

J. Smith

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A R D E N S

As a title of a college literary magazine, Dying Gardens might at first seem inappropriate, since its obvious connotations are quite antithetical to what a college community denotes in its striving for intellectual achievement. But this title is far from inappropriate. The intellectual atmosphere surrounding a college has, especially in the last two decades, enveloped the mass of studentum into a lonely world of alienation and disillusionment. The reasons for this are quite obvious and the results are inherent in the works in Dying Gardens.

The magazine consists primarily of poetry, none of which is in rapprochement with traditional forms. In trying to discover a reason for existing while dying gardens proliferate, the contributors have abandoned sacred, and therefore dying, conventions in favor of something closer to the reality of the human condition. Thus, the poetry is primarily free verse, for if the world is comprised of contradictory institutions or beliefs, a poet using metered, rhyming verse to describe it would be defeating his purpose in that he would be giving unity to an entity which has none. Likewise, if the world and the gardens in it are evil, corrupt, or isolating to the individual, an ordered form would again contradict the macrocosmic reality of the poem; unless, of course, the poet feels that by writing in this manner he is uplifting his own soul and perhaps that of the withering soul of the dying gardens. Apparently, however,

this uplift is not present, most of the poetry being quite pessimistic in its overall theme.

Which brings us to the magazine's structure. The poetry and prose have been positioned according to theme; that is, according to their place in the garden. If they have a modicum of uplift, they appear toward the beginning of the magazine, symbolizing a flower's attempt to grow in the presence of an all-consuming death. If a work is so ridden with abject despair that its theme is like a flower buried in its own roots, it appears toward the end of the magazine. In other words, from beginning to end, the magazine represents the world of dying gardens as observed, pitied, defamed, or decried through the eyes of some who want no part of the gardens or who at least desire a consciousness of what they signify. Hopefully, some particle of this consciousness, however disillusioning, will be transferred to the reader.

The Editors

Alice remembered the path
and took my hand
 past rain soaked trees
 and empty evenings
queen/child/woman
girl of wonder and tears
 led me down well worn half streets
 through neon rainbows
 of fog and mist
 and taught me to whisper
 in secret places
ran headlong into the fairytale night
of 71st. street
 and waited
 smiling
 by the door

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Your eyes swallowed me
slowly as I lay by your side
my body felt itself slipping
as it came apart
I tumbled down your hips
feeling my head spin
under your arms
and my heart cried
a little
in the stillness.

don eismann

SONG OF THE SECOND BEST

I am no prophet -
Yet I ride the winds of the Apocalypse.
My wings are sunsets
Sewn with nightmare threads
Of empty eyes,
And the song I sing is a midnight lyric -
Telling of the frozen ones
Who look only at the spaces
Between the stars.
Why do you fear me?
Behind me comes the darkness -
Before me is eternal twilight.
Take up my song
And dare to ride beside me
Or remain,
And with your eyelids closed
In an infinity of fear,
Listen to the echo of my demi-nocturne
As the wings of twilight
Beat a nevermore quatrain
Against the moon.
We may never meet the sunrise
But the light of yesterday
Is better than the darkness
Of tonight.

jack smith

A DIALOGUE TO INFINITY

I

I came,
I saw,
I conquered.

What?

Another town was all,
Another costume ball,
Another rotten pall,
Where's the toilet stall?

I think,
Therefore I am.

What?

I was young before I was old,
I think.
Yes, I was young before I was old.
Therefore I am
I think.

To be,
Or not to be.

What?

That is the question.
Without any question
That is the question
To be,
I agree
not not to be
but be.

I see.

What?

not to be.

I see.

Workers of the world
UNITE!

What?

The world needs uniting,
There's too much fighting,
The fighting's a bore,
Unite and start war.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL.

What?

Me.

I think
I came
To be

Seen, conquered, killed or not to be.
THEREFORE I AM!

Oh.

Life is but a dream.

II

Why?

I sleep at night
So help me,
I sleep at night tictictic
So help me,
I dream all day
I do,
I dream all day toctoctoc
I do.

LET THEM EAT CAKE!

Why?

That's food for thought.
For the cake's sake
eat cake.
cake,
Layer upon layer
Let them eat layer cake.

I have never
Offered
Anything but
Blood
Tears
Toil and
Sweat

Why?

I am lazy all day,
I am busy all night,
When I wake up each day,
I say goodnight.

Blessed are the meek
For
They shall inherit the earth.

Why?

Life is but
Blood
Tears
Toil and
Sweat and
Blessed are the meek
 for
I have never
Offered
 Anything but
A dream
 that
Let them eat cake
 and
They shall inherit the earth.

Thanks, God.

III

The pen is mightier than the sword.

When?

I
 want
To write
 books
 for
 a
 .
 But I am always cut/

A stitch in time
 saves nine.

When?

I ripped my coat the other day,
I sewed my coat the other day,
 Before nine o'clock,
 at eight fifty nine.
 At nine
I left it in stitches.

I think
 I shall
never see
 a poem
as lovely
 as
 a
 tree.

When?

I climbed a tree,
I read a book.
 It left me stumped.
I climbed back down,
I closed a book.
 I left it stumped.

There was no joy in Mudville that day.

When?

I had a ball
 at the bat,
Hit the ball
 with the bat,
 Then it flew away.

Time and tide wait for no man.

When?

I think that I shall never see
A stitch in time
Mightier than the sword
 that made

the pen
as lovely
 as
 a
 tree

which

in Mudville that day
waited for no man

as

time and tide
 Saved nine.

Hmmm.

Give me liberty or give me death!

No.

No what?

No question.

What???

Not what,
Not anything.
Death

.....

witt halle



Slowly he eased back on the throttle, applying the power in small amounts so that the effect of motion was attained only by listening to the gradual crescendo of the whining diesel. Inside the densely packed passenger cars, progress out of the station was imperceptible to those engrossed in their evening newspapers. It was late and the riders, mostly businessmen and students returning home after a day in the city, were intent only in their newspapers and in getting home. Frank was aware of the mood of his charges and, as he had done for thirty-five years now, he took pains to quit the station with as little disturbance as possible. "It's sort of like being a good cowboy," he commented to Ollie the fireman who rode in the once clean cab with him. "He tries to herd the steer into the pen with as little upset to them as possible. I always figured that was the same function I was to perform on this run." Ollie had heard Frank say the same thing night after night ever since he first came on the run with him. And that was, as far as Ollie could figure, close to 2,000 nights ago. Ollie assumed that soon he would be sitting next to another engineer because Frank looked to be ready to retire but he was not sure. He had asked Frank many times just when he would retire but all he ever got in answer to that and other questions was the same crap about the big run. The same stupid crap which he had listened to over six years and he was getting so goddam sick of it he dreaded the nightly run. He reasoned that there was no sense in asking for a transfer because Frank was ready to retire, or should be ready, and Ollie could wait. Anyway Ollie liked Frank in spite of his monotonous spiel, in fact when he first met Frank he had found him quite interesting. He had enjoyed listening to the old man's dreams and had marvelled at his spirit..a spirit Ollie felt was quite amazing considering that Frank should be old and bitter instead of being a man who after all these years could still think about the sheep sitting and reading their newspapers. He could still remember the first time Frank had told him of his wild and disquietingly beautiful dreams. They had sat in the cab together for about a week making the seven o'clock run out to Speonk. Frank had never said a word, aside from the usual small talk about age and family. He had just sat there and gazed absently out the window as far as Hicksville. After that as they moved north on the branch Frank had maintained his usual posture but somehow there was something different. Ollie didn't know what it was at first but after a few days of gazing at him in the dark of the cab he thought he noticed a certain tenseness as they moved farther east. Frank's eyes also got wider as the train picked up speed on the eastward run. Then in the longest stretch between stations..... to.....he let the throttle out as far as was possible and almost imperceptibly closed his eyes and stared out into the dark night ahead. The first night that Ollie had noticed this in Frank he had quizzed him about his thoughts as he made the run. He didn't

want to arouse the old man so he had asked, rather matter-of-factly, "What do you think of when you make this run Frank? You must be very bored after 35 years of the same things to look at." Frank's eyes still had that far-away look and it took him a long time before he answered.

"Oh, I don't really look at anything much anymore. I used to look out at the potato and cabbage farms and change their appearance, but they're gone so now I look out in the dark and think about how they used to look. I smell the diesel oil and imagine how the smoke from the coal burners used to smell. A long time ago I used to sit in the cab and think what it would be like to sit in the cab of the big 2-8-2's that pulled the Union Pacific up over the Rockies. I used to try and imagine what it would be like to open up the throttle and really ball through the wheat fields and blow the whistle and hear the sound go out over the farms, and keep on going because there was nothing to stop the sound from reaching the ears of some little boy asleep in his bed. I could just feel the warm and comfortable feeling he would have when I blew the whistle for him and I could tell the longing and pain in his heart when he got older and heard the same whistle in another part of the country. I used to think and dream all these things but now mostly I just sit and shut out the fact that I never could do those things, and anyway, it's too late for me to do them now." Ollie had sat quietly while Frank had told him this in a voice so still Ollie had to strain to hear. At the time he had thought that these were just the stupid dreams of an old man but as the weeks turned to months and the years passed and he heard the same stories over and over again he decided that the old man really believed in his dreams or had believed in them..and he felt sorry for him, and sorry for himself for having to listen night after night.

They were slowing down now for the Westbury stop and Frank let the throttle slip idly out of his limp hand. He let Ollie look out of the cab window to catch the conductor's wave and glanced over at him as he strained out of the window. He knew that Ollie was bored by his stories of how it would be like out on the Union Pacific run. He also realized that Ollie probably thought him an old fool from the very first time he had told him of his dreams. "I should never have told him the first time he asked me," he thought, as he slowly eased the throttle back. "But what was I supposed to do," he quizzed himself. "It doesn't matter anyway," he mused, "especially since I'm finally making the run tonight." After thirty-five years Frank had finally decided that this was going to be his last run. He was really tired of making the same trip night after night 330 times a year. It was time to quit and collect his gold watch, "To Ollie James, for 35 years faithful service to the Long Island Railroad," the inscription would say and he could then show this to his friends and hear them exclaim how wonderful it was.

On the short stretch of track, newly ballasted, between West-bury and Hicksville Frank thought, as he had many times, of his childhood in Cutchoque and how he had lain awake nights and heard the big fire-breathing monsters go by his father's farm. And how in the quiet of the Long Island summer night he had crawled farther under the thin blanket when the shrill mournful whistle blew. He could still hear it as the train approached his house...high in pitch and then swiftly descending the scale as the train sped by. It had always made him want to go far away from home and stand out in the middle of a field and lie down in the soft grass and cry till he was so tired he would fall asleep. But he had never done any of these things and had instead decided that he would someday drive one of the big dirt-stained engines. Well, he had sure as hell driven a big engine but not quite the way he had dreamed he would. He had never been able to sit in the cab of a big twelve wheeler as it pulled out of the yards in Kansas City. He had wanted so badly to drive through the endless fields of Kansas and Iowa with his hand steady on the throttle and the stacks belching black smoke behind as he balled the train into the guts of the night at 100 miles an hour. He had just known what it would be like--that first glimpse of the Rockies way off in the distance, as the sun hit them early in the morning. After all these years of dreaming he could still feel the thrill of moving all day toward those rises until in the late afternoon it suddenly became dark and the air got colder and before you knew what had happened you were on your way up the pass. He had experienced the final run from Denver to Portland many times as his train sped between Northport and Speonk,...all he had to do was close his eyes to blot out the potato farms..he could still do it except now he was blotting out the houses and cars which shouldn't be there between the Rockies and the Coast.

He started as Ollie yelled over the whine of the diesel for him to slow down or else they would barrel right through the Hicksville station. He quickly pulled back on the handle and applied the air brakes in an abrupt manner. As the train jolted to a stop he thought about the poor sheep and how they must be picking their attache cases off the floor after that stop. He felt like throwing open his window and shouting to them "So long you sheep, I just hope the next herder you get is as gentle with you as I've been all these years." Instead he just sat and looked out at the glowing signal light in front of the train.

Suddenly, as if wrenched from within he said to Ollie, "This is my last run you know." Ollie stared at him in the semi-darkness and looked speechless for a moment and then erupted into an excited tirade of words. "Shit, Frank why didn't you tell me sooner...why did you wait till now...We could have had a party, you and I, and the conductors back in Jamaica...we could have had a real gas of a celebration back there...Jesus, Frank, you should've said something." "What the hell's wrong with the old man," thought Ollie. Most of the older trainmen when they retired told everyone about

it weeks beforehand. They would strut around the trainmens' office and relate how it was in the old days when the north fork run was much nicer than it is now. They would walk around for days sort of expecting a party and of course getting one. Frank was sure a queer bird to do it like this. He had never heard of anyone quitting like this. "Stay on for another week, Frank. At least let all the boys give a party for you and say goodbye. If you quit now you won't even be able to have a dinner at which to get your watch. Come on Frank, what do you say."

Frank just nodded at the signal light which had now turned green and told Ollie to check the conductor's signal. As the diesel picked up speed and bore left at the Hicksville divide, Frank brightened up and turned to Ollie. "Ollie, would you do an old man a really big favor?" "Sure, Frank, anything you say," replied Ollie. "I guess you won't change your mind about this being your last run?" "No I don't think so, Ollie, but I'm sure you'll understand about me not wanting to spend the next few weeks with everyone saying how nice it is that the old-timer is finally retiring." "I guess so Frank," said Ollie. "I think I understand how you feel, but what was the favor you wanted?"

Frank paused to accelerate a bit on the stretch before Syosset and then closed the open window. "I know that this is against regulations," he said, "but would you mind very much if I made the rest of the run to Speonk alone. It's not you or anything like that it's just that I'd like to be alone this last time."

The old man must really be sad, thought Ollie, he's probably going to cry like a baby and he just doesn't want me to see his tears. "I guess it's okay Frank, but you know it's against road and union rules to be alone in the cab, but if you won't say anything I'll move back when we get to Syosset." Ollie figured, what the hell it's the least I can do for him and besides I won't have to listen to him anymore. "Thanks an awful lot Ollie," Frank said as he turned to look out at the tracks ahead. Off in the distance he could see the lights of the Syosset station and by screwing his eyes shut he could just make out the Rockies looming ahead.

As the train glided to a stop, Ollie got out of the cab and solemnly reached up to shake Frank's hand. Before he moved back to the first car he turned to the cab once again and asked, "Hey, Frank would you mind if I told the boys in the cars that this is your last trip?" "I guess not," answered Frank, "just tell them that I'll see them when we get to Speonk." Ollie nodded and walked back to the first car. As the train started to move he stopped once again and looked up at the dark cab and saw Frank's body outlined in the glow of the gauge lights. He couldn't be sure but he could swear that somehow Frank sat straighter in his seat. "What the hell, he probably is thinking about what he's going to do now that he is retiring." And with that Ollie climbed onto the car

where the conductors gathered after the stop at Syosset..."Hey, fellas you'll never guess what just happened..."

As he pulled back on the throttle Frank bent down to a handle at the bottom of the board and quickly turned it to the right. A faint rush of steam greeted the whine of the diesels as the train pulled out of the station.

Off in the distance the mountains were barely discernible as the train sped on in the darkness. Frank whistled loudly as he turned to his fireman and yelled over the clack of the steel wheels and noise of the steam, "Hey Casey, how long you figure it will take before we get to Denver? If I really open her up, do you think we'll be able to see the Rockies before the sun rises?" With that he pulled back the throttle all the way and the train sped on into the total blackness of a Kansas summer night.

Inside the train the conductors pulled frantically on the emergency brake as the train careened passed the Greenport station. Nothing happened. All Ollie could do was stand in the car and yell "Jesus, Jesus he's nuts, he's out of his friggin mind."

The train picked up speed as it approached the Speonk station... the end of the line. Frank looked out of the cab window and peered ahead..."Casey I can see the mountains up ahead...we made it Case, we made it, this must have been my fastest run to Denver in 35 years." With that he reached up and pulled the whistle cord.

Out off the Northport road a young man stirred in his sleep as he heard the moan of the approaching whistle. He turned over and woke his wife who was sleeping next to him. "Do you hear that Janet? It sounds like the old steam engines that they used to have when I was a kid." With that he kissed her and crawled farther under the covers and dreamt a sweet nostalgic dream.

And out in the dark the big twelve wheeler to Denver sped by with a mournful wail in the night.

don eismann

UNKNOWING

where lie my values?

these traits so sublime,
that fates do challenge;
(but in weakness decline).

who stands in judgement?

weighing all that I see,
that I touch and I feel;
(yet question to be).

fryleen

"As My Grandpa Used To Say"

nothing they can get you to work for
is easy
or was it?
nothing that they can give you
is worth taking?
or?
nothing that's easy
is worked for?
oh what was it, Grandpa used to say?
or was HE the mute?

fryleen

The Parting

The sky was dense with gray,
The whining wind, so lonely,
No doubt was here to stay,
Ruffling my hair,
Spilling against my face,
Embracing me with an enigma.
It all seemed so strange,
(For I was a callow lad)
But then again
So pure and fresh.
The wind blew through the tree tops
On up the hill
To the dwelling of the dead,
Stirring the autumn leaves
Now after their sojournment,
Pushing them on
To exile them
Into an everlasting journey.
Brown and yellow tears
Slowly, sadly fall.
They twirl and swirl about
On the ground and in the air
Unwilling to leave,
Clinging to one another,
Reminding me somewhat of tumbleweeds.
And on down the fields they rolled,
Down the fields,
Until they seemed worlds away,
Leaving behind only
The memories of yesterday.

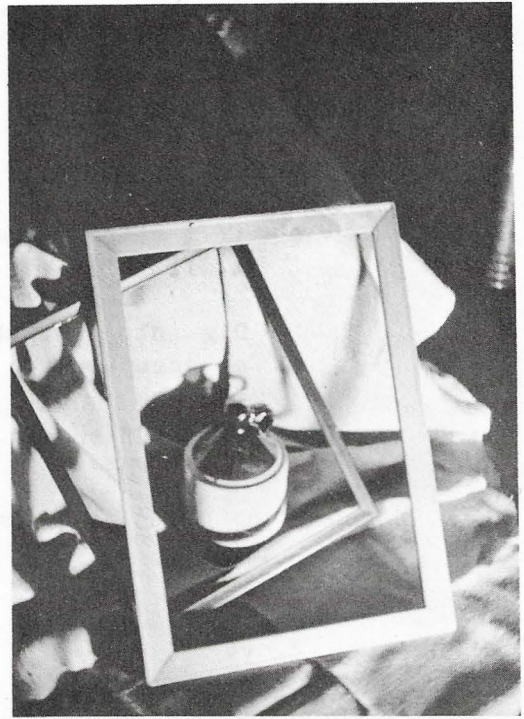
andy fraenkel

Pock-marked sunset,
Its sallow face running across a withered stage,
Hairy legs of night limping
from a hidden maternity ward,
And breathing blackness
over the orange decay of autumn,
No wind,
No life,
But children scurrying in sooty gutters,
With minds like prehensile fingers,
Clinging and cringing behind a closed door,
As perception hangs quietly on a hanger.
Seaminess with a splendid facade;
A battered stage full of light,
Smiling faces perfect in ignorance,
Stepping aside for the real people
present on the twenty-fourth hour,
Who present the great drama to the
children of the audience.

A mangy gray mutt
Licking the hairy ear of a dead drunk,
His withered face split wide
by a restless beer bottle
Laughing wildly beside him.
A shout,
A scuffle from above,
A window opening,
A basketfull of garbage
falling on the dead drunk,
The mangy gray mutt
yelping down the alley
With a pizza on his head.
A woman sitting sadly upon a door step,
Waiting,
Waiting for a blind man
to pet her acne-encrusted face,
Her flaking skin,
Her hairy nose.
A policeman,
A blueboy,
Walking furtively down well lit boulevards,
As breaking glass and shrieking sirens
fall around him.
A mossy green mist,
Dimming the streetlights,
Dimming the night
Dimming the policeman,
And the woman,
And the dog,
And the drunk,

Enclosing them
Into the encroaching misted oval sarcophagus,
The curtain to close the play.
The audience of children rising,
Shuffling outside,
Returning to stage the next night,
To please the smiling faces of children,
Still perfect in their ignorance.

witt halle



Child

I hear you rustling under the sheets
in the next room
breathing deeply into your pillow
pressing your genitals
with your
fingertips
crying "identity."
I want my arms to help you but
if i slip in your shadow
i will kill the seeds.

Dig into your skin scrape
at acceptances
and ask
your heart
questions.

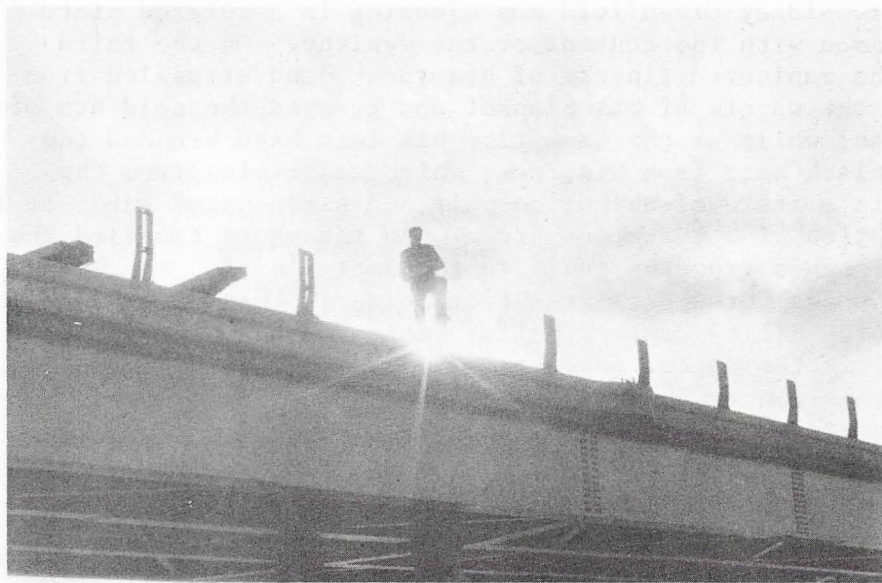
People on sliding ponds
missing the boat
missing
each other
meeting in an
impasse
where breaths are only whispered
on cheeks
without greasepaint
A shadow girl a grey
shadow girl
I saw
who held out
her hand
to beg
without pleading
prayers
for a dark angel
to swallow her body
in his skin
to
fondle her nipples
and speak to her
softly
so that she might know
a
part
of what
it's all about.

Dupont Circle Blues

I sing a lonely song
To a barefooted Jack Kerouac female
Wondering all the while where we're
Going to sleep tonight.
She talks to me of days gone by,
And by my silence
She knows I know
And looking sympathetically at her,
I hold her tenderly
Like I'm suppose to.
But hell with it,
I ask her bluntly if
She got a place where
We can go a round or two tonight.
"No", She said quietly
And we're both all of the sudden
Tired in a wide awake town.

A roving reporter
A raving retorter
A slaving supporter
A knave and contorter,
With pen and pad in hand,
Asks "what do you think freedom is?"

andy fraenkel



"A SHORT TRIP THROUGH THE NIGHT"

The telephone rang shrilly into the night enclosed room where Dr. Sidney Greenfield was sleeping in a relaxed state only common with the content or the wealthy. On the third ring, the manicured fingers of his right hand struggled from beneath the warmth of his blanket and grasped the cold arm of the phone; while at the same time his left hand brushed the shaggy black hair from his face, which was rising from the pillow in a state of abject despair and sleep-hazed anger at the interruption of a luxurious dream. As the phone traveled the short distance from the table to the doctor's ear, there came a harried voice through the receiver, clearly that of a woman in distress. "Hello? Doctor? Hello?" said the pleading voice.

Calmly the doctor answered, "Yes, who is this?" "Janice Moon," came the reply, which continued, "you must come and see my daughter. She's having an attack or something. She can't breathe. She's sick, Doctor, she can't even hold a thermometer in her mouth. Doctor? Doctor? Are you there?"

Not unaccustomed to these late hour demands, the doctor said in a soothing voice, "Don't worry Janice, I'll be there in about twenty minutes," whereupon, after the hysterical blessings of Mrs. Moon concluded and after the phone was once again placed in its cradle, Dr. Greenfield rose from the friendly covers of his bed and proceeded to fumble for some clothing, as the bitter chill of the darkened room gnawed into him and cleared his head of sleep.

He began to hurry so that in not more than two to three minutes he was sufficiently dressed to challenge his aging body to the late night cold. He thought little of Mrs Moon or her daughter while he dressed, not out of lack of compassion for their indisposition, but out of respect to the many years he had spent relieving human suffering. When he was a younger man, a call in the night meant much to him, and he would rush to and fro gathering his vestments and equipment in order to get to the troubled household as quickly as possible; but now it had all become mechanical and instinctive, which in actuality had made him a more efficient physician. Still, he could not help feel a pang for his past vitality and innocence as he pulled on his overcoat, picked up his black bag, and quickly strode through the living room and out the front door, where his snow-covered Lincoln Continental awaited his direction.

As he stepped out the door the cold brought tears to his eyes and it was only after a few moments that he felt himself able to walk without faltering. Once in the automobile he turned on the engine, waited a moment to let it warm, then turned on the heater, and finally removed the brake. A quick thought entered his mind that perhaps he should have some inkling of worry for the safety of Mrs. Moon's child instead of thinking only of his own

warmth and comfort; but this soon passed as he occupied himself with the problem of driving on a snowy night. Always a safe driver, the mechanics of late night emergency calls had taught him to drive above the speed limit, for time after time he had discovered that a few saved minutes might be beneficial to his patient's health or well-being. This night, too, he sped, again as a result of mechanics, but as he reached an intersection about two miles from his home and three from the Moon's, he noticed a flashing red light went on, then the porch light, and finally the door of the house was flung open by Mrs. Moon, who ran with arms upward until she reached Dr. Greenfield halfway up the walk; whereupon she violently tied herself about his neck, gasped, stuttered, and spoke in a rasping, breathless voice: "Oh God, Doctor, she's stopped moving. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know what to do. My husband, he's, he's not here. He disappeared a few hours ago. What'll I do?"

A bit shaken by this outburst, Dr. Greenfield disengaged himself from the trembling Mrs. Moon and stepped quickly into the house and up the stairs. On the way up, although wondering seriously about the health of the little girl, he could not help but feel relieved by the blast of heat which greeted his entrance into the house. However, upon entering the girl's room, all thoughts turned to her appearance and apparent lifelessness. She lay on her bed in a blue dress which had ridden up, her black hair disheveled, her face white, and her whole being appearing as little more than a mild undulation on the blue bedspread.

He leaned over her, and pulled back her closed eyelids; then he closed his own. With the mother muttering incoherently behind him, and the wind blowing icily through the open window on the other side of the bed, he began to think of his long life and the many joys and tears he had had while being a doctor. It was at times like this, he thought, that being a doctor meant so much and so little. He could perceive life now, through death; he could perceive his position, also through death, but perception meant so little. Was it enough that a person, a little girl, should die so that others might perceive and learn to understand life? Was it enough that a doctor could place a stethoscope to a child's heart and pronounce what only God had the right to pronounce? He shook his head. No, he thought, maybe the laws of society, maybe the speeding tickets were more a truth and more fair than the truth and fairness of death. And yet, was it? Did not the officer of justice also bring pronouncement to this girl by trying to give a ticket. No, he thought, both laws are poor and both seem to have no sense. But then again, what does a doctor know. In this case, only how to pronounce death in words.

Shaking his head once more, he proceeded to confirm the girl's death, and then he made tests to find the reason for it, after which he turned to the sniveling Mrs. Moon and said as calmly as possible, "Your daughter is dead, Janice, I was a few minutes too late. As far as I can tell, she's been poisoned."

Mrs. Moon immediately broke down, yelling between tears and racking jerks of her body that her husband had disappeared, that they had had a fight, that he had gone up to see her daughter and had then walked out and had not returned and would not return and what was she to do, oh God, oh God, what was she to do. As she lamented, Dr. Greenfield went to the window and looked down to the street where he saw the policeman who had stopped him. He turned away, spoke quietly with Mrs. Moon for a moment, and then explained to her that it was now a police matter. He called the nearest station house, which, after some pointed questions, said it would send out a patrol car and an ambulance. After hanging up, the doctor gave a sedative to Mrs. Moon, told her to stay calm and then went down the stairs and out the door, seeing that the policeman was still inspecting his car, although now stooped over at the curb. As he approached, the officer rose and pulled out his book. Doctor Greenfield came up and watched, saying nothing for a moment but then, with a voice of age, asked, "What's the problem now Officer?"

"You're two feet from the curb doc, I gotta give you a ticket" he answered in a businesslike manner.

"Oh.....By the way, there's a girl upstairs who just died. Might have been murdered by the father.....I don't suppose you're interested, though, are you?"

Officer Kreps finished writing the ticket without looking up. He quietly handed it to Dr. Greenfield and stared at him coldly: "Nope, ain't interested. I go off duty in a few minutes and I have another job. If I get messed up in this, I'll be here all night. Call the station. They'll send someone out here."

"I already did."

"Good thinking, doc, I'll be seeing you."

"Wait a minute," pleaded Greenfield, "how can you possibly give me a ticket on one hand, and not help a family on the other?"

"It's easy doc," answered Kreps as he strolled back to his patrol car, "If I don't give a certain amount of tickets each month, the sargent balls me out. If I get involved in some stupid murder or family affair, I get no sleep. So next time, doc, worry more about your car than your patients. I aint the only one who'll give you a ticket. It's all pretty easy, aint it?"

"Yes, it is, I guess. Goodnight, Officer Kreps. Thanks for the ticket."

Dr. Greenfield very slowly walked back into the house, went slowly upstairs, opened the eyes of the dead girl so he could look into them for a moment, walked to the window while ignoring the whimpers of Mrs. Moon, and stood there until he heard the howling of sirens echoing from the distance. He knew they were speeding to this house; he knew also they would not get a ticket, the law does not give a ticket unto itself. But they would be up all night, that was a relief. The window became misted as tears formed in his eyes and suddenly he turned back to the little girl lying dead with wide open eyes, and he stared into them until his own became part of them, and then he fell on his knees and cried heavily as the icy wind continued to blow through the windows and the sound of sirens continued to echo through the night.

We marched 150,000 strong to end the war
 It had never been done before
 And

we were proud.

Our poets wrote

Our singers sang

While we grew in age and wisdom.

Politicians were condemned as the robots

They had been taught to be by us.

Religion became a thing of despair

Or a personal individual hell

Or a hallucinogen instead of an opiate.

A man who was killed

said

We will have war

until the flower

Becomes as great and as respected

as the mushroom

So we dug our trenches

And

we waited.

Heinlein

Bradbury

Tolkien

Farina

Burroughs

and Pynchon

Were our eclectic bible

And perhaps for some

a little more afraid

and a little less sure

Mao

and

Stokely

were

giants

But that too was frightening.

Between the momentary eternities of debate

The people looked and saw the gap widen

And the new philosophers looked over their shoulders

And saw again a thing of fear

For those who came behind

were not

the same as they

were perhaps

as different

as those who went before

And the gap widened there also.

II

There was a man once
Sent from god
His name was

Mind.

He drew psychedelic designs on his face
and built the new world church
And saw heaven and hell pass away
Making a new reality
By condemning the plastic
that was really only sand in mutilation
While he loved the sand

(Thanx Calif.)

He sang hymns
that told the world
to wear flowers in their hair
if they should come to San Francisco
And to try again another time

(The Pearls Before Swine)

And the fugs
were fearful prophets of doom.
Broadslides worn on buttons spread the gospel
the new good news

like

Support your local Hobbit
and

Grok

and

Where is Lee Harvey Oswald now that we need him
and

If it moves fondle it
But only as many read them
as read the old.

The people searched for being
at be-ins

And Some found bananas
While others lost forever
A man walked through the Newest Jerusalem
Asking

bearded prophets and
vestal promiscuoesses

What Have You Seen Today
Most were as blind as the pagans they despised
And many didn't care.

Too bad

Diogenes-Jones

Something might be happening
if you knew what it was.

jack smith

A sporadic noise is being smothered in backyard incinerators
As pages of trouble add to pollution-
There's silence in the collision of cars-
Not a sound is sought in pledge of allegiance-
The policeman is inaudible rationalizing a summons.

Our minds are reeking with improbabilities
Our hearts hide from sight of emotion
A fear lingers on and on in the sooted throat
Our intelligence refuses to open
Denying a place for the silence.
We all reek with cowardice
We all smell of TV and race riots.
The silence is tapping the window
While confusion clouds the eyes
And silence screams
In between platitudes of 'good morning'
Its wailing sound overwhelms
Its incessant beat obscures window view
The sun wrinkles and shines in strips,
Sitting on its beauty.
And still an opening is prevented
Indeed, presented as cleverness and accepted
By metropolitan life insurance.

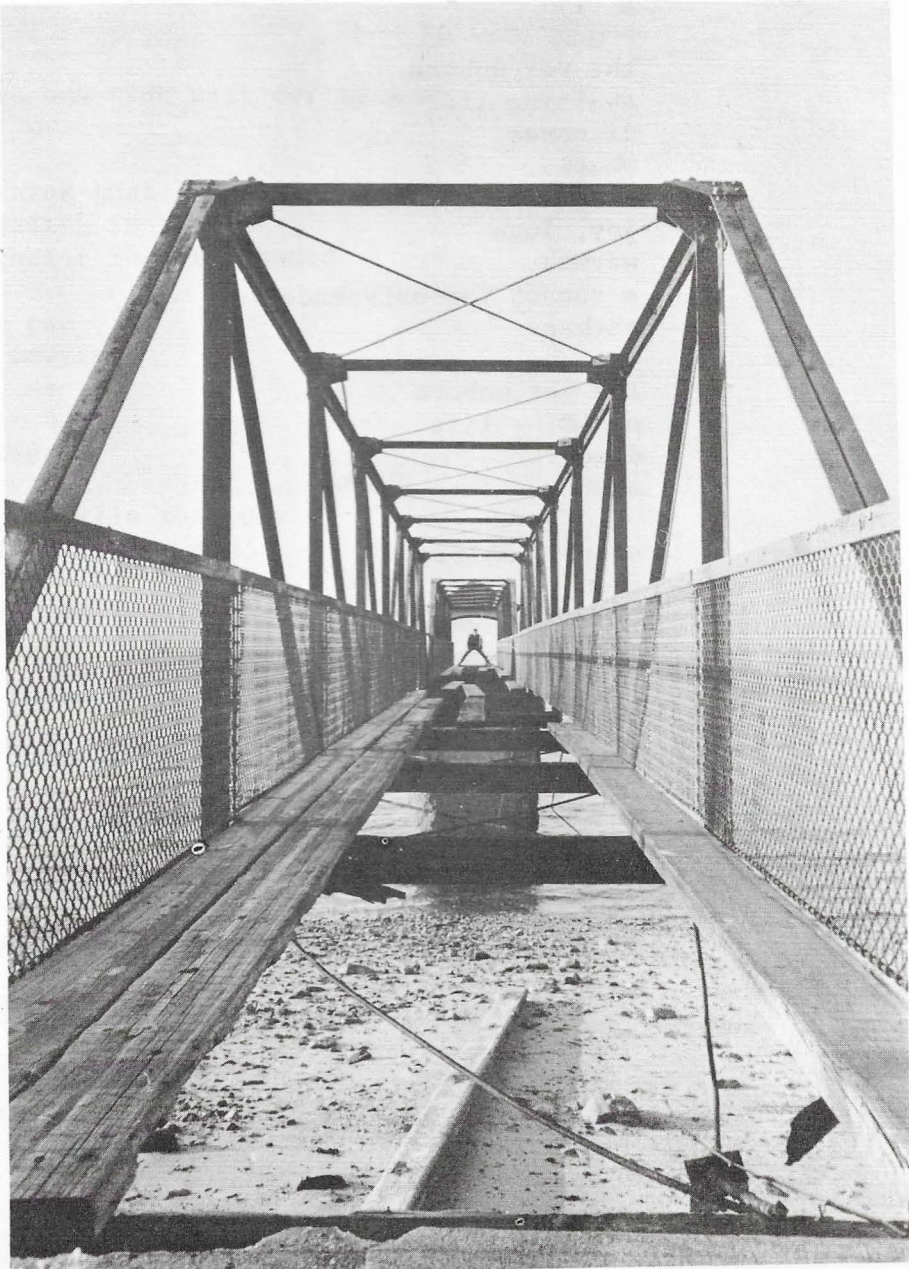
If the silence could seep, wash
In upon the intellect
Without consent,
There is no time for consent
There is only something to do-
A chore
And then another thing isn't done.

Does the window weaken?
Is the glass reinforcer growing weary?
What color is that just beyond the silence?

Return to homes past - Red Hook

Broken windows, decorated with childrens' blood
Grace the pavement of my home.
Female cadavers dance in the streets
Lifting their dresses for all to see.
And while a rodent samples a sweet;
A child eats the dust of tyranny.

harry shaw



THE YET UNBORN

lonely, the night
silent, dark
in the distance
a cry

the yet unborn
awaiting life
discover
what?

joy, love
warmth
a reason for existence
perhaps

the yet unborn
awaiting life
discover
soon

sorrow, malice
frost
the chill of death
surely

lonely, the night
silent, dark life
in the distance
a cry

barbara zanki

SUSPENSION

It could have been any park
but it was this one
on any night
the dying sun
struggled to send
its last beam of light
through a haze from
fires already dead

It could have been any swing
in any park
but it was this one
that stood alone
patiently waiting
for its rest

We hung
suspended
for a moment in time and air
then slowly swayed to a halt
and with the last picnic over
we too returned
to our sadness.

don eismann

the discretion of decisions is surrender:
as uneven mountains,
decisions follow asymmetrical routes.
to cling to a morning as morning
is the hard thing
but tiring
and soon, uninspired the tie is knotted religiously
as the morning becomes a day of the week.

concrete stoops from parochial events were constant
then
(black jack was the popular game
and when kicked off one stoop
another was found.)
with a turn of a page- a decade
and all stoops are mutable.

the man lost a thought back in '39
and became a clerk
and ONLY a clerk, still.
he interrupts a thought of another
and out the window with a quick glance
the dim sun of a winter morning
is almost seen
and another thought, is lost in '68
as the morning drifts/
in the noon.

round the bases, running and running
a run, an out, an error
round and round, the bases are anchored
the plate still home
he sits with popcorn/
in the noon.

carl nardiello

A SLIGHT STORY IN THREE PARTS : The Dream of Terrance Twillterry

I.

Arid clouds began to disperse after a long, heavy rain. A thin slice of southern sky shown deep amber, merely teasing of the hidden light below the horizon. The blue earth appeared soggy and worn in exhausted sleep.

Through a lone attic window staring naked were the two tense eyes of young Terrance Twillterry. Darting side to side the eyes had a frantic look of vainly trying to imbibe, in an instant, all of that earth lying wet and wearied. Of the other house parts all that seemed alive were waterdrops, tinkling down from the roof into a broken tin barrel. Except for Twillterry this valley, where no wind played, looked abandoned. Encompassing the wooden home were barely discernible treeless hills. There was no road or sign of trodden path visible nor were there farmed fields or familiar farm creatures. There was also absent any normal night noises, appropriate for warm seasons. Almost as if all living organisms, excluding Twillterry, had driven themselves so deep into the land, to escape the heavy rain, that they fell into an unknown abyss within the ground and were unendingly consumed.

The two anxious eyes of Twillterry now began to revolve and sporadically increase in brightness in the solo attic window. This window had no glass and was constructed without any grooves where glass frames could be placed.

II.

Long into the silence of this scene came a distant sound, the direction of which, was indeterminable. The softness of it, hardly audible, seemed to be whispering something sweetly settling to the drenched earth. Painfully lazy, this sound nevertheless began to increase. As it grew it became obvious that it originated opposite that side of the house where those still frantic eyes of Twillterry danced. However, these eyes were now considerably larger thus revealing several perverse traits. They were not oval eyes but perfectly circular; their color was an inconstant grey sometimes transparent, sometimes a deep opaque grey, always queer. They stood about four inches apart from each other. Most apparent was the uncomfortable absence of eyelids and eyelashes. They gave the impression of having no ability, or more likely, no control to depart from the square confines of that unprotected attic window.

The nearing noise now emitted rapid chaotic vibrations and was accompanied by a suffering smell. With each intensifying note the eyes of Twillterry also began to shake more rapidly. Also now barely discernible was a slight contraction and expansion of the eyeballs, not unlike those life sustaining beats of the heart.

Now evolving through the obscurity of distance broke a massive shape, still without definite form but coming quickly closer into view. And even sooner into view it,.. became. It resembled a gigantic dog, however, instead of hairs, various sorts of elongated organisms, similar to distorted insects and snakes clung to its body. They appeared not to have attached themselves to the dog but to have grown out of it, backwards, never fully detaching their mouths from the epidermal layer of the creature. These leech-like things were all sucking from the dog an addictive substance which feverishly excited them. From the conglomerate fiend-dog now came multiple shrieks not from one concentrated throat effort but from all organisms clinging to it; high mind-piercing pitches and incomprehensible belches of base tones; tones beyond the reach of complacent ears. Each tone, although emitted simultaneously from all the repulsive entities, was easily distinguishable and somehow pinched at some singular mental propensity of Twillterry. Each tone hungered to rip retinas from Twillterry's unmerry eyes. Each creature was competing for the meat of the eye and each screamed louder now sensing that nourishment was near. They all twisted in a grotesquely disciplined order. The dog-thing, so attired, was a beast of torture, but not that it suffered by its adornments but it relished each subordinate sucking from its body. It presented such a mass of agony and terror that the last red glowings of the distant light seemed to leave because of it. Now in moonless dark the incessant howling came into the immediate area of Twillterry's window, within which Twillterry's eyes erratically, in wanton horror, palpitated and ran amuck in the square window confines. The apprehensive eyes tightened and it became obvious that they were indeed aware of the inevitability of this coming. They knew of their stationary restriction. Yet upon closer scrutiny there lurked an insight, beneath, almost grinning, seemed a sigh of relief that soon its desolation would be over. The massive creature, with an eyeless head covered with these parasitic sucklings in crevices which could have once housed eyes and teeth, now stood above the window level of Twillterry's immobile, crazed eyes.

During these moments, Twillterry and the thing seemed to be sharing some mutual thoughts, although the creature did not stop its extreme wailing and Twillterry's eyes actually increased the speed of their chaotic pulsations. Then in one overwhelming motion the fiend-dog launched itself at the open window. In their last free and visible state the eyes of Twillterry were contracting. An expression of unbearable fright and futile relief was noted as they entered the worm-like covered orifice of the fiend-dog. Upon bearing down this opening the thing and all its subordinates simultaneously issued a scream that crushed all hope and demolished all peace. Then in what may have been a last desperate attempt to get some modicum of revenge the eyes of Twillterry expanded to enormous proportions within the mouth. In one strange second

silence befell the scene and then an ironically graceful slow-motion explosion spread the beast into infinite particles over the damp acres. Thus a sick yellow covering of the poisonous putrescent body fluid flowed over the land, which now once again appeared sadly tranquil.

III.

TIME PASSES IN VERY UNCERTAIN MEASURE

That same deviant modest amber southern light again shines softly on the still sad tranquil landscape. Again there is a smell of a recent, very heavy rain. Again the only sound is a gentle drip of water from the same wooden roof into the same, only more broken, tin barrel.

Off a way is seen the results of an invisible magnetic force portentously attracting the now faded and dried tan putridity together into a healthy size lump, resembling a mutated four legged embryo.

On that forsaken windowsill a new life seems to be stirring, awakening. Two new small perfectly circular eye-like vivacious bouncing balls are being nourished within those same unbreakable square confines of that unprotected and murderous window!

carl nardiello

Golgotha - in the sun

carnivorous
 -carnival
baked by insane solar king
trapped outside
 cages
cotton candy,
 parading
open mouths,
castrated carcasses
 circling the rings
 panicked children
terrorized by
 perverted sights
haunted by
 carrousel music and tin banjos
tormented by
 freaks and crowds , by regressed
parental madness
captive in the ring (s)

Gather round people - trod pass the tents ladies and
gentlemen , point and laugh with sickening taste of
disappointment and nausea in your palate-
see sights that you've never seen before - wonders of
the world - chase reality- The B in Barnum and Bai
ley is Bedlam

Hear the screams of chained children
Nature being hung by her thumbs
She is dying

And you are invited to the funeral-
Not to mourn but to

die

lydia milite

the day that beauty died

the day that beauty died
they came to mourn in long pink cadillacs;
the uninvited watched t.v.,
made idle comments,
noticed

how fatr so-and-so had gotten
and
how old whats-her-name now was.

one woman who had overslept asked yawningly, "who died?"
"really?"
"did i know him?"

while others ruffled t.v. guides
to see how long this thing would last.

reporters and columnists climbed all over each other
when someone discovered a little boy
crying his fat cheeks raw;
"did you

know him?" they wanted to know;
"what was he really like?" another asked.

several authors had already begun books.
a well-known pharmaceutical company was confident
something could be synthesized;
and a college professor was quoted
in his determination not to let truth die also.

when it came time to eulogize
none could think of a clever thing to say;
so loud musak was played while someone mumbled muffledly
into a disguised telephone directory.

and when the deceased was finally interred,
one well-meaning man
lowered his voice
and said, "thank god, he had no dependents."

john perazzo

Two by 3

Reservation #2

Cold storage.
Dreams of Ice.
Sawdust covers the vomit
 on the floors
 of melting minds.
Frozen chandeliers drip,
While off in a corner
 sinks
the maidenhead of mankind.

f.a.d.

Reservation #5

I'm sorry my feet
 are in the way
 But DAMMIT
There are some things
 that must be
 stepped
 UP-ON.

f.a.d.

THE GARDENERS

DONALD EISMANN

ANDY FRAENKEL

FRANCES FREDRICKS

JANIE FREEDMAN

WITT HALLE

SEEDS

don eismann

f. a. d.

andy fraenkel

fryleen

j. f.

witt halle

lydia milite

carl nardiello

john perazzo

harry shaw

jack smith

barbara zanki

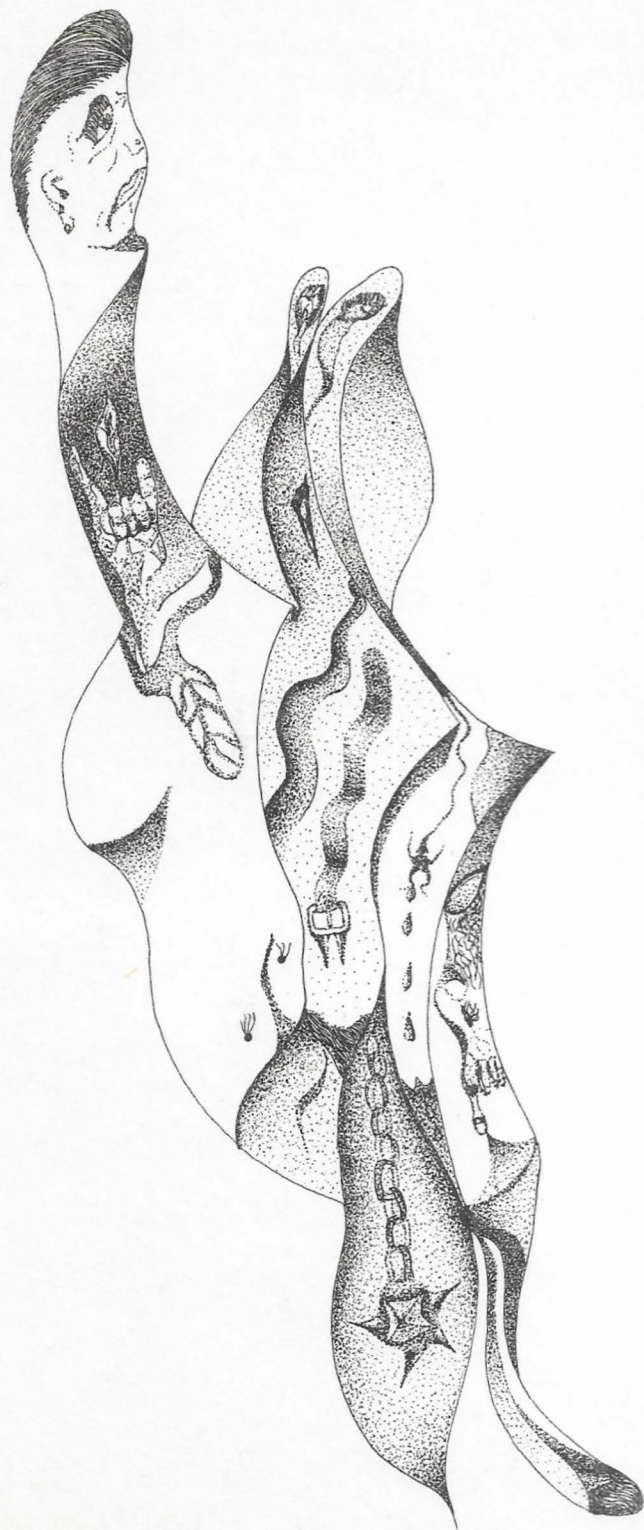
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J. Smith