

# COLLAGE



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# SPRING '85

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Cover Photography by Scott Thomas

All the arts derive from the same and unique root.  
Consequently, all the arts are identical.

—Wassily Kandinsky

# Editor's Note

I sincerely hope that you, our readers, have enjoyed our creative endeavors this year. The staff of COLLAGE has tried to saturate you with the best of the creative achievements that the University community has to offer. I feel that we have accomplished the goals which we set for ourselves at the beginning of the year, and that COLLAGE is a better magazine for our efforts. We have revised the design, the staff, and the very standards by which we make up the magazine. The final test, however, lies ahead as I write this. It is the acceptance of our efforts by our readers and our critics. This, in the end, will determine our success. I do hope that the changes we have made for the better remain, while our faults are corrected by next year's staff. In closing I would like to thank the staff for their patience, tolerance, and long hours, Oliver Fancher for spiritual guidance, Clay Hutto, our advisor, for enduring what must have seemed unending queries, and our contributors for submitting their excellent works. I would also like to congratulate Michelle Adkerson on becoming next year's COLLAGE editor; it's bound to be a good magazine next year folks, so stay tuned...Same time...Same channel.

Kelly Hayes

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## Pro-Choice

For ears translucent  
membranes stretched across  
the abyss--the pulsating, coursing  
blood mocking the absence  
of stiff cartilage, no receptor  
of outer flesh, no dangling  
lobes to pierce--no small  
hole to hang a bell  
from, the endless  
clue to your whereabouts.  
Only silence.

Always you are born  
able to speak, you infants  
of my dreams. Whether born  
with cold plucked wings  
for arms, or a perfectly  
proportioned doll-sized adult  
body, or able to grow years  
in the strides across  
a room--to pack, to leave  
me. Always multi-  
lingual. Taunting phrases  
you know I intuit  
but can't translate. And always  
able to eat solids--but never  
flesh. My breasts are not  
your stars to suckle.  
Clothed in cloaks  
or amorphous suits  
hanging  
on a slim body, sex  
is indeterminate, but once.

Only once was a father  
present or even known of  
in my dreams. A cross  
between young and strong  
and old and feeble. Standing  
in the kitchen doorway,  
in a booming voice,  
he beckoned  
you to join him;  
join him in the sole  
remaining space  
vehicle. The final  
bomb soon would be  
dropped and his duty  
was to impart  
wisdom to my child.  
And my son (Assumption:  
male. Why?) would be taken up  
to create a new world.  
His mother, a natural source  
of nourishment, was left  
seated at the kitchen table  
to die. Clinging to his father's  
robe, he smiled, "Adieu."

I sat in the silence and awaited  
the firing of the rockets . . .  
no hope that man  
would abort  
his death mission.

Nicholas Robertson



Marlene Rice



Altar Piece

## Keeping the Faith

Modern art has been losing its audience progressively for at least the last hundred and fifty years with an increasing animosity afflicting both artists and public. Since in the free world it is in art where freedom is celebrated to the fullest (perhaps the only field of human endeavor where it can be), I hope that there are not too many among the public who would limit what artists are permitted to do. But there are far too many who when faced with the cryptic confrontations of modernism too readily insist that modern art is not art at all. In so doing, the public rejects its own times and the alienation continues. Here history offers insights and constructive suggestions to remedy this situation.

Vicki Barkley



# Charles Jansen

There are many forces which led to this split and have caused it to widen irrevocably. In a nutshell, ironically enough, the split came not long after both art and freedom were rested from royal preserves and turned over to "the people," Without much of any background in art, without the hundreds of years of art patronage of which the aristocracy could boast, the increasingly middle class public came to rely on rather rigid standards handed to them by the authorities. At this point, art was at long last officially defined. A majority of people seized upon this definition and with it enjoyed the raptures of self-righteous indignation, a feeling both more spontaneous and more fun than seeking some level of understanding.

It wasn't just the look of art that was changing as images retreated from recognizability. The very nature of art was also changing. People were still looking at art in terms of *things* that could suitably or otherwise adorn a vacant nook in the densely packed parlors of the Victorian age. But at the same time, artists of all sorts were speaking about art as a kind of experience. To the Romantics of the 19th century, it was the experience of the sublime, an overwhelming emotion before the grandeur and dangers of nature. To the Futurists of the early 20th century, it was the noisy, dizzying and disturbing experiences which came with the advent of mechanized, modern living where things are blurred by the speed of change.

History's lesson here seems clear, to think of art as a thing rather than as an experience, or better an exchange, destroys the possibilities of genuine communication. Is it any more reasonable to expect the experiences in an art gallery to be satisfying or meaningful without effort than to expect a relationship or the workplace to prosper without input? Too many have gone to exhibits to wander about waiting for "art" to communicate something or to extract feeling, often to no avail but with considerable consternation. If, however, art can be defined and *seen* as an interaction, as something that happens *between* a viewer and an artist or *between* a viewer and an art object, then the historical rift can begin to heal and the public can begin to embrace its own times and even prepare for the future. If the novel experiences which art presents can be negotiated, then surely the novel experiences in our changing lives can be better accommodated for the practice.

It is *not* easy and in the last analysis requires a measure of faith. One must believe despite formidable obstacles that an interaction is possible and potentially valuable. There are good reasons to have faith when traveling strange paths of modern art which sometimes seem to offer so very little. First there is little evidence to support the often heard allegation that artists and gallery or museum officials have practiced fraud or would want to. To get into the arts today requires a lot of dues, time and

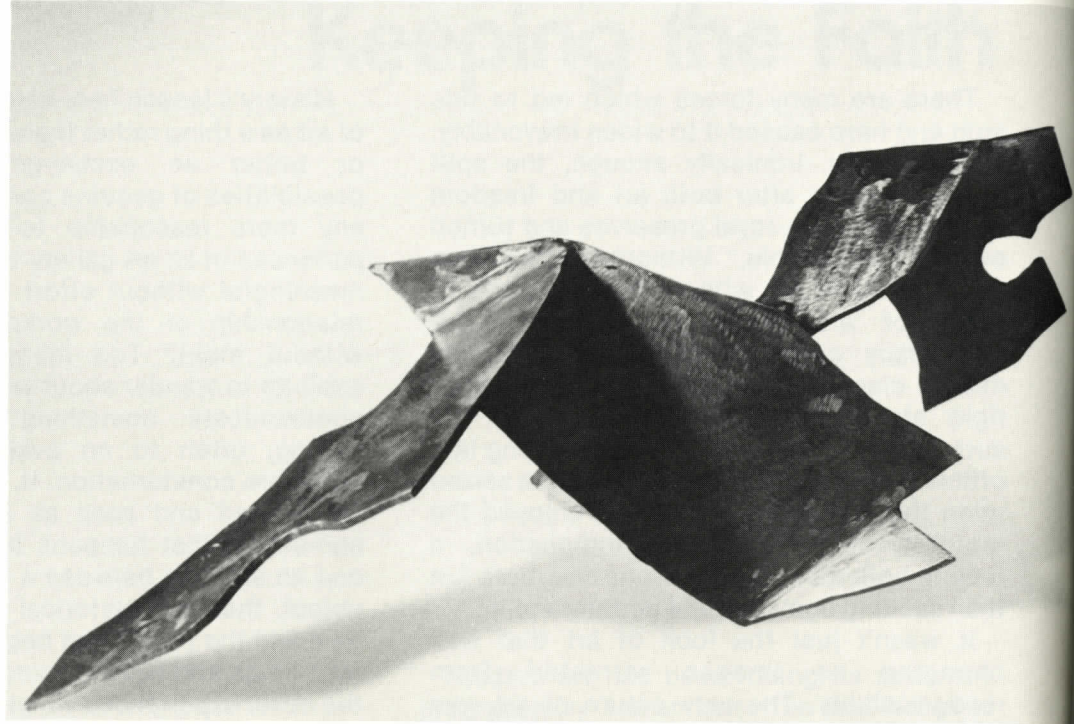
commitment. More importantly, faith brings some virtues which promise success both in individual query and in the collective quest of our culture. With faith, tolerance and forbearance increase, factors which are essential to the creativity within us all. Most importantly, with faith a sense of perspective develops leading us to see ever a slightly larger picture. Faith is a strong defense against the animosity and frustrations spawned by the rift between modern art and the public. Faith offers the promise of cultural development.

There are signs, such as the recent exhibit at the Hirshhorn Museum on *Content*, that artists are doing their part to heal the rift. A great many new artists seek to meaningfully contribute to the discussion of the important issues we all must face. In the last ten years, new artworks reveal "a dialogue between the artists and the most powerful forces that determine contemporary experience." (*Content Catalogue*, 26.) Increasingly and in diverse ways, artists function as witnesses in the contemporary spectacle in which we are all involved and implicated.

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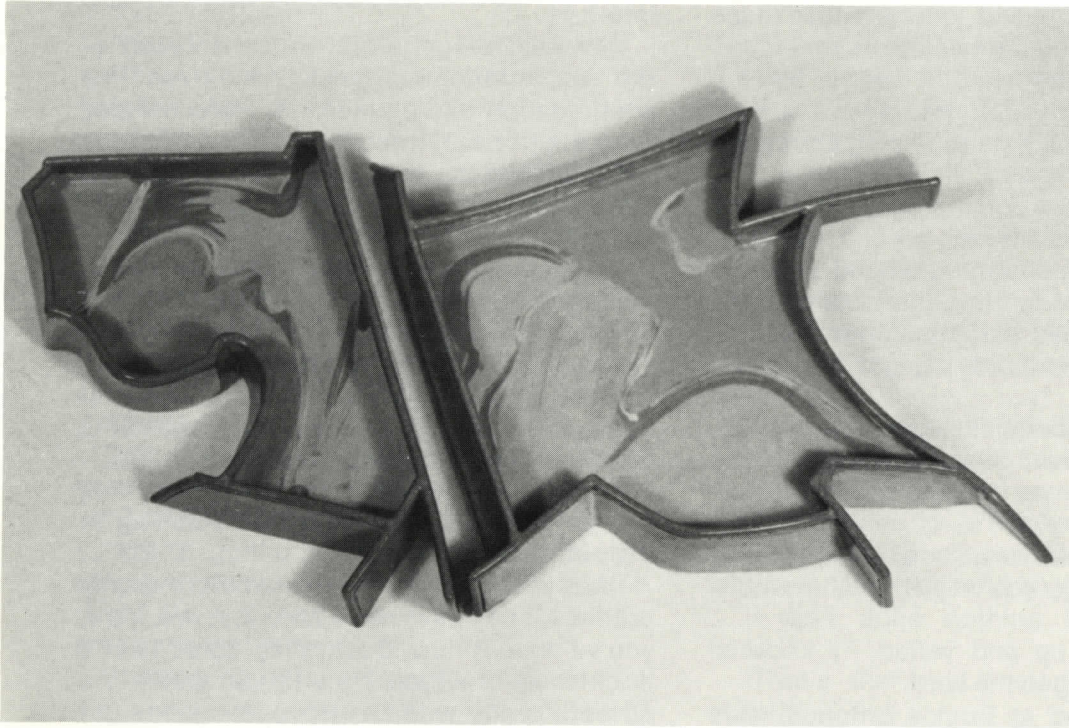


Paul David Roe



Jim Null

Major Vessel



Glenda Guion



Glenda Guion

# The Baptizing of Jo Jo Jessup

Maggi Vaughn

Buck Ladner and Herschel Pate sat on the back pew of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church. It was the annual summer week meeting in the country church and Buck and Herschel felt obliged to support the week-long meeting with their presence. Of course the main reason they were there was it got them out of plowing the fields for a week. Any time there was a choice between Jesus Christ and John Deere - Jesus Christ won every time.

They never heard much of any of the sermons since most of their hour was spent opening up the hymn books simultaneously and reading the song titles from left to right. It was always an amusing pastime being able to read "Will There Be Any Stars In My Crown" followed by "No Not One."

However, on this particular morning meeting, the Reverend Stegal raised his voice about as high as he raised his Bible. And every time Buck and Herschel looked up, Reverend Stegal was watching them. His old gray raised eyebrows almost gave his old bald head a new set of hair.

Buck and Herschel had just amused themselves by opening their hymn books to "In the Garden" and "My Feet Are Planted on Higher Ground."

"Repent" yelled Reverend Stegal as he slammed his fist on the shaky old pulpit.

Buck and Herschel nearly jumped out of their overalls.

"We better put these hymn books away. He's looking right at us," said Herschel.

"What we got to repent about. We ain't

done nothing," said Buck.

"I said repent, be baptized and be saved," yelled the Reverend.

"No one has joined this church in six months. This congregation is failing in its duty to bring lost souls to the Lord. Lost souls do you hear me? The Lord said the shepherd cannot sleep until all the sheep are counted for."

The Reverend pulled out a white handkerchief and wiped his sweaty brow.

Buck nudged Herschel. "Time for him to be taking off his coat. He always works himself up when he gets to talking about the sheep."

"The shepherd is coming again and there are lost sheep wandering around drinking poison- cussing and running around on loved ones. It is up to us to bring them back to the fold. We got to lead that sheep down to the river and up to the Lord. We got to baptize that sheep."

Buck nudged Herschel. "Has he ever smelt wet wool?" Reverend Stegal pointed a finger to Buck. His patience with the two had about run out.

"What did you say, son? If you got something to say, you say it to the whole congregation."

Buck jumped up and yelled, "I know a sheep I'm bringing to the Lord."

Herschel pulled at Buck's britches. "Sit down Buck. What's the matter with you?"

The Reverend smiled.

"Well, son, if you know a lost sheep, then

we'll wind this service up and we'll meet you by Buttercup Creek this afternoon. You bring your sheep and there'll be a great baptizing and a soul will be saved."

Reverend Stegal called on Leonard Hunt to dismiss the congregation in prayer. Herschel never closed his eyes during the dismissal prayer. All he could do was look straight ahead and think what had Buck got them into.

Reverend Stegal stood in the doorway of the old church shaking hands as the congregation left the service. Herschel and Buck slipped out through the crowd.

"Buck, has all that sheep talk made you crazy. Who do we know we can get baptized?"

Buck squinted his eyes as they walked in the noon-day sun.

"Jo Jo," he answered.

"Jo Jo!" Herschel raised his voice. "Did you say Jo Jo? Why the only time he's ever come to church was when his grandmama died and when the outhouse caught on fire."

Buck looked at Herschel. "Lord, Herschel, you ain't told nobody about us smoking in the outhouse have you?"

"Are you kidding. My paw would bust my britches if he knew we caused that fire. Lord, you've done it now, Buck. Why, Jo Jo is one brick short of a load. He's fifteen and in the seventh grade with us. How you gonna get him to church when they can hardly get him to school?"

"How we gonna talk Jo Jo into getting

baptized," said Herschel.

Buck stuck his hands into his overall pockets, kicked a rock down the dusty road where he was walking, and said "Scare him."

"What you mean, scare him? Jo Jo ain't scared of nobody."

Buck cut his eyes over to Herschel and said, "He's scared of the Devil."

"Scared of the Devil? Jo Jo is a devil hisself. His own mama owned up to that."

"I gotta plan."

Herschel scratched his head, squared off and looked Buck right in the eye, and said, "What is it?"

"Herschel, you remember what we studied in history last week?"

"Naw."

"Oh, you remember, Herschel, about the plague. All them people dying. Had something to do with Butter. I think it was called 'Bluebonnet.' You remember. We studied it last week."

"Yeah, I recollect something about it. I just didn't pay much attention to it."

Buck reached up and put his arm around Herschel and said, "Pay attention now, Herschel, 'cause that's how we're gonna get Jo Jo baptized."

"What you talking about, Buck?"

"We gonna scare Jo Jo, Herschel. We're gonna scare him into getting baptized."

"Just how we gonna do that, Buck?"

"We're gonna convince Jo Jo that the plague is on its way to Hohenwald, and he might die of it. And if he ain't baptized, he's going straight to Hell."

Shaking his head, Herschel said, "Jo Jo don't care if he goes to Hell or not. Like I told you, he ain't scared of nothing."

"Yeah, he is, Herschel. Everybody's scared of going to Hell. They may not admit it, but

when they get near death, they scared!"

Herschel and Buck saw Jo Jo sitting on the fence down the road. "There he is, Herschel. You stay cool. This is gonna work."

Buck walked up to Jo Jo.

"What you doing, Jo Jo?"

"Aw, just sitting here spitting. What you boys up to?"

"We've been to church," said Herschel.

"Ain't y'all got nothing better to do?"

Buck looked over to Herschel and said, "Reckon we could spend our mornins sitting around spitting with Jo Jo."

Herschel looked over at the Campbell's Chicken Noodle Soup can Jo Jo was aiming at. "Yeah, we can't hit that can like Jo Jo. That takes special learning."

Buck turned and looked out across the field and said, "Reckon when it's gonna get here, Herschel?"

"I speck around Wednesday," said Herschel.

Jo Jo looked at Buck and Herschel. "What's gonna get here? What you boys talking about?"

Buck looked over to Herschel and said, "Ain't no reason to worry Jo Jo with it, Herschel."

"What you boys talking about?"

"Oh, it ain't nothing," said Buck.

Jo Jo reached up and scratched his head.

Buck noticed Jo Jo's movement.

"What's that you just done, Jo Jo, just then when you put your hand on your head?"

"I ain't done nothing but scratch my head."

"That's the way it starts, ain't it, Herschel?"

"What starts?" said Jo Jo.

"Like you said, Buck, ain't no sense causing Jo Jo no worry,"

"What the hell you boys talking about?"

"Oh me, Buck. We've gone and done it now!"

"Gone and done what?" said Jo Jo.

Herschel shook his head. "Whoo-oo, we're in trouble now."

Jo Jo jumped down off the fence. Buck looked over at Herschel and said, "Well, Jo Jo's strong. I reckon he'll make it."

"If you boys don't tell me what you're talking about," said Jo Jo, "I ain't gonna let you borrow my buck knife."

"You wouldn't do that to us, Jo Jo," said Herschel. "After all, we just trying to help."

"Help what?" said Jo Jo. "What you talking about?"

"Well, Jo Jo," said Buck. "You got to promise you won't tell nobody. Ain't that right, Herschel? He can't tell nobody."

"That's right, Buck. Jo Jo, you got to promise. You can't tell nobody 'cause we got to keep it from all the women and children."

"I promise. Now what is it?"

Buck walked up a little closer to Jo Jo and said, "It's the Bluebonnet."

"What's Bluebonnet?" said Jo Jo.

"It's coming here," said Buck.

Herschel looked over to Buck and said, "Now there's no reason to alarm Jo Jo, Buck; after all, he just scratched his head. That's just one of the signs."

"Are you boys crazy? I scratch my head all the time."

"Yeah, but think back, Jo Jo. Was it itching like it always does, or was there something different about this itch?"

Jo Jo looked over at Buck and Herschel. "You boys ain't making yourselves clear about what you're talking about."

"Well, Jo Jo, now you promise you won't tell nobody?"

"Cross my heart and hope to die."

"Don't say die, Jo Jo," said Buck. "Don't even be thinking that way."

"Well, get on with it. What you got to tell me?"

"It's the Bluebonnet," said Buck. "It's on its way, and like Herschel said, it oughta be here by Wednesday."

"What's the Bluebonnet?" said Jo Jo. "You boys talking in riddles."

"It's the plague, Jo Jo," said Buck. "That's why they're keeping it from the women and children. It's just awful! People everywhere are gonna die. Have you been saved, Jo Jo?" said Buck.

Buck looked over and Herschel and winked, "Aw, like you said, Herschel, there ain't no sense in alarming Jo Jo now. He's just got the first sign."

"Y'all tell me more about this here plague."

"Aw, Jo Jo, you don't want to hear any more about it. It's awful. First, it starts by scratching your head, then your eyes glass over...kinda like yours, Jo Jo."

Herschel tapped Buck on the shoulder. "There you go alarming Jo Jo. He probably ain't getting it. I mean, after all, scratchin' your head and glassed over eyes are just two of the signs."

"I know he ain't getting it, Herschel. It ain't even s'pose to be here before Wednesday."

Jo Jo nervously looked at Buck. "Where is it now, Buck?"

"It's over in Centerville. They've had to put beds in the hospital halls. People screaming and dying with it. It's just awful, Jo Jo. First it starts with scratching your head, then with your eyes getting glassy; then, you break out in big old sores. What's that you scratching on your arm, Jo Jo?"

Jo Jo looked down at his arm. "A skeeter bite."

"Lord, thank goodness for that!" Buck said, looking over at Herschel. "Just a skeeter made that sore. You ain't got nothing to worry about, Jo Jo."

Jo Jo ran his hand in his pocket, took out a handkerchief, wiped his forehead. "Tell me more about these people dying."

"They're all dying, Jo Jo," said Buck, "young and old alike. It ain't sparing nobody."

"Nobody?" said Jo Jo.

"Nobody, Jo Jo."

Jo Jo got up real close in Buck's face. "Look in my eyes again, Buck. Do they still look glassy?"

"I told you, you don't have anything to worry about. Lots of things cause glassy eyes, and, like you say, that sore on your arm's just a skeeter bite. I mean just 'cause you're the first person I've seen this year that's seen a danged skeeter, that ain't no reason to believe one didn't bite you. Herschel, have you seen any skeeters this year?"

"Ain't seen a one, Buck."

"Well, what was that you and Buck was swatting at when I saw you coming down the road?"

"Honey-bees. We were swatting honey-bees, weren't we, Herschel?"

"Well, maybe that's what bit me."

"Don't look like no honeybee sting to me, Jo Jo. Look, Herschel, what's that look like on Jo Jo's arm?"

"Looks like a sore to me, Buck."

All of a sudden, Buck jumped back and yelled, "Good God, Jo Jo, don't look toward the sun. It's reflecting somethin' awful in your eyes."

"Now, Buck, there you go scaring Jo Jo

again. Just 'cause the sun's reflecting off of Jo Jo's glassy eyes don't mean nothing."

"I got it, ain't I, boys? I got it," yelled Jo Jo. "What can I do? Oh, God, give me a shot or something."

Buck put his hand on Jo Jo's shoulder. "There ain't no shot. It just hits you and you're gone."

"What can I do, Buck? I don't wanna die."

"Like I said, Jo Jo, there ain't nothing one can do once you got it, but there's one thing you can do that can help you later on."

"What's that, Buck?"

"Saved, Jo Jo. You've got to be saved!"

"Saved?" yelled Jo Jo, "Saved from what?"

"Hell."

"Hell? What the hell you talking about? Here I am dyin' of some plague, wanting to be saved from that, and you're talking about Hell."

"Tell him, Herschel. Tell him that if he thinks dying of the plague is something, he ain't seen nothing until he hits Hell."

"That's right, Jo Jo, it's burning forever in a lake of fire. At least, with the plague, you just scream for a while before you die. In Hell, you scream forever and forever."

"What makes you think I'm going to Hell?"

"You ain't been baptized. You got to be baptized to escape Hell. Lord, Jo Jo, we're just trying to help. We don't want you going down there."

"Well, what if I don't get it? You said you might be mistaken."

"You might not got it. Just 'cause you're scratching your head, your eyes have turned glassy, and you got a big old sore don't mean you got the plague. You might have the Tommyrot."

"Tommyrot!" shouted Jo Jo. "What's that?"

"Tell him, Herschel."

"Lord, Jo Jo, pray you got the plague. Tommyrot's the worst thing that can happen to you."

"That's right, Jo Jo, listen to Herschel. It's the worst thing that can happen to you, except going to Hell. But you might have a chance. Brother Stegal preaches all the time about how, if you got faith, you can do anything. Like make yourself well, and you got to be baptized to have faith. And if the faith don't work, and you die, you still got baptized so you don't go to Hell," said Buck.

"You mean to tell me that going down to that river might make me well, and I ain't going to Hell if I let that preacher dunk me?"

"That's right, Jo Jo, and we ain't got much time. Maybe since you just started scratchin' you might got time. Run get Brother Stegal, Herschel. Tell him to meet us at the river. Jo Jo's gonna be baptized and saved!"

Before Jo Jo could say anything, Herschel took off running down the road toward Brother Stegal's house.

"Come on, I'll help you to the river." Jo Jo put his arms around Buck's shoulders.

"Put your weight on me." Jo Jo leaned on Buck. His face had turned pale.

"You ain't gonna throw up, are you, Jo Jo?"

"I'm so sick I don't know if I can make it to the river."

"You can make it. You gotta make it. Wanta stop and rest awhile in the shade?" Buck pulled Jo Jo toward a big oak tree and sat him down. He pulled out his handkerchief and handed it to Jo Jo. "Here, wipe your brow, but try not to puke in it. It's my Sunday handkerchief."

"Lord, Buck, I'm gonna die before I get to the river."

"No, you're not. You're gonna make it. If

you die now, you'll go straight to Hell."

Jo Jo got his hands around Buck's waist and pulled himself to his feet. "What's my eyes look like now, Buck?"

"Aggies. Like all them marbles you won when you played us for keeps."

"I'll give 'em all back to you, Buck, I swear."

"Ain't no time to be worried about that now, Jo Jo. The river ain't far now."

By the time they had reached the river, Herschel was there with the preacher. Word had spread rapidly, and several members of the congregation were standing by the river bank. Sister Isabell Putnam, who played the organ, had pulled her skirt up and waded out into the river.

"Glory to God, this boy's coming to give himself to the Lord," yelled Buck to Brother Stegal.

Sister Putnam shook her skirt and yelled, "Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!"

Buck handed Jo Jo over to the preacher. By this time, Jo Jo was so sick he had gone into a state of semi-shock.

"I gotcha, son. Follow me out into the river. What a glorious day this is!" said Reverend Stegal.

Herschel came around to where Buck was standing. "We've done good, Buck. Brother Stegal's so happy he claimed we could take up the collection next Sunday."

Brother Stegal had waded with Jo Jo into the river. They stood about six feet from Sister Putnam, who was still shouting.

Brother Stegal placed one hand on Jo Jo's back and another one on his head. "Brothers and sisters - we have found the lost sheep. But the good shepherd is about to welcome this here boy to his fold."

Jo Jo looked over at Reverend Stegal.

"Hurry, Reverend Stegal - put me down in the water."

Reverend Stegal looked at the crowd that had gathered on the bank. "Listen to him. Listen to this here boy so anxious to be saved. Glory to God."

Reverend Stegal lowered Jo Jo into the river and said, "Do you take the Lord Jesus Christ to be your Savior?" and Jo Jo felt the water cover his head. The water brought Jo Jo back to his senses. He opened his eyes, and came face to face with a large cottonmouth.

Jo Jo sprang up from the river, spitting water out of his mouth, and yelling, "Holy sh—"

Brother Stegal, in excitement, dumped Jo Jo again, shouting, "He's got the Holy Spirit!"

Once again Jo Jo went under the water to come face to face with the cottonmouth. And once again he sprang up.

"Whatcha feel like, son?"

"Cotton..!"

Brother Stegal pushed him down again. "Cotton ain't good enough. You got to get white as snow."

Herschel looked over at Buck and said, "Jo Jo's taking this more seriously than I thought he would, Buck."

Brother Stegal was quoting Scripture. Sister Putnam was singing "Amazing Grace."

By this time, the cottonmouth was tired of the invasion of his privacy, and bit Jo Jo on the arm. Jo Jo came up screaming, "Je-sus Christ!"

The preacher pushed him under again. "That's right, Jo Jo, Jesus Christ, your accepted Savior!"

Along with the cottonmouth, Jo Jo's life

Continued on page 32



Diane Fox-McCord





Crystal Whitaker

## Ode to an Abandoned Classroom

Before this room there were no true echoes. Nothing I hadn't done was welcome.  
All the ghosts waved and ambled over to sit on my knee and tousle my hair, saying  
"Remember when we. . .at the lake. . .after the light had gone. . .in rowboats,  
always rowboats and surely a rusty oarlock yelped when prodded, thinning our blood,  
my blood. . .circling to begin again at an old heart."

But here memories not my own trace like dice across bright casino felt,  
Turning up the numbers of another time. This room, ignored now in the wash of  
Improvements - the wake of determined forward movement - the high money of our  
New minds - sits in a silence as utter as snow and so listening you can hear more  
Than the hitching breath of age, looking see further than rows of desks along  
Crumbling walls. The nail where hung a clock which warned that the lecture was  
Ending, that Picket was in retreat, hauling with him a paltry three thousand  
Where once there had been four times that many eager, scrambling, whooping  
Doomed, the end of the Great Rebellion, related in rooms like this,  
Itself a part of somebody's history, somebody's charge through time  
Till he straggled back to drop in his seat and remember.

Crosby Hunt



C. Smith

## The Discovery of the Constellation Orion

And turning saw the darkness swarm  
like a stain, moving  
Its dirty borders forward with a craft  
practiced through  
centuries of encroachment, the skill  
of steady seizure,  
until all edges essential to discovery  
are covered.

And running heard the last of the light  
murmur in the leaves  
like a muffled chime; behind, the  
swelling ceases, sated,  
and bloated it plumps down its  
soundless boundaries,  
allowing only owls their toneless  
songs.

And hiding saw a voice like an arrow  
tear the dark  
in arced descent, striking the silence  
created by its absence,  
And heard the animal die and hoisted,  
slung through new space  
and hung in mute opposition to the  
freshly ruined blackness.

Crosby Hunt

## Analysis of a Study on Influence

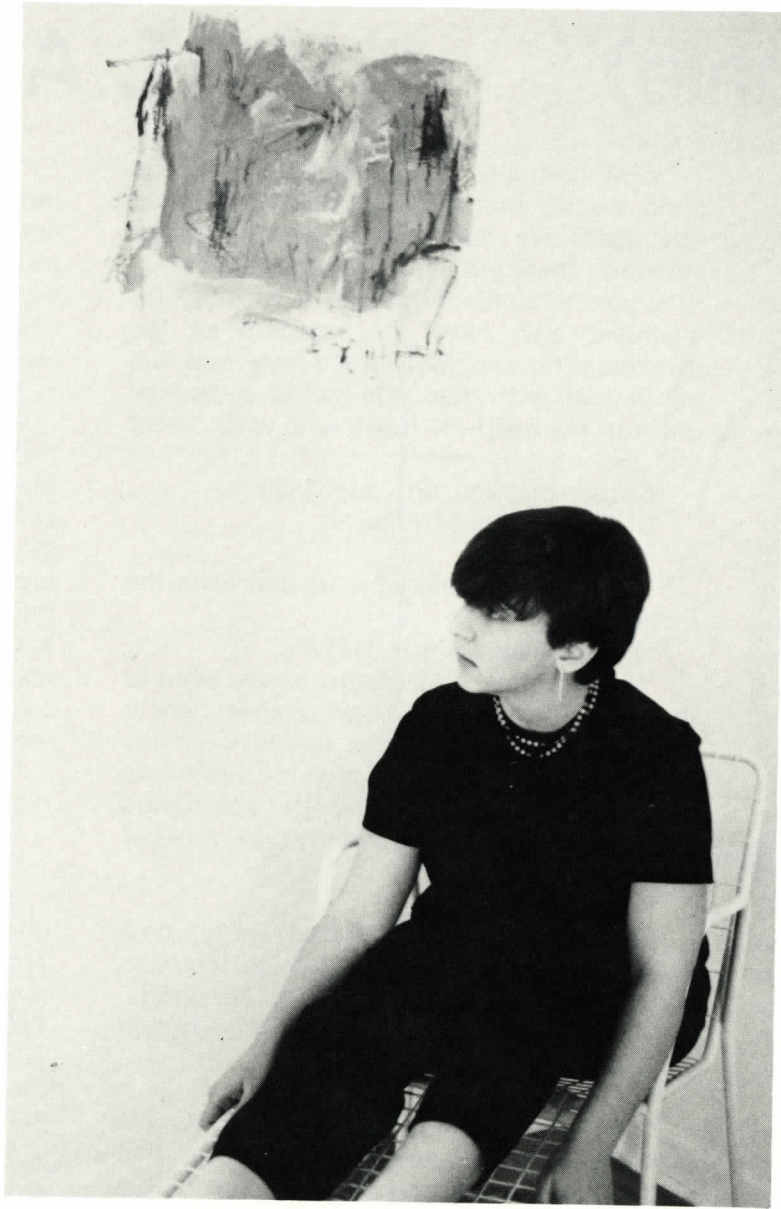
If violet is to my eyes as it is to yours,  
can we not share it? Must  
you steal from me or I from you,  
and then spend energy  
violently disputing who  
stole from whom?  
Why not smile at the mutual  
recognition, pen it into your poem  
and I into mine,  
and breathe in the freshness  
of the violet evening  
and walk together into the night.  
Thus side by side the dying sun's  
rays wash us of guilt: we learn  
concurrent adoration spontaneously  
creates separate but harmonious  
visions. The glittering Thames  
does not rival its complement,  
the Seine. Divergent angles  
of descent inspire converging  
angles of ascent and violet  
becomes violet to me as to you—  
contingent upon the composition  
of one evening  
's atmosphere.

Nicholas Robertson

## Brown's Diner

Warm Sunday  
afternoons,  
shattered by the  
incomprehensible  
muse of astrology,  
who has condemned  
all signs  
save the one  
born under neon.  
which sheds  
the light of illusion  
in small bottles  
crying  
"Drink me."

Ralph Jones



C. Randles

# "Sixty Minutes" in Hell (With Dante)

Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

"Hello. I'm Dan Rather."

"I'm Morley Safer."

"I'm Mike Wallace."

"And I'm Harry Reasoner."

"Tonight on 'Sixty Minutes,' Dan will take you live where no man or camera has ever been before. The place about which I am speaking. . . is hell. Dan is there to interview the author of the classic work *The Divine Comedy*, Mr. Dante Alighieri. Dan, to you."

"Thank you, Mike. Hell. Hades. The Underworld. Dante's 'Inferno.' We've all heard about it. Some have read it. We're all familiar with it. But, until now, we've only imagined what hell actually looks like. Behind me you can hear the echoes of the wails of pain from the other side of the river. I'm talking, of course, of Acheron. Here with me now is Dante Alighieri, author of *The Divine Comedy*, who will serve as our guide. Mr. Alighieri has agreed to speak in a language familiar to most of us, English. Mr. Alighieri, firstly, may I call you Dan?"

"Yes, Dan, you may."

"Uh, Mr. Rather to you. All right, Dan, most of us are familiar with *The Divine Comedy*. Tell me, is hell as you expected? How does its structure compare to that about which you wrote in your 'Inferno'? And from what circle have you come to guide us?"

"Well, Mr. Rather, no. Hell is not quite as I had expected. I have been below to the innermost circle, and it is quite unlike that of which I had written."

"Excuse me, Dan, are you telling me those here in hell are free to wander from circle to

circle?"

"Well, normally, no. I have come from the sixth circle, that of the vengeful, whose occupants are not able to wander about. However, there are a few, Washington Irving, Stephen Vincent Benet, and myself, for example, who have the freedom of the grounds. You see, Melvin is a very vain and egotistical individual. He holds a special place in his heart for those who write about him."

"Excuse me, Dan, uh. . . Melvin?"

"Oh, yes, he goes by Melvin."

"Satan?"

"Yes. Don't ask me why; he just likes the name."

"Oh, . . . well, continue, please."

"Yes, well, as I was saying, I have been to the innermost circle and have seen all here in hell. I'm proud to say I was correct on many of my assumptions. There are nine circles, as I suggested in my work. Though I positioned them incorrectly, I did correctly label most of the circles."

"For example—"

"Well, Dan, . . . uh, Mr. Rather, we are now standing in the third circle, which includes those hypocrites, soothsayers, simonists, purse snatchers, and those who serve boiled okra to guests."

"Uh, excuse me, okra?"

"Yes. Melvin hates okra. Oh, while I'm thinking about it, you and your crew had better keep an eye on your wallets in this circle. The first circle is, as I guessed, Limbo. I assume you have met Charon. He's an odd character, don't you agree?"

## T. Alicia Adkerson

"Yes, I suppose he was a bit peculiar."

"I try to avoid him when I enter his territory. The second circle is full of the heretics. Melvin is partial to those sorts, so he keeps them near the edge. Oh, excuse me. Get! Down, boy, down! Scat! Please excuse Fido. I realize he gets carried away at times. He won't bother you anymore."

"F-F-Fido?"

"Yes. Well, Minos. We like to call him Fido. He's harmless really. He just puts on the facade of being mean and vicious. Now where was I? Oh, yes, the fifth circle. This circle contains the wrathful, avaricious, prodigal, and lustful. There's a line to get in that one. The sixth circle includes those who are vengeful. As I have said, I am a proud member of the vengeful class. The other circles are fairly similar to those of which I have written."

"And the last circle, that in the City of Dis, that one closest to Satan himself?"

"Ooh, I hate that!"

"Excuse me?"

"Dis. I hate that! Some idiot must have miscopied. Dis. It was clearly printed as 'Bis.' The City of Bis. Why would I write 'Dis'; it makes no sense. Well, what's done is done. You ask of the last circle. Well, I'll tell you. The last circle includes those without receipts."

"I beg your pardon?"

"You heard me correctly. Frankly, I was astonished upon finding this out also."

"What exactly does it mean?"

"All those who have returned merchandise to a store without a receipt reside in the ninth circle."

Continued on page 32



Crystal Whitaker



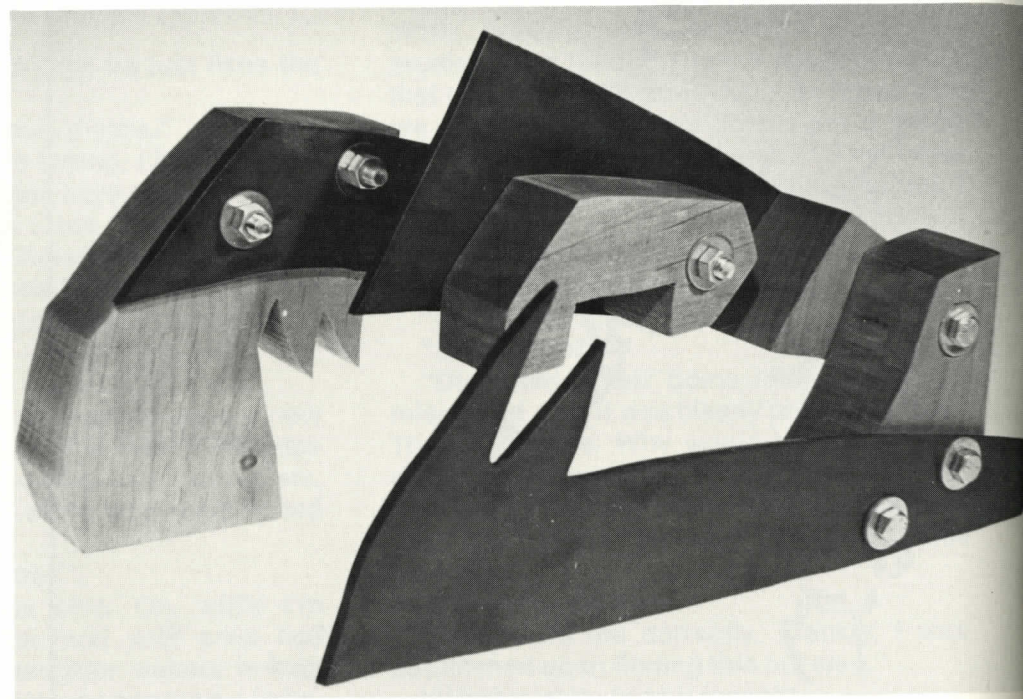
Crystal Whitaker



Zing Went  
the Strings  
of My Heart

Joe Landa

The Apprentice



Jim Nutt



The  
Ruptured  
Duck



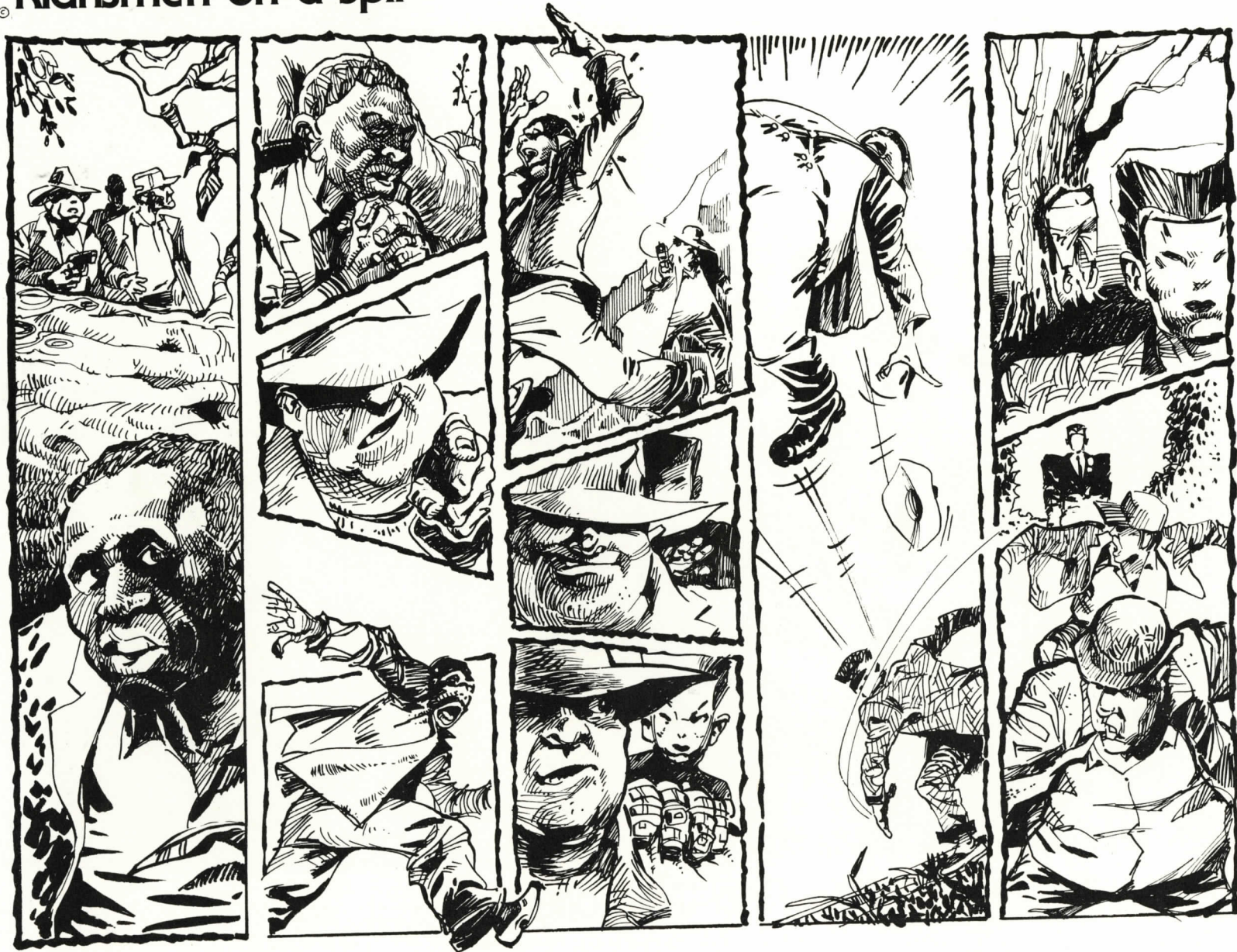
Rita Ann Donnally



Joe Landa

# The Remnant

© Klansmen on a Spit





## Tomorrow

Tomorrow she will come.  
Riding the long train down from  
Some dirty northern city  
Her eyes will be frosted over  
From the slow frames of cold shacks  
And unplowed fields which trains  
reveal  
As they tour neglected lands.  
Her ears will still hum with  
The drumming cadence of rolling  
wheel  
Over endless steely track.  
The grime of the trip will still cling to  
her skin,  
But she will step lightly down the  
steps at the station,  
Glad for the small warmth of the  
south in winter.  
I will take her straight to my father's  
field  
And lay her down and hoist her soiled  
skirt  
And feel the numbing motion still  
within her,  
Joining my long winter wait  
With her unutterable ride.

Crosby Hunt

## The November People

People....  
Like  
the  
falling  
leaves of November  
Pass through our lives in varying and  
mysterious ways.  
Caught by the winds of hurrying time  
Fleeting visitors in our self-serving  
scramble toward eternity.  
Some....  
Still  
sun-warm  
in  
recent death  
Catch our eye as they cartwheel by  
Flashes of late color and brilliance.  
We would mount them between the  
pages of our lives  
....if it were not so much trouble.  
Some....  
Lie  
damp and dark  
against  
the cold  
Nestled in the withered grass of our  
days.

They are too far gone to love  
Too heavy to carry very far on our  
journey.

Some....  
Are crisp  
and grey  
and almost transparent  
with age.

We touch these gently...  
Knowing they may come apart in our  
hands  
Not wanting the discomfort..or guilt  
of it.

Some..however  
Catch  
between  
the searching fingers  
of our emotional rakes.

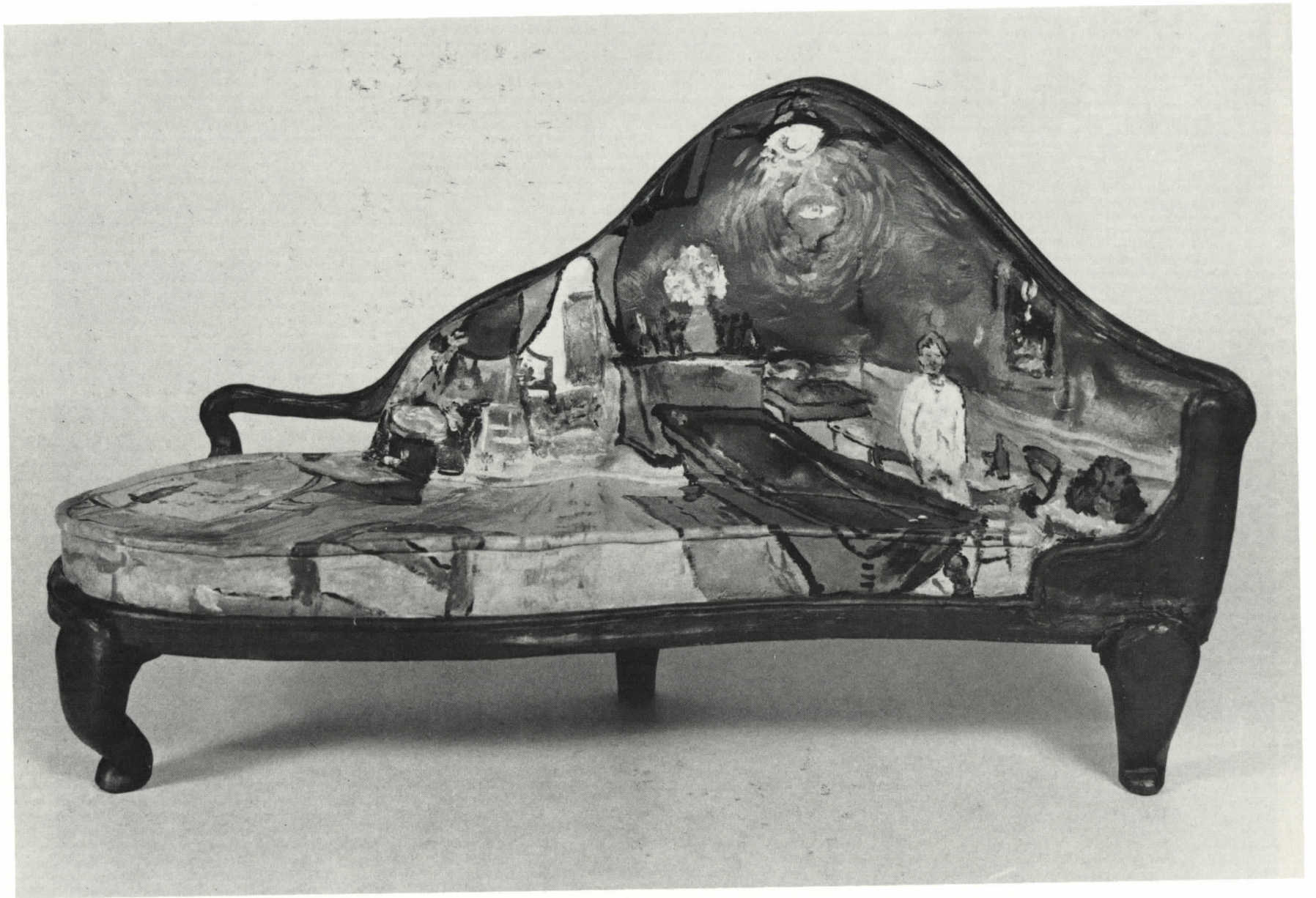
These..we must touch!  
These..we must deal with!  
For they are caught forever..in the  
very fabric of our memories

These..are the November people.

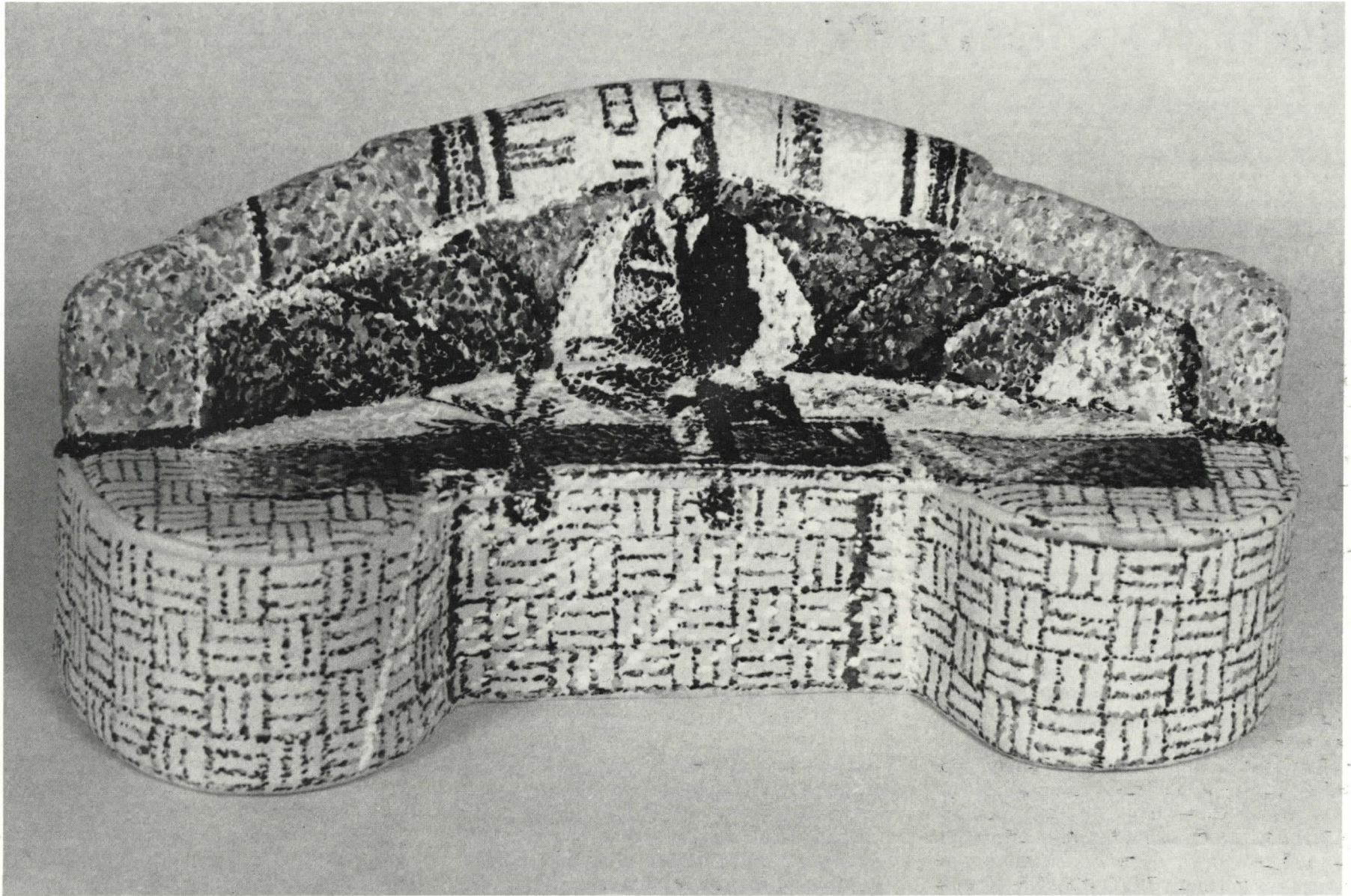
H.C.



Сүд Сүднор



Stephen King



Peggy Trail

# Flight To Obscurity

# Jay Beard

There were more cars than usual on the road that day when we walked from Jimmie Joyce's house down to the cave. It was Sunday afternoon, though, and the fishing poles sticking out the car windows reminded me that Town Creek Fishing Camp was just twelve miles down the mountain toward Guntersville. Lots of people from Martling and Asbury went there to fish on weekends.

Grandma Hodge would have said different, though: "Huh! Them loafers give up all their time to drinking homebrew and gamblin'. Them fish ain't running no risk at all."

Dust rolled up as a big Ford flew by. The Stevenson sticker on the bumper made me feel funny again just like at school Friday. The big candidate rally in the gym on Thursday night had been fun, but the next day at school, everyone seemed to know that Sis and I were Republicans. Daddy said it didn't matter, though; it was worth being in a smaller crowd to be on a winning team. Everybody in J.J.'s family was a Democrat, but that day, we had silently agreed to avoid that subject for one of our favorite adventures—sneaking off to Old Jackie Beam's cave.

Jackie Beam was a real hermit. Everybody knew he kept bats for housepets, too.

Sometimes we would meet him walking to Moody Fossett's store with a towsack over his shoulder. He was always barefoot and wore overalls with no shirt. J.J. said that was all, too!

"He doesn't wear anything underneath; probably doesn't even have any underwear," she giggled.

In the wintertime, he wore red longjohns under his overalls and never cut his hair or beard. (Daddy said he shed his coat in the spring like our old hound dog, Trouble.) Old Jackie hated kids, too. Sometimes when I had to walk to the store for Mama, I would nearly faint if I saw him coming my way along the road between our house and Moody's. His beady eyes were enough to tell me he wouldn't like anyone snooping around in his cave, either. The memory gave me a sudden chill.

"A cat just ran across my grave, J.J." I shuddered as I clutched her sleeve with a sweaty hand.

I hadn't really wanted to go to the cave that day, but J.J. wasn't afraid of anything, and I didn't want her to think that I was, either.

"I wish it was down on our bluff," I said. "This is just the best place to hide out and play."

"And the safest place to smoke these! Aunt Edith will never miss them." She produced two Camel cigarettes from her jacket pocket. "Besides, it's more fun to sneak in and out under Old Jackie's nose."

"Yeah, it is more exciting this way," I lied through a mouthful of cotton, "but, Mama said she'd whip me if she ever caught me down here."

Our last meeting at the cave had made me swear I'd never go there again. Holly McCauley got made at me because I wouldn't walk down to the creek with him. I was afraid he'd try to kiss me again like he had at Edna Reed's birthday party. I shuddered and felt goose pimples. His lips had been all slippery, and he'd smelled like Beechnut Tobacco.

Anyway, we had all sat around inside the cave and played our favorite game, Pleased or Displeased. Holly had brought a kerosene lantern, and the light on the walls showed up all the dancing ghosts who lived there; they all had Jackie's beady stare.

That would have been our best meeting ever if Holly and Johnny Roden hadn't got into a fight. Holly kept bragging about the homerun he'd hit at school that day, and Johnny finally called him a showoff. Holly got a bloody nose and started to whimper. He



left, taking his lantern and all the ghosts with him. It wasn't as scary after that, and everyone started leaving. I was disappointed. I had hoped when we played Pleased or Displeased I could walk down to the creek with Johnny. I knew I wouldn't mind if he tried to kiss me. A warm feeling ran all over me, and I wondered if J.J. noticed, but she was whistling and flipping a box of matches in the air.

We cut off the main road onto the trail through the woods. Suddenly, we walked faster even though neither of us had said we should hurry.

I actually smelled the cave before we came to it; a cool dampness clung in my nose, a dampness that made my neck tingle. I slowed down as we got closer, picking my way through the huckleberry bushes and tall johnson grass that grew around the opening of our secret den.

"This is probably how Old Jackie smells, too, but," I added in a moment of conscience, "he has no place to take a bath, I guess."

People at Martling said that Jackie didn't have any kinfolks, but Mama said he was Miss Dickle's cousin. Miss Dickle was a schoolteacher down in the Blue Bend community; she was a real fine lady and went to Birmingham twice a year to the D.A.R. meetings. After Jackie came back from the war, wounded and crazy, he started preaching on the courthouse steps in Guntersville, preachin' and hollerin' about how the war was a crazy thing to do. After that, Miss Dickle wouldn't speak to Jackie anymore. After all, patriotism was real high on her list; it was her favorite subject when she spoke to the D.A.R.

As we found our seats on a ledge inside

the cave, I was thinking how sad it would be to have kinfolks who wouldn't speak.

A match lit up the gloom.

"Jody, remember that secret meeting we had here back in May?" J.J. was already puffing on her cigarette and blowing smoke rings like Rita Hayworth.

I was about to answer her when something warm and furry brushed my hand.

"A bat!" I screamed and saw Trouble standing there switching his tail and looking grateful for having been invited to our secret hideout.

"That damned dog is going to get us caught!" J.J. picked up a stick. She chased Trouble toward the opening of the cave, but he faked and darted to the rear. We had not seen the bottles until we heard the crash. The sickly, sweet smell was not new to my nose. I knew right away what it was.

"Dammit, J.J.! That's Jackie's homebrew," I shouted in dismay as Trouble jumped and barked trying to lap up the foaming liquid.

We ran from the cave with Trouble at our heels. The trail seemed much longer, now. Back on the road, we slowed to a fast walk, but my heart never slowed at all.

"That's the last time I'll ever let you talk me into that, J.J. God! Are we lucky!"

"Lucky if no one saw us. If you'd make that stupid dog of yours mind, or stay home." J.J. was breathless from walking so fast, and I couldn't talk at all; my chest was hurting. I felt relieved as we got closer to J.J.'s house. It was getting late, and I suddenly wanted to be home.

"Don't forget to chew the gum I gave you." She half whispered and disappeared through the rear screen door.

I climbed the hill up to our house, wishing I didn't have to walk alone. I knew I'd be

scared if I didn't get home before dark. I wondered if Old Jackie ever got lonely. Maybe he did get lonely, but I knew he would never be scared.

I hoped that no one would even see me as I walked along from J.J.'s house to mine. When I got home, Daddy was on the back porch with Trouble.

"This ramblin' dog has cut his foot again." He was pouring water into a pan, and Trouble was whimpering and licking his paw.

I gave my friend a knowing pat on the head and went straight inside. In our house I felt safe again, but I was sick from the cigarette and the excitement.

"Can I just take a bath and go to bed early," I asked Mama, even though supper was on the stove.

"You've stayed out walking too long again in this October wind." She felt my face. "Eat some of this soup before you go to sleep. You won't rest if your stomach is empty."

My dreams were not the sweet ones she wished me. All night long, a kind old man kept calling and calling to me through the woods. I was confused and afraid. I knew the old man would not be kind; we had spilled his homebrew. Finally, I heard voices that didn't belong in my dream and realized I was awake in my own bed.

Daddy was in the kitchen telling Mama about Old Jackie. Daddy always walked up to Moody's early on Sunday morning and talked to Moody and Willie Brown and Herschel Beard while Mama cooked breakfast. The three cars at Jackie's shack had been a real good sign that something was wrong, especially since one of them was Doc Isbell's.

Our Hermit was dead in his own front yard. "A heart attack," Doc Isbell had said. "That

Flight To Obscurity.....

Continued from page 31

and too much homebrew.”

I went to the refrigerator for some milk, trying to hear everything without listening.

“It’s a sin and a shame for any poor soul to die that way when he’s got kinfolks.” Mama’s voice got louder, and she beat the bread dough harder, pounding it down on the counter.

“Yeah, but sometimes when a man’s mind goes, even kinfolks can’t do anything with him or for him.” Daddy poured some coffee into my milk and gave me a good-morning pat.

As I watched Mama cut out biscuits, I wondered if anyone else would ever live in Jackie’s shack. The plain, flat dough was left in little diamond shapes when she lifted out the circles.

“Everything changes.” Mama wiped her hands on her apron. “Grandma Hodge says that Jackie was once an up and comin’ young man. He used to write for the newspaper in Albertville; even wrote poetry. She said the war ruined him.”

Mama leaned against the counter and rested her back.

“People here thought Jackie would always be around. I guess he lived like he wanted to, though. He didn’t work for nobody, and I don’t guess he had no bills to pay, either.”

I couldn’t think of Jackie wearing an army uniform or even a tie.

“I don’t think Jackie ever did any of those things,” I mumbled and glanced at Mama. She was busy setting the table.

Daddy was standing at the back door staring off into the woods where he and Trouble went hunting sometimes.

I moved over beside him.

“Daddy, I don’t think Jackie ever wrote any poetry, do you?”

The Baptizing of Jo Jo Jessup.....

Continued from page 13

began to unfold before his very eyes. It wasn’t his big sins, but the little sins like shooting all Mr. Horn’s chickens - hiding the school flagpole on the 3rd of July - putting his private in Mr. Pedigo’s milking machine.

This time Jo Jo came up, with the cottonmouth wrapped around his arm.

“Lord God, Buck, he’s took up the serpent!”

“I don’t think so, Herschel. Looks like he’s trying to put it down.”

Reverend Stegal cut his eyes toward Jo Jo’s arm. “What you got there, boy?”

“It’s a goddamned cottonmouth!”

Sister Putnam screamed, threw her skirt above her head, and started running to the bank.

Reverend Stegal dropped Jo Jo and beat Sister Putnam to the bank.

Herschel and Buck were standing on the bank, yelling, “Get outta the water, Jo Jo! Get outta the water!”

Billy Thrasher was standing on the river bank. “Get him in the pickup. We gotta get him to the hospital.”

By this time, Jo Jo’s arm was beginning to swell bigger than his left leg.

Billy Thrasher pulled out in his pickup with Jo Jo, Herschel and Buck in the back. Familiar houses and trees went by in a blur for Jo Jo. What was ninety miles an hour seemed to be a snail’s pace for a dying boy. Jo Jo was shaking with chills and yelling, “I’m gonna die! I’m gonna die!”

“No you ain’t, Jo Jo. No, you ain’t. We gettin’ you to the hospital. Just hang on.”

Jo Jo looked up at Buck and said, “You can’t let me die, Buck, you can’t let me die.”

“We ain’t a-gonna let you die, Jo Jo. You gotta be baptized again. That one didn’t take.”

“Sixty Minutes” in Hell (With Dante).....

Continued from page 20

“That is extremely hard to believe, Dan. Please explain further.”

“Yes, well, it seems Melvin—”

“Satan.”

“Yes. Before he became what he now is, even before he became an angel, he was in charge of handling complaints and returns at a well-known and established discount store.”

“Discount store?”

“Well, if you must know, Woolworth’s.”

“Mr. Alighieri, excuse me, but I find it very hard to believe that Satan ever worked, let alone at a discount store. Woolworth’s didn’t even exist as far back as you are implying!”

“Do you know how long Woolworth’s has been around?”

“Well, no, but—”

“Neither does anyone else, and, until now, no one has posed the question.”

“Well, . . . uh, . . . Mr. Alighieri, it seems as though we have run out of time. I would like to talk further with you after the show if it is possible.”

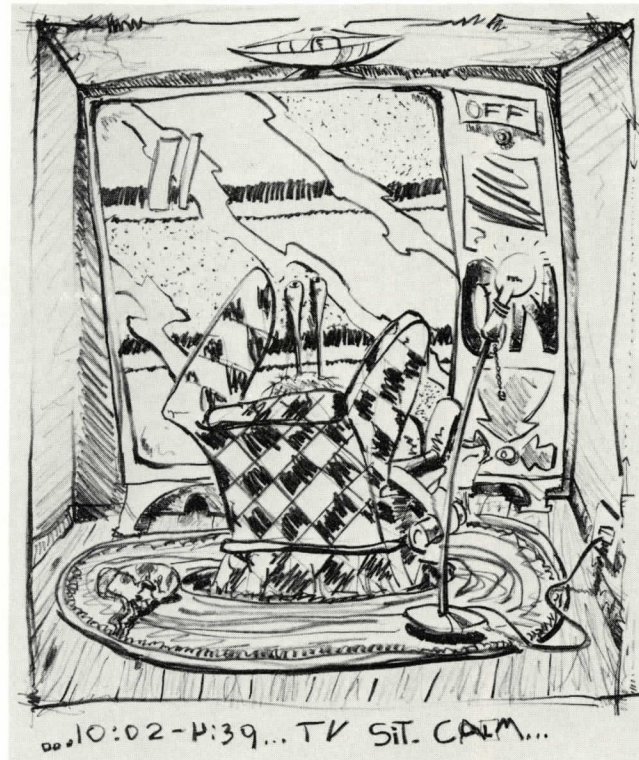
“Certainly.”

“Well, Mike, there you have it. Puzzling? Yes. Incredible? Indeed. Hard to believe? Certainly. However, as you may or may not know, those in the Underworld are unable to tell a falsehood. You, our viewers, must ponder and seek the truth behind the words yourselves. As for this reporter, it will take a long time and many sleepless nights trying to find the truth behind Mr. Alighieri’s statements. For now, Mike, back to you.”

“Thank you, Dan. Well, Harry, Morley, we have run out of time. Tune in next week on ‘Sixty Minutes’ when Dan, if he returns, will interview St. Peter. Until then, this is Mike Wallace signing off.”

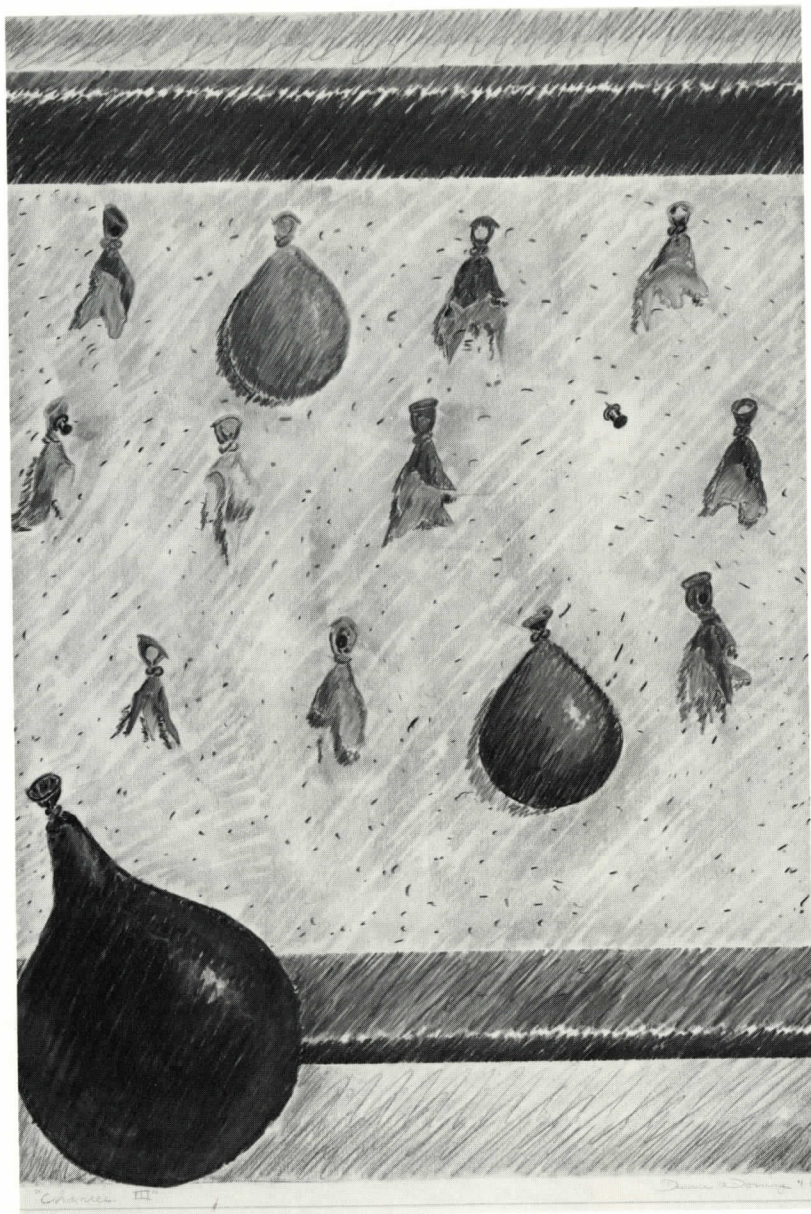
Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock.

"a day in a life"



Scott Thomas

Chances III



Duane Dominy

Stoneware Covered Jar



Tim Butler

Tigre Lily



Ling Tan



Spencer Page



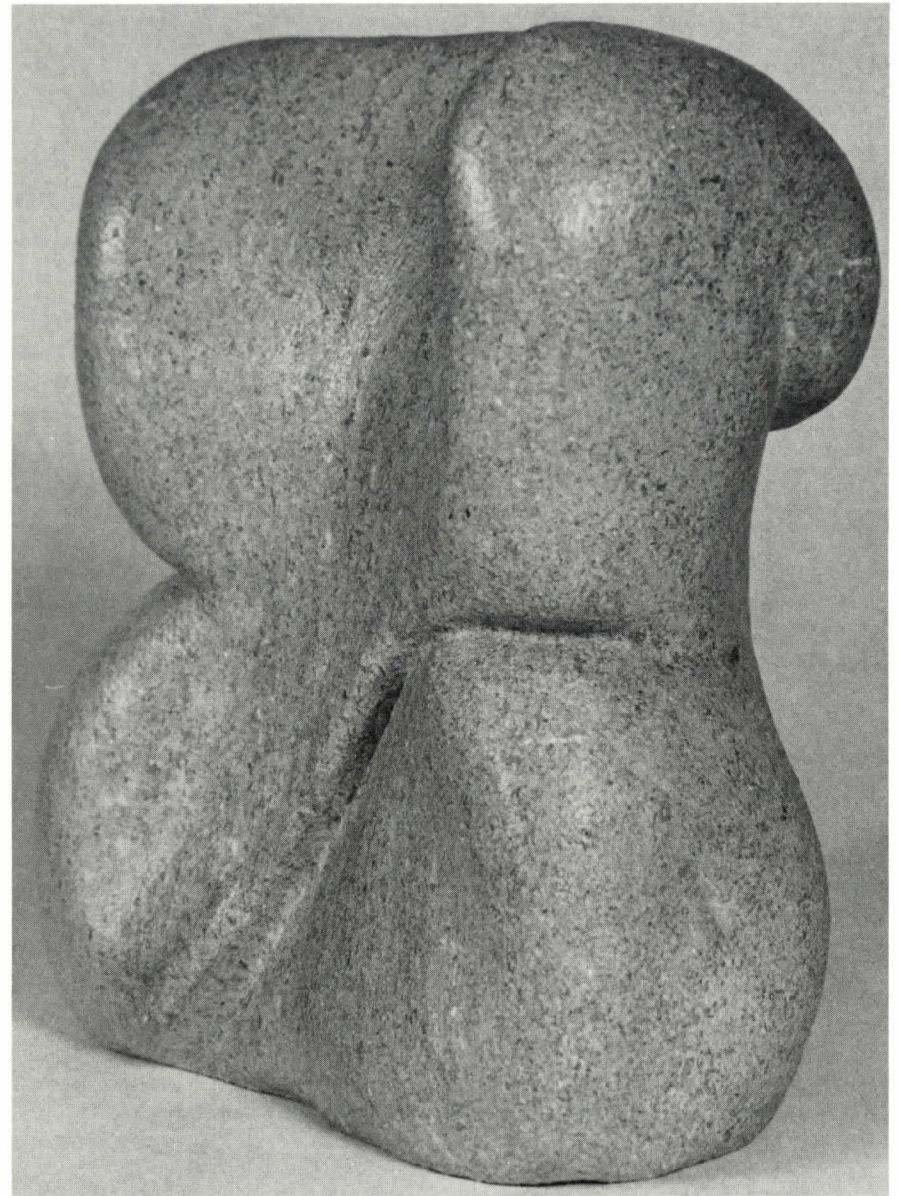
Chrisana Reveley McKinney



Female Torso



Female Torso



Chrisana Reveley McKinney

## —Waking...

Flung forward from the dark, phantasmagoric subway  
I cringe on the polyester  
Dissolving into real, tablespoons at a time,  
Focusing mangled vision on the walls of the small cubicle  
where the rose wallpaper bleeds  
dripping hot scarlet wax on the carpet.

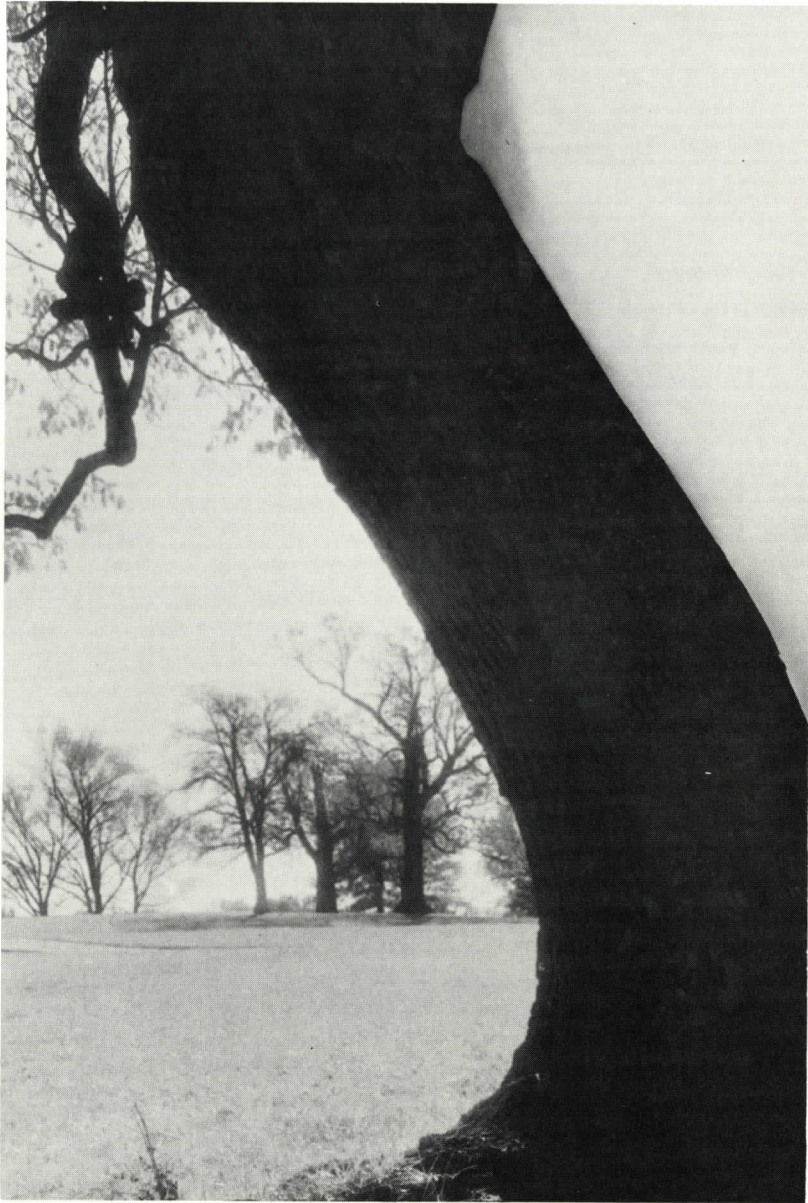
Ten seconds away  
The dying bacon screams  
Squirming convulsively as it is sacrificed to the iron.  
Two eggs whimper, in thin and thread-like voices,  
Boiling in oil for their existence in an inferior state.  
A multitude of oatmeal O's skydives from cardboard bombers  
And drowns in a suicidal mission.  
...a barely perceptible creak escapes  
as the stainless steel jaws of the kitchen General open  
in an approving smile.

I turn away  
to hear dawn percolating violently  
below the line of bare-knuckled elms  
to see the shredded-napkin moon sliding downward  
to avoid the spray of the tangerine sun.

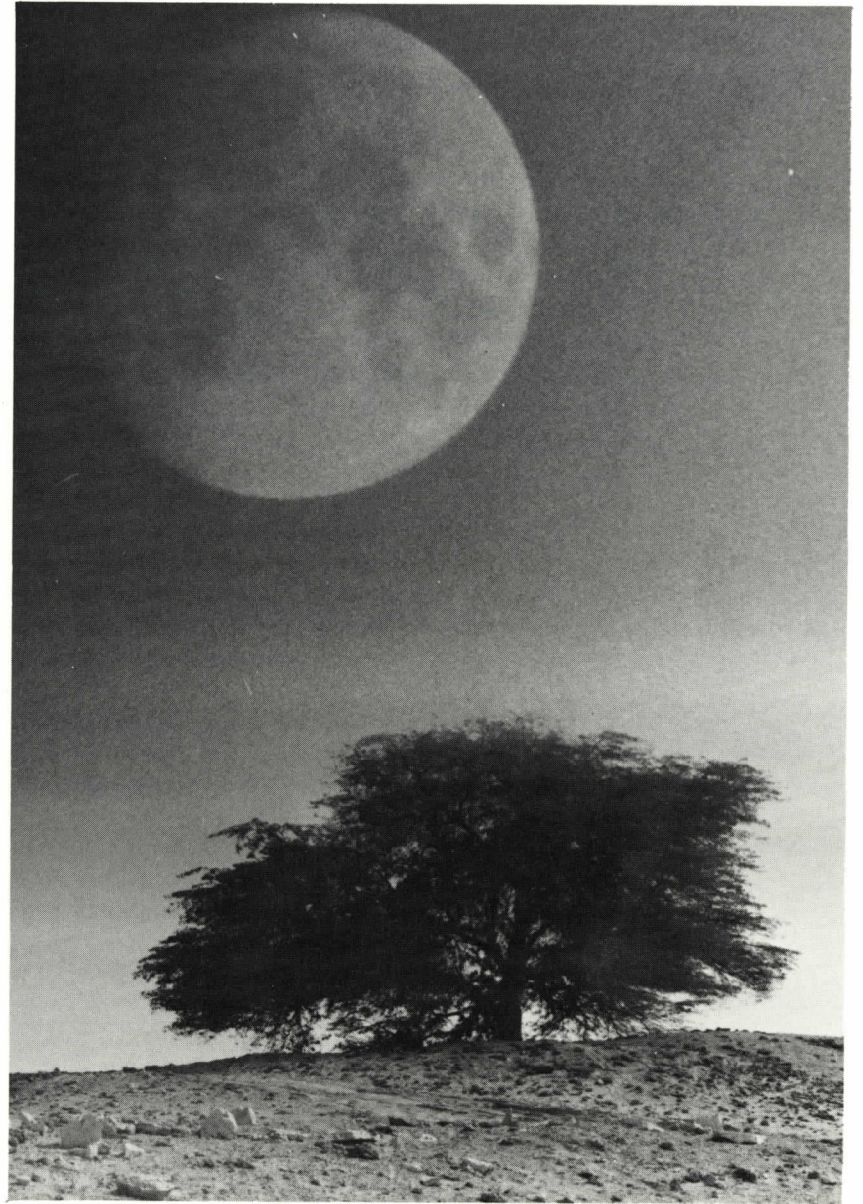
Amy Cantrell



Mother  
Nature



C.S. Hayes



C.S. Hayes

## A Non-Petrarchan Sonnet (for Young'un)

A friend that could not near be earned  
By me, who grabs for everything  
And carps and gripes, though birds still sing  
Oh don't you think it's time I learned

That  
Love like yours just can't be bought  
By yuppies with their credit cards  
Or songs from ee-lectronic bards.  
Why does it seem I can't be taught?

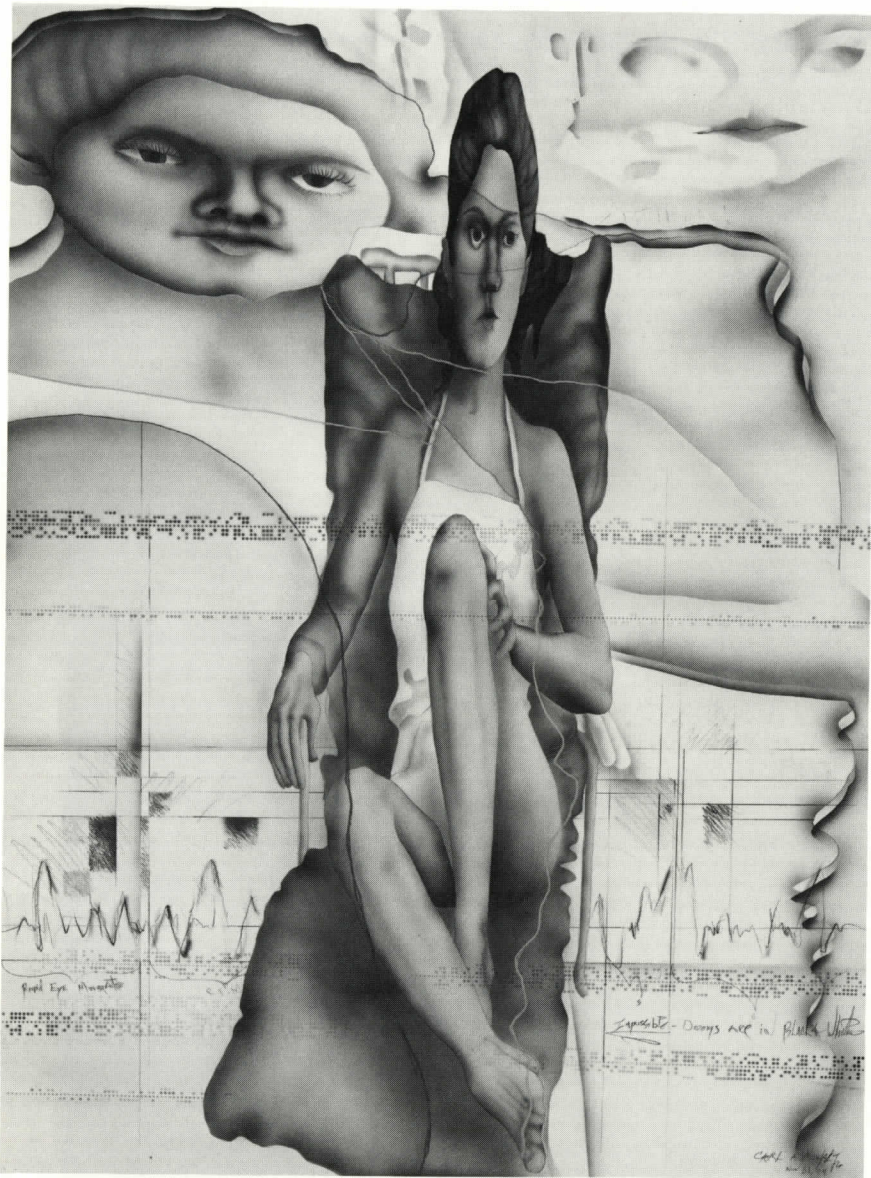
Your hands are "palms" of victory  
For peace of mind o'er mind-made hell.  
Your eyes they see the world for me  
As yet it is, and yet could be  
With just a little bit more faith  
To break my ego's wicked spell.

Elkin Brown

## Out of It

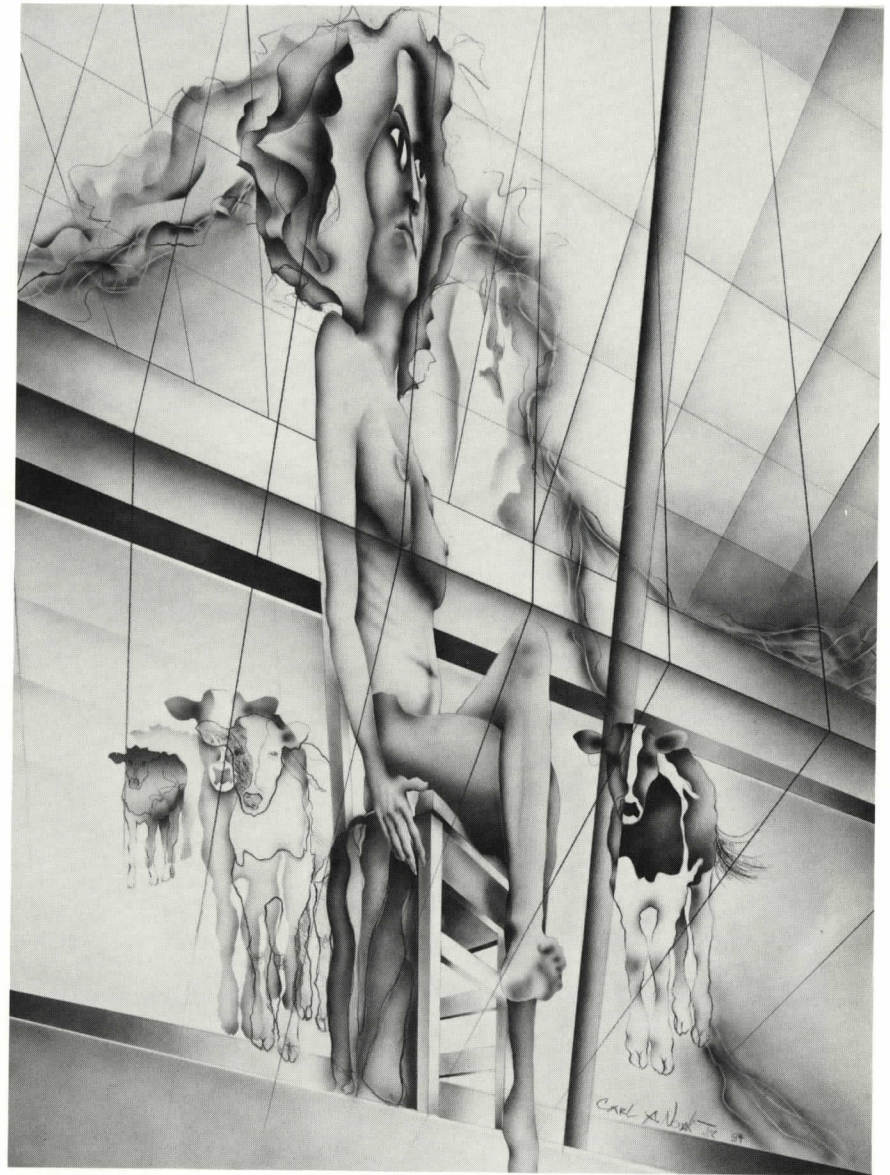
My lighter sits on the table,  
cigarettes are burning in the ash tray;  
liquor pouring, music blasting  
The smoke has stopped rising from my cigarette  
and the butts scratched out the burning embers.  
We buried its corpse and said a prayer,  
the uprooted life ended in unknown soil.

Jim Wise



Carl A. Nowak

Dreams in  
Black & White



The Cattle  
Are Crossing

Carl A. Nowak



C. Randles



C. Randles

## 32nd Avenue

Huddled  
in crowds  
back to back  
face to face  
strangers and comrades  
in urban/urbane  
surroundings,  
Sharing the sensations  
felt before  
in pre-legend  
days of yore,  
familiar and  
unaware of that  
Kinship of the flame  
that warms the heart  
against  
the night darkness  
and  
lights the vision  
opposing  
the star-kissed cold,  
Huddled  
in crowds  
feeling bold  
(only)  
as long as  
the flame  
lasts.

Ralph Jones

## Tough Boys

They're backed to a building  
peering to the street  
a cool disposition  
smoldering heat

Their jackets of denim  
the collar turned up  
the Levi's are faded  
their crotches are cupped

Their leather scrapes pavement  
their struts stir desire  
lovers of worship  
insatiable fire

They're rough undercover  
pleasure and pain  
they live for destruction  
and play for the same

They're kings of the jungle  
tough boys of the street  
they're animal passion  
sexual meat

Their eyes show the danger  
their faces the scars  
of life in their jungle  
the neon and bars

Their strength is their attitude  
macho controlled  
ready for action  
heartless and cold

They rape and they conquer  
they take for their own  
they live for the present  
the future unknown

A.R. Smith

## (Untitled)

I closed the door  
on my paper dreams  
and cut myself in two.  
Now the slightest breeze  
rips at my heart  
tearing down my world.  
Then the pain starts  
and it will never end  
until I do.

James P. Vinett

## Memories of Things Past That Shall Never Be Again

...little glass-eyed man with white hair  
and razor blades  
he is walking death  
he sneaks through the right channels  
he is an editor

*snip* this scene here  
*cut* that scene short

he works slowly, sitting in his office  
previewing rushes  
running old footage

edit slowly  
don't let others know

*slash*, he's gone

edit

*snip*, the money's gone

edit, edit  
do it fast and mean  
come up from behind

*slash*, she's gone

pupils float in a sea of confusion  
throw them an inflatable duck  
when they need a boat,  
lead them to an island  
that will sink into the brine,  
give them hope and . . .

edit, edit, edit

now they are gone too

Jamie Miner



Glenda Guion





Glenda Guion



Syd Sydhor

## Staff:

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Robin Altin	Literature
Kathy Brady	Photography
D. Michelle Adkerson	Copy & Proof
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Carl A. Nowak	Design
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MARSHALL  
Tullahor  
ADMIT  
ONE  
Good Day  
of Sale On  
081308

GOOD THIS DAY  
ADMIT ONE  
The manager reserves the right to refuse admission on the ground of overcrowding. A.S. No. 1000  
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