



HELICON

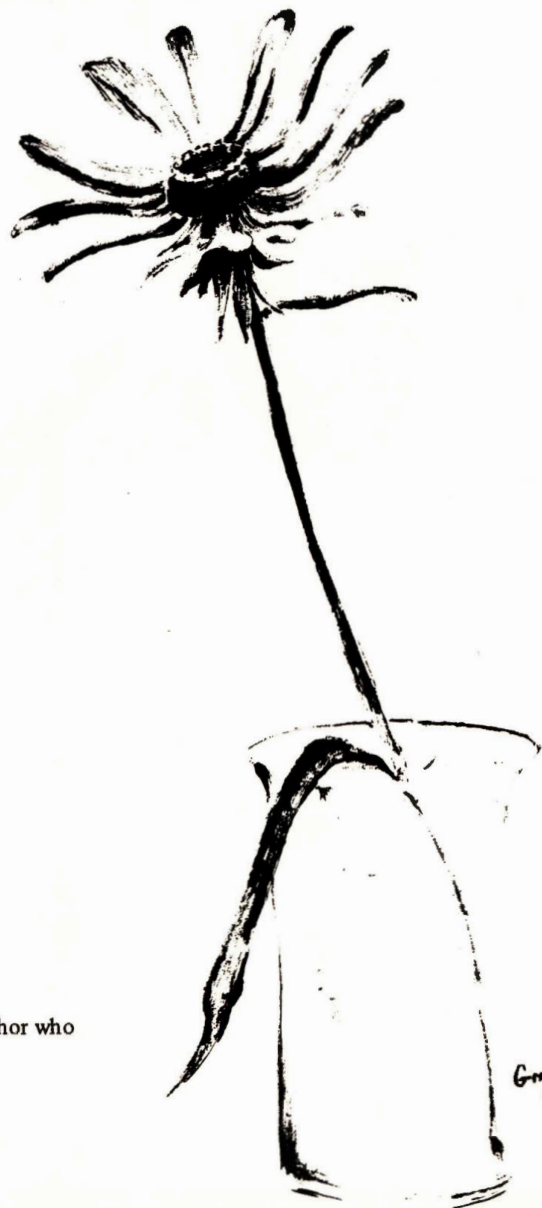
HELICON

editor
Chris Harkey
art editor
Eric Duggins
literary - board and staff

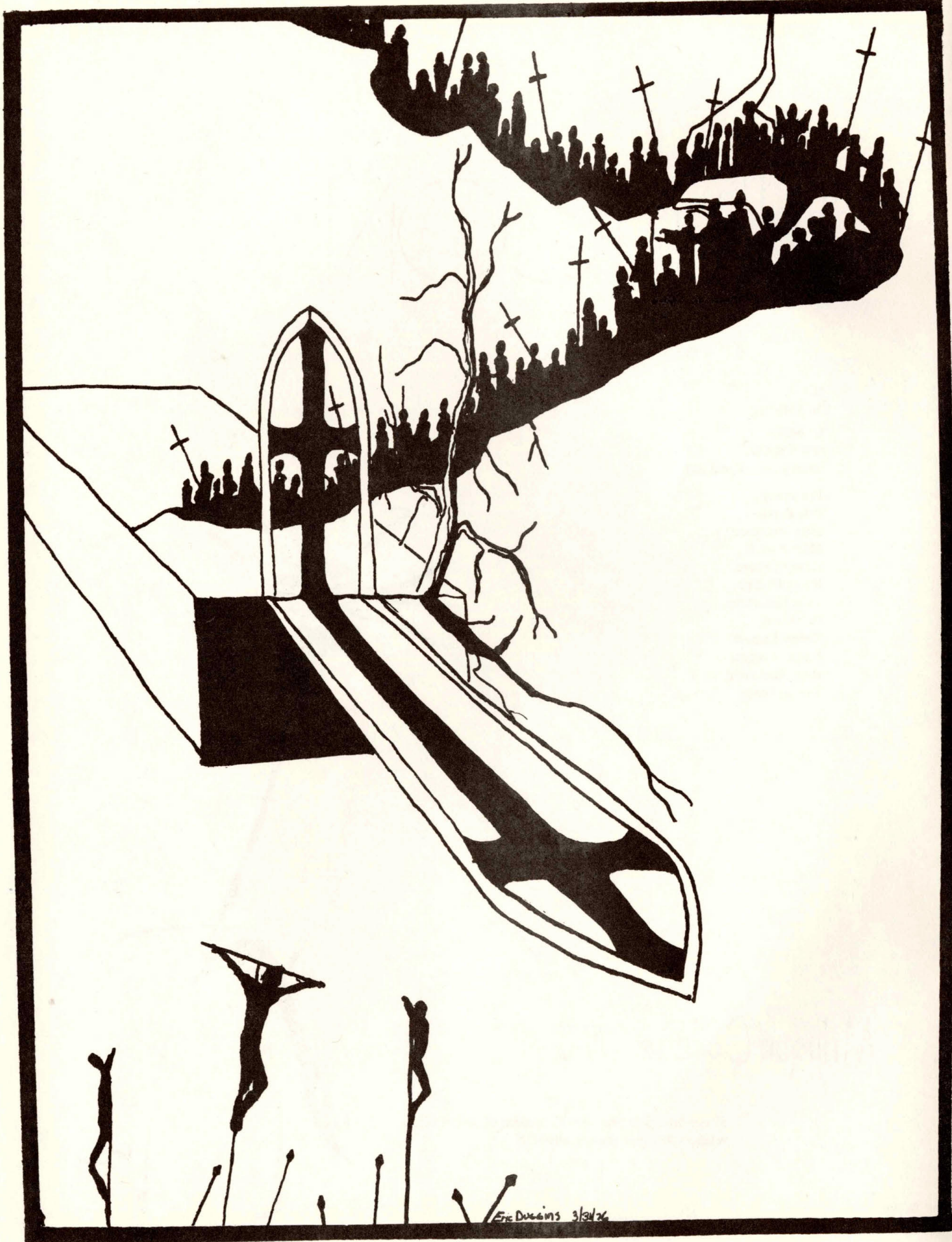
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Pete Purvis
Mary Robinson
Mikel Carroll
Kenny Leisure
Robin Phillips
Jama Humphrey
Pam Coon
Kenny Leisure
Kevin Huddleston
Ruth Rheinhold
Valerie Lentz

Milligan College 1976

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Cover Design
Eric Duggins



Eric Duggins 3/2/26

CIRCUS BLOCKS

And when the laughing hands are gone
the lions and tigers roar in some distant corner
they've now pictured themselves in their cages
taken a rest from tumbling to the rug
sharing rumors of lands far away

And when grown to age—
the vintage recollections
flow together again—

worn hands smile

Chris Harkey

FOLLOW THE SUN

Walking the streets,
You don't care who you meet
You're a man who has nowhere to go
Finding your mind.
You spend most of your time
Chasing rainbows that seem at your door
Reach with your hand
As your dreams turn to sand
You're a fool who has lost everything.

You know
Love never comes to those who follow the sun
And I guess that's what happened to me.
I reached for the past
But it slipped by so fast
That I was left with a vague memory.

Jeff Stemen

I

What tree without an earth-fast trunk
can pull the sun into its limbs
threaded in the dance
mingling breaths of air
sure wood at heart
deep rhythm for each leaf step.

II

White tombs may reek of death
empty bone land and hollow pith.
Houses breathing of life
raise roofs
decoration
wide windows inhaling the warmth
without a pang, utter a sigh into the air.

Chris Harkey

THE TIME HAS COME

The time has come to realize
The writing on the wall,
But you gotta stop and read it
For the words to mean at all.
You've been chasing after something
That was there but now is gone.
You're in love with a shadow
Who comes and goes with dawn.

Someone told me long ago
He said, love's a two way street,
But it seems you're on a one way road
That's headed for defeat.
You're a stranger in a foreign land
The one you called your home,
But the minute that you walk away
The place you are is home.

I guess the ones who love you
Will stand thru thick and thin,
And I guess the ones who care the least
Have never really been.
So be at peace, you're a child of God
And all comes to those who wait.
Don't be a fool and chase the sun
Because you know it will not wait.

Jeff Stemen

BLOOD DROPS

Drops of blood from a rusted spicket . . .
Dripping slow but steady,
Staining the brown dust
About my feet.
A light breeze blows,
A drop diverted,
A speckle upon my shoe.
Shadows grow deeper,
A glutted fly drifts by,
And rests within the gore.
A quiet voice calls to me . . .
I cannot answer.

Pete Purvis

Sleep on dear friend
for you have failed me
when i have needed you most.
I needed a hand to hold,
or a heart to lift -
You were not there
yet if i were to leave
you would miss me
But now i am gone
so sleep on,
sleep on . . .

BILLY THE KID

"Good morning, Class," said Miss Grunella.

Billy shifted his gum to the side of his mouth and chanted with the other first-graders. "Good morning, Teacher."

Miss Grunella began the day. "Today, class, xyzabcdefg, hijkl, mn, opqur, stuvw, zyxcbapnml. . ."

Billy stared at the blackboard. He was lost in outer space, and each new mark Ms. Grunella made was a new planet he had to conquer. Pow! There goes the planet of the apes. Socko! The green martians fell left and right. Pow! Boom! A falling star landed on Billy's flying saucer. He called headquarters on the radio. . .

"Kitten. Mitten. Seven. Eleven," Mrs. Grunella droned distinctly.

"E-l-e-v-e-n," Billy dutifully replied. Someday he'd go in a giant elevator and fly to the sky.

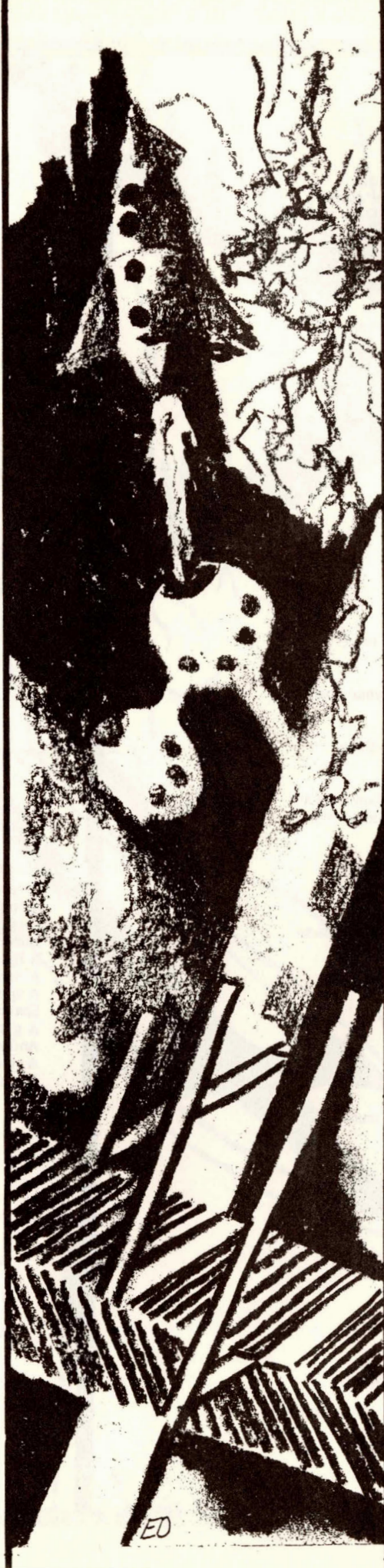
The electric buzzer sounded in each classroom of the school. Miss Grunella switched on the latest audio-visual aid, a television. It was time for Educational Activities Period.

A semi-bald man with round cheeks appeared on the screen. He was holding a bunch of yellow balloons and wearing baggy orange and white striped pants.

"Good day, Children."

The man disappeared and animated puppies could be seen on the screen which was suddenly a jumble of the Oval Room, a war, cavity-curing toothpaste, and the Bionic twins. Then the man with the yellow balloons was back, this time with a bunny rabbit cradled in one arm.

Billy was at the ball game while the man spoke. "Today, Children, we will be interviewing Dr. Boris Szfcafulaskivich, B.S., M.B.S., Ph.D., D.D.S., the renowned lepidopterist who has been studying the effects feathery antennæd moths have on reading problems faced by three-year-olds." Billy's hero hit a line drive, it went straight toward Billy, he reached his hand up and smach! He caught it. The whole team cheered him and carried him on their shoulders and signed him up. . . " . . . due to the ever-present perplexity of dyslexia. . ." and Billy never went to school again. "Needless to say, the psychological implications alone are astounding. . ." Billy blew a bubble almost as big as a baseball. . . not to eliminate those of a socio-economic nature. . ."



That afternoon, between Plane Geometry and Educational Play Period, Ms. Grunella's class watched a talkie entitled "Censorship of Cinema Today." The class discussed the social and political significance of the matter.

At the beginning of Educational Play Period, the class celebrated Jimmy Brown's sixth birthday. They ate cookies and drank Kool-aid and dropped clothespins into a milk bottle. Tomorrow was Billy's sister's birthday, and Billy knew where the new doll was hidden. He'd be a detective when he got big and find every criminal in the world. Maybe Mrs. Grunella was a foreign spy. The doll was that new one which grew hair, walked, wet, and pleaded the Fifth. Maybe he could be a cowboy, too. Wow! On a bucking bronco! He'd be the star of the rodeo an get to be President on weekends, maybe. If he wanted. Billy wondered if that would be socially significant. He let a spitball fly into the garbage can.

"Now, class," Miss Grunella was saying, "we're going to brrreeepz-jkonetwosix. . ."

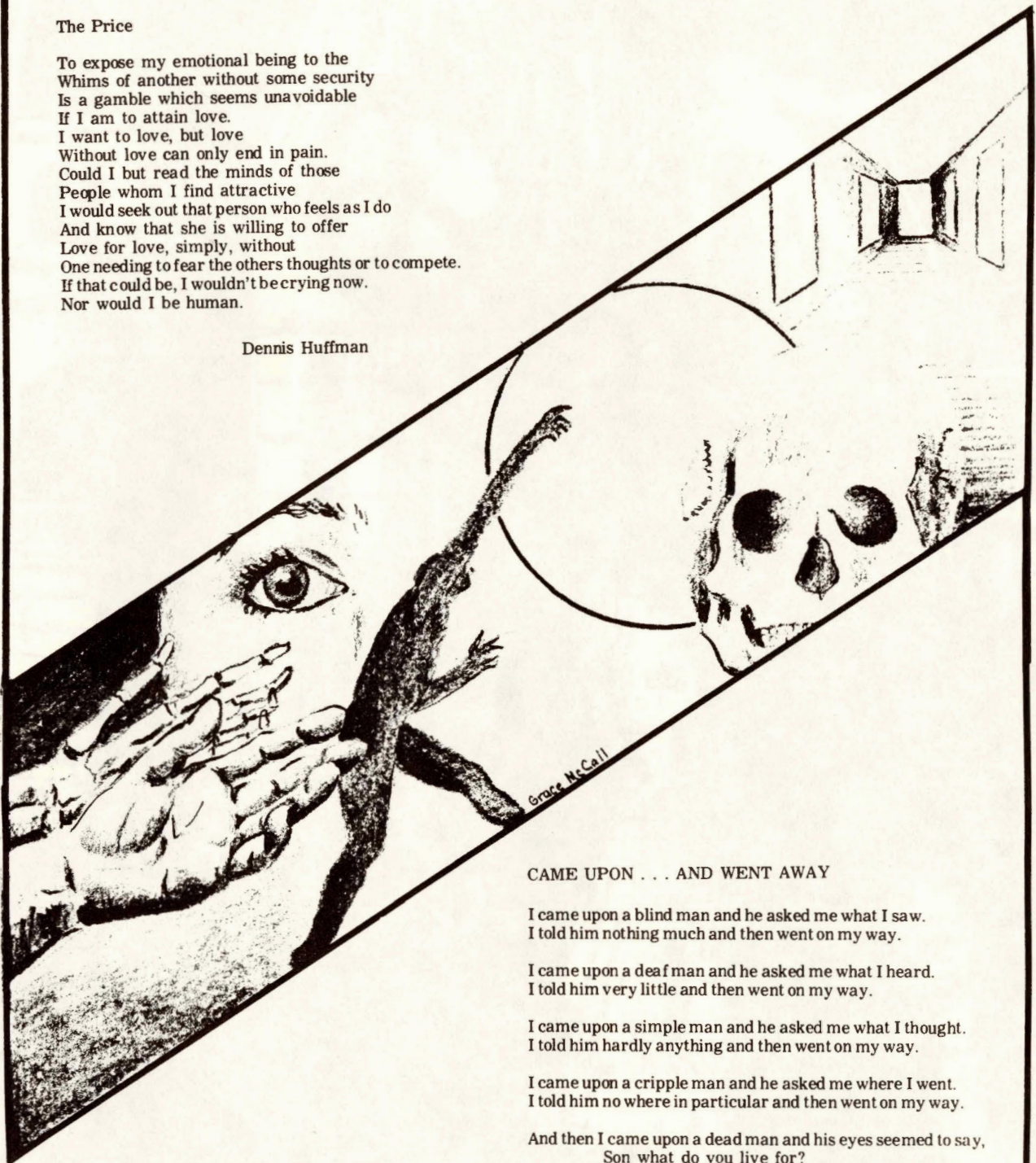
As Billy traced the etymology of "recess" he decided to be an inventor. He'd invent giant monkey bars and seing on them and join a circus. Swoop! He was on the tightrope. Careful! He was on the tightrope, a million meters high. He blew a bubble almost as big as a lion's head.

"All right, Boys And Girls," Miss Grunella said. "Grouflo upjlekmpn gree grssrg, class dismissed." Billy popped his bubble.

The Price

To expose my emotional being to the
Whims of another without some security
Is a gamble which seems unavoidable
If I am to attain love.
I want to love, but love
Without love can only end in pain.
Could I but read the minds of those
People whom I find attractive
I would seek out that person who feels as I do
And know that she is willing to offer
Love for love, simply, without
One needing to fear the others thoughts or to compete.
If that could be, I wouldn't be crying now.
Nor would I be human.

Dennis Huffman



CAME UPON . . . AND WENT AWAY

I came upon a blind man and he asked me what I saw.
I told him nothing much and then went on my way.

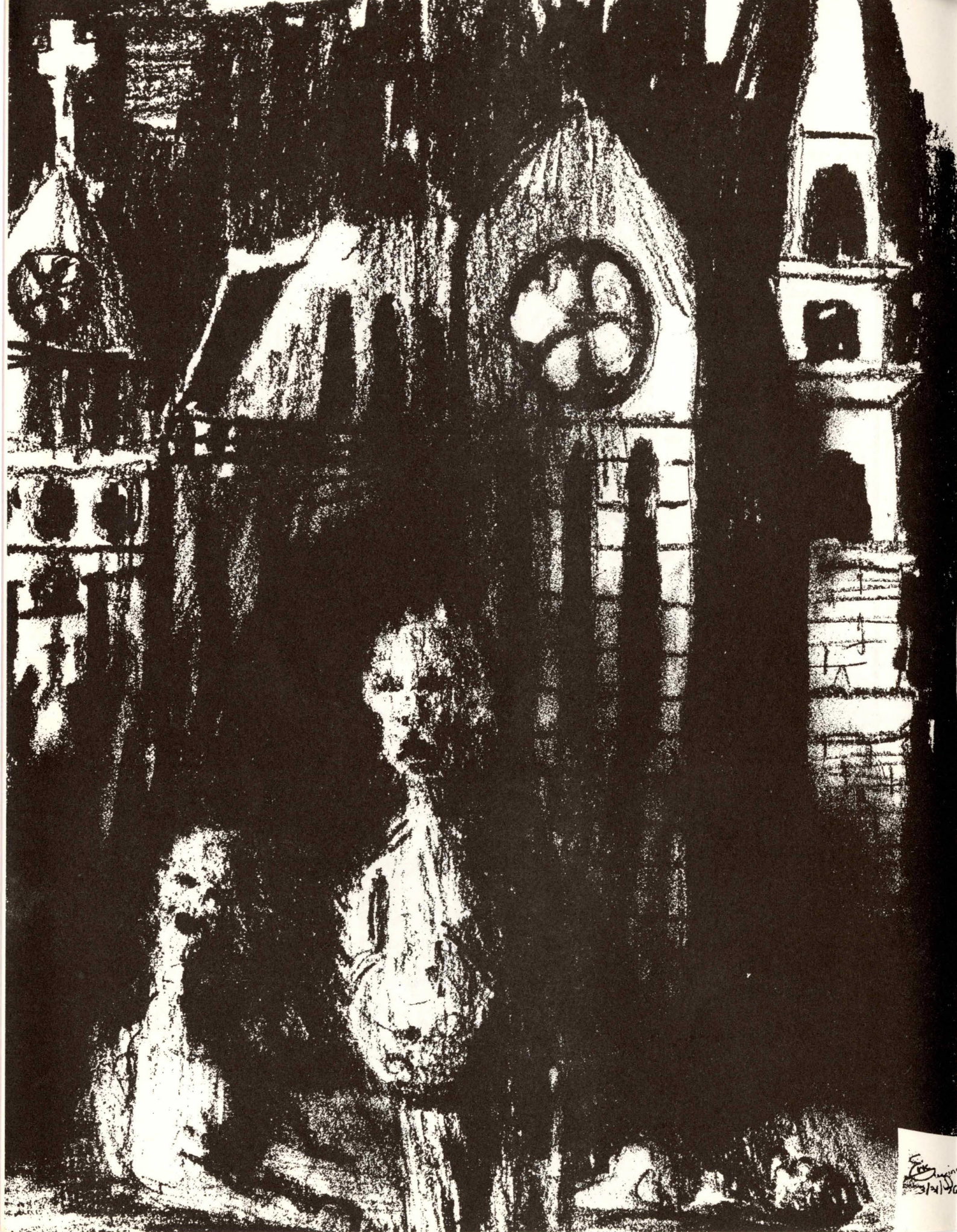
I came upon a deaf man and he asked me what I heard.
I told him very little and then went on my way.

I came upon a simple man and he asked me what I thought.
I told him hardly anything and then went on my way.

I came upon a cripple man and he asked me where I went.
I told him no where in particular and then went on my way.

And then I came upon a dead man and his eyes seemed to say,
Son what do you live for?
And I had no answer for that man and then went on my way.

Pete Purvis



Edwin
3/21/90

Gray scrag slodge with sickening pain
outside the sacred wall.
And one gray scrag knocks the door
and gives a pleading call.
with bloated gut
and swollen tongue
he heaves his desperate wail.
And those behind the leaded glass,
"There really isn't hell."

Black scrag shrivel in silenced cries
outside the white washed nave.
And one gray scrag turns to black
and lies down on his grave.
Watchful eyes
and tight lipped mouths
never did respond.
Those behind the leaded glass
"Oh well, we must continue on."

Eric Duggins

LISA

Like a wisp of Smoke blown from a tired cigar
Soon to disappear as the embers die
Or snuffed out by an even more tired smoker.
Stale to the taster
Yet pleasant to those who have accustomed
Their eyes to these tears.
The smoke goes
Uprising.

Richard Evanoff

The chill world exploded
and then grew vain in order.
the pillars reposed in humble ruin,
foundation ripped from the bottom up,
post and lintel piled in quarry again.
The evening's slant
takes its dance on fluted columns
laying on the ground.

New temples, roofed with a more solid shield
new dance among the stones in reveries,
shadows in dusk
new-found liberty of soul
Proclamation of purity is sure,
but surely I contradict
surely this birthright is stolen.

Chris Harkey

What's happened to that sweet warm glow
That once engulfed my lonesome tune?
The spirit moved from my heart to my head.
But now I don't care so much to know
I only want that second honeymoon.
The spirit's died; the spirit's dead.

CHORUS:

Lord, give me peace and let me lie my head back down.
It's not the same but you know its come more real.
I've found the way and in searching it will not be found.
Until you reach out your hand and let your head be still.

Until I point myself away
Form that which would limit you
Paradoxically enough by just describing you.
For the minute that you say a single phrase
You've said more than you've needed to,
But it will change your life only if you want it to.

And the only reason that I'm singing to you today
Is to help you hear the voice that sounds so small.
And its not that I can't say anything more.
It's just that I can't say anything at all.

Richard Evanoff

NOVICE

I have danced in circles
my own steps, moving inward
music echoing in the halls.
I've heard voices sift through the gate—
now approaching these doors
I have said prayers
made matins
the stations of the cross
now to try to take a cup of life with others
to move from cloistered life to cloistered life.
Have I missed the leavened morsel the rest have taken,
the steps to match the dancers,
the rhythm to move together.

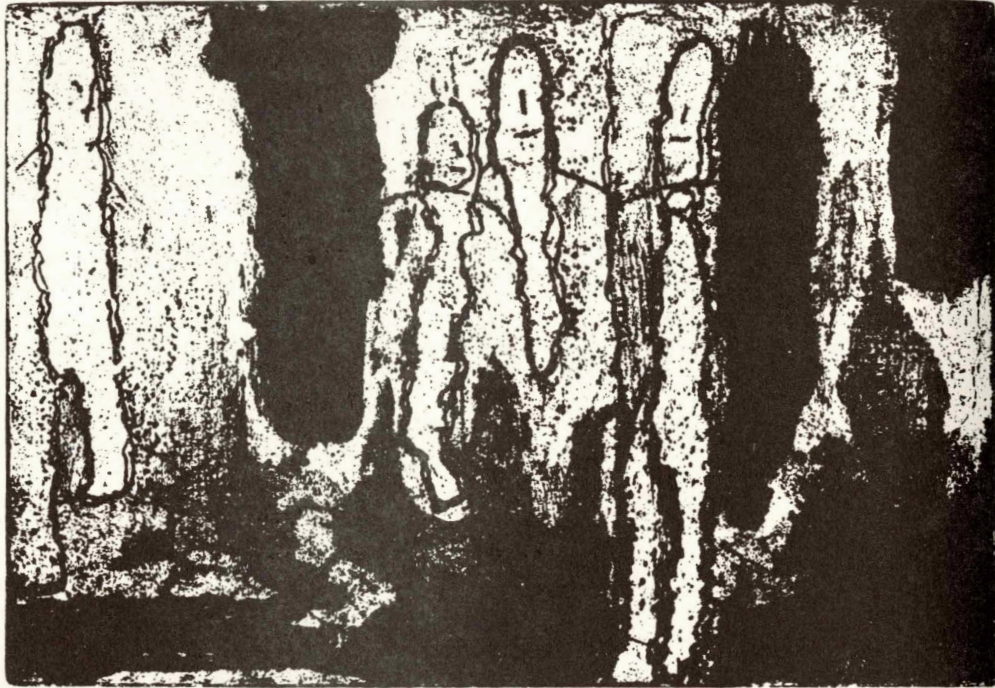
Chris Harkey

smoke lingers
above cafe tables
in union bars
lost horizons glitter
oasis-like, beyond reach

in days of constant rumbling
the rush drags them on
to the heart-beat of the hum-drum
drumming through tired deflated brains
and before the pounding of desire
a fog rolls in -- confusion

smoke lingers
in union bars
like fog in the minds of
thousands rushing on
toward lost horizons
that glitter in the glass
-- transparent

Tim Brady



THE EPILOGUE TO THE EPITAPH

Yes it is dead and buried away—
No longer a God; no heaven nor hell.
Yet, I cannot leave you with nothing to say
Or chain you each in your own private cell.

There must be something I can put in its place;
For humans are human, and each has a face.

Here is the thesis from my point of view:
"We cannot live on our own separate shelves."
And here is my offering, though it may not be true:
"Things being good are good in themselves."

Richard Evanoff

A COLLAGE

Why a eucharist? I'm an analyst!
Love you tried to surpass
Pursuing and discontinuing
My whole past, It didn't last
A silly joke gone up in smoke.

Call it suicide, I think homicide
Love's true sound has been tossed —
Why discuss? Love's ambiguous —
Ness was lost When Pentacost
Was just last year faint in my ear.

If I try to prove, will god disapprove?
What there is to be found —
My telescope is just a fruitless grope
At the profound. And I've lost ground
Trying to seek when I'm so weak.

I won't impose or try to suppose
That you will revere
My quest to learn, yet inside I yearn
To be sincere and persevere.
I won the debt but lost my bet!

Richard Evanoff

WINTER'S NIGHT JOURNEY

The trail winds slowly by the riverside.
The pale moon through the clouds does show,
Trees bent and twisted that confide
Of howling winds and blowing snow,
Which for the moment now subside.

The moon seeks shelter from a cloud
And all in darkness quick is shroud.
The cold night air now bites more sharply
With steps measured in cautious uncertainty.

Up ahead there comes a faint glow
Which promises of a fire warm inside.
The pace quickens as a warm hello
Rings out across the countryside,
Assuring that love and home lie just below.

Pete Purvis

Lord even though my cup is half-full
My cup runneth over.
Give me the wine and give me the song—
I don't want to be sober.

I DIDN'T GO TO CHURCH LAST EASTER

Yes, I am the unsophisticated sinner.
Not even making the yearly pilgrimage
To the mausoleum of living idols.
Instead, I entered the One holy temple
Created in the image of the Builder.

I slept the night before in the valley
And saw the Sun slowly slip
Behind the mountain, there for me to climb.
And at the peak — my body torn,
Flogged by whipping branches
And pierced by prickling thorns —
I saw again the Sun.

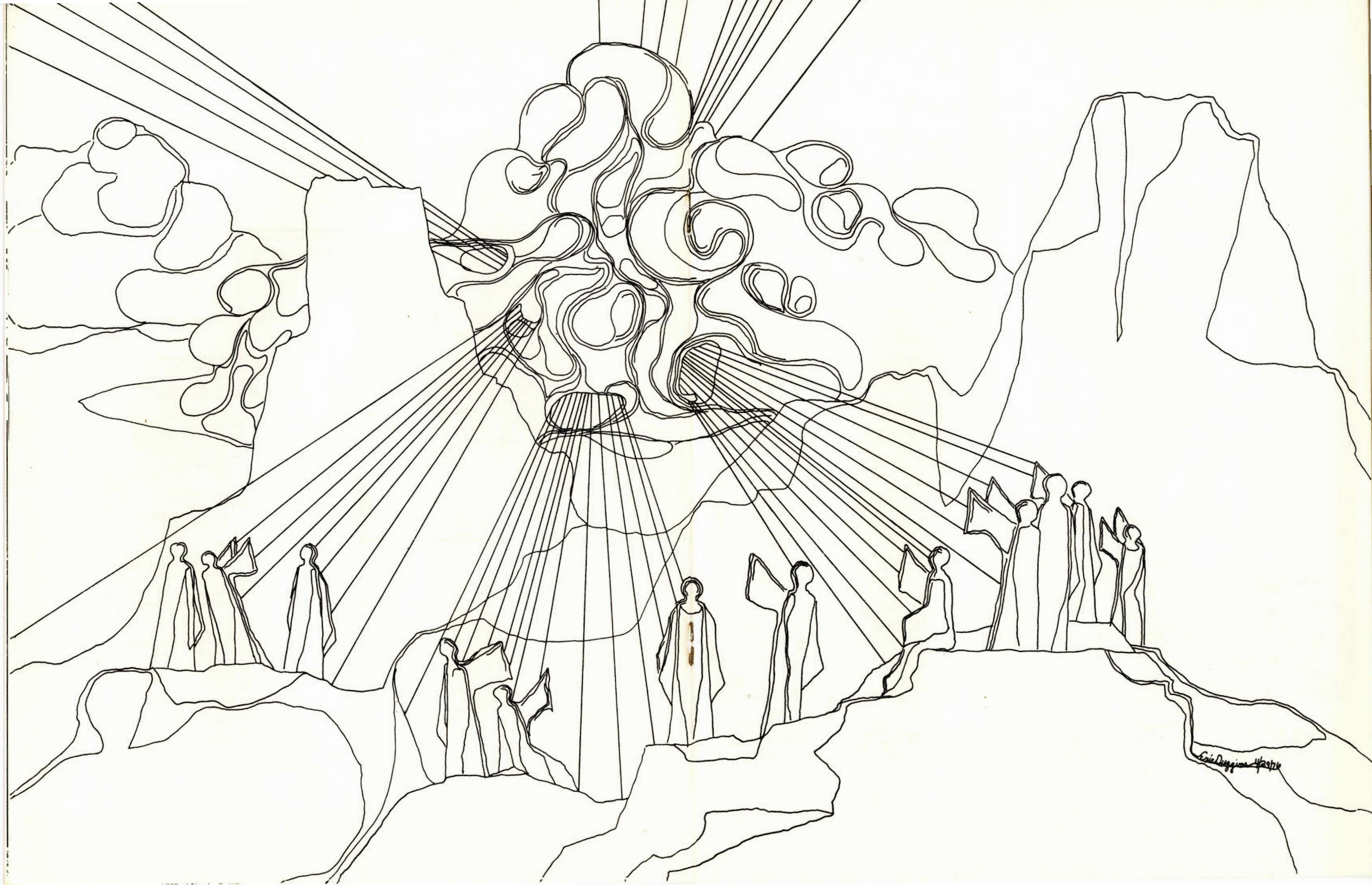
O Mazda! god of light and day,
I saw you faintly fade away
And cast a nimbus 'round the earth
To pantomime its holy worth.

O explosive creation!
What law can define you,
Confine you in shackles, stunting your growth?
I embraced this expanding sanctuary,
Incubatively ripening,
Celebrating and praising
The infinite cycle of death and rebirth.

When I returned to the valley
The shadows laid heavy and
Darker were they than they had been before.
With a stone for my pillow,
I slumbered and dreamed
Of the angels descending
To earth's humble shore.

I awoke in the dampness, covered with dew
When the first fingers of dawn crept into
The valley, dispelling the shadows and waking the true
Images of nature, delightful and real.
I bathed in the coolness of a stream nearby.
And there through the trees,
Dancing in splendor,
I beheld the glory of the resurrected Sun.

Richard Evanoff



Eric Duggan 4/20/76

WALKING FOREVER

Over the miles of desolate highways
Through the fields and on the shores
You have watched your life before you
Now tell me what is the score.
I can take this pain no more.

Following dreams and schemes of grandeur
Looking for no loves but your own
You have felt the kold winds touch you
So now bend your head and cry.
It's so hard to say good-bye.

Well you said the things you wanted
And maybe they just misunderstood
Now you know what you were after
But it's so far and out of sight.
I hope the next time turns out right.

Over the miles of desolate highways
Through the fields and on the shores
You're alone and walking forever
With memories on your mind.
You find peace so hard to find.

Jeff Stemen

EVENING BY THE SEA

The great, warm September sun,
Rolling like a fiery tear drop
Into the boiling sea.
And as the evening comes, there's a warm breeze begun
Hurrying the fishermen to port, with their abounding crop,
To wives and families, and a bit of well earned eau-de-vie.

One knows that day is done
As the first star's lights begin to show
And the evening fires are lit.
A quiescent ardor now settles upon everyone
And all the houses are aglow
With warmth and love befit.

Pete Purvis



A PARABLE OF THE GRASS

He loved the grass.
As he made his way
His bare feet pressed on the lush green blades
Which spring had recently re-born
Another, seeing his joy, followed in his steps.
Another after him the same and so,
Many after that. Until the way became
A beaten path of hardened mud and unearthed stones
Trailing through the autumn leaves.
Soon only blistered and callous feet tread where he had trod.
And those feet carried with them mouths
Insisting upon this straight and narrow way —
Sore feet were only a cross to bear.
And the people put up a sign
(Not to be broken under penalty of death):
"Keep off the grass."

Richard Evanoff

STILLMEADOW

I've done enough traveling for one man's lifetime,
I've been aboard too many ships
Bound for long distance trips.
I'm an old man now long past his prime.
I want to go home to Stillmeadow.

I've seen the marvels that the world has to offer,
And in that my life has truly been blest,
But I'd give it all up now for just some rest.
I'm an old man now and no one knows how I suffer.
I want to go home to Stillmeadow.

Please don't misunderstand,
My life has been one of good fortune,
And I don't regret a thing that I've done.
But . . . I'm an old man now in a strange, foreign land.
I want to go home to Stillmeadow.

Pete Purvis



inscrutable fineness, deeper than each
kneebend and bristle
a poised conclusion, concise
meditation
diamond sparkle from a finer hand
a confirmed leaf-liver
at ease on the edge

silent snatch in the air
here.

He's gone.

Chris Harkey

EIN HELDENSTERBEN

. . . he died of a stroke before a T. V. blaring
(no one knowing, no one caring)

To his surprise, he found himself hovering in the air among the towers of his creation, above the grassy hill and the stately mansion. Life flashing by- a little boy wanting to grow up to be a cowboy.

But his mind wandered as a voice intoned. . .

EVERYTHING TASTES GREAT. . .

He was filled with thoughts of his great works (A single brown and white cow stood hidden behind one of them at this moment- suddenly visible to him in his new-found omniscience (Is this Heaven?))

. . .WHEN IT SITS ON A RITZ!

He was very much in sympathy with strip mining, and he changed his way of saying "you All" to "You-all" soon after his arrival. His fervent wish was to be remembered for the way he improved his corner of the world.

. . . thinking now of the glorious eulogies that would be uttered ("Let us now praise famous men"). He was sure to be remembered for the mighty edifices. . .

CHECK YOUR VITAMIN CONTENT!

. . . swirling into the whirlpool that was to carry him away, he felt memories dissolve. A confused mixture of sounds assailed his consciousness.

THE IMPORTANT THING IS, WILL MRS SCHULTZ RECOGNIZE HER OWN PEANUT BUTTER?

. . . a final honor. Disembodied yet tingling in anticipation. . . Gone now. . . A crowd of relatives and friends gathered talking in hushed tones. Funeral plans. The appropriate thing.

"It's gonna be kinda triumphant"

John Dowd

A NOTE

FOUND IN AN OLD BOOK

The binding is loose,
A few pages are torn,
And even some gone;
The ones remaining,
Discolored and faded.
298 and 299 are there.
With time the inks grown faint,
But the message is clear . . .
"I love you" it reads;
The one and the only . . .
It's just a note found in an old book.

Pete Purvis

Lawrence, you write
so wild
I read your words and
unpack the images
beside my chair
see the city with directness
feel your spite for wasted life
tortured images leap up
with glimpses of American Dreams
visions pile up
in parks and parking lots
in stark light of living room closeness
you see so clear a world betrayed
you are the dog seeing reality
trotting
and seeing reality
and I am waiting, too.

Tim Brady

"Fragments From a Student Handbook"

Advocate and exemplify
Communicate all pertinent information
in matters pertaining to at least two of the three constituent groups
Channel our activity through a responsible organization
A resolution for amendment having failed
(Women should knock before entering another womans' room)
There shall be no painting, nailing, or disfiguring of the walls,
woodwork, etc.
unless the student who is ill follows the nurse's information,
she will not be excused!
confusion and noise which prohibit studying will not be
tolerated!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Possession of firearms is prohibited
Demanded
and judged a necessary part
of educative process.

"All phrases of the above composition were selected with great
thought from Student Handbook at Milligan College 1967-1968 Edited
by Dr. Roger Sizemore (coordinator of student life) Published by the
Student Council of Milligan College M.C. Tenn.

What can be said? I really don't want to say
anything at all. I wish that somehow the
experiences which I have had could be
miraculously translated into your experience.
But this is not possible. You cannot hear me
tell of myself; you must experience for
yourself. Words are very inadequate vehicles.
Oh, yes, it may be faster to travel by plane
than on foot. But we can never be sure that we
will reach the same destination unless we
travel together. And if together, we can sing
the same song. You may not be particularly
interested in going where I have been; and I
am not particularly interested in staying at
home, comfortable around the fire, chatting;
but never going anywhere.

Yet, I want to say that the poet has power:
He has not clipped his angelic wings. He will
tell you where he has been. But he is not a
journalist; they fill the papers daily with
intelligible phrases. No, the interpretive poet
has an ulterior motive. He bids you join him
on his next journey or to strike a path of your
own. But until then, what can be said?

Richard Evanoff

Wind of the waters
Blowing so free
Take me to somewhere
Where I can be free.

I am a traveler
Who calls nowhere home
You are the spirit
That's making me roam.

Silence befalls me
It caresses my soul
Somewhat over taken
As it captures me whole.

Wind of the waters
Don't leave me behind
I am just someone
Who's so undefined.

Sunset before me
Another day gone
Whispering a message
As I move along.

Jeff Stemen

Warm winter ways
Won't wait forever,
Slipping suddenly by us,
We'll realize they're gone.
Autums forgotten
Spent springs.
Fond friendship grows
Increasingly intimate.
Future-finding involves us
We'll soon sometime be
Solitarily seeking.
Entwined eternally.

Boyd Stover

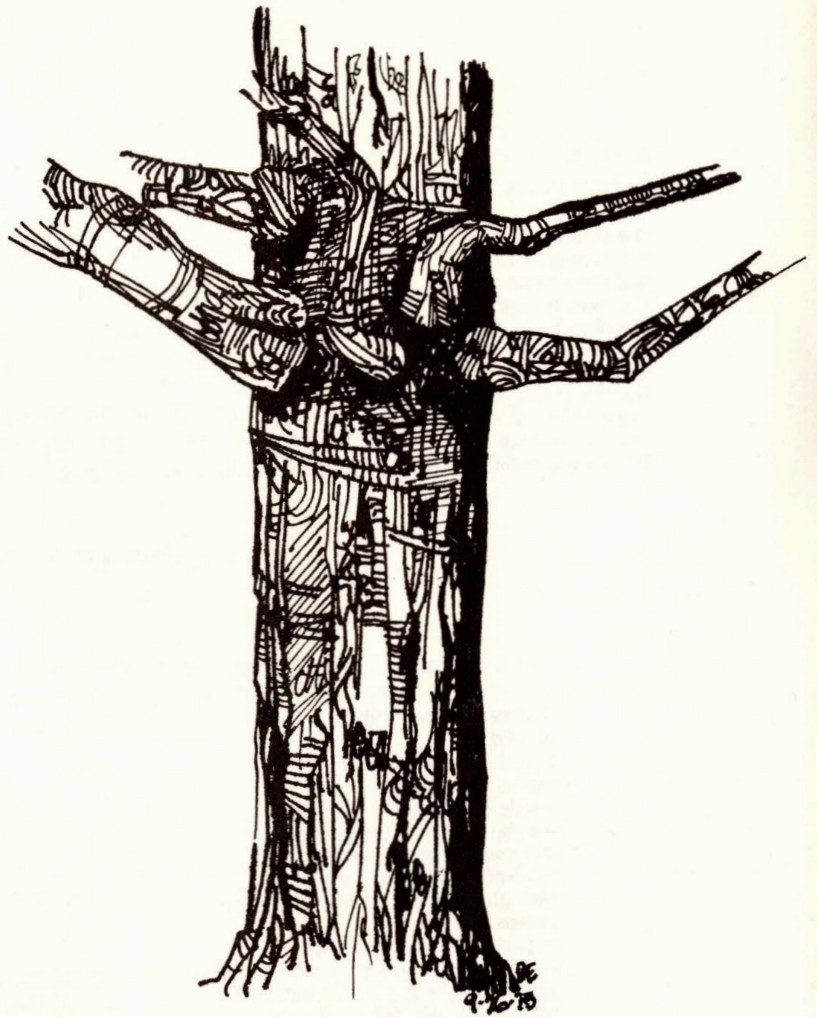
Every new plane
will separate me more
from what old companions know me to be
although I hope they too
will meet me here
And share with me the pain
that yesterday is no longer ours
and maybe then together
cut the curtain of the unknown
to lose only more
till together we stand
and see the scope
of the road we take
at the foot of tomorrow.

Becky Coleman

A MEMORY

A memory from a misty dream.
A reality once,
Now obscured by time.
Visions to be touched
Held, grasped —
Gone.
Beer and cards,
A girl.
You call it a crime —
No,
Just a memory from a misty dream.

Pete Purvis



WINTERTIME

Wispy, cold, dark wintertime.
When white rain floats gently down,
To cover the landscape sublime,
With beauty so renown.

It brings a chill to the bone
And stillness to the air
As the glittering frost lies bestrown
In nooks and crannies everywhere.

The sounds of children on sleds
And the crunch of snow beneath ones feet
Herald winters having visited
With all its accompaniments replete.

And all too soon the rains do come
To seek out winters quick recession.
And so the white succumbs
Knowing that spring again has won.

THE WAITING

He shifted his weight in the chair and it creaked in protest, having apparently become quite, if not comfortable, accustomed to its former position of support. The man glanced at the clock which stood near the wall. The pendulum below the face swung back and forth with meticulous precision.

It was late now. Looking out the window he saw the orange glow of sunset continuing to fade into the deeper hues of twilight. She should be here by now he thought. There was no reason for any delay. He dislodged a book from on the small table beside the chair. It had been hiding between a collection of larger volumes which had been standing upright with the support of two bookstands, cast in the form of large willow trees. It was a book of poetry. He detested poetry in general, and in particular at this moment. He replaced the book carefully, back into its hiding place.

He crossed his legs with a sigh of impatience. The chair answered with a moan. The rug covered the floor almost entirely, and was of an unusual texture and design. More probable than not, it was an antique. If indeed it was of a rare quality, it was a pity it had been placed so near to the front door; for he could see that around this area it had been worn dangerously thin.

It was now growing quite dark. He arose from the chair and went to the window in order to view the street more fully. There was no sign of activity, nor of her. For a brief moment he debated whether to make a light. He walked slowly about the room trying to distinguish the paintings above the fireplace, and glancing at the numerous books on the several shelves. Periodically he would dutifully check the window. She should have been here by now.

The room seemed to have trapped the heat of the day. He loosened the unfamiliar tie, and wiped the perspiration from his brow on his coat sleeve. His mouth tasted stale. He would have liked some water.

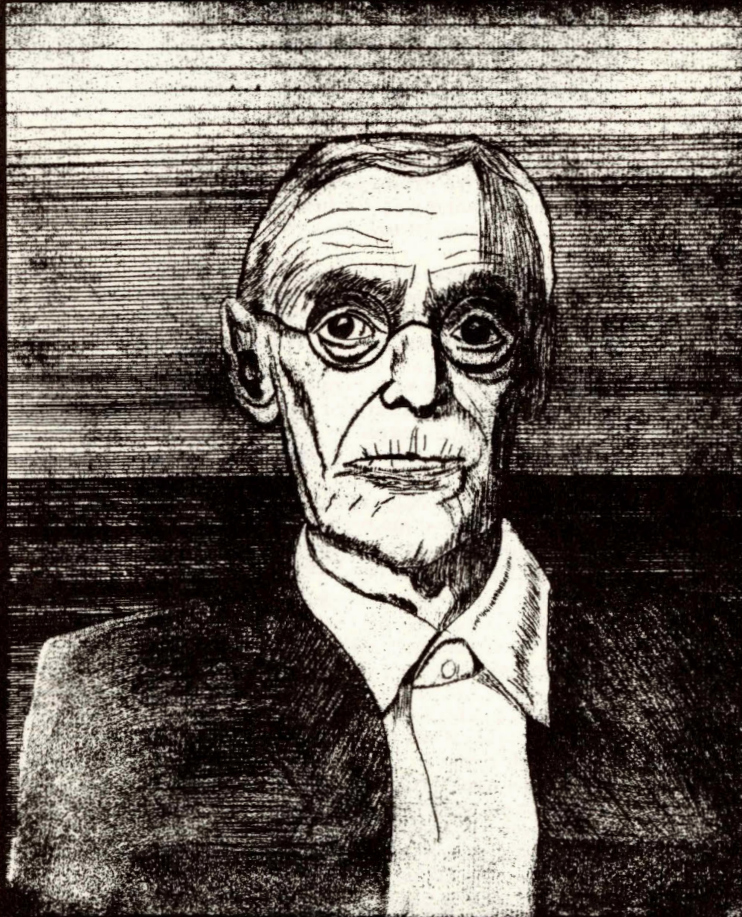
The room suddenly came to life with brilliant light; which quickly subsided and was followed immediately by an explosively loud crack and rumble. His body lurched instinctively. His hands flailed uncontrollably. An intricately molded statuette of lovers embracing toppled from a nearby shelf into a vase of flowers upon a table below. He reached in and searched through the flowers quickly. A rose fell to the floor. He found the statuette. It was unharmed save for an almost imperceptible fracture which ran from the center of the man's torso, up jaggedly, and directly through the area between the two lover's mouths.

Picking it up with trembling hands he stepped around the table to replace it on the shelf. There was a rattle at the door. The statuette fell from his hands and shattered upon the floor about his feet, and about the rose.

She was here. She was at the door. All that remained between them now was that interminable time it would take for her to unlock the bolt securing the door. He reached for the knife and strode quickly for the door. It rattled once again. He was taut. He was ready. The door would open. The knife was poised.

The wind blew hard through the trees, bringing with it the first drops of rain. He moved hurriedly down the darkened street. The rain stung his face and mingled with the tears. The countless hours of hesitation, determination, and at last resolution; all gone, all wasted. The rising storm raged on.

Pete Purvis



CHANGES

You're different now —
And I'm not the same.

No more avalanches —
But silent snowfalls.

No more brass bands —
But melodic symphonies.

It's not spring —
It's summer.

You're different now —
And I'm not the same.

Gary Richardson

Lines After Stafford's "Ritual"

"If you don't know the kind of person I am,
And I don't know the kind of person you are",
Then as friends we are failures and
Oh, please don't let us be failures.

We pride ourselves on being alert, intelligent creatures,
"awake" if you please, knowing
of the world around us and yet we are a part
of each others' world, and we don't know each other.

"For there is many a small betrayal in the mind
a shrug that lets the fragile sequence break
sending . . ." What? A shiver down my back
and up my mind, a chill that tells me of your lie.

And so I appeal to you my friend as a friend
to think of me as such. We could tease each other,
hurt each other with our words, but as friends? No,
just two kids deceiving each other with unmade promises.

"For it is important that awake people be awake
or a breaking line may discourage them back to sleep;
the signals we give — yes or no, maybe —
should be clear! The darkness around us is deep."

Valerie Lentz

STARS

Stars so distant, cold, impersonal.
Yet filled with fiery mystery,
Seeming to radiate some faint prophetic
Missive to man's distant ancestry.
You incite in me uncontrollable curiosities
Which heat the desire to know,
The answers lying within your enigmatic soliloquies
Of which to no man you will bestow.

How long must I wait?
Must I grope always for deliquescent clues?
Or will you one day appoint an official episcopate
To clarify the things I now peruse?
Perhaps you expect of me
To devise some medium by which,
I should sojourn to your far reaching apogee;
Whereupon you will see me worthy to enrich.
But if that be so you create
For me, yet another quandry to be resolved
Before I can undertake the unravelling of my inchoate,
And yes, essential design foresaid.

Oh I dream of that glorious day,
When at long last
I can ultimately fathom and finally survey
Your celestial marvels so vast.
That day exists deeply within my soul.
It remains forever emblazoned there,
The eternal reliquary of my wanting goal,
Causing me torment to great to bear,
Be done with it now I behest,
Enlighten or strike me down.
I offer you no more protest,
My resources in your ensorcel vanity now drown.

Just . . .
enlighten or strike me down!

THE MUSTARD SEED

The wise man smiled as he turned to go
And held out his hand to the villagers there
Saying, "Here is a bulb; in it shall ye know.
To you I entrust it and ask for its care."

And the villagers marveled at so wondrous a gift;
For they loved that wise man's simple plea just to trust
And promised him there that they never would drift
But ne'er e'en thought that a seed needs its dust.

So they worshipped the bulb and set it up high
For all who could see it would surely be saved.
It was honored with speeches and sermons so dry—
The dust of the ground had slowly been paved

To provide a strong altar where the bulb would be kept
That it never should stumble on less holy ground.
And when the night came, the villagers slept
Content with the fortune they'd recently found.

And later some cynics from later a time
Gazed on the bulb and pondered its worth.
Did the withered bulb deserve such a shrine
And is this the religion to which it gave birth?

For the bulb had acquired an unsightly mold
And the cynics all laughed at the people's blind sight
Saying, "Hail in the new and please cast out the old.
Let us stand by ourselves and become our own light."

And the villagers gathered in anger and tears
And reasoned together as to what should be done.
They counted their blessings but hid all their fears
Under the cloak of their god's only son.

And with brand new vigor they stated their case
And blindly asserted that no one could doubt.
For theirs was the gift to the whole human race,
And any reproachers they promptly cast out.

And the cynics rose up with a thoughtful reply
Saying, "We've been denied the right e'en to ask.
And we cannot point our heads at the sky
Lest we neglect our plain earth-bound task."

And war broke out on that sad mournful day:
The villagers protected by their dingy dead seed
Rose up with their swords to kill this new way
Of the cynics and their own self-righteous need.

And when the rage became finally clear
And all were dead in their own bitter hate—
The wise man again so dear
And wept because he'd come too late.

He then cleaned the seed, gave it a fresh start
And promised me earthly and eternal bliss.
So I simply planted the seed in my heart
Saying, "Come Thou Blessed Synthesis."

Richard Evanoff



The young man boarded the train in late evening hoping to reach his destination sometime during the night. He found a seat next to a window and as the train slowly pulled out of the station he noticed the sign - Believing 107, Knowing 248. After a few minutes of watching the darkened landscape and the lights of the cities sprinkled upon it he settled down in his seat and soon fell asleep.

The screeching of the brakes awakened him suddenly and unaware of how long he had slept he wondered if he could already be at Knowing. He looked out his window but it was quite dark and misty and he couldn't really discern any distinct features in the station or the countryside. But he thought it must be Knowing for it seemed that he had slept so soundly - anyway, he certainly hoped that it was Knowing. Going to the door of his coach and straining his eyes he could barely make out the figure of an old man sitting on a bench nearby. He called to him, "Excuse me, but is this Knowing?" The old man slowly looked up and answered, "No, this is Believing." The young man looked around in the darkness and again considering the depth of his sleep and also his hope said to the old man, "But, I believe this is Knowing" to which the old man slowly replied "Yes, but I know this is Believing" assuring him that Believing is just a station on the way to Knowing. So the young man went back to his seat, rather disappointed but nevertheless hopeful that he would arrive in Knowing in only a few more hours.

The train pulled slowly into the station as the tired young man watched the morning sun disperse the mist and give life to the once barren and featureless landscape.

Gordon Miller

OH LAUGHTER
Ooh! Laughter!
Is it a joke?
Well I don't get it.
Ha! Ha! Very funny!
Hey! But what are you doing?

Then said Almitra, "Speak to us of Laughter."

And Almustafa answered her softly in the quiet of the sunset:
"It is better to smile than it is to laugh.
For the smile reveals some job observed—
The peace of knowing both activity and passiveness."

O that I could dance with you
In the starry night with the sky swirling
'round a pregnant moon.
Yes, then we would laugh.
And later we could retire to bed and laugh some more—
It is still echoing as we fall asleep.
Tomorrow I will rise in the morning
And go to the field to tend the sheep
Scorning the wolves and praising the lambs
I will come home to you and fall safe in your bosom
For I am tired, weary and we smile
Knowing that we have done what we could
And then back to bed and to sleep
With the smile guarding us and greeting us
Throughout our days.

"Yes, to know when to act and when to be silent
But uneasy laughter reveals neither—
It is still seeking the blessed synthesis.
Laughter forces itself upon us when we are not yet ready.
Like a drunk man, it tells the joke too soon
Or pouts when it does not get its own way.
Yes, laughter is drunk — It cannot control itself
And seeks only its own unproductive pleasure.
We shall all laugh some evening, some day — perhaps.
Unwilling to become sensitive
The fool laughs.
But the wise man smiles.
For when one laughs, the gods laugh at him.
But when one smiles—

Ooh! What have you been up to!

Richard Evanoff

Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.



Most poems speak of long lost loves —
Of purple mountains and snow white doves
Of people walking hand in hand
With small hearts pounding to the beat the band.
But I say this — without flower or fife—
You're the cream in my Oreo of life.

Gary Richardson

