietta. They wanted to get a car with gasoline, and a radio transmitter." He sat down on the step beside his father. "I wish you wouldn't worry about it, sir. Carl only does these things to bother you. He always has." The boy clenched his fists ineffectually, looked at them, and relaxed them almost self-consciously.

The father squirmed uncomfortably. He knew Alfred was trying to protect him again, and it bothered him. Surely a father was supposed to be more than a source of disagreement between his sons. But he couldn't bring himself to speak to Alfred about it. He thought again of Mark's trip.

How can they all be so unchanged by everything? What would God have to do to make men believe in Him? "What do you think about it, son?" He dreaded the answer because he was sure what it would be; they had been over it so many times. He looked at the young man and waited.

"You already know what I think, Dad. I've told you about air pockets. I think this valley was preserved intact — us too — because an air pocket sealed us off from the rest of the atmosphere." He pushed the hair off his forehead again.
"I think there were probably other valleys saved too, sir."

The screen door behind them slammed, bounced slightly, and slammed again. Heavy steps thudded across the porch and stopped. "Those women are mad as hell because you all didn't come and eat. Now it's cold." There was a pause when they didn't turn around. Then suddenly, "Did Four-Eyes tell you about Mark?" He chuckled. "That kid — got more guts than some people I could mention. He's gone off to Atlanta to see the sights!" He laughed again. "God, I wisht now I'd gone with him, in spite of Marietta."

"Don't swear by the name of the Lord." It was automatic; his mind was far away. "Hell. When he finds a car it'll not be long till we can all go anywhere we please on this whole damn continent! Just think — wide open roads and no damn traffic cops, and pull into any gas station and fill 'er up!" He chuckled contentedly. "Even you gotta admit it'll be fun to see the country after hiding in this valley for six months, woncha, Dad?" He lumbered down the steps and slapped his dad on the shoulder, still laughing. "God, I haven't felt this good since the bomb. It's gonna be great to get out of this hole."

The older man felt almost too tired to speak. "Carl, I still think that God wants us to stay in this valley and raise our children without letting the evils of the old world come to them. Then when we're all strong, He'll show us what He wants us to know. That's the only way any of this makes sense to me."

Carl leaned forward and shouted into his father's face. "Well, if God wants me to stay in this stinking valley the rest of my life he can damn well tell me himself! I've had all of this valley I can stand! Staying here all summer wondering if we're the only people alive, wondering if the radiation'll get us — I quit! There's pretty clothes out there and my wife wants 'em, there's fancy hotels to stay in that I could never get in before, there's Jaguars sitting on the streets waiting to be drove, and I'm gonna drive 'em! And somewhere there's a big, fine house where we're gonna live, and enough canned food so I'll never have to work another day of my life!"

"Do you want us all to go to hell?" He could feel the veins in his neck tightening under the collar. "We're going to stay here and try to be clean and decent for a change. We've been given a new chance and we're not going to throw it away! Those things are so ridiculous now — next you'll be wanting all the money you can get, and television sets! I didn't want to resort to force to keep you here, but —"

Incredulously he saw Carl draw his fist back into a tight, knotted bullet and shove it toward him. The sound of Alfred's sharp intake of breath was as tangible as the pain on his chin, and he spun backward and fell on his face across the steps. "You let my father alone!" Alfred screamed through clenched teeth.

Dully he sensed that the boy had lunged toward Carl, and heard Carl gasping between breaths — "Nobody's keeping me here — any more." It was only a few seconds before he turned numbly to tell them to stop, but Carl was running toward the road where a dust cloud was growing larger and larger. The repeated blasts of an automobile horn came from within the cloud.

Near the steps Alfred's form lay on its face, a small puddle of blood being absorbed into the dirt under its mouth.
Figure study by Lucille Beeler

RELEASE

A bundle lay where it fell,
Not far from the Ganges.
Life flows on, as life ebbs
From the sea of human misery.

Peace is not found
In soil watered by the Ganges.
Life-food may be given
When the Spirit has been taken.

Peace can be found
By washing the Soul in the Ganges.
Death's pain will be taken
When the Spirit has been given.

Pity is not felt by many,
Or even by the Ganges.
Death will not wait long,
As life walks past a bundle.

John Riley
AD INFINITUM

Oh silent dwellers of the dark beneath,
Has thou Atropos cut thy golden thread
And sent thy souls to an everlasting sleep?
Or can it be as the Bible hath said
That there may be light beyond death's door?

Before this pale horse with its rider came,
Thy mind was possessed in seeing a dream,
And thou was sure to subsist on earth the same
With but a dire image to try not to ween,
And thence to bar Satan's affliction.

But as everyman is put on earth condemned
To die, with method but unknown,
So then did arrive death's old friend
Of long standing, from many he had shown,
As you were to see on your long journey.

Then rising and struggling to be free
You fought to keep from your eternal sleep,
For with your liberty you found life's key,
And you need not worry, for death now weeps,
And then in rage he proclaims you victor.

Oh silent dwellers of the dark beneath
And to those of you who will not give,
I find for these I shall not weep,
For if all of life is not to live,
Can all of death be to die?

Robert Fields
THE SEA

With waters stretching like the powder of a cloud,
She rises and then settles, always remaining proud
While her reaching fingertips with its lasting charm
Draw into every city and port that its waters farm.

Then her languid waters wash upon the golden sand,
As Neptune’s servants sit hand in hand
Watching wave upon wave bring distant news
Of hulls and bones with altering views.

Aroused at times from the storm from above
She soon becomes as peaceful as the dove,
But still she keeps her mysteries hidden
And the other secrets valued as forbidden.

Robert Fields

Photo by David Gladstone
SUPPLICATION

Please
, since (among
wild roses
sweeter than believing)
you
and
I
would play at love
why not
un
-pretend
(oh
ask
me
;ask me
please)
to be that way
:give me violets
with
your
(bluer than believing)
eyes.

June Demetry

L = Emc²

The icy fire
Of torment
Pierces
My every thought
A silent storm
Rages
Within my heart.
And my soul cries out
For peace.
I am but a speck.
An iota
Of nothingness.
Suddenly
I am a mountain.
Built upon peace
and wisdom.
There are no torments—
no conflicts.
Time passes without motion.

Conrad Melton
It was too lonely for her there,
   And too wild;
She lived between anxiety and fear,
   And was never reconciled.

It was hard for her to understand,
   And she would never ask;
Just what was the plan,
   Never, until the last.

Why did the bird's song never end;
   Why did the butterfly wait so long,
With never a chance to comprehend;
   These thoughts had too long grown

And they broke through to light,
   Through her shy inquiring front;
And now she understood, on her upward flight,
   And now she was done with the puzzling hunt.

It was too lonely for her there,
   But now not wild,
And beside her grave I stood,
   And thought perhaps she smiled.

John Gazurian
Mike Margulies

Doug Edge

A time for waiting

Leo Lamboy
A PARTY IN BERKELEY

No affectation, instead, studied reality
That permeates like new-spewn love-juice a sheet
(what!)
This gathering of floating insecurities (can one drink depressed beer?)
Facade of intellectuality that shields Truth
It is mouthed by the folly of the inept mind
That is cluttered with irresponsibility poverty
and general degradation
Try to be amusing confusing
Avoid reality

Cry you fool.
Scream your protests.
Renounce the sins of mediocrity.

Search you fool.
Burn your eyes out.
Run your legs off.

Where are you now?
What do you see?
Who hears your protests?
Go back to the water.

Conrad Melton

Tracy Gordon
VAUDEVILLE

That histrionic sun again!
insisting always on a
three act waning and
a death off stage.
All I wanted really
was a sudden brief smile
filtered through
these last leaves.

S. T. Clendenning

COCKTAIL HOUR

That face, the one over there
with the 6:00 P.M. smile,
is my own.
I admit
I treat
it well.
I have its teeth filled twice a year
with golden wads of brotherly love
at 16 bucks an ounce.
If I give it an occasional martini
it is not to spite any brain cell
that I know of.

S. T. Clendenning
The stranger at the third bar-stool was about to give up drinking. Instead of finishing his beer, he swore, “Never again,” and rushed to his car.

The swearing-off took place when he looked over at the first stool. There, he saw a big, white, flop-eared dog, quaffing beer and munching pretzels.

But, quiet, respectable Tom Coast, sitting at home watching TV didn’t swear off. He didn’t know he had a boozehound for a dog.

A year earlier Tom found a dirty white pup in the back yard. The family decided to feed him before sending him on his way, but four-year old Johnnie Coast claimed him. He wore his dad down, and finally Tom conceded, “Oh, keep the brute—”

“Nice ‘fool!” crooned Johnnie, and the dog was named.

Floot’s eyes had gradually turned a reddish-pink, and he did a lot of day-time sleeping, but, Tom thought that was normal.

In the spring, the pastor of the church across the street came over and asked Tom to keep the dog home. The organist had complained that he was under the building, howling whenever she practiced.

So, Floot was confined to the yard on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, while the organist practiced without competition.

One Thursday evening Tom took Floot for a walk. As they were passing Jocko’s Tavern the big dog literally pulled Tom toward the door. A couple of men coming out of the bar gave Floot a friendly greeting, and Tom an understanding smile.

There was no indecision for Floot, he dragged Tom into the tavern. And, beat him to the one empty seat.

The man on the next stool didn’t seem surprised. He nodded at Floot and said to the bartender, “A bowl of beer for my friend, and a sack of chips.”

Jaw hanging, Tom watched the guardian of his home, the pet of his child, and man’s best friend tie into a bowl of Harndorf’s Bock.

With a canine smile Floot set to work. Like a man reliving a three-day thirst, he alternated between the beer and the potato chips, and finished both at the same time.

Suppressing a polite burp, Floot turned his pink eyes down the bar, expectantly. Someone interrupted a conversation and repeated the order.

After all, that beer-guzzling pooch was Tom’s dog. He ordered Floot’s third beer, and one for himself. They each had an order of beef jerky.

Floot shook his long white hair from his eyes, and turned to his master, grinning as if to say, “See what you miss staying home watching TV?”

The other customers filled Tom in on the dog’s unusual pastime. Floot had wandered in one evening and people fed him potato chips and peanuts. When Floot returned to Jocko’s the next evening, Jocko had ordered him out. “In California, taverns are eating places. And dogs aren’t allowed—only customers.”

“Well, let’s make him a customer,” one of the bar-stool sitters said.

They taught him to hop up on a stool and to look as intelligent as some of the other patrons. One of the men spotted Jocko’s cup-like bowling trophy, and ordered it filled with beer for the dog.

Floot was hooked. He decided he liked the stuff.

He liked it so well, he started coming early and staying late.

Everyone in town knew about the beer-drinking dog—except the Coast family.

Tom could see that the late hours and the unusual diet was doing Floot no good. The dog was headed for Skid Row, unless he reformed. And, reforming him would be quite a problem. There weren’t any chapters of AA handy, and a canine branch seemed unlikely.

The only solution seemed to be removing him from temptation.
A rancher friend of Tom's suggested an answer. He had a Basque sheepherder who had mentioned that he needed another dog. And, the more Tom looked at Floot and his bloodshot eyes, the more he looked like a sheep-dog.

First, Tom bought Johnnie a little dog. One with legs too short for a bar stool. Then, he hoisted Floot into the car and took him out to the ranch.

The dog seemed to know what was happening. He didn't protest when Tom drove off and left him behind, in the care of the sheepherder.

At home, Johnnie and his new pup became fast friends. Everything returned to normal. Jocko's customers forgave Tom. They figured up how much it had cost them to keep Floot in beer.

A couple of months later Tom decided to drive out and see how the dog was getting along in his new job.

In a remote section of the ranch, he found the Basque herder having his lunch. A hundred yards away was the herd. Bossing the herd was a reformed Floot.

“How's he getting along?” Tom asked.

“Fine, Senor,” said the shepherd. “He’s the best dog I’ve ever had. His father must have been a good sheep dog.”

He waved and whistled toward the herd. Floot turned his responsibilities over to another dog and trotted in. He looked fine. Like hard work agreed with him.

“How did you do it?” Tom asked, amazed.

“When he first came to me, he had trouble getting the hang of it. So, I tried a little reward. Then he started acting like a sheep dog.”

With that, the herder spoke to Floot. The dog sat down and opened his mouth.

The herder picked up his leather wine bottle, and squirted a small stream into Floot’s mouth. The dog didn’t lose a drop. Then, he trotted back to work.

“We Basque believe a little wine hurts no one. His mother must have been a Basque dog.”

As Tom walked to the car, Floot barked, as if to say, “I like it here. Say ‘Hello’ to Johnnie and the Missis for me.

“And tell them down at Jocko’s that they can have the hair of the dog—I’ll take the hair of the man.”

AGAPE

BENEVOLENCE,
RECIROCITY,
COMMUNICATION.

THE RICH MOSAIC OF THE PERSON
PERMEATES, DIFFUSES
THROUGHOUT THE CONTENT OF COLD FACT.
BUD OF FLUORESCENCE TAKES SHAPE
IN THE LISTENING NEOPHYTE.

KNOWLEDGE,
LEARNING,
WISDOM,

TRINITY OF THE MIND.
WONDER, FAITH.

DILECTIO,
AMICITIA,
CARITAS!

DOROTHY VAUGHAN
SIGNIFYING BEING

Elliptic prisoned,
Two hands of HE live wombed in asteroid clay.
One hand winds in grief spun strands,
The other waits,
Paling of molecular cells.

Perihelion marks the stormed white sphere
Immense and hanging silent beyond.

This time no atom fails.
Objective and precise,
Obsolescence circles closed the pale blue hand
That dies . . .

. . . and she,

“She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word”
When unlocked of this grieved orbit
To have sought her in the world and found her
Not yet gone.

Done, her finite dreams where cries of infant breath
Awaken with the sleep.
Her nursling nihilility lost;
Struck dead before conception.

Great God! What men lie pained beneath these stars?
Who know no other suns than ours, by ours.
Hands touching hands touching the worlds hands touch
By ours they quit this anguished sleep bereaved,
This tear falling warm on the hands of WE.

End in I AM
In suffering,
Freed.
Born in a hand to reach beyond the space blue stream
To touch the Sun
And break the thread that binds the living to the dead.

Robert McGuire
EPILOGUE

Yours not this bee-festered garden
Dilated day
No, nor flowers fierce
In noon's fidelity

Yours but the hollow night's
Secret soliloquy
The tear to slide the painted face
While ever inaudibly,

The broken prattle of the hopeless muse
Grotesque and bittersweet Thalia.

K. Terry
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