The editors of Eclipse would like to express their thanks to the editors and staff of the Sundial for their aid in helping us reach the student body of Valley State.
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AN OPEN LETTER TO
ANDREI SINYAVSKY & YULI DANIEL

Pilloried, you are not alone. As much as we seek for ourselves we also seek for you that freedom found only in the understanding that no topic is inappropriate to art. As much as you, we face a public whose ideals are so shaped by various social forces that they can be considered more or less prejudiced. The difference between us lies in the overtness of your government’s actions. We too stand on trial often enough that your fate gives us back the image of ourselves, and we accept the image as we accept our own existence, with serious laughter. It is little understood that art can commit no crime except that of insincerity, and of that crime we pronounce you not guilty. Let us offer you this hand, the only hand in which the gypsy will find the line of rhetoric diminishing into nothingness. European culture, American culture, Russian culture: drop the first word from each of those phrases. Let the silent merging proceed. We proclaim in your defence and our own the necessary separation of art and the state. We enter as evidence the fact that no court, governmentally decreed, has jurisdiction in the land of the mind. The arrow at its apogee whispers towards its mark free and without guilt, we claim the same right for you, for ourselves.

THE EDITORS
AN INTERVIEW WITH
JAMES DICKEY

James Dickey stands out as one of the foremost poets writing in America today. Poet, critic, reviewer, and lecturer, Mr. Dickey's prominence has steadily risen with each new publication. At present he has in print five books of poetry (Into the Stone, Two Poems of the Air, Helmets, Drowning With Others, and Buckdancer's Choice) and a book of literary criticism (The Suspect in Poetry). His recent appointment as Consultant-in-poetry at the Library of Congress, beginning in September, 1966, testifies to the high regard with which he is held in his field, and the phenomenal sales level of his most recent book points toward the importance of his work in the eyes of the reading public. He was the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1961, became poet-in-residence at Reed College in 1963, and received the Melville Cane award for poetry in 1966. For the last three semesters Mr. Dickey has been Visiting Professor of English and poet-in-residence at San Fernando Valley State College. There is little that can be said in such a short space that would serve to encompass James Dickey. He is a massive man, whether in his sprawling in an easy chair during this interview and seeming to spread through the entire house, or in his friendliness which resembles nothing quite so much as it does the cavorting Dickey puppy that was continually stumbling over the microphone between us. Our interview automatically turned into a relaxed, rambling discussion, and yet there was always an undercurrent of high energy which seems to accompany James Dickey in whatever he does. Always there was the feeling that he is a person who is as meticulous and demanding of himself in his everyday life as he quite evidently has always been in his art. Throughout, there was never any question, but that Eclipse must join with the Hudson Review in saying, "We can no longer doubt that we are in the presence of a major talent, a true art."

Eclipse felt that should academic pedantry prevail in questions of grammar and syntax, the spontaneous tone of this interview would have been lost. For this reason, we have tried to retain as much of the relaxed atmosphere of the discussion as possible.
When did you begin to write poetry?

DICKEY
Well, I began, the nearest I can remember, in writing long letters. The early 40's were great times to write letters to girls from the people in the service, and I wrote long, romantic letters to girls and out of those, somehow, developed a kind of rudimentary poetry.

You've told me, I believe, that you have had about 5,000 hours of combat flying or approximately that.

DICKEY
A good many. I really don't know how many.

At least in the thousands?

DICKEY
In the thousands, definitely.

Yet the war doesn't really appear directly in an awful lot of your poems. There are a few in which it does. How, generally, do you feel it influenced your writing?

DICKEY
A lot—a lot—I was a member of the war generation. I remember almost every day that I was in the war, and I think almost everything that I've done is influenced, at least to some degree either directly or indirectly, most probably directly, by the fact that I was in the war. I write mainly from the standpoint of a survivor.

I believe you mentioned once that you began majoring in astro-physics when you entered college.

DICKEY
No, actually I minored in that.

Do you feel that this scientific background has influenced the direction or the content of your poetry?

DICKEY
I've never really found a way to use it in poetry. I've never really found a way to get it into verse, but there must surely be a way. I can claim but a very modest scientific background, but this I think is really a kind of enlargement of view which any poet would like to have more of. That's about all I can say; I really don't base a poetic on it.
You're one of the few, one of the very few poets writing in America today who uses the long narrative form as in "The Fiend" or "Slave Quarters." Do you find yourself particularly at home with the form, and how does it serve your particular poetic purposes?

DICKEY
Well, I like to get the reader more or less involved in the poem. I know that there is a school, such as Robert Bly and Jim Wright belong to, and they're from the school of the drop-their-nugget-in-your-hand-and-run type of poem. I don't feel that way. I feel that what I really want the poem to do is to devour the reader. I want it to engulf him. I want him to become entangled with it inextricably, and, in order to do that, you can't use just a line or two, you have to draw him in and then throw your lassos.

ECLIPSE
Do you have any particular concept or aesthetic of poetry?

DICKEY
Well, I guess in a way I do, a tacit one, but if you do as much reading in the English poetic tradition as I do, you see how much lip service is given to a kind of sterile convention in various eras. You know, the sterile convention of the Elizabethan blank verse line or the sterile convention of the 18th century couplet. Now they're not necessarily sterile. They were practiced as external forms by people who were in that particular period, and who practiced the form because everybody else did it. My feeling is that the first allegiance that one owes to the reader is to deliver to him something which is of viable coin as the communication between human beings, something you can believe in as a statement of how somebody feels, not as they feel out of a predetermined poetic convention.

ECLIPSE
In a script for the Voice of America about your poetry, you talked about meters and rhythms, and you said that, for you, the anapest more satisfied your needs that the usual iambic line of English poetry. Why, and is this still true for you?

DICKEY
No, it isn't still true, but for one period of time that I was writing or developing or whatever you might want to say, it had a very powerful attraction for me. I used to read a lot of Poe, and the carrying power of the metric seemed to me to be very powerful, although what was being said was not especially interesting. It seemed to me that despite everything that I'd heard to the contrary, that the anapest or the dactyl I guess, or whatever you call it depending on where you start counting, really is
capable, if you vary it strategically, is capable of a new kind of sound, or a kind of sound which is unusual because one thinks of mainly as something connected with either Poe or "The Shooting of Dan McGrew," but this doesn't exhaust the possibilities of the anapest, and I began to experiment with it to see what could be said this way which would give this great, powerful, surging rhythm. It seemed to me that the thing would be solved if you could say something which was poetically viable in this way; then the sound, and the fact that it was real poetry and not fustian like Robert Service, would create a kind of new aesthetic effect. That's all. This is what I was trying to get at.

ECLIPSE

Part of the reason I asked that question is because the form in *Helmets* was different from that in *Drowning With Others*. It changed again in your most recent book, *Buckdancer's Choice*, and you told me that it underwent still another change in your next book, *Falling*, which isn't yet published. Where is this leading you? What are the changes basically?

DICKEY

I don't know where it is leading, but I have one firmly rooted conviction about poetry and about the role of the poet; he must always be exploring and he must always try to get out beyond the frontiers where he has previously been. This is a great lesson of Picasso; you know, in an analogous art. I remember one time that in *Paris Soir*, or in one of the other French newspapers, they interviewed Jean Cocteau, and they asked him what his advice to poets was, and he said, "Find out what you can do best, and then don't do it."

ECLIPSE

In the same article you talked about the "split line." What is it?

DICKEY

A split line? Well, I don't know.

ECLIPSE

How do you use it?

DICKEY

What I'd like to think one can use it for is to present a wide variety of states of mind which are continuous with each other, but which are also sort of coterminal. It's a kind of an impressionistic technique which as nearly as I can tell approximates as close as I myself can get to the way the mind really associates, and it doesn't really associate in sentences so much as it does in word clusters. I tried this, in the few poems that I've written using this technique, if such it may be called, this kind of technique for writing in word bursts. If words occur to you in your mind, they only occur one, two, three at a time, but sometimes those are
STARTLING in their conjunctions as they do turn up, and in the proximity of one word to another running together to form a complete subject. This is the feeling that I have been trying to get with the split line, but I don’t know, I don’t think the possibilities of it have been touched in anything I’ve done.

ECLIPSE
In other words, you separate the bursts, one from the other?

DICKEY
Right; just with space, it might be as easy as that.

ECLIPSE
Robert Bly once described you as a “bull moose” in The Sixties magazine in one of the reviews he did of your work. What was he getting at, and what was your reaction?

DICKEY
Fine, it’s all right with me. I think that the type of criticism Robert Bly does when he compares John Logan to a one-legged crane or me to a bull moose, this is fun and games, but it doesn’t have anything to do with any real description of what we’re doing, either Logan or myself and probably Bly either, as he likens himself, I think, to a whopping crane. I think that... well, I don’t know; if you want to play that game it’s a lot of fun. I’d like to be as big and powerful as that, but I don’t think such analogies can be pursued without a certain danger of misrepresenting everybody concerned.

ECLIPSE
In your own criticism, in the book review section of the New York Times, you’ve dealt rather shortly and sharply with Alan Ginsburg and other poets of his ilk. Do you feel that Ginsburg and the movement he represents have no redeeming features?

DICKEY
No one said they did not have any redeeming features. It’s just that it seems that when one writes this much—as much as Ginsburg and Corso do, and as much as Robert Duncan does, and other people like Robert Creeley—they have no block against writing. They write an enormous amount. There was a fellow in San Francisco who’s always writing about dope addiction; he’s another one of them, but you see right then that something that has to do with the selectivity of the linguistic instrument has been left out—they maybe have bypassed this. The first thing one thinks is: Hallelujah, here is somebody who has bypassed the difficulty of writing, and they’re just pouring it out. If it were all gold, if it were all wonderful, then the whole problem of writing would be solved. But then one looks at it, and one sees no, the problem of writing is not solved,
because they have a congenital inability to turn a memorable phrase. They’re writing like the monkey in the hunt-and-peck system. You know, like the battery of monkeys postulated by Thomas Henry Huxley which, because of the laws of permutation and combination, would eventually produce, just by random hitting of the typewriter keys, all the works of Shakespeare and the Bible—the whole canon of English literature. They just keep pouring it out, hoping that something wonderful is going to happen, but it almost never does, and when it does it’s buried so deeply in the mass of claptrap that it would take a truly dedicated person to dig it out. Even then, I doubt very much if it’s worth it. All the work of Ginsburg and Corso and all these people is not worth one really well said thing, one well said thing by John Berryman, one well said thing by William Stafford, Louis Simpson or any other, Jim Wright or any of these people who are real poets. I was at Yaddo last summer, and I sat at the breakfast table next to a composer, and wishing to be knowledgeable, I said to him, “What do you think of John Cage and all these experimental composers?” He turned to me curtly and said, “I like real music not joke music,” and I feel the same way about poetry—I like real poetry not joke poetry.

ECLIPSE

In Helmets you have a long poem called “A Folk Singer of the Thirties.” Now your latest book, Buckdancer’s Choice, is titled after a folk song or folk tune . . .

DICKEY

Yes, right.

ECLIPSE

. . . what do you feel your connection is? How are you influenced by this rather loose genre we call folk music?

DICKEY

I don’t have any real connection. I’m really sort of a late comer to the game although I was raised among a sort of a folk music, but I don’t claim any tapping in on the real right thing any more than anybody else has. Buckdancer’s Choice was just a song that I learned on the guitar which reminded me of a song I used to hear my mother whistle at home. I’m not sure it isn’t the same, although I’m not sure that it is. “Folk Singer of the Thirties” came from reading Woody Guthrie’s autobiography, and reading Burl Ives’ ghosted autobiography, The Wayfaring Stranger, and wondering what those guys must have had despite the deprivation and the poverty, in the 30’s, when they rode the rods and sang their songs for their meals in the little depression ridden towns all over the country—what the difference between that would be and what they have now in
the great affluent and great society when they live in those uptown apartments and purvey their folksy humour on quiz shows and become actors and that sort of thing. There seemed to me a very great cleavage there. Something definitely has been lost. The music really has been lost. Burl Ives can sing "Jimmy Crack Corn" all he likes in night clubs, but it won’t be the same as when he was poor. It’s not better that he should be poor, merely that it’s closer to the true folk thing that he should wander and sing for his supper.

ECLIPSE
Your poems tend to be more descriptive than instructive or moralistic. For example, "The Fiend" is an almost lyric description of what the newspapers would call a sex pervert or a maniac, but there is nothing really judgmental about the poem. Do you feel that moralizing or judgmental tones do not belong in poetry?

DICKEY
No! I do think they do, but it depends simply on how you feel and where you feel the judgment lies. Myself, I read "The Fiend," and, then again, I wrote it so long ago that, unlike most of my things, I can’t remember exactly when I wrote it. It seemed like I worked over it a long time, but I feel a very strong sympathy for "The Fiend." I like "The Fiend." I think women who are explained endlessly to us have that air of mystery and beatification and pedestal dwelling for us, and can have it only in this kind of inaccessible state, such as you would behold them in if you looked in the window of an apartment when they were undressing. They have a marvelous, absolutely untouchable, transcendent quality there, and it seems to me that to say something about this would say something very real, not only about American life, but about the man and woman situation generally. One doesn’t want a woman to be too accessible, one wants her to be beyond—beyond and yet visible.

ECLIPSE
You do feel that moralizing, in other words, judgmental tones, do come into poetry?

DICKEY
Oh yes, they do. Poetry cannot avoid that. I mean the judgment that you pass on a subject that you’re writing about is either absolutely overt or is implied. You might leave it up to the reader to decide what is meant by what you’ve said, but you know, as the writer, what you feel about it yourself. You know whether you detest it or whether you like it, whether you have mixed feelings about it or whatever it happens to be. But you know you’ve taken a definite stand, and the poem necessitates that. You can’t write a poem without a definite stand. You can’t always
straddle a fence. Robert Frost was a very good fence straddler, but he really didn’t straddle it that much. He has an implied opinion in almost everything he says, although he, above all other poets, seems to give with one hand and take away with the other.

ECLIPSE
There seems to be a tremendous apathy towards poetry in America today, especially among the younger people of high school age. Do you see any way of overcoming it? I mean ways poetry might be taught in high school?

DICKEY
I don’t know. I myself was a victim, a product of that apathy. But now it seems to me like the pendulum is swinging the other way. I’ve never seen so much interest—in fact the interest frightens me. If you predicated an apathy to begin with, and ask what I would think would be some kind of remedy, I would simply say stop teaching bad poems in high school! Stop teaching “Bob-o-link, bob-o-link, spink-spank-spink,” and teach something of Randall Jarrell’s, John Berryman’s or William Stafford’s or something that will have some connection with the life that the student might be presumed to know something about. Teach Karl Shapiro’s poem about the drugstore where “they sprawl in the booths like rags not even drunk.” That’s them you’re talking about. It might arouse their indignation, but at least they would know what you were talking about. Teach poems which have a connection with something that they themselves are prepared to judge and have an opinion about.

ECLIPSE
Speaking of Randall Jarrell, in your critical article on him in The Suspect in Poetry you seem very split in your opinion. In the end it seems that you come out favoring the views of both critic ‘A’ and critic ‘B.’

DICKEY
No, I’m ‘B.’

ECLIPSE
You’re ‘B’ all the way through?

DICKEY
Is ‘B’ the favorable or the unfavorable?

ECLIPSE
‘B’ is the unfavorable.

DICKEY
Then I’m ‘A.’

ECLIPSE
The one “conjured up out of the wind?”
DICKEY

Right. I'm 'A.' I just write an article in the *American Scholar* which I hope resolves this. It haunts me, and will haunt me until my dying day as to whether Randall Jarrell, when he committed suicide last week, ever saw this. Because this is something I intended to get before the public. I do think that he is a valuable man. I do think that because of his very caustic tongue he made an enormous number of enemies, and, despite the powerful friends he had—like Robert Lowell, Delmore Schwartz, Allen Tate, and John Crowe Ransom—the fact that he had such an overwhelming number of enemies—that he himself had made—finally weighed on him too much and he snapped.

ECLIPSE

It's difficult to go through your poetry and really conclude that you are, say, addicted to one theme more than another. Do you feel that there are any basic themes which underpin most of your poems?

DICKEY

Well, no.

ECLIPSE

Other than broad themes such as . . .

DICKEY

I don't know. I think that most poets are not looking mainly for themes, but they are looking for occasions. They're looking for things that will make good poems in the kind of style that they themselves have developed. My own work, I'd say—well, I don't know. I remember Theodore Roethke, who was one of the unhappiest men I ever knew, saying that he strove all his life to proclaim a condition of joy. My work, despite all the emphasis on death and the sadness of so much of it is, essentially, affirmative. As I said earlier, I write from the standpoint of a survivor, and everything I do seems, when I stop to reflect on it, or, better still, when I don't stop to reflect on it, is very largely miraculous. It's miraculous to sit here and talk, to have a beer, to play a guitar, to make love or any of these things is wonderful to me. That's gravy. That's something I probably don't deserve to have, but who does?

ECLIPSE

Who do you think might have influenced your writing, other writers that is, or did any?

DICKEY

I have no notion at all. I've never read anybody that had exactly the sound that I have or that I wanted to emulate. I emulated a lot like any young writer. George Barker was a person that I technically imitated very early, but, luckily, none of those poems have ever been preserved.
Thomas was somebody that fascinated me, and I liked him a lot. Also, Hopkins, but I didn't have the right feeling or the right rhythm for them. Eliot: he's somebody I acknowledged as an eminence grise, but he never meant anything to me really from the standpoint of what I was trying to do. Theodore Roethke later on I liked, but, again, his rhythm was so different from mine. I guess the poets that I feel closest to—and this may be one of those kind of dim, magical things that's a result of the fact that you don't really know the language yourself well, and you impute to the foreign language poets that you read haltingly in their language some qualities they don't actually possess—but the poets that have influenced me in my fashion from the time I really started publishing books were foreign language poets, mainly the French: Jules Supervielle, Pierre Reverdy, André Frenaud, René Guy Cadou, and other writers of the contemporary French scene. Now these are not names that are known much by people here, but they were wonderful to me. I discovered them when I use to sit in cafes in France in 1954, and you know, in those days you could walk into a French book store with five dollars and walk out with as many poetry books—or any kind of books—as you could carry, and I just took them to a cafe and sat down and tried to puzzle out what these guys, who might have been from the planet Mars, were saying, and what I got was very exciting to me, and, I suspect, that influenced me more than anything in the English tradition because I was struck by it. I knew the English traditions. I knew the old "Intimations of Immortality" and I knew "To His Coy Mistress" and I knew Hamlet and I knew "Il Penseroso." I knew all that, I mean, I was tired to death of that. This was something new for me, and the excitement of it carried into the work I was trying to do at that time which in turn was the work that was fundamental to what I did later on and what I'm doing now. So it was very much a matter of chance.

ECLIPSE

No one then really sort of played Mr. Pound to your Mr. Eliot?

DICKEY

No. No.

ECLIPSE

How do you feel what you're working on or what you write relates, say, particularly to the contemporary world or to the modern United States? You seem to deal mostly with things that bring in the imagery of nature, but your imagery does not come a great deal in contact with urban life.

DICKEY

Well, I guess not. I've written some things about cities, about the apprehension of a city by somebody who is not himself a city person. To him,
I would like to think that the city has the quality of a vision. It's strange; I have one poem about going up to the top of the hotel or motel in New York and looking out over the city as the sun comes up. That I have done, but it's really not my kind of thing. My feeling is this: there are lots of poets who very effectively deal with the colored theme, civil rights crisis, and with the Vietnam situation—with the public occasions of that sort. I, myself, have no compulsion to do that. As I get older, I feel I have only one mission as a writer, and that is to try to render what life has felt like to one person who just happened, incidentally, to be myself. That's all.

ECLIPSE
You mentioned not being primarily a city person. You’re a country person, someone from Georgia, and southern writers have always been sort of distinct from the rest of the country. The southern poets form a very individual group. Do you consider yourself among that group to any degree?

DICKEY
I would like to, although my work, I don’t think, really has a strongly regional flavor. Some of the things couldn’t have been written if I hadn't been a Southerner, but most of them probably could have—although I may I be fooling myself there. I am not a deliberate regionalist like Donald Davidson or the early Robert Penn Warren was. I don’t really insist on that. I only sort of relate it or record it as something that is indigenous to my particular life, that’s all. But as a panacea or a code of action or a way of looking at existence as a Southerner, I don’t really hold with it. I've been gone too long, although, again, as I say, I may be fooling myself. The best things I have ever done may very likely precede from the fact that I'm a Southerner. I don't know, I think that in any person's life, as he gets up into his 20's and 30's and as I am now in my 40's, he realizes the implacability of one thing, and that is there is only one past, and that can't change.

ECLIPSE
How has teaching at a California state college struck you? Has it been a favorable experience? Have you enjoyed it?

DICKEY
Yes, I have enjoyed it enormously. I can say something scandalous here.

ECLIPSE
You can say whatever you please.

DICKEY
I'll tell you: one of the nicest things about Valley State is that it's confirmed me in my life long propensity as a fanny watcher. There are
some very nice things going on at the campus every time classes change. As to writing students, I've had some very good ones. It's a sad thing to me that I only get them for six months or a year. I can't, you know, know what's going to happen to them after that, and this puts an enormous burden on the teacher. You've got to give them everything you can give them in one semester. You've got to fix them. You don't want them to imitate you as a writer. You don't want them to do your thing—you want them to do their thing. But, discovering what their thing is, or helping them to discover it is one of the most difficult things there is, and since you're bound by the peculiar limitations of mortality yourself and judgments subject thereto, you're never sure that you're right in what you tell them to do. But, if I were to mount my seat on my Parnassus, which I have not yet really achieved or earned, and looked down on the people at Valley State, I would pick out ten students who I believe, and who shall be nameless, who I think, if assisted enough and if they go through the agony and the ecstasy of it enough, will make a place for themselves on the American Parnassus. That is, I've got ten, and surely five, that I would lay my cold coin on.

ECLIPSE
How did it compare with your experience at Reed College?

DICKEY
I probably shouldn't make a comparison like this. The Reed people are, head for head, more brilliant, more knowledgeable, better read, more dedicated. There are three or four excellent people I had at Reed that were really unbelievably good—good students, promising writers. But what Reed doesn't have and what Valley State, or a huge, amorphous kind of school like this does have is innocence. Innocence; and out of that it very well may be that all good things can flow. They have no preconceptions; they're willing to swing with themselves as they find themselves. Knowledge is a fine thing, but it can also be crippling. Too much book learning can interrupt the flow.

ECLIPSE
You mentioned something about Falling, something new you were trying in form.

DICKEY
Too early to talk about it. I think I've got a new kind of sound again, another beat, a halting, hesitant, stuttering kind of sound. I haven't really made it go yet, but occasionally I can hear a halting voice saying amazing things, and I would not permit myself to say anything more than that right now.
ECLIPSE
Are you going back to a shorter line?

DICKEY
No, no. I want to mix them up. I think what I really want is a sense such as if you stumbled on to the village idiot, and he began to mutter amazing things to you, and, like in "The Ancient Mariner," you could not help but hear—you know? That is the sound. That's what I want to try to get down, but, God knows, no telling what's going to happen.

ECLIPSE
Other than poetry and criticism, you're working on a novel . . .

DICKEY
I'm less sure there.

ECLIPSE
...what else?

DICKEY
That's all; just poetry, criticism and a novel and some reviews. I just tried my hand at reviewing some children's books for the New York Times. I don't really know what to say about children's books, but I found something to say. Santayana or somebody, maybe it was Nietzsche, said, "The poet is he who, not having anything to do, finds something to do." That's what I did; I found 14 children's books to review, and I wrote on those with, if maybe not a great deal of erudition, at least enthusiasm based on my own innate childishness and the more authentic childishness of my own children.

ECLIPSE
Both your earlier books were dedicated to your family, is Buckdancer's Choice also dedicated to them? Your family plays a great part in your life and your poetry, don't they?

DICKEY
Right. All of them in one way or another. I believe in the continuity of the blood lines. I believe in the possibility of some kind of miraculous birth occurring. The oddest thing about it is that when the birth of any child, any human child, occurs it's as miraculous as anything could conceivably be. My great love of my middle years is my children. I just regret so much that I didn't have a whole lot more of them. I would like to have had eight or ten children, but what I hope is that my boys will be more productive than I am or I have been, because what I really hope to be is a patriarch. I'd like to have hundreds and hundreds of them running around. Population explosion be damned! Let those others be sacrificed, my brood will be indispensable.
ECLIPSE
James Dickey, the patriarch, one of your many different facets.

DICKEY
Right, right. I remember saying in an article that was published in the New York Times Book Section, about a man going around giving poetry readings, who didn’t know how to act before an audience, and he says to himself, “Well, it will be all right, just be yourself,” and then, in the next breath, he thinks, “Ah; but which self?” The same with any writer, because every man has in himself such a plethora of different personalities. Everybody has in himself a saint, a murderer, a pervert, a monster, a good husband, a scout master, a provider, a business man, a shrewd horse trader, a hopeless aesthete. Everybody has all these and more in one proportion or another, as it’s determined by his personality. There are all kinds of contradictory selves. Essentially, the most exciting thing for a writer, especially a young writer, is to get as many of these energized as he can, to let the monster speak as well as let the prospective husband speak. You know, you shouldn’t limit it all to one thing, and if these selves are contradictory, say with Whitman, “Do I contradict myself? Very well then, I contradict myself, I am large, I contain multitudes.” Which you do, which everybody does. I think the great thing for the young writer is to let as many possibilities swing as he can confront, and to get these out. Valery says, “Never go into the self, except armed to the teeth,” but when you go into the self armed to the teeth you see so many different people there and each one of them has a voice and it is listening to these different voices in the self that makes it so enormously exciting. America is famous for writers beginning well and then petering out or repeating themselves and not being able to develop, but these are people who had early success and who fastened on to the one voice that produced their early success as their voice, as the only voice. Steven Crane did this for example. If I could just get people to see that they’re not limited, that if somebody is crazy about their first book that’s no sanction to do nothing else but the same manner or the same style as the first book for the rest of their lives. That way lies sterility and madness. Let the first book speak for itself and its voice, but then go on and ask that diametric opposite in the soul, all right buddy, the good guy had his say, what are you going to say, and let him write the next book or the next poem.

ECLIPSE
And that’s what you’ve done?

DICKEY
That’s what I’ve tried to do.
ECLIPSE
You’ve let all the various aspects of yourself speak; the archer, the sportsman, the guitarist, the husband . . .

DICKEY
The fiend had to have a say. The best fan letter I ever got was from a police lieutenant who read “The Fiend” in the Partisan Review, and he wrote to me and he said, “I’ve always had a sneaking sympathy with you guys. Please don’t answer. I’m not going to sign this, and I won’t give you any return address, but I’m a member of the New York City Police Department.” That’s the most rewarding letter I’ve ever gotten in twenty years as a writer, not twenty, but surely twelve or fifteen years as a writer. In that one I was convinced that I’d said something that mattered to somebody, and, while maybe it shouldn’t have mattered to him specifically, the fact that it did pleases me very much. “I’ve always had a sneaking sympathy with you guys.” I think every male in America, and probably the world, is gorgeous material for a peeping tom anyway, don’t you?

ECLIPSE
Definitely.

DICKEY
If he had the right situation.

ECLIPSE
Having had it when I was a boy . . .

DICKEY
You never forget it.

ECLIPSE
One last question. Where do you think poetry in America today is going, and what is its promise? What are the poets going to be doing, because, you know, poetry today is so amorphous, if it isn’t the Beats then what is it?

DICKEY
It’s not the Beats, and it’s not the Academics, it’s the mavericks like Stafford and the . . .

ECLIPSE
But the mavericks aren’t getting that much published.

DICKEY
No, God knows. It’s a question of what you think is going to happen on the one hand, and what you hope happens on the other hand.

ECLIPSE
What are both?
What I think is going to happen, and, maybe what I hope is going to happen are not too far apart. I think there is going to be more of an introspective kind of poetry and a personal kind of poetry. When you think of Salvador Dali, the painter, as being a sort of primary exemplar of the surrealist movement, but surrealism in writing is probably going to have more far reaching effects than surrealism in painting ever had. People like Wright and John Nofel in Chicago, and Robert Bly and Bill Knott, and there are others who are essentially late blooming products of the surrealist movement of the 20's in France. I think that the surrealists—Eluard, Tzara, Breton, Desnos, Blanchard—and all those people of the 30's broke down a linguistic barrier that these people like Bly and Wright are just sort of timidly going through. I think surrealism—not surrealism itself and the odd images like the “white haired revolver” and that sort of thing, that’s not the fruit that is going to be born, but the general sense of the breaking down of linguistic and psychological barriers that the surrealists began—is going to result in a kind of an odd new poetry that nobody has ever yet written or heard of or envisioned. The whole business of what the New York literati like to call “the deep image” has not really been explored at all. The timid little forays into the unconscious that have been taken by Bly and Wright and these people are almost nothing to what possibly might come later. If I were to cast now a literary horoscope for the poetry of the future, I would say that it would be a kind of a responsible free association as opposed to irresponsible free association. Now, the joker in the deck is what constitutes responsibility? What I would posit would be some guy who had a strong personal sense and a strong personal control—which amounts to a creative sense—over an extremely powerful and sensuous subconscious. Now, out of that the new poetry will come. I’m looking for it.
"AT 5:30 P.M. WILL BE A RE-ENACTMENT OF A MILITIA MUSTER OF '75"

The box grows slowly, down in Williamsburg, and we walk slowly through the maze of years until the drummers catch us with their beat and fifers trill melodious martial news, bringing the children running to the green, and we are children too. We run along behind the men who leave the Raleigh Tavern, leave the cobbler's bench, and leave the bells of Bruton Parish Church to evening prayer. Shrilling down the Duke of Gloucester Street the fifers reach the square. They slow their steps to half-time near the flag, where stars explode defiance from the staff. An antique cannon booms, a silversmith in homespun stubs the fuse, and drill begins. We see a brown-wigged officer command and know his heritage is not an act, his special issue: drill, defend, or die. Today that man would not be there, the man without a leg. Nor would the boy beside the man who shoulders a blunderbuss, a gun. The roll of drums, abrupt and silent now leaves a vacuum like a snare, echoing drums, and fifers cradle the music in our minds. We stand so still the birds take over air and we are lifted beyond the sunset sky to see and hear the muster of sleeping men snared by drums that rumbled long and far before this casual cluster of free men.

—ROBIN JOHNSON
LOVE SONG
FROM PACIFIC PALISADES

(watching vapor trails from launchings
at Vandenberg Air Force Base)

And suddenly the earth is not enough.
Familiar with this element, the hill
Of some new element is working, rough
And urgent, shoving slag and bones to fill
Dry ruts, freeing veins to run uphill
And warm the sensitive clay. Surprised in birth
The churning ground gives off rare lustre, still
And opalescent, metamorphic worth
That can't be measured by any coinage known on earth.

The pressure bursts the seal of a deeper pool.
It rolls up instinctively to splay
Out lively streams that alternately cool
And warm, calm and foam, responding gay
And light-struck, giddy whirlpools drunk on spray.
They spill a spiral seaward course, attain
Allegro grace before they kiss the bay.
It waits ... the sea ... deeper than any stain
And stronger than rivers or lovers, merging, ingathering rain.

Buoyant lungs ride out cyclopean seas
Till something above the waves throws off a light.
Higher than drying sea gulls holding the breeze,
A tremor of prisms, like rainbows gaining flight,
Repeats a flashing code on clouds, a bright
Red-orange and yellow, green-blue-purple flare,
And a radiant bridge throws up its arc toward night.
The moon prepares to draw her tides. Aware,
Exalted, new-found wings earn right-of-way to air.

In swing and soar the flight creates the bird,
And friction prinks a wing, ignites a spark
That quicksilvers to earth. A crack is heard,
minute explosion, blaze of kindled bark
That holocausts through trees to torch the dark.
Pure grandeur, tongues of wildfire lick the pyre
Of woods and fields and continents. An ark
With asbestos wings ascends from the crucial spire,
And suddenly the earth is sun, a star on fire.

—Robin Johnson

SETTING OUT FOR ZENITH

Tolls are taken on the skyway,
tokens of no quiet night.
Thruway offers exits
only at the start.
Dizziness and heights
require compatibility, or else
the pounding blood may wash
you out before the road.

Danger grins beside you,
the hitch-hiker with credentials
whom no patrol will oust
in answer to your flag.

None will find the wreck,
and come to think of it,
has anyone returned to tell
if the end is near a place
worth going, or even
food, or
rest?

—Robin Johnson
BJ

BJ scuffed down the road, stooping occasionally to pick up a dusty pebble which she wiped off on her dresstail, peered at squintingly, then dropped into a small green sack which was tied about her waist. The heavy noonday sun beat on her bare arms and face. The sweat at her temples matted the yellow hair and pulled down threads of it that stuck to her face.

“J wish I was a handful of sun,” she thought, as she tried to peer at the white sky above her. “It’s lovely hot today.”

There was no breeze to tease the waves of heat that rose from the road; no breeze to raise little pools of dust or chase leaves down the ditches. “Better,” thought BJ, as she closed her eyes for a moment, feeling the heat bear down until her head swelled large and light. She watched the patterns of red and yellow rocket behind her eyelids and tried to follow them back into the trails of her mind. She opened her eyes again, but left them squinted against the glare in order to watch the wavy shapes of trees and fence soar up and down through her pale lashes.

Once again used to the light, BJ walked on, picking up a stone here, kicking one there. She looked down at her heavy brown shoes: they oppressed her, but the thought of the hot road on her bare soles was intolerable. Her feet felt blistered through the thick rubber, and she laughed a little at the pain.

As she walked past the bend in the road, she deliberately turned her head away from the farmhouse on her right. Directly in front of the house she stopped to kick a stone, listening for the call:

“BJ! Wanna play?”

“Child,” she thought, although the boy, at ten, was only a year younger than she.

She kicked the stone again, harder, ignoring the voice through two repetitions of its demand. Finally, she picked the pebble up and stared at it intensely, ready to pop it into the green sack the instant that Billy arrived panting at her side.

“Whatcha got, BJ?” asked Billy.

“Nothing,” she replied in a disdainful tone. “Nothing at all.”

“Wanna play?” the boy queried again. “Daddy fixed the tire swing.”

“Daddy fixed the tire swing,” mimicked BJ. “I wouldn’t touch your old tire swing,” she added.
"We can play in the hayloft," he said, looking at her with his head held askew.

BJ picked up a stone and dropped it in the dust. "You know what I want to play, Billyboy," she said, and started humming an imaginary tune while surveying the sky. Sometimes Billy thought he hated BJ, but he always resigned himself to her wishes. "All right, BJ. We'll play 'Scary'."

As they walked past the house, Billy ran in and returned with a small paper bag. They walked on, a few hundred feet, into the woods. It was a sudden change to step into shade, and BJ sighed—not from relief, but almost as though she hated to leave the blistering heat and godawful glare. A hum of woods insects greeted them as they trooped through occasional thickets. BJ stopped to survey an ant hill. The little insects running up and down the sides of the slope seemed to amuse her. "Dumb little animals," she thought. She rose from her knees and stood looking at them for a moment. Billy watched the corners of her mouth turn up as she put one foot on the hill and slowly pressed down, twisting her foot in short semicircles back and forth, back and forth, crushing and churning the ants into the earth.

She stopped only when Billy interrupted her: "You're always first, BJ. Can I be first today?"

"All right, Billy," she relinquished. Billy took the bag and ran into the woods, from where he shortly returned.

The bottom of the bag was bulging with weight, and he held it up high for her, with the top open.

"Scary!" he cried delightedly, "Scary!"

BJ snorted and stuck her hand into the bag, pulling out a huge bullfrog.

"Okay, BJ, your turn. But please, BJ, no webs, huh? Please?"

"All right, chicken, no webs." She sauntered off into the woods, leaving Billy with his imagination, which was awesome enough. Her taunting voice sang from the woods, "Billyboyobillyboy, waitillyousee, waitillyouseecceeeeee!"

He knew, but he couldn't leave. His legs would not move.

BJ returned, singing, "Billyboyobillyboy . . ."

"It isn't webs, is it, BJ? You promised . . ."

"Come on, Billyboy, come on . . . see what's in the pretty brown bag . . . come on," she coaxed in a singsong voice.

The bag looked light. Maybe there was nothing in it, maybe she was
just fooling. BJ held the bag up, and he raised his hand, clenching it against fear. He opened his hand and stuck it slowly into the bag.

When his hand reached the bottom, he screamed. He ran out of the woods screaming, the sticky webs still clinging to his hand.

BJ laughed. BJ rolled with laughter. When she couldn't laugh any­more, she dropped the bag and walked farther into the woods. She reached a clearing and stood with her eyes closed, feeling the searing heat. The red soared behind her eyelids until she felt light again. Free and light. The yellow net reminded her of the cobwebs, and she smiled to herself.

The warmth felt so good. “A handful of sun,” she thought, as she opened her eyes. “A drop of sun,” she sighed, “and I feel so good.” The life swelled in her and she felt she was floating into the heat. She walked quickly into the woods again, and to the pool.

The pool was somewhat smaller than it had been earlier in the sum­mer. The moss was dried to a crust a foot down the sides and, from there, it reached out in great dark strings under the murky water.

BJ lay down in the grass. She turned over on her back and looked at the sky through the branches of the heavy trees. “Blue,” she thought, “and white and gold. But not enough.”

She sat up and looked around. The only spot of sun large enough to suit her was in the water. BJ removed her shoes and socks and stepped into the pool, walking to the edge of the ledge that jutted out underneath the water. She stood with her feet in the silt, squashing it through her toes. The moss wove slowly back and forth, set in motion by ripples that bubbled out in ever-widening circles. BJ watched the skeeters glide across the shaded edges of the pool; the green and blue dragonflies skimming through the air. She closed her eyes and watched them glide beyond her eyelids, feeling at once the surge of life, and the warmth that incinerated her mind. She lifted her arms and felt the glow of heat washing her skin. Even though the green bag of stones weighed heavily about her waist, lightness filled her; her head spun great pinwheels of light.

BJ stretched out her arms to encircle the heat. Reaching out for the center of the pool, she plummeted like primeval adamant where a handful of sun sparkled on the water.

—Theodora Sims
ANOTHER WORLD

In another country
The cold wind
chilled our hands and feet
in the pearl-grey dawn of another day
as we lay froglike on the beach
my blue lips whispering on her,
and I thought of another world.

I have often thought
what were her thoughts?

But Alas!
I cannot even recall her name.

—GERALD MARCOLIS

GLORY BE TO THE GLOWING PEACH OF LIFE

That under this facade of words
an eternal truth is present
Held in the pit of this poem-revealed
to all when in the moment—one reads

GLORY BE TO THE GLOWING PEACH OF LIFE

I write this for all,
You who do not hold the anchor time
between your legs
And cannot smash your chains upon this anvil
But watch with frightened, terror-stricken
eyes the—

I

Panoramic visions of despair that spread
beneath the soft pregnant hands that move.
Shaping from above, below the bright,
violent, flickering cinder
Anguish breeds despair and the dawn
of this thought bears the twilight of every moment
Stand apart—crash your shackles
together,
Announce by the clang
that you testify to the rise and decline of the perpetual moment.
Spread your lead wings and drop
your chains
Now follow me through the hot
sun’s cool center
For beyond that fervid hoary eye of
hours and seasons
A naked truth dwells.

II

If this be the age of the forlorn
Take heed—for the moment is
one of the ripened intensity of glory
When all that was is now
When all that will be is now
Ecstatic moment of beauty
nature, wonder!
That is the sway of trees in the
cool morning of a timeless dawn.
child, wonder!
That is a little freckled girl—eternal kid,
playing hopscotch with a bandaid on her knee,
an elastic band around her wrist and a lollypop in her mouth
celestial, wonder!
That is an ethereal star
dances fancy,
singing star that forever
walks in limbo to flimsy delicate night clouds.

III

Where the moment holds firm
It is a candle in the void
Against all of your ebony silent nights
—watch to see your reality illuminated
In the one instant—which is the ever-recurring moment
Where all must exceed itself to be itself.

IV

And all who have thus far heard the poet’s poem
Shout from the philosopher's abysmal cave—

"Incarnate doom for this iconoclast's iridescent art."

This is the resounding echo
From the holders in that hollow hell
of dark despairing disbelief
To them I say—"Hail, horrors! Hail"
For they have minds not to be changed
by place or time.
But chained by both.

Now look ye on, ye centuries of old,
Behold my fellow fellows.
Posterity will testify to—

the living Phoenix that blurs out in the quietude of my heart
through the calm of my soul and placid spirit—
"Watch me rise!
I will rise!
Watch me rise!"

V

Who is this young madman
Who holds to speak with the fire of truth
and his muse as the symbol of beauty?

VI

Nay,
And I say—
I am that young idiot
And the only child who was a man
Whom I never knew
Was my own protracted dream of myself
In the image of the last of a long line of apocalyptic poets
Of the new order of private realities
Where only "now" is held sacred
And the moment is the only god.

Listen on, listen on.

For I remember standing on a violet star
—stooping down and lifting
the immense cup that held
the Pacific Ocean to my lips
When I drank deeply of the Pacific
    and was not pacified
    and felt an anxiety to drink more
To push on and on and on and on
    that moment of dream and wonder
With wide eyes;
    mad, yes!
    real, yes!
    true, yes!
Screamed

"GLORY BE TO THE GLOWING PEACH OF LIFE."

For it is in every minute moment
That I live through my own
    perpetual Renaissance of intensity.

VII

That in a trice
Can realize—
    glittering fragments of light
That shoot in shimmering beams through my skull
    ignite! spark! flash!
Then watch me fumble, grumble
    mumble—ROAR
    and not humbly come forth
    with the thought

VIII

That freedom is a sordid boon to those who crave enslavement
And I cry to you that every man
    lives in a chained agony of his own mind—
    and dwells in the prison of himself.
That every mind is free only to desire enslavement
And freedom is a sordid boon to the bird chained by the skyways
    to the man nailed to his imaginative tomorrow’s highways
    to the women—in her yesterdays
but not
for he who lives in the intense moment
    free for always.

—GERALD MARGOLIS
Matutinal sun spread on a slice of butter. The eyes are burning. The head is very heavy from a long night without dreams. Nobody is home. The black kitten of mine is purring and happy; I know it; we can talk and understand each other.

Malborough s’en va-t-en guerre . . . .

I call the cat “M’sieur Malborough” and nobody knows the reason for such an unusual name. Scabby little kitten! A password. All the strange ideas in the world merge in the weird deep fields of the dawn.

The coffee is boiling in the pot. A perfect stagnation reigns and overtakes my thoughts.

At the edge of the sink a towel is hanging. One can see the extreme beauty of the shape as it is lightened by the lamp on the ceiling. Curves concave and convex intersecting each other, forms transfigured and demolished with a profound feeling of creation as the wind started blowing outside and the leaves now shaken disturb the clear view of the mountains.

I am holding a piece of white bread that I soften with the tip of my fingers. Mud and light pooling a dream out of time and place.

Malborough s’en va-t-en guerre
La ra la la la la
For he’s a jolly good fellow
La ra la la la la

The Sunday mornings in the past and in the future, scrambled eggs in the kitchen for the family. I and “M’sieur Malborough” eating the bread and drinking “café au lait” lying down on the filthy rug. Stains of wine and stains of grease and stains of blood. Ants crossing the crucial point and saving their lives. The kitten is angry so is the pyrope sculpture; then we get up all of us and we dance the Pyrrhic.

The kitten licks my thigh.
The coffee is boiling.

Then we get up all of me and you and he and she and we dance. No matter what we dance. We DANCE dance dance . . .

The cup is empty and clean as I fill it up with dark coffee. I caressed the kitten and carefully washed by hands and wrists. I soften the tip of my fingers with a piece of bead. A piece of enriched bread.

I switched off the light, (it is not dark anymore), and I am lifting up my hands so I can measure my height. One cannot be sure of his height; it varies from one day to another.
In the deep quietness of the morning the small garden is extending the possibilities of a hope and transition. Flowers and blossoms slightly moving in the stream of life towards the end and endness. Bred in falsehood. Aside the kitten’s dung drying up changing colour and texture. And the sun shining. And a dry burning taste in the mouth. Within the golden olive oil submerged green tears, the olives, reflect the insipid light of a match.

I spit on the rug.
A broken sun in the morning plenty of bits of tufts.

“M’sieur Malborough” is asking for his portion of “café au lait,” eyes wide open.

Meow meemeow mrrreowww mrrrrrrreowow
I ask myself questions and then I laugh and laugh and laugh, staring at my fingernails and then sober and sad.

—You and me and all of us in the doors of perception every morning with a new adequate sun, I say.

The window was opened a few seconds ago and a perfumed breeze penetrates corners and instantaneous thoughts. Exorcism of a new born day. The breeze that breaks through the pores of the huge leaves.

Laughter.

Meow mrrmeow meemeow

Laughter.

“Ta gueule Malborough.” People singing, people running under the flags. “Pauvre M’sieur Malborough” . . .

Malborough s’en va-t-en guerre
Ne sait quant reviendra
La Trinité se passe
Malborough ne reviendra
M’sieur Malborough est mort
Est mort et enterré

Steps hurrying on the stairs.
A tap is dripping on the sink. Lacrimae rerum.

Scrambling eggs and staining the rug swimming in the reality of the dawn and filling whatever is left with thoughts and fears.

Poor ol’ “M’sieur Malborough.”

Not lonely anymore but alone.

—DIMITRIS ZORBAS
That's my last Duke, drawing the curtain,
Standing so smug—so smug. And certain
That dead I'll be faithful. Ah! Yes, and yet
“Pandolf's hands” did paint me. Forget
He must've that for pleasure he painted—
Still for others to see! Ah, tainted
His mind by my death. And the stranger inquires,
“How came such a glance to that face?” “Well, sires
And Lords, t'was the touch of the observant artist
To note that my presence brought joy . . . To enlist
All pleasures between us he saw.” And he surely
Recalls all those favors to me. And purely
And simply forgets to mention the fact
That officials aren't always reserved. To distract
Attention was a grievous crime. In spite of
The fact I had borrowed his name, I did love
To ride my mule, and find in the orchard
Cherries left there by a fool who'd been tortured
For paying attention to me. And I smiled,
Why not, at officious guests, who, beguiled
By my beauty and charm, would graciously speak
In eloquent language. And I was too weak
To resist. Now he speaks of the woman for whom
He has love—and respect—and adequate room
For a sizable dowry. But let her beware,
Else her bronze head shall set ... perhaps over there . . .
And under, a sign: “Sculptured Just for the Duke
With Care and Precision by Claus of Innsbruck.”

—ROBERT KOFF
WITH TEA AND LEMON

She has come home to the white room
That locked her dreams in paper roses,
The curtains more fragile
Than her wedding dress.

Torn in half in her morning,
Unhealed on a velvet chair,
She marvels at her wholeness
In the mirror.

Where is her mother who does not come
With tea and lemon
To say love is a fig
And a feather?

She knows where he is, his sorcery spilled
In willing hands,
The bright lust of another’s hair
Stitching his eyes closed.

Blind, he is yet beautiful. There are weeks
Ahead, months, and years, years.
Outside a pigeon wears a prism on his breast;
A horse rears.

--HELEN SORRELLS

THE SEVENTH WAVE

She left so suddenly her sunburned arm,
Raised to the day,
Had to salute that depth
Where she lives now,
Surely all sweet curved yet
And probable.

She has taken below the seventh wave
Heat that flared unhoarded
In her night;
Flame that turned on fact and questioning
So gay a light
The grave must be transformed,
Windy and space lit as the shore she left.
Do not grieve for her.
She put to flight
Those angels with the moulting wings
Who wove the myth
And preconceived its stings.
She so clearly dared
Breathe all the blue
Of her last April
To plunge, as if in water,
Into death.

—Helen Sorrells

INVITATION ENGRAVED ON SUNLIGHT

While this fresh fall of light,
This summery burn,
Heats our travelling blood,
And the wheel turns
Upward in the hills
Of your forgiveness,
Come to my country.
I make two promises:
Here prophets are given
The keys to their cities;
All the statues are
Living.

—Helen Sorrells
The thunder outside kept making its muffled rumbling noise as I tossed in bed. I kept thinking it would eventually die out and I could keep on sleeping. But it did not die out . . . it became stronger, finally developing a sensuous rhythm which repeated itself time after time. I got tired of listening to the noise and looked out from my window.

Throughout the night the wind had pushed the clouds toward the sea. The sun, for the first time in weeks, was now allowed to shine against the deep blue background. It did not make any sense, for I was sure I had heard thunder. The white-washed walls and windows of the rooms encircling the vine-roofed patio reflected the sunlight which had bypassed the bare arms of the vines. I blinked my eyes, looked at the sky, and looked down again. I noticed then that my mother, my aunt and my younger brother, Juanito, were standing on the middle of the patio looking up at the sky.

“What’s going on?” I said.

My brother yelled, “It’s a revolution!”

I jumped out of bed, put my pants on, looked around the room for my shoes and finally found them under the bed. I forced my feet into them and tried to find my jacket. It was under the bed too. At last I was dressed well enough to go outside and find out what was happening. My stomach was already churning with excitement. “Mother, is it true?” But before she had a chance to answer, a plane flew past our house flying at almost treetop level; a smaller plane followed in pursuit. The thunder’s muffled rhythm droned over the southeastern part of the city. “Something is going on at the harbor!” I said. My stomach and lower parts of my body felt very warm and my head felt dizzy.

“Pablo . . . donde piensas a ir?” my mother said.

“Out,” I answered.

“Come here!” But it was too late; I had already mounted my bicycle and was almost through the side door when she yelled, “You have not had your breakfast!”

“Luego!”

“Tu padre te va a dar una paliza!” She yelled after me.

I knew my father would spank me, but my stomach kept making funny noises, and my mouth felt so wet that the saliva made lumps in my throat as it went down.

A slight breeze ran through the streets making dead leaves drunk with joy as they staggered and crawled toward the curb in their newly-
found freedom. It was Tuesday, but the stores were closed and their windows were protected by heavy metal curtains. The heavy wood doors of Our Church of St. Francis were also closed. It seemed that everybody was on the street clustered in small groups, talking with excited loud voices and puncturing the brisk air with their gestures. I walked toward one of the groups. "It started about six o'clock this morning," someone said.

"And I thought it was a storm at first."
"I thought it was a bomb, like the one somebody threw at the bakery about three years ago."
"At least we'll have a couple of days off."
"Do you think we'll get to hear the soccer next Sunday?"
"Sure. This will only last a couple of days."
"Are you sure of that Fernando?" Carlitos' mother asked her husband. Carlitos detached himself from his mother and came over to where I was.

"Where are they fighting?" I said.
"Down by the harbor."
"Want to look at it?"
"My mother won't let me," he said.
"She's not looking at you now . . . I've never seen a big ship," I said. "C'm on, let's go."
"I told you," he said.
"She turned around. It's going to be fun," I said.

An open army truck, its green paint faded by a thick coat of dust rambled down the street in the direction of the harbor. The crowd became somewhat silent as the truck went by. I counted twenty soldiers inside the truck. They sat very erect and unsmiling. They did not talk with one another. I felt kind of funny then.

I thought I would not have a chance to get close to the harbor, and I rode toward a portion of the coastline which drove deeply into the sea. Hundreds of people were already there. I rode to the edge of the cape, and after pushing my way through the spectators, I saw the cause of the thunder.

The sea was calm that day and the ships' bows sliced the water like razor blades cutting paper. They slashed toward the harbor and turned to present their bodies while the thundemakers went into action. The man next to me yelled, "Bueno! Give them another round!"
Another man from further down the line said, "Listen to those burps!" Everybody laughed. He took a bottle of cheap wine from his pocket, uncorked it, wiped the edge of the bottle with the palm of his hand, and bent his neck back to take a long drink of wine. Then, he passed it to the man next to him.

The ships came closer and closer to the port as the resistance to their advance decreased. Finally I was able to see small figures in blue uniforms running around the deck, and the recoil of the guns immediately after they had been fired.

One of the destroyers changed course and came toward the beach where part of the crowd was; it slowed and fired one round which hit the beach about five-hundred meters from where I stood. I jumped on my bicycle and tried to get away, but the man who had made the comment about the burps pushed me off against the ground in his hurry to get away. There was a flurry of legs dashing for safety. A couple of people trampled on me and my bicycle. They cursed and one of them said, "Damn you kid! Why don't you stay home!" When I got up, I saw that the rear wheel of my bicycle had about ten bent spokes and was unfit to be ridden. I pushed it, mentally calculating how much it would cost to have the wheel fixed. About halfway down the cape, I stopped and looked back at the harbor.

Fires were everywhere; it was as if that part of the city was enveloped by a solid, sooty-black wall with a myriad of red and yellow blotches. Nearby, a petroleum tower stood watch over the holocaust. The ships fired once more. A lazy thunderbolt crept up toward the sky and finally fell in a dense fiery mist. Two jet planes flew over the harbor and disappeared into the distance. The crowd was silent.

The shelling lasted for about three hours. It was now nine o'clock in the morning. I straightened the bent spokes on the rear wheel of my bicycle as best as I could and started for home. The crowd broke up into small groups and walked toward the city.

When I arrived home, my mother rushed out of the kitchen and yelled, "You come here and eat something! Just because your father is out of town, don't get any ideas you can do what you'd like, young man!"

"Yes mother," I said. I ate a couple of biscuits and drank a cup of hot chocolate.

"Eat some more!"

"I am not hungry, mother!" I said.

"Don't you dare answer me in that tone of voice!" she snapped.

"Yes, mother," I said and got up from the table.
“Where do you think you are going?”

“I'm only going to the door, mother,” I answered.

My brother who was playing in the living room yelled, “Wait for me!”

We went outside. The day had changed . . . the sky had become gray and the sun hid behind dark, ugly clouds which allowed only an occasional finger of light to show through. A sharp and bitter wind bit the streets stopping only to angrily slap the blackened and dead leaves against houses and the skeletons of trees. Most of the people from the neighborhood were inside their homes and the street was the property of strange people who walked away from the harbor looking straight ahead seriously, and stopping only to rest momentarily before going on.

Don Carlos, our next door neighbor, was talking to the pharmacist and to another man in front of the drugstore. “Looks like it's going to rain again,” Don Carlos said.

“This weather is crazy. It's so unpredictable,” the pharmacist said.

“I hope it doesn’t rain too hard. During the last storm, my basement flooded,” the other man said. A large group of people went by and the three men stopped talking.

“Imagine, they have been walking like that since the bombardment began,” Don Carlos said to no one in particular.

“I had no idea that the harbor contained so many people!” the pharmacist said.

“And the things they are carrying! One woman was carrying a picture of Christ, and the man next to her had a radio and a pair of pants in a wheelbarrow,” the other man said smiling. I didn't say anything. I looked at my brother and he was grinning. I kicked him and he ran home crying.

The pharmacist said, “One of them had the gall to ask me for some gauze!”

“Did you give it to him?” Don Carlos asked.

“I had to. I didn’t like the way he looked at me; but I'll never again open the pharmacy early in the morning! I have to pay for the gauze . . . it is not free nowadays!” Don Carlos and the other man nodded in agreement. Another group of people walked by and Don Carlos and the two others were silent.

Mrs. Garcia, an old widow who dressed in black and had a permanent scowl on her face when she talked to us kids, came outside carrying a folded card table with one hand and a few cups on the other. She placed the cups in the hallway of her house and assembled the table on the sidewalk. After placing the cups on the table, she went back inside the
house and returned with a huge copper pot which she placed on the table. A small group of people gathered round her. “Here is some hot chocolate, if you want something to drink,” she said.

Don Carlos said to his friends, “Let’s go and get something to drink. It’s starting to get chilly. “Mrs. Garcia,” he called, “Do you have something for us?”

Mrs. Garcia looked at him and answered in mock amazement, “Yo no sabia que gusanos toman chocolate. Worms drinking chocolate?” She smiled and continued, “My chocolate is for people.”

I laughed out loud; Don Carlos got very red in the face and neck; the pharmacist walked away; and the other man glared, first at her and then at me. Some people helped themselves to the hot dark drink saying, “Gracias.”

After that day, I got to like Mrs. Garcia.

HUGO LUIS STANCHE

THE WITNESS

I have watched him as he walks, feeling
Where the sidewalk meets the grass
With the blood-tipped point of a cane.
I have watched him softly counting off
Steps of remembered distance,
Changing direction by ninety degrees only.
With silent precision he walks straight into a door
And searches with his hands for a doorknob
You and I have never seen.

—CONRAD MELTON
STRETCH YOUR MIND

CHONLA

to the Edge of Madness

Acid Treatments

ditori

strodat

Deep Space
RICHARD CRASHAW

Richard Crashaw’s motto for his volume, *Steps to the Temple* was:

Live Jesus, Live, and let it bee
My life to dye, for love of thee.

The poems of Crashaw are filled with enthusiasm and exultation, soaring on the wings of angels and cherubim in that seventh heaven beside the Throne and Lamb of God. The preface to the above volume refers to Crashaw’s poetry as: “The Language of the Angels,” “The Quintessence of Phantasie and Discourse centered in Heaven,” “it is the outgoings of the soul.” The language of the angels it is not, but the outgoing of a soul of a devout Catholic it clearly is.

Crashaw is metaphysical in his ingenuity and his bold use of the language of sexual love for devout and godly themes. He is baroque in his use of highly adorned imagery. The emphasis in Crashaw is sensuous and emotional.

Baroque is really the one characteristic that clearly defines “the poet saint.” His cantata, *An Hymn of the Nativity, Sung by the Shepherds*, focuses on the infant Jesus and clearly presents a passionate exuberance at the birth of the once and future king. His poems on *The Epiphanie, The Assumption*, and *New Year’s Day* (the circumcision), clearly reflect the Catholic reformation. *The Weeper*, a poem on the repentance of Mary Magdalen, extends the metaphor of tears beyond the sensibilities of the modern reader. Finally we have the constant images of wounds, kisses, blood, milk, nest, breast, ecstasy and surrender as they relate to God.

Crashaw is a simple, devotional poet. There are no conflicts, no tensions so characteristic of the metaphysical school. His cosmology is not intellectually but spiritually and mystically oriented. Only through suffering do we receive eternal truths. Only through the naive ecstasy of a Teresa, and the suffering of a Jesus and Mary *Mater Dei* is man saved. Finally, only through love is there any chance for that mystical union so desired by man; The love of Jesus for man, the love of Mary for Jesus, the love of Teresa for God. The world outside the spirit is mentioned by Crashaw, but the mistress is a supposed one.

The concentration is on the sensuous imagery, which through contemplation focuses the power of the mind on devout themes and becomes enraptured in a union with God. The subjects of contemplation are the lives of the saints, the lives of martyrs, the life of Christ.

A poem typically baroque in style is *On the Wounds of our Crucified*
The images are grandiose and almost grotesque in the use of blood, wounds, and tears. The suffering saviour died for humanity. Those who have believed and served will be repaid now that the Son returns to the Father.

There are two prominent images in this poem, tears and blood. The tears represent the repentance of Mary Magdalen, and the blood, the suffering of Christ. The image of blood emanating from Christ’s feet nailed to the cross is placed in opposition to the image of the tears (Luke 7:36) “She began to wash His feet with tears and wipe them with the hairs of her head.” The images culminate in the final stanza when the blood becomes “ruby tears” and the tears “pearls.” Mary’s washing of Christ’s feet with her tears and her hair is repaid with the blood of the wound of the nail in his foot.

Lo! a mouth, whose full-bloomed lips
At too dear a rate are roses,
Lo! a bloodshot eye that weeps
And many a cruel tear discloses.

The wounds are the eye of Mary and the mouth of the wound of Jesus. In the bloodshot eye the images of the wound and the tear; the contrition, the repentance, and the suffering, the love, are through the use of the contemplation of the sensuous image fusing into one, until:

This foot hath got a Mouth and lippes,
To pay the sweet summe of thy kisses;
To pay thy Tears, an Eye that weeps
In stead of Teares such Gems as this is.

The foot now has “a Mouth and lippes” and “an Eye that weeps” to repay Mary, and Mary, in her union with Christ, has the “blood-shot eye.” The tears and the blood unite in the image “ruby-tears.”

Tears are a favorite metaphor of Crashaw, representing the cleansing quality of repentance. In an epigram on Luke 7:36, Crashaw says:

Her eyes flood licks His feet’s fair stain,
Her hair’s flame licks that up again.
This flame thus quenched hath brighter beames;
This flood thus stained fairer streams.

The tears are pure and innocent and repentant. The flame quenched with such tears is indeed brighter in its nearness to the light, the whiteness of the Lamb.

In The Weeper, Crashaw once again resorts to the metaphor of tears.
The poem's diction is stock, the sensation remains on one level. The overextended metaphor of tears are those of the contrite Mary Magdalen at the feet of Jesus. The tears are sweet. The tears are gentle. The grace of God is gentle and sweet, and the teardrops reflect all that is sweet and gentle in the world:

Haile, Sister Springs,
Parents of Silver-footed rills!
    Ever bubling things!
Thawing Crystall! Snowy Hills!
Still spending, never spent. I meane
Thy faire eyes, sweet Magdalen.
    Heaven thy fair eyes bee,
Heavens of ever falling starrs,
    'Tis seed-time still with thee
And stars thou sow'st, whose harvest dares
Promise the earth to counter shine
What ever makes Heaven's forehead fine.

Tears of repentance cannot be bitter, nor can the poet use anything but a light hand in their creation; nevertheless, a joy, an exuberance, an exultation so characteristic of Crashaw is definitely there.

O cheeks! Bids of chast loves
By your own showers seasonably dash't,
    Eyes! Nests of milkie Doves
In your own wells decently washt.
O wit of love that this thus could place,
Fountains and garden in one face!

Tears are often associated with such metaphors as "gentle streams," "milky rivers," "Crystall stars," "sorrow's best jewels," "her richest pearls," "a watry diamond," and "the cream," all signifying contrition, purity, and the humble and contrite heart receiving the whiteness of divine grace.

Crashaw is a master at the Latin epigram. His epigrams are concise, delight in paradox and violent contrast. In the space of four short lines the epigram contemplates a sensuous detail, i.e., color, touch, symbolizing a religious theme. The epigrams usually take a verse from the New Testament for their text and proceed from there.

Upon Lazarus his Teares
Rich Lazarus! richer in those Gems, thy Tears,
    Then Dives in the Roabes he weares:
He scornes them now, but o they'l suit full well
With th' Purple hee must weare in Hell.

Even the plutocratic Dives with his "purple roabes" rich in gems is not as rich as Lazarus who has the white tear, divine grace. The wealth will burn in the flames of hell while Lazarus finds his place somewhere else. The epigram is tight and the paradox evident.

Blood finds its place in another epigram, On our Crucified Lord Naked, and Bloody:

Th' have left thee naked Lord! O that they had!
This Garment too I would they had deny'd.
Thee with thy selfe they have too richly clad,
Opening the purple wardrobe of thy side.
O never could bee found garment too good
For thee to weare, but these, of thine owne Blood.

The images are repeated once again, the purple, blood, the Garment, but with a twist. Whereas the purple of the epigram above denotes a kind of wealth leading to hell, the purple in this epigram will lead to the other place. The Romans have not left Jesus naked, for he is richly clothed in the blood of suffering. There is the characteristic ecstasy in pain, the sensuousness, and the paradox, irony, wit, and oxymoron are all present in the one epigram. The paradox of the purple wardrobe of blood, the oxymoron of richly clad nakedness, the irony in the men leaving him naked yet not knowing he was clothed in something intangible, and the wit, i.e., seeing similarities in disparate things, e.g., naked—clad.

In the cantata, In the Holy Nativity of Our Lord God, the poet adapts love conceits to the birth of Christ. The focus is on the babe in the manger, and the opening chorus sets the scene. It is dark, all is shade:

Come, we shepherds, whose blest sight
Hath met love's noon in nature's night;
Come, lift we up our loftier song
And wake the sun that lies too long.

Crashaw's wit is evident in the pun on the word sun. The sun refers to the impending light about to arrive; it refers to the dawn about to break; the sun is the Son of God. Christ represents the noontime of love, and Christ is the sunlight, more than nature and visible without any of the faculties of man.

The recitative between the two shepherds, Tityrus and Thyris, speak in passionate, enraptured images of the birth of Christ:
"The Babe looked up and showed His face:
In spite of darkness, it was day.
It was Thy day, Sweet! and did rise,
Not from the east, but from Thine eyes.

The birth of Christ sends nature in a turmoil, the North forgetting its scars, and sending, instead of frost, flowers. The birth of Christ chases "the trembling shades away."

"We saw Thee, and we blest the sight;
We saw Thee by Thine own sweet light.
Welcome; though nor to gold nor silk,
To more than Caesar's birthright is:
Two sister-seas of virgin milk,
With many a rarely tempered kiss,

The song continues with the story of the manger, the frost, the conception of the babe, who like the phoenix, is immortal. The infant sleeps in the "whitest sheets of snow," purity, innocence, grace, God.

"Forbear," said I; "be not too bold;
Your fleece is white, but 'tis too cold."

The story builds to a passionate chorus, melodic and exuberant, gathering the momentum of the choral refrains and never letting go:

Welcome, all wonders in one sight!
Eternity shut in a span.
Summer in winter. Day in night.
Heaven in earth, and God in man!
Great little one! whose all-embracing birth
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.

Here, the paradox, the irony, the oxymoron, the sensuousness, the fiery beauties, the exuberance and the grandeur of the baroque, combine in a passionate rapture in the birth of Christ. The world is topsy-turvy, nature is out of whack, the Son of God is born!

Welcome; though nor to gold nor silk,
To more than Caesar's birthright is:
Two sister-seas of virgin milk,
With many a rarely tempered kiss,
That breathes at once both maid and mother,
Warms in the one, cools in the other.
Whereas before the suspense was built with caesuras slowing the action and allowing for the exultation to break the lines, here it is slowed by the gentleness of the imagery, i.e., "virgin milk," "tempered kiss," warms in the one," "cools in the other." The theme remains the same, gold, silk, material wealth, not even the power, position, achievement, of Caesar is comparable to the pure divinity born in the manger.

Welcome, though not to those gay flies,  
Gilded i' th' beams of earthly kings,  
Slippery souls in smiling eyes;  
But to poor shepherds, homespun things,  
Whose wealth's their flock, whose wit, to be  
Well read in their simplicity  
Yet when young April's husband-showers  
Shall bless the fruitful Maia's bed,  
We'll bring the first born of her flowers  
To kiss Thy feet, and crown Thy head.  
To Thee, dread Lamb! whose love must keep  
The shepherds more than they the sheep.

Welcome, though not to the world of those who sponge off the court and are fragile, "slippery souls," or perhaps, those flies of the devil.

To Thee, meek Majesty! soft King  
Of simple graces and sweet loves,  
Each of us his lamb will bring,  
Each his pair of silver doves;  
Till burnt at last in fire of Thy fair eyes,  
Ourselves become our own best sacrifice.

We each bring to thee, the fire of divine love, the sacrifice of ourselves. This then is the cantata. Passionate, exuberant, and enraptured in the birth of Christ. The chorus, beginning in the night, pianissimo, building to a crescendo with the birth of Christ and the corresponding responses in nature. The volume then diminishes until the second chorus and its stress, sforzando on the word WELCOME, and the chorus loudly exultant, fortissimo. The last part of the chorus diminishes once again. The physical counterpart of the thorough bass in the cantata is the choral refrain after each recitative of the shepherds.

Such then is Richard Crashaw: exuberant, rhetorical, sensual, grandiose. A poet finding a sado-masochistic pleasure in the blood, wounds, and suffering of Christ, saint, martyr. A man finding a mystical union in the Ecstasy, in the catalyptic Teresa of Avila, and in divine love. A poet
medieval in his imagery and devout in his meditation, regarding his *Steps to the Temple*, and *Carmen Deo Nostro* as a kind of Platonic ladder of ascent from beautiful, sensual things, to contemplation of beautiful souls leading finally to a contemplation of the Love which is God.

To the modern sensibility the baroque is too decorative, too exuberant, and too enraptured in naive beliefs. The extension of metaphor merely bores the reader and the use of blood and tears, red and white, pain and ecstasy lead one to Freud and Mario Praz. If the *weltanschauung* of the continental baroque and Catholic Counter-Reformation can be felt, the poetry of Crashaw achieves a stature comparable to the near greats if not the greats. Saint Teresa of Avila and her *Interior Castle, Way to Perfection*, and *Life*; de Sales' *Love of God*, and the *New Testament* are indispensible in an effort to understand the poet. Once the effort is made the poet becomes contagious.

—JEFFREY HERSHENSON

**IMAGINATION**

A priestess conjuring visions  
Of pale pink dust  
Whirling in the black night

—ELAINE ZORBAS
An image of her develops,
coming across the hot center of Greek plains
into my mind like a whisper.
I touch her breasts;
her eyes lower. Her face fills with motion.
In the village young girls make music, and
we walk in streets where the dust stirs.
What do my fingers touch?
The coffee we drink in a taverna
makes circles in my cup. Her eyes
seem to be blank spots: colorless.
We do not talk. The sea breathes
deeply from its belly; squares on
the tablecloths turn white. Were
her hands slender? There are several
vacant spaces in what I remember.
This evening a blue painting on the wall
becomes the Mediterranean Sea in her hair.
In the dim light of conversation
I see a woman laughing. There is
a sameness about the mouth which
introduces one into the other. We speak.
I touch her breasts; her eyes lower. One
smiles through the other. In the morning
her hair will be wet with the jasmine-scent
of sweat, and I will enter the woman
through the image.
It is reason enough.

—Lewis Kruglick
POST-PILGRIMAGE
(for Jack Hirschman)

His disappearance never really occurred.
He went off into Greece with wife and children,
and wasn't heard of again for months.
On Yom Kippur his father went to the temple
on a brown Brooklyn street, and hoped he was safe.

But now he is back.
The black in his eyes
has evaporated, bulged
through the spectrum into blue.
In the islands, small
harbors of afternoon,
he was laid to rest—
but he is back,
morning's mint in his collar,
jagged teeth like lightning.
And his voice has come back
quiet as the smooth hills of Hydra.
His body has come back
made out of crystals.
His breath has come back
banded like comboloi.

He knows there are snakes on Delos, and that
goats bleat, carefully, along the stone steps.
He has come back with a tone that says
there were saints and a madonna standing in space.
And now he dances Greek dances
while singing Yiddish songs, and
the silence he speaks of is deafening.

LEWIS KRUGLICK
The smell of charcoal lights my hands
the pleasure all sensations bring
from first to last things
in rapt concentration made
unbearable and yet mellifluous.

"How are we created now?"
I asked the warlock prince—
that tree that shed a skull
on summer in our back yard.

His teeth snickered on the glacial air;
"Strange we live in world
is wonderous many wilds redeemed
nor function cannibal-like
in our content to whirl our
parent's daemon like a sword."
Moving arm makes the hand
wind and motion
cells crack heat in
and burst to sounds,
sight, smell, taste, touch—
the five form into many patterns
each catching the other without hierarchy,
collapsing in every direction at once.

—LEWIS KRUGLICK
PROLOGUE

I

Watching
almost afternoon
under leveling power
of gull wings on the air
and blue awnings coveting
the wind's stare.

II

Waiting,
the rare scent of wanting
a woman I have never met
rises above talking couples.
Day after day she passes here,
and sometimes, along the boulevard,
I follow her a short way;
not for hope of anything,
but to be near.

III

She is coming.
The clash of coffee cups
and conversation peaks. Getting up
I track her shoes, and she is aware
that I count her heels tapping, see
her legs snapping the concrete to pieces
releasing the showering heat.
From twenty yards apart
we are muffled in a light sweat.

IV

We pass cafés
and the bakery door
where I used to stop, spoor lost.
Today the need I have been feeling
has left, and I go on. Flattery gone,
she is puzzled at what I want to find,
and never before had my footsteps
made her tremble so high beneath her skirt.
V

She turns a corner, through a thin street and its canyon shade. The glazed stone grows. What do I pursue, vaguely afraid? The mirage sound of a seashell at my ear? She approaches her portico and stops. Eyes count, desperately, every rock on the ground.

VI

She turns. Question? The wind blows harder, her hem strays. The blue awnings are far off, taking the air as uncertain as I. The sense of loss, the gull-shrill monotone locks in her face, and the surface of her skin gleams taut as I walk away.

LEWIS KRUCLICK
WINTER SOLSTICE AT
ST. PAUL DE VENCE

Among that winter
sunmade shadows haunted
the steps in St. Paul.

Silence crumbled, like
children's kites, in the wind,
and I was caught by the sound.

The brown ramparts were goatherds
to walks I took, belled by women
washing morning in the fountain, and
each day guided me down to the weedy
cemetery where white marble teeth
stood up in the ground.

I held parties
among so much company.

—Lewis Kruglick
I close my eyes. A cloud comes towards me. A big huge cloud with bluegreen nuances. I refuse desperately to drink my milk.
—No mama, please don’t . . .

I close my eyes, I open my eyes, and close and open. It’s a machine I say. It is a simple statement; I merely prefer to be dogmatic.

I bite my tongue; bad sign.

The girl just lies on a certain bed. I don’t claim property. She ought to be nicer about it.

I walk out and I come back. Many times. Clouds hanging on a dull sky. Many little clouds or maybe one huge greenish cloud broken in infinite little pieces.

The street is very narrow so I can’t lift up my hands. One has to be afraid of the narrow streets. I look around carefully; not the smallest trace of a sign: NOT A THRU STREET. I continue to walk, step by step. I watch cautiously the soles of my shoes. No mark of mud. The back of my hand hurts. She used to bite.

The rain starts suddenly.

A drop on the top of my hat.

A dog howling on the top of a roof.

Draconian Laws.

The oysters within the sea. Warm Mediterranean nights.

—What do you make of that? I ask my father. He sleeps. A deep deep sleep. Or he pretends to sleep.

Slap slop slap slap dapity da dapity da slap slap . . .

A cat drinking milk.

Sloapt taf slip slip slap plits plif.

Relief.

Ido.

An idle language.

I searched my pockets. Some string from a package, a piece of melted chocolate bar and a picture. Nothing else. Yes and a penny; I found a very old penny. I am starving. I look at the picture: me, changing faces in the stream of time. I look through the picture. Nothingness.

I am at the end of the narrow street.

It is an especially quiet evening with shining sky like her eyes, like
their eyes in the morning.

She wakes up confused, lost in her dreams; I guide carefully the tip of my fingers through the shape of her face. There is an immense freshness hidden under the quivering skin.

I have to decide whether I climb up the stairs or walk through the tunnel. I cannot come back into the room I left. I know it. She waits for me and I want to wait for her but I just can't. I have to go ahead, I have to find a way to the big square, where the Town Hall is.

I tear the picture. It was her picture. I bring a dead end into my memory.

Dragging of slippers, murmurs. One is sick. I realize that I am sick, wrapped up in white blankets and white sheets, in a white cold room. There is a white tag hanging on my ear. A white tag with immense black letters. I can read my name and underneath: EXPECTED DEAD. But I know I am not dead. I am teasing them. The flash of lightning; a thunderstorm.

The dark fills me with fears.

Strange tunnel. It is a silent tunnel. Cars pass by noiseless, the head-lights on. Quiet flashing eyes of anger and hatred.


—What is your name?
—Sophia, she says softly. What is yours?
—Noname.
—It is a very rare name, isn't it?
—Yes Sophia.
Bla bla bla.

I feel the soft flesh, burning, melting, vanishing.

I am in the middle of the bridge. I can see the corner of the street that leads to the big square. A boy on the bridge is peeing. The water is forming a nice long thin arch splashing on the quiet surface of the river. The sunrays are bathing in it. Iris colours.

DEFENSE D'URINER


—What is your name?
—I don’t know.
—I'm afraid you have to go back in your own place, sir. Our Café
is too crowded.
  Silence.
—Sophia, they say I have to return home. Sophia.
—......
—I must ....
—What is your name again?
She softens under the touch. Sophia. Wisdom. The open shells, the
dead shells. The burden of a crowded café.
Laughter.
The waiter who brings the black coffee on a tray. A dancer.
Silence and darkness.

—DIMITRIS ZORBAS
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

CHRISTOPHER BREYER: Received his B.A. and M.A. in English at UCLA. He is an ex-officio member of the French College of Pataphysics, and he is currently studying at SFVSC prior to his going to the University of London for his PhD. He has written drama and film reviews for several publications, and dabbles in alchemy as a hobby. This is his first appearance in Eclipse.

JEFFREY HERSHENSON: Received his B.A. in English at SFVSC. He is currently working toward the completion of a M.A. degree in English at this college. His ambition includes pursuit of the PhD degree, college teaching, and continued publication in his field of specialization—seventeenth-century poetry.

ROBIN JOHNSON: Received B.A. in comparative literature at Scripps College; M.A. in philosophy at the University of Michigan; has been a member of the faculty of the University of Michigan; on editorial staff of Trace magazine; poems published in Saturday Review, New Mexico Quarterly, The University Review, Trace, Impetus, Fiddlehead, etc.; is attending SFVSC to study poetry with James Dickey, and is also interested in writing fiction.

*ROBERT KOFF


*WILLIAM McCARROL

GERALD MARGOLIS: Canadian poet—21 years old. Attended McGill University, Canada. Has published in Forge, Cataract, Contact, etc., and an edition of poems titled In God's Other Image. Currently a “sometimes” student at SFVSC.

KERRY A. MAYER: Born in Philadelphia, Pa., in 1936. A professional still and motion picture photographer. His photographs have been exhibited in various institutions. He will graduate in June, 1966 with a B. A. in English.

CONRAD MELTON: A graduating speech major, he is also a musician, an athlete, an actor, and very involved in the activities of student government and fraternities on this campus. Three of his earliest works were published in the 1963 Eclipse.
RICHARD REDNER: Has photographed since he was eleven years old. He is not interested in photography as a profession, but as an art form. Received his B.S. from the University of California at Berkeley. He is currently working for his credential and Masters at SFVSC in the field of English. He is twenty-four years old and was born in Poland.

*THEODORA SIMS

HELEN SORRELLS: Journalism graduate—worked on newspapers—free-lanced for radio. Published poetry in Coastlines, California Sun, Uclan Review—soon to appear in Beloit Poetry Journal, Trace, and an anthology, The Girl In the Black Raincoat to be published by Duell, Sloan & Pearce. She has attended verse writing classes at SFVSC taught by James Dickey.


VANCE STUDLEY: Currently pursuing bachelors degree at SFVSC. Studied at Chouinard Art School, Otis Art Institute. Exhibited in the valley and surrounding area: Canoga Mission Art Center, Canyon Gallery, San Fernando Valley State College, Scripps College, San Diego State College. Age 21. Plans to continue education upon graduation from SFVSC in the Masters program at UCLA.

DIMITRI ZORBAS: Born in Serras, Greece, 1940. Completed Superior School of Economics and Commerce of Athens, and is continuing his studies in economics at SFVSC. He has published in Pali, an Athenian literary quarterly.

ELAINE ZORBAS: Born in Los Angeles. A 1964 graduate of the University of California at Berkeley. Presently a graduate student in History at SFVSC. Her contribution to the Eclipse is her first publication.

*Data unavailable at press time.

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THEL'S MOTTO

DOES THE EAGLE KNOW WHAT IS IN THE PIT?
OR WILT THOU GO ASK THE MOLE?
CAN WISDOM BE PUT IN A SILVER ROD?
OR LOVE IN A GOLDEN BOWL?

—WILLIAM BLAKE