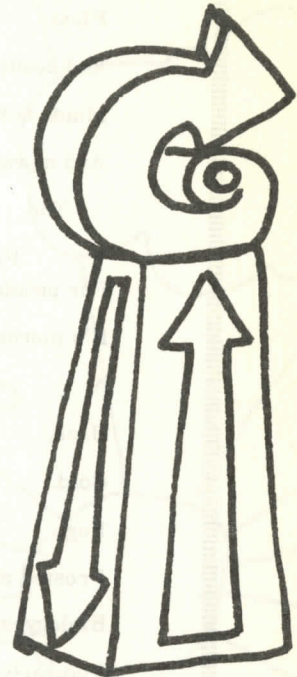




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FEBRUARY 1970
Volume 3, Number 4

mid-morning

Boiled.

Baked.

Scrambled.

Fried.

A plus, B minus themes

Float

And heads nod;

Minds move too slow

And morning moves

Too

Fast

For people to understand

It's morning.

A

Haze.

Cold.

Fog.

Frosted mind over

Biology—sun rises

Too early

Class in five minutes

Why doesn't someone

And—Oh, my

I forgot to write again

I wonder

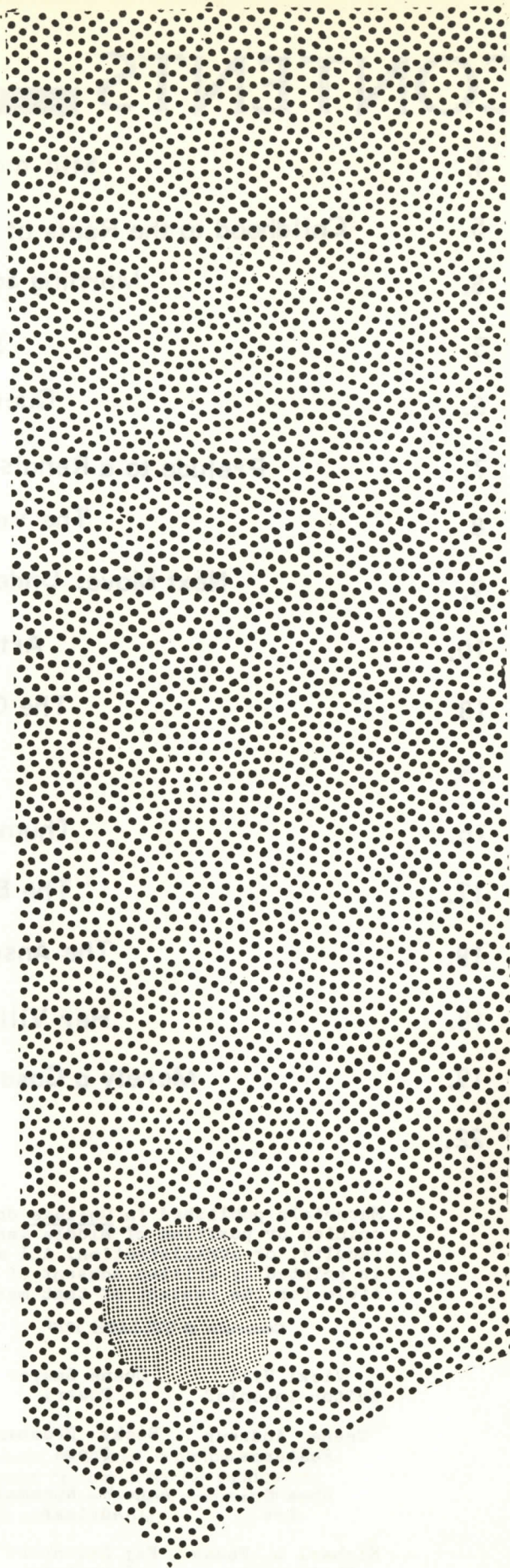
Boiled.

Baked.

Scrambled.

Fried.

Bill Peters



MORNING SONG III

Morning.
Fleeting sickness pain.
Again.
Would I die
And die for you
In silent -30- tones
While my eyes
And your eyes
Together streak the dawn
With rods and cones
Filtering the particulars
Of William Carey's death
Through the morning.

Bill Peters

"I am different.
I have done evil."
"so have all men."
"But I am different.
I am ashamed."

Ditson

Simile

The wet black
branch half-covered
with a jacket
of new fallen
snow
and half-exposed
to the cold
winter wind
in stark nudity
reminds me of
the soul of
man which
turns one
half to the
comforting
light of Heaven
and leaves the
other naked
to the brutality
of existence.

-Patrek

Childhood to the Reefs of Death

Pilfering voyage, the harbor I leave
Behind has sunk into nostalgic blurs
Trailing vision of outlines I conceive
Trailing to pinpoints causing me to demure.
But I leave nevertheless and become
A pilgrim, for what other life have I
To lead with brind as the majestic sum
Of me and the earth I left there behind.

Mute Siren behold your languishing arms
Which held me and left me to go alone,
Such love that I hold at rare times disarms
That mem'ry and measures sung that I own
Yet star-crossed I end upon arid land
The last moments demise, I feel your hand

James Baskin

QUERULOUS

Throbbing temples
beat a hot rhythm
to accompany
my grating
voice which
slices
through facades
and pierces
their self-assurance
while
with my
gleaming
eyes

I tease their
egos and hold
my brows in a
look that
says

“Are you sure?”

--John R. Moore

i
cried tonight. . .
only for a moment
but

each
tear

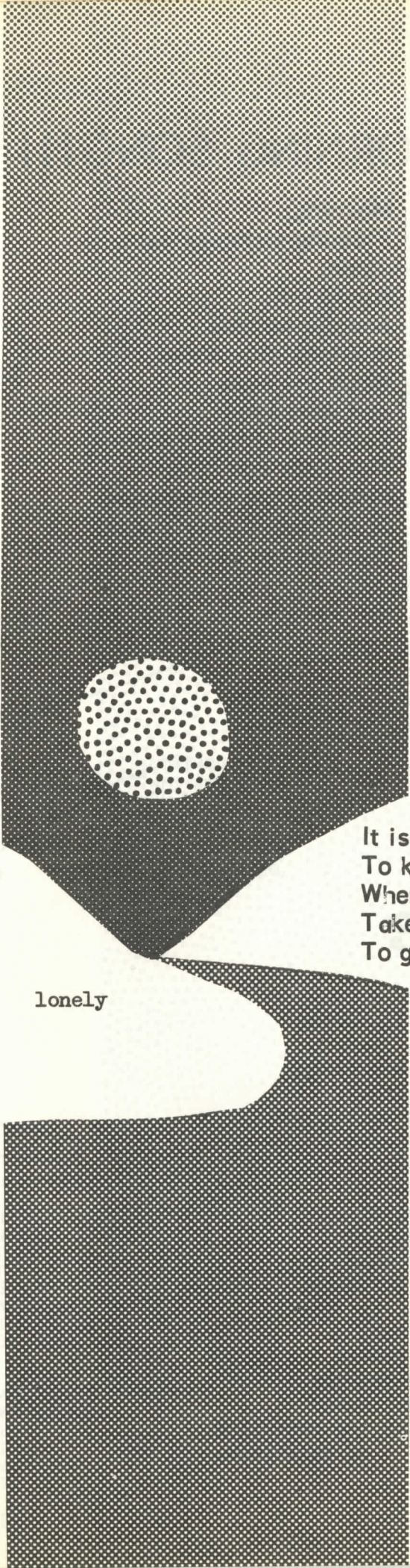
s
a
n
k

H E A VY

like the d r e a m
it

d
e
h
a
a
w w
a
y.

—Jhadeaux



It is hard
To know what is going on
When someone you know
Takes time out
To grow.

-- duane sawyer

PRELUDE TO A RENAISSANCE

i died now
life closed without opening
 my world
 extinct
 my life
 beautiful
 awful

“Was all that real?”
“It uh . . .
I uh . . .
Perhaps?”
(is it tomorrow yet?)

Die is not die was
Is dead not was dead
 AM dead

See no hope
Feel no emotion
Hear no humanity
Know no history
Speak no prophecy
 AM dead

i died now

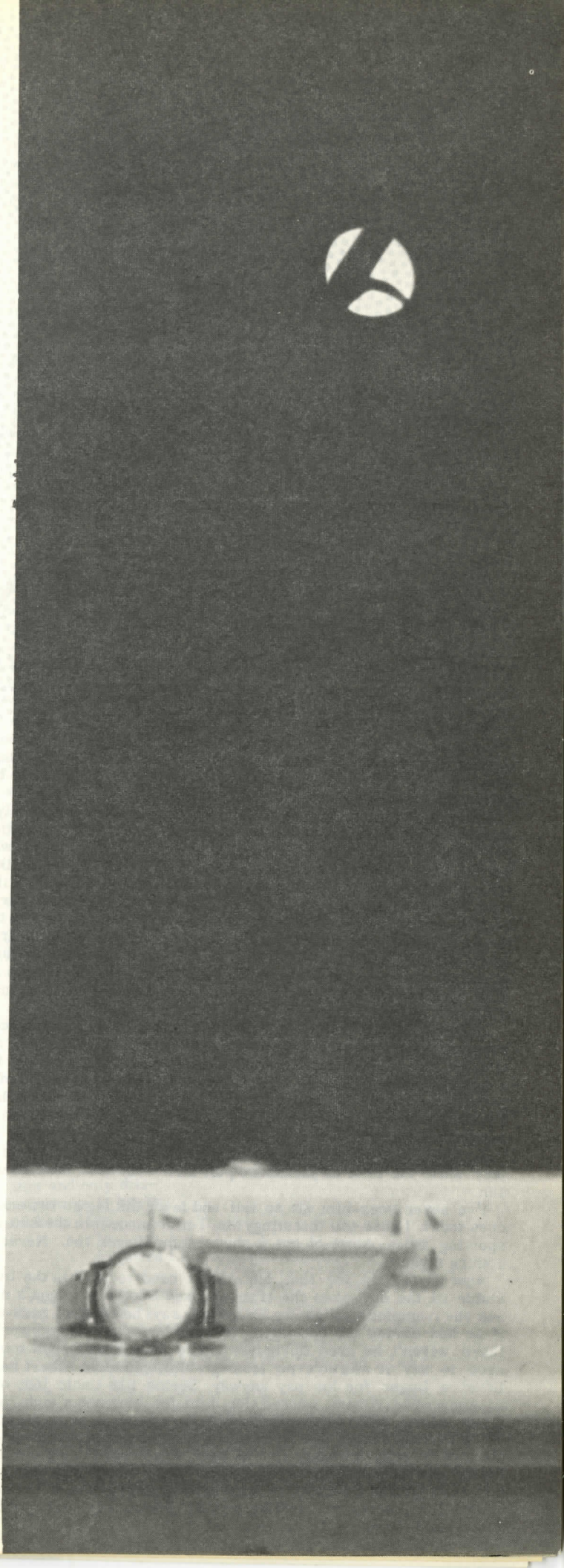
 M RD ER ER...
 U ...!

I,
who should have the executioner
with searching eye
imploring
question the sky's existence
blot out the sun
with questions why.
fingers
run screeching across the mind's crevices
now.
fingering the last ideas
groping the fissures
collecting the courage
to fire—
now.
now.
now.
when?

Bill Peters

Crickets sing at night
If I sing along with them
Am I still alone?

Duane Sawyer



THE VAGRANT

by Frank Murray

We had run him out of town for vagrancy. No one would have figured that he would have come back and break into the bank after closing. The trial would have gone better probably had Josey, the cleaning woman, lived to identify him.

Funny how he didn't have the money on him when Sheriff Clyde found him the next day. Probably hid it in some log or something. But he'll have no chance to use it after dinner today. That's what we do to murderers in Holstern County. There was even talk of letting out the school today to go to the hanging. But Mr. Stikes said as principal he'd make us go to school. But I slipped out during recess before widow Mills history class so I could be here a half hour earlier than the rest. They should have saved me a seat in front. After all, if I hadn't of agreed with ole Albert's testimony there might not of been any reason to gather today in the square. Ma and Aunt Opal agreed that the jury couldn't have found the tramp guilty if I hadn't of testified the same.

Everyone knows that ole Albert spends all of his afternoons counting carriages from the porch of the depot. He usually sits through his idle hours till the evening chill forces him to find a warmer spot inside the depot. Then it's a matter of time before someone takes issue with him on a past debt and he limps back behind Uncle Jody's livery stable where his wife waits with the earnings of fourteen hours in the mill.

Today he sits with Doctor Jerrigan and the other members of the jury while the rest of Jacksboro pull their shades to the Kentucky sun.

I've never seen him sit so tall and favor his leg so little as he does today. I hear tell that stingy Mr. Taylor made him the suit he's sporting today. Must of got a shave somewheres too. Never got nothing myself.

Aunt Opal told me that ole Albert used to work in the livery stable til the day when the train spooked Doctor Jerrigan's mare and she trampled his right leg. Uncle Jody says he could of recovered if he had wanted to, but seeing that the Mrs. had started working there weren't no need to. I guess Uncle Jody knows right too. He used to say it weren't no loss to him, cause ole Albert hardly lifted a finger for his pay anyway. Seems like Uncle Jody ought to know. Ole Albert worked for him for long about eight years.

Ole Albert took to drinking when he was recovering from the accident and, seeing that he never quite recovered, he never saw no need to stop drinking. But he sure was sober during the trial. Every morning during the trial Mr. Taylor would pick him up in his carriage and treat him to breakfast then drive him to the court house. But I never got nothing myself. Seems kinda funny though cause I said the same as ole Albert at the trial.

Preacher Jones is probably busy today. Gotta prepare the drifter for this afternoon. Mom says that the man's lucky to know when he's gonna die and to have a preacher to help prepare him. Seems right. Preacher Jones is kinda lucky too cause church was packed yesterday, all them people coming for today. There was hardly a room left last night in Julies Rooming House. Wonder what they got when they passed the plate at church. Sure was good to hear him preach on something besides drinking and idleness. Yesterday he spoke on sin and God's justice. Talked about the prisoner most of the time. Someone oughta tell the man. He'd be mighty proud.

Mrs. Jones is up near the front. I oughta take the seat she's saving for her husband cause he ain't gonna need it. He'll be with the prisoner all the time.

It's pretty well filled up, up front near ole Albert except for the seats saved for the rest of the jury members and those seats Mr. Stikes is saving for Judge Backeridge and Mayor Smithin and his wife.

Everybody arriving goes first to ole Albert and greets him, asking him about his health. When Judge Backeridge came in and greeted ole Albert, he wouldn't let him rise to greet him. Ole Albert couldn't have got up anyway cause Doctor Jerrigan had his arm wrapped around ole Albert's shoulders.

Still kinda wish they'd saved me a seat next to ole Albert. I have a mind to take that seat saved by Mrs. Jones. Nope. Mr. Stikes would see me and I'd have hell to pay in the morning. Still gotta get up near the front though, cause nobody's gonna see me back here.

But I reckon about all's here now cause Mayor Smithin just finished seeing to ole Albert's comfort.

Dad would have made sure I got a seat up front near ole Albert, if he had lived through the mine collapse three years ago. I remember how pleased he was when I told him about the time Suzie was surrounded by a pack of wolves. Suzie wouldn't have fared well, one dog against three wolves. Dad stopped rocking and smiled when I told him how I picked up those stones and threw them at the wolves. I know Dad believed me, though, cause he must of told Uncle Jody all about it cause when I saw Uncle Jody and started to tell him what happened he said, "Yeah, uh-huh." Must of been talking to Pa.

... Not long after the wagon left with the body for burial, the square was empty except for ole Albert and me. Ole Albert up front and me nearer the back. Mom said the man's name was Tom Booker.

Next Move: UNDECIDED

i
sort
of
accept it now.
i've done it in spite of all
that He said,
and i know
i can't turn back ever again.

"But this one time you'd better be
dead
certain
sure."
He spoke with a finality
that frightened me.

i wasn't
dead
certain
sure,
but i did it.
i thought i had to.
now i tell myself
"Accept it.
You've done it in spite of all . . ."

and i hope the phone will ring
and i hope He will call me back
back to him
and i hope He will not let me go
and i hope He will try one more time.

But He doesn't love me
or He would not have let me go . . .
without talking to me
without making me listen.

but i could not.
i would not.
i was hard.
i was cold.

He was tired.
He was beaten.
He could not win
even though he loves me.

He had pledged Himself
To a war
before He met me.
a Man must keep His pledges.

i was second from the beginning.
a girl can't fight the Infantry.
a girl can't tear down Pride.
a girl can't let herself destroy a Man.
especially if that girl is a woman,
and if that woman loves this man.
i am
and
i do.

Pride and humility
don't mix in His world.
to Him my world is common
to me His world is awesome
and i would destroy it.

but it would destroy Him
and i met Him too late
to be first
and i must exert humility
to be second

and humility doesn't exist
in His world.
His is a Man's world.
A world of challenge
of adventure
of freedom
where Men are not tied down
by anything

and love can tie Him down.
but greater love can free Him
and so i leave Him free
and so much of me goes with Him
even though He would destroy it
i must let it go.
it is His
it can never come back to me.
it can only stay with Him
and leave me room to grow.

love is strong
ours is the strongest
but it can't tear down
and build at the same time
and bring two worlds together
without an explosive collision.

so by the love that would bind You
be free.
GO.
and be the world's freest Man.

Turn my love into
strength
freedom
faith
and GO.

it is better for You
this way
and i can survive
i must survive
i will pray
but i will still love
i will still care
but four times is
too much to ask.

so may i ask You to be free
and let me be a memory.

Go with the wind—
this and only this—
no woman is worthy
of Your love.

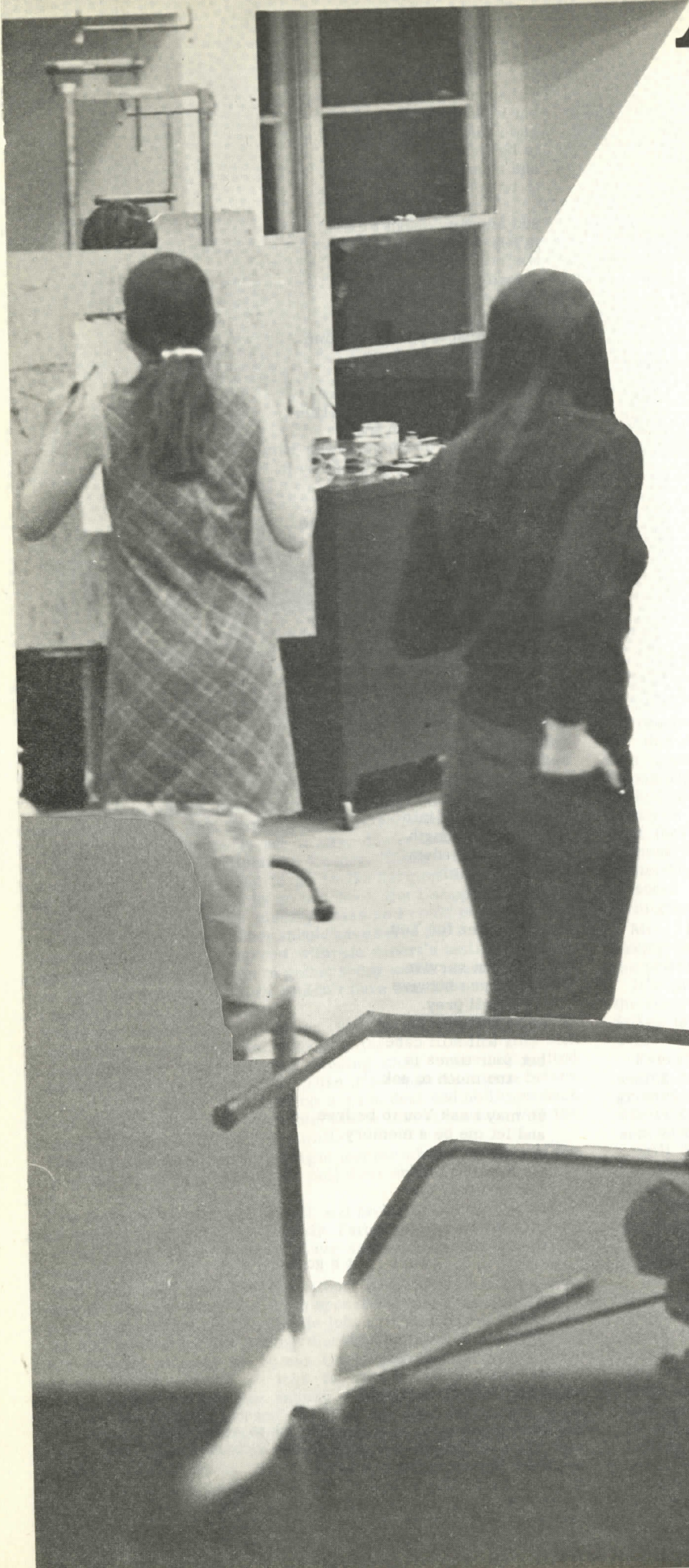
(were i but a goddess.)

Your love is greater
than i am, but
my love is great enough
to free You.

GO.

Here's luck to a Gambler
with me as a charm.

ART BARN



Late one night as I walked back to the dorm after an evening in the library, I chanced to look up and see something that struck me as somewhat odd. Although the agriculture building was quite dark, an old dairy barn next door to it was brightly lit. Could it be the agriculture majors putting the cows to bed at this late hour, I wondered to myself. My curiosity raised and having nothing better to do, I decided to journey up there and see if they would let me watch.

A sidewalk led to a door which I opened. I entered a well-lighted lobby which contained display cases of pottery, pieces of sculpture, and abstract paintings. This must certainly be the most cultured herd of Gurnseys in Tennessee. But where were the cows and the Ag. majors? Well, maybe these were just classrooms, but I could hear people bustling around, so I proceeded with my mission.

Opening the first door I came to I entered a small room with some big contraption in the middle. Around the room were canisters of colored liquid. Someone was sitting in front of the big machine which made a strange whooshing sound as it was used to spray something on a pot. Extremely confused and lost, I tapped her on the shoulder and asked her where I was. "In the glazing room at the Art Barn," she replied, and went back to work. Art Barn??

So art, not cows, is housed here, I thought. I had always thought that art courses were taught in the fine arts building. But as I later observed, all this unusual equipment would never have fit into the third floor of fine arts. Short of the Presidential Palace, the Barn, as it is affectionately known by its inhabitants, is the most exotic-looking building on campus and inside are some of the most exotic equipment and happenings anywhere.

The ceramics area of the Barn contains potters' wheels and work tables, an advanced students' studio, kiln room, and glazing room. This area alone is as large as the old barracks building (where the new addition to Todd Library now stands) which housed all the three-dimensional activities of the Art Department until the move to the barn.

Wandering around downstairs I discovered a jewelry studio, lecture room and three sculpture studios: one for wax and plastic, one for wood, and one for metal where there was welding equipment and a foundry. Entering this room in the semi-darkness was like viewing a dungeon or torture chamber in a horror movie, so I passed on through to the gallery where several students were displaying all kinds of creative work.

Seeing some steps, I wandered upstairs to a large, airy and well-lighted room in the north wing which proved to be the painting studio. This room has a 20-foot ceiling which peaks with the roof of the barn. All around are easels and canvases, and something about the room made me want to pick up a brush and start painting. But, restraining myself, I walked up three steps to another studio with a much lower ceiling, this one for drawing and design classes. The different levels of the rooms and ceiling heights made even the building seem arty and unusual. Branching off were smaller studios for advanced students. In the upstairs south wing instructors' studios and a wood shop for making frames and canvases were being constructed.

After my first short tour of the Barn, this place held an irresistible attraction for me. I wanted to find out what makes people want to spend hours there. I kept returning to the barn and every time I went the most unusual and interesting things were going on.

Any time during the semester, beginning and experienced students can be observed throwing pots, tasting clay and worrying about how glazes will turn out. When the pots are ready to be fired there is always hassling to decide whose pots will be loaded in the kiln first and in the best places. After being preheated to 1000 degrees for eight hours, the kiln is fired to 2400 degrees. Someone has to sit with it constantly. One can't tell by gauges if the firing is going well--it's a matter of feel, as is most art. When the kiln is finally opened three days after it is loaded, everyone crowds around like on Christmas morning to get the first look at his wares.

Some of the very best are sent as entries to exhibits and a student is pretty good if he gets his work accepted in a show where he is competing with professionals. This year nine students and instructors have sent works to the Mid-State Crafts Exhibition in Indiana and several have sent works to an exhibit in Oak Ridge. Since the Tennessee Arts Commission is now gathering a permanent traveling collection, many students are working toward this goal.

In the wood carving studio you can see a student eyeing a tree trunk, trying to visualize what it will be. The shape of the wood may suggest a human torso or an abstract ice-skater.

Watching a budding artist weld together a wierd looking metal sculpture one may chance to say, "That's art?" and receive the widely quoted reply, "Art is anything you can get away with." (Attribution to McLuhan.)

Classes in the Barn are small and students and instructors get to know each other better than in academic courses. A student has to explain to his instructor what he is doing and why. The hardest part is getting the idea from paper into the actual clay or on canvas. When he is through with a work it is no longer the same thing he was working on--it is a part of him. And each problem solved and each question answered raises more problems and more questions.

Occasionally you may see a student in the depths of despair, completely lacking inspiration. Then an idea hits and he sky-rockets up. The next thing you know he is hard at work. Four hours a week outside class are required in art courses, but some people practically live in the Barn. They work because they want to, and because the atmosphere of the Barn makes them want to.

Barn people seem to be a whole new breed. There are two kinds of them--the semi-Barn-addicts and the real Barn-freaks. The real freak is usually an upperclassman and when you ask him about the Barn, his eyes light up and he gets very enthusiastic. Barn people tend to be personality people. They tell me that the number one personality people is the ceramics instructor. He seems to inhabit the Barn as much as his most dedicated students. When discussing him, I noticed students assume attitudes of respect while glancing over their shoulders like concentration camp inmates discussing one of the guards.

One guy majoring in ceramics stirs Cokes with his left index finger. He has a reputation for having the cleanest index finger in Middle Tennessee. One gal has a poodle which comes with her to class and occasionally has unfortunate accidents. Another guy drapes himself over his latest sculpture, stroking it affectionately and telling you how good art is for his glands.

There is a bond between the people there, like the immortal one big happy family. Barn people are very open with each other and the shadiest jokes don't always come from the guys.

Occasionally Barn people do manage to tear themselves away from art long enough to have one of those freaky parties that everyone hears about... When you get so many personality people and their friends together you can imagine what happens. Anyone from an Air Force Captain to a prof to a jock may show up.

Dressed like flamboyant factory workers Barn people come and go all day and half of the night. So if you're ever out walking the campus late at night, with nothing better to do, you might stop by the Barn to get a look at a new and different slice of campus life.



Photos by Mike Fedak





THE CHOICE

by Betty L. Smith

The world was bright with early spring. Breezes were warm enough for children to play without their sweaters, but she kept her raincoat tightly buttoned around her during the funeral. Afterward she walked the silent three miles back to the small suburban house they had shared--the house which now belonged to her alone.

She entered through the unlocked back door and left it standing open behind her. She sat at her place at the kitchen table and clapped her hands around the little wooden candle holder he had once made for her, a souvenir from one of their country walks. She tried to smile, thinking of that, but all she could manage was a twitch at one corner of her mouth. She remained thus until almost midnight as they had often sat together talking and sharing laughter. She sat very still, staring through the dark at his empty chair, and wondered blankly whether to use his gun or her butcher knife or the pills. She decided the knife would be as good as anything and rose from her seat to open the small drawer by the sink.

But with her movement, a slight motion inside her caught her awareness. She stiffened and quickly passed a hand over her swollen belly.

"I thought you were dead," she whispered. "You stopped moving days ago. You can't move now. I don't want to be a mother now. You're dead."

But the fluttery movement came stronger. "No!" she screamed, slamming the drawer, knotting her two fists together. "No, no, no, n----", and she crumpled to the floor, helpless now against the sobs that ached in her throat.

The next morning she found herself cramped in a corner beside the refrigerator. All her muscles protested her efforts to stand, but she got to her feet. She closed the wide-open door against the chill and unbuttoning her raincoat, trudged to the bathroom. She turned on the shower and undressed. Naked, she stood before the mirror and stared at the awkward form that stared back at her. The red streaks that ran in jagged paths over her belly gave it the appearance of a huge over-ripe plum bursting its skin.

She fought to smile, reminding herself of the years before she had married him--the years she had spent teaching in the local high school. She had loved her work and had thrilled at the brief moments of realization that sometimes flashed over the faces of her students. Then, when she met him, she found that her interests changed. She longed to be a mother instead of a teacher. Now she would have a child but, without a husband she would return to her teaching. She had not missed it very much, but perhaps she would enjoy again the self-giving that had once been the outlet of her vibrant love of life. For herself perhaps as much as for her child, she would again become a teacher. But for now there were many things to do.

She spent the rest of the month knitting blankets, booties, a sweater, a white dress. The writhing of the tiny body grew so strong at times that she had to drop her work and grasp the arms of the rocking chair. But always she smiled a little and resumed her hurried knitting. Then late at night, when fatigue took control, she would put aside the work and go to sleep. She had moved the mattress from their bed to the kitchen floor so that she would not feel the warmth of that familiar ray of sunlight that played over their eyelids in the mornings, awakening them to each other's kisses. Now, instead, she was tugged away from sleep by the squirming of the tiny body.

In all those days only one card (from his employer) came in the mail; no friends dropped by because they had no friends. They had decided long ago that they were their own best friends and that they neither needed nor wanted any others. She had often said to him that the only thing she needed to make life worth the effort was his love. But now, without him, her love for his child must be her sustenance.

At last one afternoon she knew the moment had come. Frightened, she hurried to call a taxi for a ride to the hospital. The ride was fast and the weather warm; it made her dizzy.

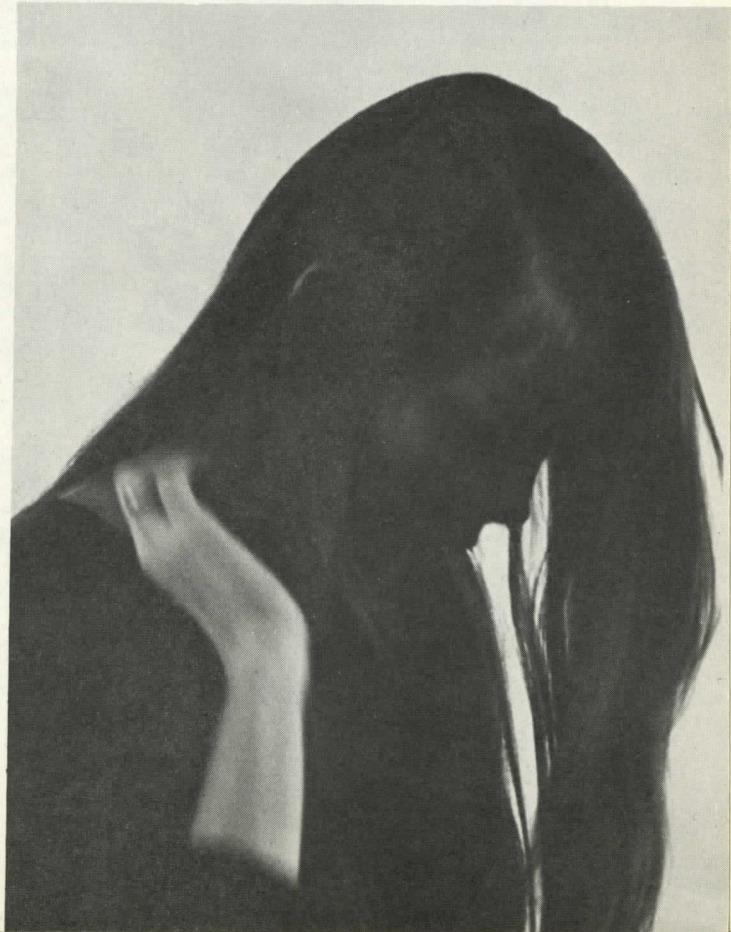
As the doctor left the room his words spun around in her head: ". . . dead about a month ago. . . sorry . . . didn't you know?" She had maintained the calm that he had always respected in her: the doctor was satisfied now that she had taken the news very well. No one must know how she had really taken the news, for she knew they would stop her.

And no one did know. Three days later she left the hospital to walk home through the warm streets of town. She entered through the unlocked back door and left it standing open behind her. She pulled out the small drawer by the sink, picked up the knife, and pressed the point against her deflated abdomen.

"No, I can't," dropping the knife. She hurried to his desk, fumbled for the pistol in the large bottom drawer, but threw it back. "No. Not like that."

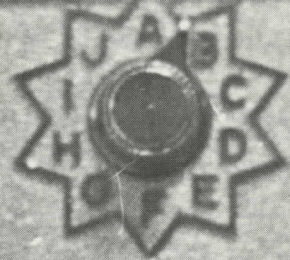
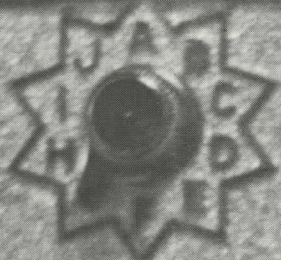
She ran to the bathroom on unsteady legs, opened the cabinet and took down the bottle of pills. For a long moment she stared at the brown bottle which blurred before her eyes. Suddenly she saw herself dash the bottle to a thousand pieces on the tile floor. Her head went back, her eyes squeezed shut, her mouth opened.

"I can't..."



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5844



5835

5845



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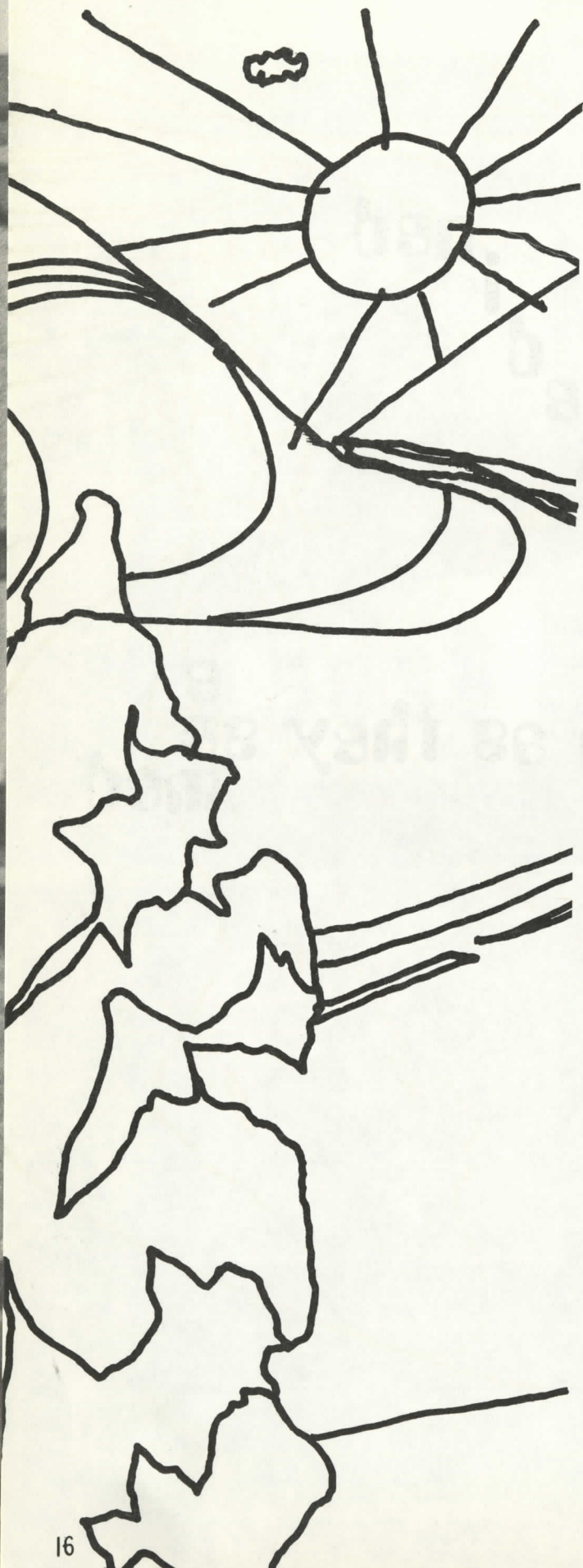
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The door opened

and i walked in

Things were not as they seemed

But i met them



THUMB- NAILS

ARIEL, by Sylvia Plath. available in paperback from Harper and Row Publishers, N.Y., 1966.

So Rod McKuen doesn't quite cut it with you, but you are looking for something to meet your demands in poetry. One particular poet who relates to the senses is Sylvia Plath, and the relation is strongest in *ARIEL*. This poetry is real. Nothing is kept from the reader; the author has no secrets. Confessional poetry is the name given it by most critics, but Sylvia Plath's confessions engulf the reader and become his own emotions. This volume definitely deserves the attention of every reader attempting to broaden his poetic scope.

TO SEEK A NEWER WORLD, by Robert Kennedy. available in paperback from Bantam Books, N.Y., 1968. 235 pp.

Kennedy presents America. *TO SEEK A NEWER WORLD* is an exciting description of the United States in which we live today. His description forces the reader to admit that filth, disease, poverty, and violence exist in the "land of the free and the home of the brave." Kennedy compels the reader to face himself. Once one reads this sometimes frightening exposé on American life, there is no way to escape his own prejudices. *TO SEEK A NEWER WORLD* is, in a sense, a self-portrait of any American who takes the time to read it.

THE BEGATTING OF A PRESIDENT, by Myron Roberts, Lincoln Haynes, and Sasha Gilien. available in paperback from Ballantine Books, N.Y., 59 pp.

This satirical commentary on the 1968 Presidential election manages to make some good-natured pokes at almost everyone. Styled after a widely-read text (King James Version), the book includes such chapters as "The First Epistle of Richard to THE AMERICANS, or The Apocrypha," "The Pacification of Goliath," and "L.B. Jenesis." The chapter relating the story of Adam and Eve and their banishment from East of Eden Estates "into a Credibility Gap" is particularly witty. Hilarious and well worth the price. Amen.

???

"THE BLAHS"

Feeling tired and run-down? Has the Administration finally gotten to you about that overdue parking ticket? And Calculus isn't what you calculated it to be? Why not go out and get polluted? After all, the task is a bit easier than it might sound--not all pollutants are sold across the counter in a little brown bag.

Take that canned drink you might be swilling at this moment. Notice the label on the side? Ah hal Artificial flavoring and coloring. Ascorbic acid, stannous chloride, and benzoate of soda added as preservatives. You're polluted without even knowing it... Relax though, because the nation that makes cheese that goes crunch, flat popcorn, fish-shaped snack crackers, bugle-shaped corn, and lands a man on the moon first can and must work at it a little while, however, because we'll have to manage to top some of our previous all-time winners.

Remember that nice, white snow Bing Crosby crooned about on the late show? Ah yes! Chessnuts roasting on an open fire, Jack Frost nipping at your nose, and radioactive particles floating down on all of us. Even if we don't have this old bugaboo to worry about, we can ponder the real romanticism behind a revised Gray or Black Christmas, depending on the density of the smog in the area. Oh, well... black is beautiful.

In a few years, we can all send our children to school and listen to their cute little nursery rhymes recited for our pleasure. "Pollution pollution everywhere; has anybody seen the air?" Or how about trying to explain to a curious (or pretentious) little brat-er, child just what pure air is. You might consider the selling of pure air as your first big business move. With a minimum outlay of capital, you can collect and bottle pure air, store it away, and sell it to curiosity seekers as souvenirs of the "Old World" for some outrageous price. Clever.

By the way, have you broken bread on your knees with anyone lately? Actually, you've probably broken more calcium propionate (added to retard spoilage), fat preservatives, and yeast nutrient than you would like to think. That's a lot to chew on by itself, but whatever happened to just plain, old bread?

Cyclamates, cyclamates everywhere. Even in our sausage for awhile. But of course, now cyclamates are bad for our health, even though they have been around for about two years. So the cyclamates are now replaced with pure, white sugar. Perhaps the entire trend indicates that we should take the sour with the sweet.

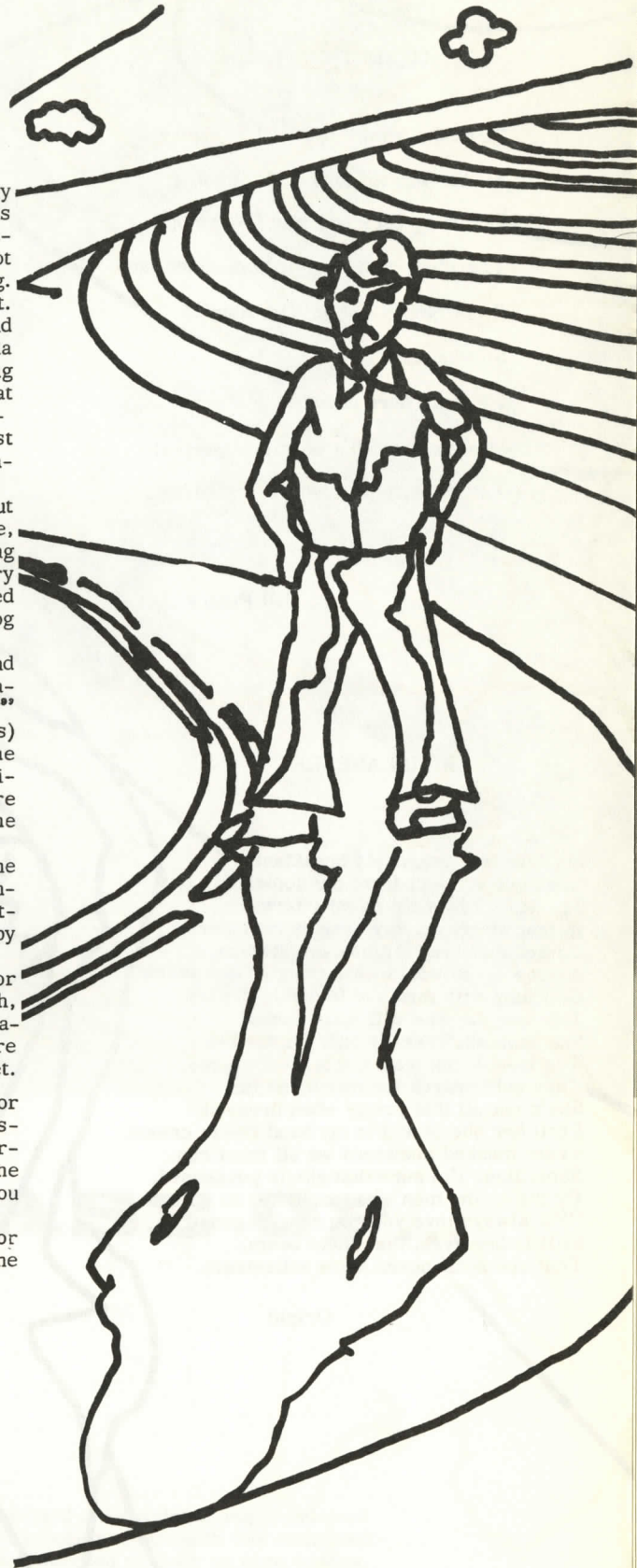
Even mothers with best intentions can't be trusted now, for latest reports tell us that the DDT content in the milk of nursing mothers is considerably higher than that allowed in commercial milk. Just think, if Communism supposedly poisons the mind, dear old Mom can start the job on the body. Makes you wonder about Dr. Spock, doesn't it?

In the event that you're considering taking up a starvation diet or taking up residence in the Great Painted Desert, consider one last point in your now pollution-polluted mind:

"A planet doesn't explode of itself," said drily
The Martian astronomer, gazing off into the air--
"That they were able to do it is proof that highly
Intelligent beings must have been living there."

--Wheelock

Did the man say "intelligent"?



IT AIN'T THAT NEW

"Ban the bomb" crashed and tinkled
All the way through my wotthehell
Listening ears and said "Wake up!
There's a cold-hot-medium-sized far
Right bloody war in Viet Nam!"
So what else is new?
I just sit here at my \$125 a week
Desk job, writing beer commercials,
And hope my son isn't killed in the
Berkeley riots.

Bill Peters

HER VILLANELLE

My love is yesterday's breakfast.
Grab her straight from me someone!
The others long have lost interest
In that which she says reigns supreme.
Things that are common, we all shun
As one would would when fronted with incest.
Couching with men she foolishly dreams
That one day she will marry one.
She says she'll settle only for the best.
The best do not want the least it seems.
They only search for mirth and fun.
She's not all that pretty when dressed;
I tell her she is and in my hand she is cream.
From masked monsters we all must run.
Sometimes I'm sure that she is possessed,
By the hiring men who taught her to scream
"I'll always love you you sons of guns!"
Still in her eyes, that Sheol beam,
That she shall never know selfesteem.

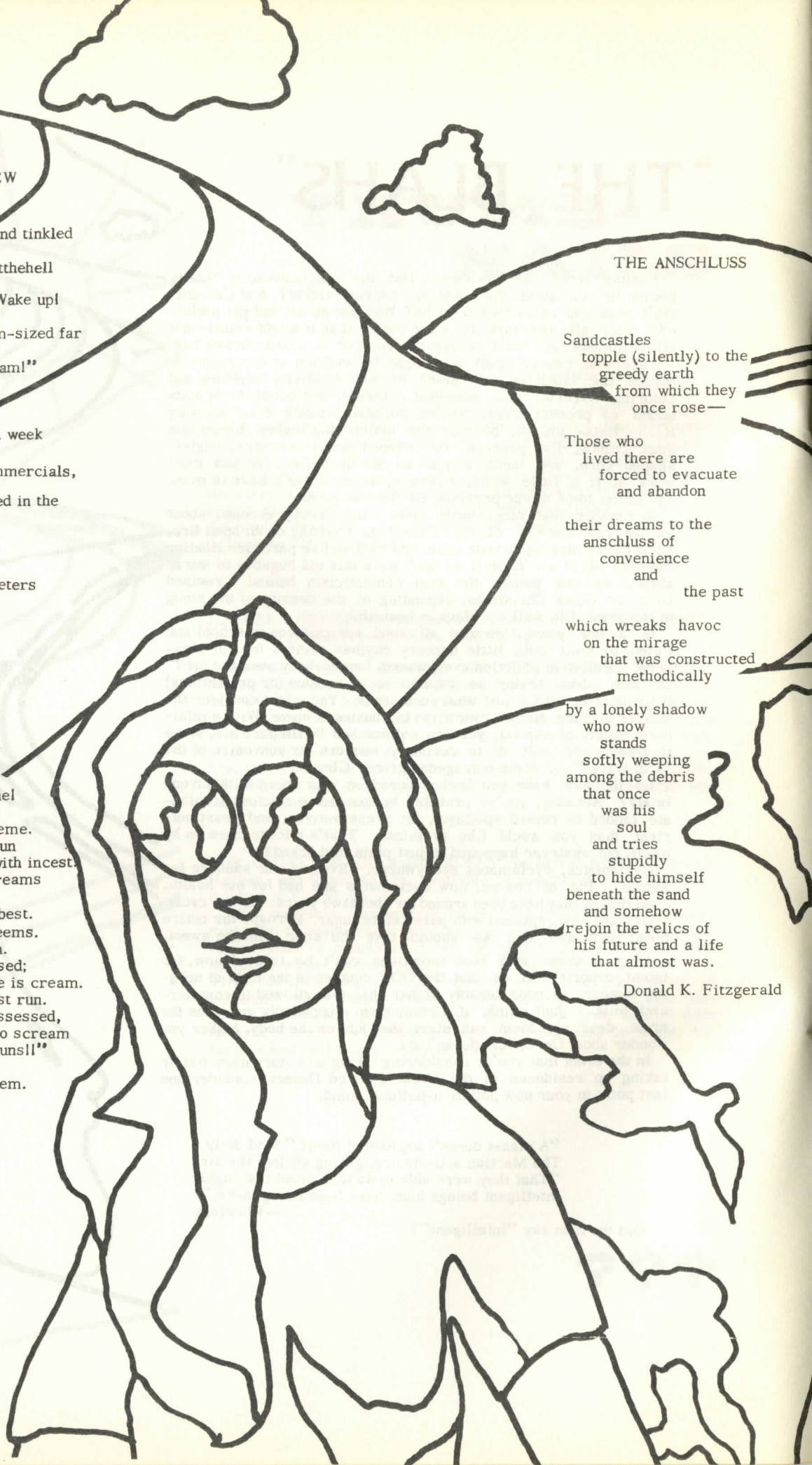
Orlrid

THE ANSCHLUSS

Sandcastles
topple (silently) to the
greedy earth
from which they
once rose—
Those who
lived there are
forced to evacuate
and abandon
their dreams to the
anschluss of
convenience
and
the past
which wrecks havoc
on the mirage
that was constructed
methodically

by a lonely shadow
who now
stands
softly weeping
among the debris
that once
was his
soul
and tries
stupidly
to hide himself
beneath the sand
and somehow
rejoin the relics of
his future and a life
that almost was.

Donald K. Fitzgerald





MERELY A CASE OF...

Miss Betty Millard, 19, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Millard of Cleveland, was found dead in her room this morning by her roommate Miss Marsha Foster. The unexpected death was estimated as having occurred sometime after 2 a.m. when Miss Foster awakened to close an open window. The cause of death has only been reported as due to unnatural circumstances. Survivors include . . .

continued

It's really not funny you know, sitting here writing about the Bell Witch and wondering if I'll be allowed to finish the next sentence before some dreadful punishment assails me from the unknown. I've heard it said that "he who reads the Bell Witch book will surely die," that is if he's allowed to finish it and the book doesn't disappear or get its pages torn mysteriously from it first. Of course, I don't believe in all of this myself; I finished the book last night—also my obituary (just in case, you understand).

Now if you haven't heard of the Bell Witch yet and you've been in Middle Tennessee a full semester you are sadly out of things. I couldn't begin to explain here all that has transpired concerning this infamous spirit since her early history, but if you'll agree to keep this article held low and not ever mention my name aloud in connection with it, I might be persuaded to tell you a bit about her and some of the rumors I've heard just lately.

First of all, the Bell Witch is not really a witch at all as we think of witches but more of a poltergeist. Of course, back in the 1800's there weren't any technical names for ghosts like we have now so the communities of Springfield, Cedar Hill, and Adams just called her the Bell Witch because she haunted the John Bell family. Oh yes, she did have a name; it was Kate. They called her that because the witch once claimed to be old Mrs. Kate Batts' witch, Mrs. Batts being an eccentric neighbor lady. All the same it is now believed by spiritualists that Kate has never known herself who she is or her origin. She gave so many identifications of herself that the one claim that she was old Mrs. Batts' witch probably means as little as the rest of her claims. And the way I figure it, if she had been Mrs. Batts' witch she wouldn't have lived longer than Mrs. Batts did herself. But the Bell Witch yet exists and continues popping up all over Middle Tennessee and has even visited this campus on a few occasions.

Now I know as sure as I'm sitting here relating all this to you that you're sitting there not believing it, but I swear to you that all the facts about her and what she did years ago are in a book if you care or dare to read it. The name of it is The Authenticated History of the Famous Bell Witch by M. V. Ingram. There are many articles written about her too but this book is probably the best source of information you can find. The book itself tells of how Kate terrorized the Bell family, especially John and his daughter Betsy, till John finally died because of her.

For several days I have asked around on campus and though I have found many who have begun the book, not many have actually finished all of it. Also it is rumored that sometimes the book will disappear and appear somewhere else or it will get some pages torn out of it, all very mysteriously. Moreover, it is said that the few people who have read the entire book aren't with us any longer. Well, you can be sure all this made me pretty wary about finishing the book myself, so I began checking around trying to find somebody—or anybody (breathing)—who had read all of it.

The first guy I talked to lives over in Gracy Hall now and he, like a lot of curious others, checked the book out of the library here last year. He wasn't long in finding out what the excitement was about. It seems one night after his roommate was already asleep, he was skimming through the book and decided to gust lay it up until the following day. He closed the book, then laid it on the counter and flipped out the lights. The door was closed and also the windows, so when he felt a cold breeze hit his legs he went right back and turned on the lights again. When he did he noticed that the book he had just closed was open to the picture of Betsy Bell.

This little relation didn't leave me feeling very safe about finishing the book, but I continued my search for someone who had completed it. Finally and gratefully I did hear of a few students who had done research papers on the subject and read the book with no ill effects apparent. Being for the most part a rational human being, I began reasoning that there could be no reason why this ghost would bother me for only reading about her if she hadn't bothered others for doing it. I mean, I've always been nice to the ghosts I've met. So I set the book before me, my fears behind me and my roommate beside me and completed the book.

By far the most well-known as well as tragic appearance of the Bell Witch at M.T.S.U. was many years ago, not long after the school was established. You probably know all about this one from rumors you have heard, and these rumors vary as to what actually happened (as confirmed by a recent session in High Rise West). It is agreed by the majority that the situation was this: a young girl living in one of the older dorms (I'll be nice and not scare you with the name of the dorm) had been working diligently on a research paper she was writing on the Bell Witch. She was having quite a bit of trouble it seems because

"all these weird things" kept happening to her. After typing late one night on the paper, she put it away and went to bed. During the night something woke her. The window was open and the wind was whipping inside. She closed the window and in doing so noticed that her reference book was open, and the chapter on the Bell Witch had been torn out. But the poor girl's miseries had only begun. She was afterwards in a continual state of depression and her grades were suffering. Some say she was probably bewitched during this time, but I suppose being haunted as she was is enough to make anyone hang himself as she eventually did. You may wonder (out of idle curiosity) how she did this in a dorm room, but you must remember that some of the older buildings have pipes running across the ceilings. It was from one of these that the fatal rope was strung. Or so go the rumors, if indeed they are only rumors.

One theory I've heard of why the phantom might have had a particular dislike for this girl is that she could have been a descendant of the Bell family. It is commonly known or maybe just commonly rumored, that the witch said she would return in a hundred years to haunt John Bell's descendants. If so, then this possibility seems credible.

One of the most startling reports of Bell Witchery comes from a friend of mine whose former teacher's husband wrote a play about the Bell Witch. The play made it, as few plays do, to Broadway but whether coincidence or not, it is interesting to note that within a year of the Broadway performance all of the people with a major connection to the play were dead, including the author himself. My friend found that the man's widow could not be reached because she is now on the verge of a complete nervous breakdown. Obviously, curious unthinking inquirers have bothered her too much about the sensitive subject already.

I could go on with rumors I have heard along with facts I have obtained about the Bell Witch, but I'm sure that the happenings mentioned already will be enough to cause the most severe skeptic to have second thoughts on the subject. Naturally many rumors tend not to be true, but the rumors on the Bell Witch, have been based upon facts, if they are not facts themselves. For example, I have heard several ways that Andrew Jackson was first introduced to the witch. The Bell Witch book simply relates how the general's team of horses were stopped short on the way to John Bell's home one day. Jackson and his motley group

of friends (including one witch-layer) were only halted until Jackson recognized the trouble as being the Bell's witch at which the witch laughed aloud, said he would see them at Bell's that night, and let them pass. That night at Bell's when Kate entertained the constant group of visitors, she showed the witch-layer off as the coward he was, while the rest of the company including Jackson received a hearty laugh over the event. Other versions of the story are obvious evolvments from this one, but other details have been added, or possibly these have simply been omitted from the book. In one account, Jackson's horses stopped midroad, reared and would not go any further. Jackson, who was on his way to Bell's to try to disprove the witch, had his hat removed by an unapparent wind, then heard the witch's hilarity. It is said that the general would never again talk about the Bell Witch after this incident. In still another version Jackson only needed the witch to hit him in the head with a piece of stovewood in order to make a believer of him.

Theories about what the Bell Witch really is have been issued here and there ever since the beginning of the Bell family's troubles. Some of them have been proved false, but most remain conjectures. Many of the people living during the period of the terrorization who never looked very deeply into the matter nor visited the Bell home gave the simplest explanation for the events. Their explanation was that the family members were causing the disturbance by playing with ventriloquism possibly for the attention it gave them. This theory must be wrong on two counts. First, the family tried to keep their trouble quiet until it got so bad that they had to ask for help. Ventriloquism could not possibly have been the answer since the witch knew almost everything going on anywhere at any time. She could recite any scripture from the Bible, and altogether knew many things that no family member could have possibly known.

The most interesting theory I have thus far encountered is one exerted by Russian psychiatrist and psychologist Nanvor Fodor and Herwood Carrington in the book Haunted People. In this book the authors seek to establish their belief that the Bell Witch was a part of Betsy Bell's mind, that the "witch" was actually a "cold conscious personality" that was born of shock after Betsy was sexually assaulted by her father, John.

It is not an established fact that Betsy was assaulted by her father, and The Authenticated History by Ingram even leads the reader to believe that Mr. Bell was a highly moral man. But I do concede that moral men fall at times below their own standards, and this could possibly be the case here.

The book the Haunted People continues to explain that this was not an actual ghost or spirit, but an entity born as a psychic defense of Betsy's repressed thoughts. This, they explain, would be the reason that the being hated John Bell and persecuted Betsy. The guilt that Betsy felt was what actually kept her from marrying the man she loved, Joshua Gardener. Not marrying him was a punishment she subconsciously felt she deserved.

The "witch" at the time of John Bell manifested itself many times as animals, usually a dog, rabbit, or bird. Fodor and Carrington explain this in terms of the electrical impulses emitted by the brain. These impulses were channeled into physical energy independent of Betsy's body and used to protect her sanity. This "witch" had no idea that it had occupied a mortal body, nor did it have any idea of its origin. This would be the reason that the witch gave so many varied reasons for its presence in discussing with Bell's family and friends. This

entity obviously could not tell the difference between good and evil, and this is what gave her the suspicious nature she had. This also could be the description of Betsy's mind at that time, confused between good and evil. Present day phenomena are explained the same way. The mind's increased amount of electrical impulses cause the happenings; in other words, the person makes his own hauntings. But as I said before, this is only a theory and an interesting one at least.

Today a house near Springfield holds some of the original Bell furniture. I'm sure if you were to visit the house, John's old rocking chair would gladly rock for you as it does for all visitors. I guess the old witch has never quite gotten out of that spirit of entertaining as it did in by-gone years at the Bell's home.

by Betty Millard



DOUBT

Empty, stupid, unmeant
words of complaint,
suspicion, and
accusation are
the only things
that hold
a solemn
shadow
to drab
reality.

The thin wall of
conversation, ragged
at the edges, pushes
back for another
fleeting second
the horrible
flood of
solitude
and
the
black
sea
of
cold realization that,
as always, the night is lonely.

--Patrek

