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Silver Canyons

Silken soft summer rushes
over an earth child in spring,
And on wings of joy in restless abandon
we bring you laughter.
After it hushes, we go.

Though my roots are fastened down
depth in earthy, stony silence,
I'm free to fly down silver canyons
neath a golden moon,
And soon as the laughter hushes
we'll go together.

Mike Hurt

i, windowed apart from
the shiny-sun
day

watch my
boy-child
play architect
in the sandbox

sand bridges
sand moats
sand castles

cold shivery tickly wet sand on his toes--

anyway,
i simply must
get this kitchen
cleaned up

Barb Deal
Along the limbs
Of an angry sky
The thunderbolt rumbles war;
And spears
And tears
Fall;
And blood runs
Clear as rain.

Along the limbs
Of this thunderous morning
The bird attempts a song;
And in the wake
Of freezing rain
Moves on
To brighter skies.

Along the limbs
Of this snowbound day
The trees look
As if an artist's hand
Had retraced each line in white,
And each flake of snow
Seals in winter.

Along the limbs
Of this dying year
The new year sharpens its nails.
And in ice mirrors,
Which give edges to air,
The world is stopped
In a frozen daze.

Along my limbs
And through my heart
Runs a shiver and a tear.
And summer, who lent her days
Too freely, is lost.

And I
Am dazed as the world.

Pat Jaros
Convicted in 1931 of a murder he says he did not commit, Henri Charrière, age 25, is subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment. There begins a fascinating tale of the adventures of Charrière, called Papillon (French for "butterfly") by his friends because of a large butterfly tattooed on his chest. Written in 1966, thirty years after the fact, this story is filled with almost unbelievable adventures engendered by Papillon's refusal to accept reduction to an animal state by a barbaric penal system.

His first thoughts after being sentenced are of how to escape, and he decides that his chances will be better if he asks to be sent to the penal colony at Cayenne, located in French Guiana on the northern coast of South America. His many acquaintances in the French underworld give him information necessary to the planning of his escape, and less than three weeks after his arrival in Guiana, he and two other convicts seize their opportunity to flee.

Papillon never misses an occasion during the description of his first escape to contrast the brutality of the French government with the kindness and understanding of the countless people who are willing to help three convicts make new lives for themselves. A colony of lepers provides them with a boat and necessary supplies; a family in Trinidad, by manifesting complete trust in them, gives them a certain respect for themselves that the months in prison had almost destroyed, and finally, after many difficulties, Papillon arrives alone at an Indian village in Venezuela and is adopted by the tribe.

The description of the six months he spends with the Indians provides a striking contrast with the unspeakable conditions in which Papillon has lived and to which he will soon return. He knows six months of what he calls "an incomparable refuge from the wickedness of men," and he somewhat naively perhaps returns time and again to his theme of the "noble savage" as opposed to the base civilized man.

Upon leaving the Indians, Papillon is almost immediately arrested and incarcerated in a Venezuelan prison where the cells are underground, infested with rats and scorpions, and flooded twice a day at high tide. In spite of these conditions and repeated brutality on the part of those in charge, Papillon never gives up hope of escape. He is eventually returned to the French, and between the time of his leaving the Indians and his final successful escape from Devil's Island, he attempts no less than seven escapes. As punishment, he is on two occasions sentenced to solitary confinement and for two years he is not allowed to speak, to leave his cell, even to hear human voices or to do anything but eat, sleep and sit. As he had commented earlier, the Chinese invented the water torture, but the French invented the torture of silence (p. 26). Papillon's final escape is the most incredible of all. He leaves Devil's Island on a raft made of coconut shells and makes his way through shark-infested waters to eventual safety. After being imprisoned again in Venezuela, he is released and begins a new life. He is today a citizen of Venezuela, for he feels that these people, as opposed to the French, are willing to accept him for what he is and not to judge him by his prison record.

As stated earlier, Charrière's thesis throughout the book is that the French system of justice is designed only to make a man into something less than human. A secondary theme is that there is nothing admirable in this system of justice or in the men who conceived it, but that there is at least something admirable in the society of prisoners who must live together—there is a certain "honor among thieves who must learn the qualities of "pity, goodness, sacrifice, nobility and courage." (p. 259). One is not entirely convinced that the convicts do indeed live by this honor that Papillon insists upon, for the same senseless deeds of violence occur in the prison community that occur among free men.

Papillon was an immediate best-seller in France and
indeed all over Europe, and it is not difficult to see why
it has become something of a political issue. French readers
reacted quickly either for Charrière or for the government,
and several books have appeared in which the veracity of
the adventures has been questioned. Charrière himself has
admitted that all the details may not be accurate, for the
events occurred thirty years ago, and his adventures are
many. Some industrious searchers for truth have verified
that some of the adventures did indeed happen— but to other
people. One tends to wonder, also, about how guilt-free
Charrière really is since, for example, he apparently knows
personally most of the French and Italian underworld. He
admits in his last reflections upon his years in prison that he
was the perfect set-up for a crime he did not commit. He also
admits at this point that the French people are right in
demanding to be protected from his sort, but that they are
wrong in refusing to believe that a man can be rehabilitated
and lead a useful life. No man, however, will have a chance
at this rehabilitation as long as the penal system is based
on the idea of vengeance and dehumanization: "That's where
there is the greatest nonsense of French civilization. A
people does not have the right to avenge itself or to eliminate
too quickly those who cause problems for society. They are
more to be cared for than to be punished in such an inhumane
manner." (p.45).
Charrière is an intriguing and colorful story-teller
in the tradition of Alexander Dumas, author of The Count
of Monte Cristo and countless other episodic novels. Like the
novels of Dumas, Papillon is essentially a great number of
adventures held together loosely by Charrière's main thesis.
Whether or not one agrees with this thesis, whether or not
one believes the story to be accurate, one is forced to conclude
that Papillon, while doubtless not a great literary work, is
a fascinating tale of adventure.

Anne Bolich

*This is my own translation from the
French edition: Henri Charrière, Papillon (Paris:
will be to the French edition.

Anne Bolich is an assistant professor
of French in the foreign language department and
has written this article at the request of COLLAGE
See

The breeze caught the tree and each leaf individually and all the leaves together to produce one gentle sway, above and beyond all pollution, all riot, and all notice.

D.M. Kerr

Bill Peters
HANG IN THERE, DYLAN
on the death of four students killed while
protesting American involvement in Cambodia

I crawl beneath the willow and grasp
its snaky tendrils round my heavy fear
The green then hides me as I weep.
Tears—of anger—confusion—drops

of liquid

GRIEF for those who died for me

Four of me gunned down—today—
As they raged against the dying of the light
any light life, whether "them" or "us"
so empty
too short too dark for too long

When the child sees the glow and rage erupts
First the candle wavers

But soon. oh! soon.

The dying of the light

Joey
The boy was twelve years old and not particularly anything for his age. He was twelve years old and he was on his way to say goodbye to some acquaintances.

He wandered across the yard and opened the barn lot gate and closed it after him and walked up the path into the gloomy mouth of the old barn. Inside, standing in the cool, heavy shadows, he realized that he did not want to open the door to the stalls where his white rabbits had been. . . nor did he want to climb to the high loft of countless hay-castles and corncob fights.

It was sufficient to stand in the great central hall and let vague images form in his mind.

After a few minutes he shrugged and walked back out of the shadows and into the sunlight. Pausing there, he waited to see where he would want to go next and let his eyes wander over the barnyard.

The goat wasn’t there. He had known it wasn’t, of course.

That goat, now . . . that goat had been a stupid animal. It was so nervous that when you yelled at it, it would freeze up—get stiff as a stone. It was the funniest pet he had ever had.

He looked toward the big oak tree that had the swing dangling from one of its lower limbs. Used to, when he got in the swing and got going high, the goat would run up behind and try to stop the swing with its head. It wasn’t big enough, wasn’t near grown, and the swing seat always knocked it for a loop. But it never learned.

He had gone to the barnyard almost every day and worked the swing to watch his goat get clobbered.

They had head butting contests, too. The goat’s head was harder, but he had learned that if he stayed in close and kept their heads together, he could push the goat all over the place. Then when he was tired, he would start yelling and it would freeze up, and he would reach out and push it and watch it topple from its stiff, spindly legs and lay rigid and mute. He always petted it then, holding its head in his lap and talking gently to it until the terror left its eyes and it began to bleat and squirm.

As soon as it was all right, they would play some more. That was the way they had loved each other.

His goat was gone, of course, but he had provided for it. The man that his dad had sold his goat to had two boys, and they had promised to take good care of it.

He followed his footsteps around the side of the barn and climbed the fence and plodded across the fallow garden toward the woods.

The woods were a never-empty source of things to do. They went on farther than he had ever gone, and in their depths, left memories waited.

He untangled a clutching briar that had snared him and pushed his way through the dense brush that grew at the wood’s edge. Inside, it was all feathery shadows. Light filtered down from above in little rods of gold that speared the trees and pinioned the fallen leaves. He stood and waited for whatever it was he had come to take leave of to give its benediction.

There were a lot of his things in these woods. There were huts built like the pictures in the National Geographic magazines, and two sink holes, and a
bunch of fallen logs, some of them hollow.

He walked back out and meandered along the edge of the low pasture. As he drew near the pond, frogs hit the water with a dull plomp. He threw back his head and laughed. He hadn't even tried to sneak up on them.

There was a green blanket of scum over the pond. That meant it was a bad time for fishing. When you drug your line out, there would be gobs of soggy stuff balled around the hook and sinker.

He stooped and got a flat rock and whizzed it across the water. It only skipped twice before sinking. He picked up another one and tossed it straight up as a final offering.

That ended the pilgrimage. He drew in a deep breath and let it out and turned up the dirt road toward home.

The road was really only a trail for cows and farm machinery. It went along beside a row of evenly placed fence posts until it ended in a long, unpainted wooden gate.

He climbed the gate and trudged up the low rise to the house. His mother stood waiting in the door.

"Where have you been?" she demanded.

He shrugged and looked away, feeling the hot tears gathering under his eyelids.

"You've ruined your clothes," she said. "Now how will you look when we stop?"

He didn't care about stopping. It wasn't nearly as important as having to go.

"Well, all right, run and wash your hands, Dinner is about ready."

He washed his hands haphazardly and went into the big front room. His father and grandfather were talking to the man who was going to drive the truck.

"Follow 41 right on across Lookout Mountain and through Chattanooga," the man was saying. They noticed him and all of them smiled in different ways.

"Is this the boy with the goat?" the man asked.

"I've heard about you."

"All ready to go?" his grandfather asked.

He nodded and crumpled into the divan. His father chuckled and shook his head.

"I don't know about him," he told the man.

"Going to Florida and he doesn't want to go. When I was a kid..."

"Florida's a nice place, all right," the man told him. "You'll find a lot to do there... of course, I don't know about goats."

He hated the man, but he nodded politely. His grandmother came to the door and called, "Dinner's ready."

"Should have gotten started earlier," his father complained.

"We'll make it fine," the man said.

They tramped into the dining room and shuffled chairs up to the big round table.

"We're having something special," his father told him.

The man laughed.

"You all help yourself," his grandmother said.

They began to pass around bowls and platters with the usual disorder.

"I want Coca-Cola," his sister whined.

"Drink your milk and be quiet," his mother told her. "We have company."

"None of that," the man said, obviously pleased with himself. "Though my momma said a child should be seen and not heard."

His sister began the sniveling pout she always used when she didn't get her way.

"Junior didn't want to go," his grandmother said.

"He wanted to stay here with his grandaddy and me."

They all turned to look at him. He worked intently at his food.

"He'll change his mind when he sees the ocean," the man predicted.

His grandmother dropped her head.

"I want to go," his sister boasted.

"Of course you do. We all do," his mother said.

He didn't want to go. He wanted to stay, Florida might have a lot of things, but they weren't his things, and he didn't want them.

"How's the steak?" his father asked.

He nodded mutely.

Apparently the man liked everything. He ate like a pig.

His grandmother didn't hardly eat at all.

"Now," the man boomed, his mouth full, "don't forget to stop at that place I told you in Atlanta."

He swallowed mightily. "We'll decide where to pull in for the night."

"Hate to have to stop," his father grumbled.

"Can't be helped," the man explained. "We'll get there fresh besides."

"That's true," his father said.

"You can come back and visit," his grandmother said. His grandmother didn't want him to go. She was the only one that understood about leaving things.

"We can hunt sea shells," his sister realized brightly for everyone.

"Of course we can," his mother told her. "We'll go to the beach and have a wonderful time."

"Lot of fish in the ocean," his father promised.

"Better watch out for the people though," the man warned. "They're used to milking suckers. They'll have you good if you don't watch out."

"We'll be careful," his mother promised.

"Just the same, let'em know that you're not a tourist. They rob tourists blind. I know—I've seen it."

The man had gravy in the corners of his mouth.

"You're welcome here any time you want," his grandfather told him. He looked at his grandfather and barely smiled.

"We'll have a wonderful time," his mother assured everyone. She wanted to make sure he didn't cause another scene, especially before company.

"Dessert!" his sister demanded.

"Is everyone ready?" his grandmother asked.

They were. She went to fill the ice cream dishes. They came back heaped with lime sherbet.

"There's plenty more," she told them.

"How was the steak?" his father asked officiously.

He nodded. The man was grinning at him with that smug leer that adults have for secrets they hold among themselves.

"I don't think you should..." his mother
His grandmother got up and went to the kitchen. "Do I look like he did?" she asked gaily.
"Like who, dear?" his mother asked.
"Like he did! Like he did!" she chuckled. "When he ate his goat. You ate your goat," she told him solemnly and then doubled up on the seat in laughter.
"Be quiet," his mother said.
He could see the side of his fathers grinning face. He began to wait.
"Your goat!" his sister challenged belligerently.
His father began to laugh.
"Don't tease him," his mother said.
"I know, I know," his father said, but he didn't quit laughing.
"He vomited!" his sister accused.
"He did not," his mother told her. "He spat up deliberately."
That was all right. They had killed his goat. They didn't belong up here in the mountains.
On their side of the road and far below, the great bowl of a green valley shimmered. From the sides of the cliffs projected great slabs of grey rock like giant teeth.
That was all right. They'd see about eating a person's goat. They came to a sharp curve.
"Look," his sister said, pointing off into the center of the great bowl.
Even as he eased forward, he knew it was useless. He wasn't big enough, wasn't near grown. Even the strength he felt in his arms now would not be enough to twist the wheel from his fathers hand. The car would stay on the road. He would fail.
He collapsed, exhausted, back onto the seat without trying. He would fail. He could visualize their natural horror.
"I'm going to beat you half to death!" his father would say.
"I told you not to tease him!" his mother would say.
"You're crazy!" his sister would conclude with satisfaction.
And he would get a whipping. His sister would see to that. If only he were a little bigger. . . he could almost feel the car falling free toward the valley floor. Behind his pressed-together eyelids he saw his finger stabbing at them and heard himself shouting, "Your goat! Your goat!"
But he would have failed. Even though the wanting was so strong in his hands that he could feel them clutching his sister's hair and see himself battering her head against the window while they fell, he knew he would have failed.
He wondered how many times he could have smashed her before they hit the bottom.
But the momentary euphoria of his wish-world passed, and his tight arms fell limp against the drained body huddled deep in the corner.
A blue car whipped by on their left.
It had been a good plan. He had had hopes for it. But you had to face up to things.
"I want a blue car," his sister said.
You had to learn. He couldn't do it now, but he could do it. In a few years he would be as big as they were.
He had time. . . as long as it took.
He wasn't a stupid old goat.
POLYGONAL PERPLEXITIES

Sin is parabolic

Love is parallel

Suspicion is spherical

And hate is square.

Circles are for jerks and

Triangles suck

Pentagons attack you

And cones are stuck up.

Sex is perpendicular

Liasons have an angle

Life is an hyperbole...

My God! I guess I'm straight (?)

Indian Tent
Family Portrait

Kathy Waller
In creating my photo-essay I was not concerned with depicting a certain place with specific people, but rather with human emotion and the conditions of its environment. I strove to capture the essence of a situation rather than to document it. When a photograph is used to make more than just an objective report, it must convey more than meets the eye. Keeping this in mind, I have attempted to evoke a mood in the viewer through conditions and characteristics of the subject. I want the viewer to react to and become involved with the picture to the fullest possible extent of his unique being. In capturing the flavor of the original locale, I seek to communicate my experience, as I find it, to my fellow-man.  

Kathy Waller
People are scattered over the small room, 
And they make cheerful noises at each other. 
Giving nothing, taking all they can scratch 
From the tough veneer that covers us all.

Blank, hardened masks, revealing nothing 
But the emptiness of fading dreams. 
Sightless eyes meet sightless eyes, causing 
Not the slightest spark in the fog.

Joey

Steve Dees
Patterns: Approach and Recede

I

This town I have lived in
Has become a stranger
The streets I walk
Have grown unfamiliar with
Fear that lies nestled in the gutters
And houses lit with sorrow
Speak their yellow and white warning.
Once I ran dancing barefoot
Yelling down the laughing pavement,
With the barking dogs
And birds flying up into the morning.
But summer has lifted
Her long smelling hair
And moving off will not confess
Nor deny
This vicious lie of sweet serenity,
And all my phantoms
Moving off, framed by bare trees
Cannot survive the clear cold will
Of winter's light
No matter how much I need the lie.

II

Though I am not yet drunk
From thy dark vessel
My fingers still show the trace
Of having memorized your fiery shell.
I will try to hold you intact
Though my own mind slips,
Until once again you lie beneath my hand
Which yet caresses

Emerging from catatonic sleep
Where I've stooped and delved
Stroked and dived
And examined myself in the
Profoundest depth, I still
Am unsolved, still
Am unrested
And darkened, like the oblivion
Of underwater.

Mike Miller

Christopher Darwin
A SCIENTIST VIEWS ASTROLOGY

Dr. Roy Clark

Although there has always been an interest in astrology since mankind was first able to conceive of cause and effect relationships, still it must be admitted that astrology seems to occupy an unusual portion of the thoughts and artistic output of the current generation of students. Why astrological interest burns so brightly and apparently is so acceptable to intelligent moderns is a question I propose to answer in this article.

People are animals. Any medical student or physiology professor will verify that fact for you. They are not, however, just animals. They are very unusual animals. Their brain is their most unusual feature. The brain of the human is apparently constructed (or develops, if you prefer) in such a complex manner that a sense of time is possible. Reasoning ability alone is not the primary factor that makes humans so distinctive. Other animals reason insofar as they find it necessary to do so. But most animals have very little sense of the past, and very very little sense of the future. Thus an intelligent dog, for example, can mourn for a lost master, but probably does not worry about tomorrow and what it may bring. Some animals prepare for the coming winter as if they had a sense of the future, but they show little indication that they reason about the future except in an instinctive way. Although this question is admittedly a complex one, I conclude that humans differ from other animals in that they possess both reasoning ability and a sense of time.

As mankind developed from sub-man his sense of time apparently extended in both directions, which is to say his mental makeup developed in a way that could (1) store and retrieve information and (2) could rearrange such information from his past to present himself with a probable picture (mental) of the days to come. Thus mankind developed traditions which were not instinctive but rather were remembered past occurrences that he found it desirable to repeat, and also he guessed at futures in which he envisioned his continued existence.

Once having developed the ability to imagine his future, he soon learned to compare what actually happened to him with what he imagined would happen, and make some generalizations about probable future events. For example he may have early generalized that a sequence of long hot days might mean that the water hole would be found dry on subsequent trips, or that the appearance of strange other-humans usually was followed by territorial battles.

The point of all this is that mankind developed the ability to generalize and look for cause-and-effect relationships as a survival mechanism. The fact that his cause-and-effect relationships were not always valid ones, that is, were not substantiated by subsequent experiences, did not deter him from adopting many of them. "Wise men" were the tribemen who were best at this cause-and-effect relationship inventing and who were thus predictors of the future. The sun and stars were obvious ingredients for such speculations, and the moon's phase turned out to be an obvious cause which sometimes actually correlated with the effects. The success of moon-caused predictions resulted in the obvious, though incorrect, extension of this reasoning process to the stars.

Now from a scientific point of view we all agree that the gravitational forces from the sun and moon are of considerable consequence. Also the radiation from the sun has many complex direct and indirect effects on life on our planet. Primitive people could hardly be expected to know that the stars were too far away to exert significant gravitational forces on earth, and that the planets were millions of miles
away, exerting only the tiniest of gravitational forces. Radiation from the stars and planets is so low in energy that special equipment is required to measure it, though it can of course be perceived by one's retina. Cosmic radiation can conceivably cause some random mutations, but hardly qualifies as a predictable cause-and-effect relationship.

It came to pass that in the development of civilization many cause-and-effect relationships were postulated involving the stars and planets and their effects on human lives and personalities. This set of speculations has come to be known as astrology. It was the "science," that is, the knowledge, of its day.

When certain men found it reasonable and fruitful to subject their speculations to experimental verification and discard those not verified by experience, then modern science was born. It was only possible to accomplish this verification-by-experiment with any widespread agreement by restricting the focus of attention to the simplest of phenomena. Speculations involving people and their personalities were not verifiable in the early days of experimental science. Measurements on inanimate objects and their motions and reactions were possible with some reproducibility, and thus the physical sciences grew from such simple experimentation. Other branches of science such as biology, physiology, and the social sciences grew only slowly, for they had chosen a complex subject to study and thus had difficulty performing reproducible experiments.

To the best of my knowledge no one has ever tried to verify the predictions of astrology by correlating them with actual results after the prediction. The speculations of astrology are of such a vague and non-specific nature that such verification would be difficult even if the experimenter could overcome the difficulties of dealing with such complex experimental animals.

Therefore I view astrology and its generalizations as virtually untested hypotheses, and of no great value to modern man. The success of predicting future events enjoyed by modern science, on the other hand, is well-known. I would certainly never ride in an airplane, or even live in an electrically heated house unless I had considerable confidence in the future performance of the airplane (according to scientific principles) or the future consistency of the electrical effects in providing me with protection from the winter weather. The predictions of modern science are not infallible, but are vastly more reliable than those of any untested speculations, astrology being the prime example.

As to why astrology is popular, I believe that there are several reasons. First, it has a long tradition, and mankind has difficulty in discarding traditions. Second, astrology is easy, requiring little training, and provides lazy intellects a quick and easy answer to "why." Third, and perhaps most influential, astrology is rather fun, and if not taken too seriously has the glamor of unorthodoxy and the mystical glow of ancient "wisdom" passed down through the ages.

I am pleased that so many of today's youth are asking "why," and "by what mechanism" things got the way they are. I am disappointed that they adopt such easy and unsound answers. Perhaps, with much study and work, we will someday really discover why. Why not? Roy W. Clark

Roy Clark is a professor of chemistry and physics at MTSU. Due to current interest in the subject of astrology Dr. Clark has taken time to express his opinion and submit it to COLLABE. Other readers are invited to contribute essays expressing their opinions on any subject.
The Secular Mass on Pierced Ears
OR
The Modernization of the New Emancipated Woman

PRELUDE

MALE CLAIRVOYANT ChORUS (sung prophetically):

'Days numbered, to take what I can.
She is leaving tomorrow
I understand. She will not say
Good-by, for then again it's true
She doesn't know when she will leave
Or what dilemma will ensue.
Give me today, for tomorrow
Is no time. Precious, dear pin-ups
To paper the walls and to save
For centuries-spicy memoirs,
Sad nostalgia, some one recalls.'

PHASE I

Chorus of Conformity

FEMALE ChORUS (sung with spirit):

'The forced incision of the banal lobes
With stabbing instruments, rejoice the wires
As hangers to hang within the whim,
Small boats and planes and crystal chandeliers
And Indian beads of pale turquoise
Or 14-carat nubs resisting blandness.
With such results, Perish! Perish!
If over there was the uncogest thought.
Woman there is and woman to be
Unlaced, locked with curdled smiles.
Free! Free! upon the pregnant earth
with stapled ears.'

[Caution: The chie should be aware
Of iron earrings painted Gold.
Oh! Gravest calamities
That can befall the fair sex.
Deepest despair in hated silence
Never to speak a word (for shame)
Unpolite that infection will lead
To perilous lock-jaw.]

MALE VOICE (out of the wilderness in slight discord):

'Woe, woe be unto you transgressors.
Repent, repent, while there is time.
Unthread thy needles
And prick thy sins.
Sign this space
And be redeemed.'

PHASE II

Chorus of Conformity

FEMALE ChORUS (sung with greater spirit):

'Wires are passe
And those fetid baubles (pure trash).
Buy now (low discount, three months
to pay)-
Circular skewers to stab
The wounded lobes, degree, degree,
Prepare for the demand of the stretch,
The peg,
the circular wood chip,
AND THEN!
AND THEN!
A glorious spool inserted
Projecting out from the cumbersome hair,
Dazzling with glass beads and sequins
Causing streaks of jealousy.
But no, the male creature be gone.
I do without your eyes,
For to see the flames of indulgent desires--
Envy, envy, to an envious woman.'

[Caution: Impatience, ah! the loss of beauty
The stretch of the lobes. Do not hasten
Be tender to sweet little girls.
Rough house-mothers-can nab an ear.
But should such calamity, take heart!
For I hear rumors
That 'snags' may be in next year.
So grieve not loudly, but hope it so!
Mercy from Paris! Hope it so!]

PHASE III

Chorus of Conformity

FEMALE ChORUS (sung passionately):

'The doleful Sargasso, that frightful war to train
The discipline of rebellious locks
Under sprays and close-cropped ribbon ties,
How dreary fighting the nauseous weeds (ho hum).
So why not? Why not murder them
And be done!
Summer heat, that scratchy furnace,
The inevitable 'snow falls' in embarrassing blizzards.
Be done!
Assassinate them with open shears and razor blades.
And shave (though daintily) the imposing orb,
Out of respect and awe for the dome of St. Peter’s.
You have, resilient above the 'modern' motifs.
Ah! Wax ed and resilient, gleaming in the sun
As a broader proposal, a lamp unshaded,
Allighted by the movement of electrons
Through an emancipated body.
Oh, see the light!—of freedom
Behooving a 100 watt bulb.
[Caution: Floor wax can work wonders, you know
But read the labels for conspiracy.
I've heard of male overtones, scheming in their holes,
To debase the beauty
That we have evolved.
Hail! Hail! (Oh please!) the unfortunate ones
With scalps aflame like red, rare steak.
For rumbles of approval I've heard in some quarters—
The fashion, next, it will become:
And if so, to bow to it (who can argue with fashion?)
With draughts of novocaine and deep stoicism.]

MALE VOICE (out of the wilderness in slight discord):
'Beware! Beware!
The end of the world
is at hand.
Prepare ye for the last
judgement.
Discard the tired paraphernalia.
And repent thy sins.
Sign! Sign! This space
(Your last chance)
And be redeemed!'

PHASE IV
Chorus of Conformity

FEMALE CHORUS (sung emphatically):
'Revolt! Revolt!
Slay the 'Victorian' bitch—
strait laced and whale boned.
Throw away her social limitations
(But not all her fashion).
Repetition (we reconsider her ways).
Paris resurrected her in a large way.
We slew. But she will not die.
Congested rump, bustles then
How quaint, how small it was
Then. Visions gone wild to see a
Goddess (revised of old Botticelli).
Extended beauty for all to see.
But say, how sad that only portraits forget reality.
Softly the tides that spit her out
Drift authoritarian into the still shades.
Classic revised, sweet Venus Hottentot.'

[Caution: Cheap material is perilous.
The repellant kind, the best
(Don’t mind spending a few
Pennies overall, your best
bargain yet).
For those of padded sponge who
on and on persist.
Long raincoats and large umbrellas,
The best in sudden rains.
For soaked argument, cures are too late
And the best advice one can offer
Is to haul it with dignity
Hoping for quick evaporation.]

PHASE V
Chorus of Conformity

FEMALE CHORUS (sung in subdued hysterics):
'Revitalized sufferers-gettae launch the modes
Of quaint imagery of flying saucers
And their marvelous molds
That consign to fresh trials the limpid lashes,
Marked accents of added expressions.
But where to place it now that the rest
Is bangled and performed beyond recompense?
The lips! Ah! the lips so long have they lacked adornment.
Lipsticks and kisses are so old-fashioned.
So, I begin to say over and over and over again
Prepare the degree of stretch (same as ears).
The stretch of a penny!
The stretch of a half-dollar!
Then wonder of wonders—a discus!!
In both lips, bottom and top.
Then accessory to the style, nose rings from India
Placed in multiples in the flairs and septum (how chic).
Then, madly, how priceless (and how weary)
It's all become. But freedom we have.
So smile (if you can) and make funny noises.
Sorry, but speaking isn't in
this year due to the new fashion.
(We know it is very difficult to do this
But Paris has spoken.)
To comfort yourself, look beyond
the present span
As goddesses into yourselves,
Lift up your faces as champions
of the modern
Self-styled, unhampered ones,
the ruling tribe
of the modern Ubangi!!'

[Caution: We know that some will wear
Phosphorescent discs, but come now.
Isn't this carrying Fashion to the extreme?
Fashion isn’t designed for abuse you see,
But a means to preserve and heighten
the natural rose
In a vase with gasoline.]

A brief pause while
the chorus turns
another page
of history

INTERLUDE

COMBINED Chorus (sung in ominous texture of voices):
'Strife in the world as multitudes born
With crying mouths demanding their due.
And, oh! such strain of anarchy’s rise
For nations to wield their governing crew.

Violence, avarice and growing pestilence
Is there (brought to mind) a trusted friend?
Arch villains in secret, in sated compacts
Slaughter in apropos to their useless end.

The bedraggled West, a strange decline, you bet.
Vacant streets and bleary-eyed strays,
Beware the tigress stalking its victims!
Law declares he must, but still he disobeys.'

FIRST MALE SOLO (sung in a brow-beaten voice):
'Anguish, anguish in my heart
When Paris stole our fair Helens.
Now we of no report, even now, steal
The capitol—Atlantic City. But then again...
Yesterday pleasant memories,
Today it turns the stomach
And causes conversion to blessed Catholicism
And their holy orders for most.
But still there are again some brave souls
Who champion the bed as the ease of Mount Everest
And ask the reason, that proverbial answer
'Because it’s there! because it’s there!'
Yes, they are there. That’s why I’m here
In a monastery, mumbling a chant.'
THE SECULAR MASS ON PIERCED EARS

MALE AUDIENCE (Sung in Gregorian chant):
'Sweet Medusa of gorgeous mold,
I dream of thy perfect beauty and flawless form.
Oh to cast these bludgeoned eyes upon that dawn
of thy creation
Where Minerva's wrath prevailed
and thine
was made the sweet berried vine
Offering choice the enticing fruit
To any innocent being
Who cared to sample of thy sweet juice.
Where but slight cut in the soft berry skin
Would make life's anguish forgotten'

SECOND MALE SOLO (sung semi-dispairingly):
'I couldn't rave about her hair
(What's there to talk about?)
Her eyes? so much paint,
I couldn't see them.
Her lips? she spoke a word
I lost my nose.
Her teeth? charcoal black, for white (they say)
is so monotonous and passe.
Her body? seductive as
a lumpy mattress.
You see! you never know
where the package ended
and the woman began.'

THIRD MALE SOLO (sung pseudo-pathetically):
'Now I sit here, hero of the male line,
An Audie Murphy of the bedroom battlefields,
The Lone Ranger of the antiquated bed.
But still disillusioned I, one of the last of my breed
'Through perilous covers and flesh sasharis-
Madness! It was all madness!
The centerfold of my passion
--a gumball machine.

So, I had this thing,
It all passed away, you know,
Age didn't touch me, but
'cowardice' did.
So now retired, under my bun nose
Hearing the echoes of male applause
While counting my beads.'

A brief pause while the
chorus turns another
page of history

THE HALLELUJAH CHORUS

CHORUS (sung with an uplifted mind, spirit, and heart):
'And the dark of the Great Hand
moved across the face of the earth
And Armageddon
The last bullet for its object cried.
And the Great Deity raised his right hand
And all was stillness.

Then days of trumpets resound
and judgement was at hand.
As the West shaken to its knees and poured
Tears of libation for benevolent reprieves.
But too late. To late, vanity uncrowned
Sad songs of limited remorse
And grumbled all the way down.

These few, these pitiful Western few,
(How sad, the rest of the world
died of civilization).
The mocked oldsters gathered together
To be ordained to the right
Or damned to the left.

Then strange the divisions,
A clean-divided swath
The cowled inhabitants passing to the right
And their nemesis all passing to the left,'

MALE VOICE (out of the wilderness in perfect harmony):
'And I gave her space to
repent...and she repented not.'
(Excerpt from Revelation 2:17)

(A blare of trumpets, harps, and choirs.)

CHORUS:
'Then from an angel
a herald of tidings
And the light of heaven beamed
on the right hand.
A scroll appeared
old but timeless
And was read to those
so long in tribulation.

MALE TENOR (sung angelically):
'Peace, dearest brethren
For peace is nigh at hand.
Forgive the garden. Sorry, the snake blew it.
And about that rib, oh my!
How embarrassing. I had done
So well after five hectic days.
Then Adam had to get the blues.
So, I put the lad to sleep
And performed legal larceny
(Excuse me, heavenly larceny).
Then something, something went wrong.
I don't know exactly what.
(Most have concentrated too long
on the elephants.)
But this creature I fashioned,
What was I thinking of?
I gave her conceit. Oh dear!
But it was too late to undo the damage.
So c'est la vie, I said.
Maybe it'll work out.
And to play it safe
I laid down a law
'Your desire shall be for your husband
And he shall rule over you.'

(Numbers 3:16)
But it didn't work out. She wouldn't listen.
First it was thing with apples.
Then on and on and on,
Century after century.
No rest. No rest at all.
(Do you know that a
woman actually started
the Thirty Year's War?)
And man. Poor man. My image.
Why I hardly recognized you.
Was she that bad to you? Oh dear,
If it wasn't for conceit, Tsk! Tsk!
But I should have known.
I remember after those apples,
That fig leaf caper. I should have done something
Then and there but no.

Eternal optimist I, Let her go.
Suspiciously, for even then she was
Uncontent to arrange those critical leaves.
Nonchalantly, oh no, she had to prune them
Seductively (Adam was certainly shocked)
And ever since continued till
Vanity was the prime resource
And thus a sad prophecy fulfilled.'

(Male tenor departs on a cloud with a
blare of trumpets, harps, choirs etc.)
CHORUS:
‘Then all was stillness.
Then the Great Deity raised his right hand
And the exalted ascended to the roof
And the uns assaulted descended to the basement.’

BENEDICTION

SAINT HUGH HEFNER III (sung in melodious voice):
‘Those were vintage times.
A magnate I became in the declining years
When the plummeting sales caused me to turn
Two generations back for retribution,
MY! They sold well, those priceless objects.
Smiling seductively with no sense at all.
Those were the days, I think,
When a woman was and that was all.
When we love her better than she did herself
And embellished her life in a practical manner.

In spite of it all, I made it,
(Who says a rich man doesn’t go upstairs?)
A right hand seat at that!
But so dull up here. You see
I miss the magazine. Not like Him
Who thought they were a mistake.
I dismissed the last few generations
But loved the rest it seems before the deluge
Of paraphernalia. So I sit here
Bored to tears on my famished cloud.
(Harp concerts become so
dull afterward.)
Spending my time
Humming a John Wesley hymn,
while painting
a Miss April
On the robe of Saint Peter.’

A pause while the
chorus turns a page of
history

FINALE

CHORUS (sung in style of Italian aria):
‘There commenced from the basement
A trembling which penetrated
To the recesses of celestial ears
Causing insomnia,
Then the Great Deity
(Who happened to be a light sleeper)
Raised his right hand
And all was stillness

Then a quavering voice
emitted from below.
A faint voice (barely audible)
in small, satanic terms.

MALE VOICE (sung in tragic soprano):
‘I knew the place wasn’t big enough.
Hell, we were semi-contented here.
Raisin’ Cain and waiting for all those souls,
Then they came and there went the neighborhood.
Believe me, I didn’t think you were so vengeful.
I think the serpent thing on my part
Was pre-ordained. What a nasty joke.
Me, me the short end of eternity.
And I thought I was so clever.
You just can’t imagine the predicament.
I thought we were suppose to do the torturing
But the roles were reversed somehow

The minute they arrived.
They couldn’t wait to rearrange the rocks
And flirt with my cloven footed friends.
Still again their appearance, egads!
I think that was the worst calamity of all.
Of all the indecencies I ever supposed.
Poor demons how they’ve suffered
As those artless females chased them about
(Several had nervous breakdowns as a result)
And the few that were caught in their vile clutches.
Have mysteriously babble incoherently since
Of gentle suicides and descents in maestrion.
And me, great heavens! I feel the daggers
Of seductive eyes. They come to ply me.
Salvation! Salvation! I am too young to die
(An adolescent in the scheme of eternity, I
Whose evilness was just reaching maturity)
Save us! Remit our rebellion.
Save us from loose ecology.’

CHORUS:
‘In spite of Himself
The Great Deity
Was moved by their suffering.
And the dark of the Great Hand
Moved across the face of the basement
And they arose.

They are saved.’

CHORUS OF DIVERSION

FEMALE SOLOIST (sung in despair, depression and other
synonymous emotions):
‘Give us the abundant plenty
Of assorted gadgetry. Much so much
The constancy here and to us
The ho-hum fashions that have become
Of red, asbestos overalls and rough
Belligerent combat boots (oh my!).
And besides what a horrible interior decorator
Someone must have been. All this brimstone
And the burning lakes, my how they conform.
No imagination, no imagination at all.
And those cute little demons and their shocked expressions
(We merely suggested that their tails would
look better in curls.)
And Lucifer, we merely suggested
Should have his nails manicured. But no
He persisted in biting them, especially
During the last few days that he was here.
But now he is gone and left us
With envy as we suppose that he
Now skulks around paradise all day
In his simple sheet. But we have
An idea, underneath it all, he hides
A few trinkets and thinks of himself
A Lucifer in the sky with diamonds.
All alone are we
Sulking in our ancient jealousy.
Habit it is sure. But what else to do
But quarrel noisily with no rescue?
Paris! Paris! Perfect reflections
Of the dead past. Too bad
You got scorched. But memories
They can’t burn off:
gleaming domes
crusted rings
posterior frauds
luminous saucers
And the ancient
Wires that crucified years,

And wires that crucified ears.’

FINIS
South Dakota farm boy—
The carnival never ends
It just changes location. Barb Deal

one more time

I can tell (from the way things are going and all) that everything is shot to hell Again.

(March on, little boy.
You are the parade.
You can't watch it go by.)

All the conversations with the People on the sidewalk. I would like to stay and talk. Always they can never stay; Always me that goes away.

Duane Sawyer
With wet so many tears
Down along the way
Past caring 'til you're broken inside
With the joy of it all.
Strange child to consider yourself
different

To laugh, to cry,
And thinking all the while
There might be something else
like you,
To know instantly, to reach out
And take your hand.            Christopher Darwin
farewell to sweet lips (hardly)
who ran on mean whips
and stood on the corner
of forty-second street
(used to shoot the hard stuff
out of a silver pump)
and sit with me
and the madman
(who smoked too much)
and talked
about the john
who couldn't pay
enough
clicking her red high heels
against the mortuaries
brick sight
(shifty
dollar-note eyes
enough to shield
the last light)
(and stabbed
the bad nail
into the half-whore
like a snake bite)
tuned my head
to the sounds
of the freight tracks
(faced back)
and there
was sweet lips
(who was hanging
from the end
of a mean whip)
and had
been startled
by the voice
of a train whistle
(the last).

Steve Dees