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R E V I E W

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1 - 2 - 3 - 4

by Robert Levine

1

Snow
car
(ME), brothers, aunt.
Shoes, ties, slacks.

Funeral. Home.

Car door-
snow
sh(foot)oe
snow
car door.

Glass door,
stairs-
Mr. Blank
wood
door.

R-o-o-m
c-h-a-i-r-s
c-ouch
c-ask-et
w-o-o-d
m-o-m-m-y

2

Face
bubble.
Neck
bubble.
Purple
bubble.
Fingers
bubble.

Bubble
Bubble
Bubble
Bubble

People.
Aunt (Canada)
Uncle (neighbor)
Friends. Peoples'
friends.
Acquaintances.
Neighbors.
Relatives.
People people people
bubble bubble bubble

3

Snow
snow people
Person
Ex- Girlfriend
My body
Her body
Walls

Window
Me
Snow - Air

Ground

Wood. Bodies,
bubbles-
Shoes, ties, slacks

Funeral. Home.

Tear-
eye,
cheekbone,
flesh,
mouth,
chin.

Air.

Ground.

4

M-o-m-m-y
w-o-o-d
c-ask-et
c-ouch
ch-air-s
r-o-o-m

Door
wood.
Mr. Blank
-stairs
Glass door.

Car door
snow
sh(foot)oe
snow
car door

Funeral. Home.

Shoes, ties, slacks.
(ME), brothers, aunt.
Car.
Snow.

by Robert Levine

The Devil in My Past

by Julie Moschella

Trisha was an Irish angel in disguise. A friend who would always be there to soothe away the pain and create hope for the future. It was the two of us sitting behind the high-school in her old beat up Toyota Celica. We were both being chastised by our boyfriends, but I was the only one feeling fear. My head hung in horrible anticipation. Whenever he was in this mood, it seemed that I was the outlet for his frustrations; was turned into his human target. They were falsely accusing us of being with other guys in Tricia's car at the park. They were really hiding their guilt, and we were at the time blinded by naiveté.

The musty odor of a hazy night mingled with the mildew smell of the car's interior. There was a leak in the sunroof, and I cautiously looked up to inspect it. I wouldn't even dare to glance at him. Each lie was a left jab to my gut, but I knew how to make such a small thing numb away. "You were there!" he yelled. "I saw the car myself, parked over by the beach - you slut!" This final accusation prompted me to reply because he was so wrong. I brushed my long bangs into my face as I pleaded with him to believe me. No matter what I said, he still insisted on calling me by that wrongful term. He needed to hurt me.

A thought brushed my agonized mind as I glanced over to see how Tricia was faring. Since her boyfriend's gaze was lowered to his feet, I realized she was in control. This inspired me to state my idea. I believed that I could prove to my boyfriend that I wasn't at the accused place. I knew of another girl who drove the same make and color car. She also hung out at the place where he indicated he saw Tricia's car parked. I promised my boyfriend that the car would be there if we went to check. I would then be off the hook - and hopefully loved again. He agreed to drive me there. I only wish I knew what the consequences would bring to my body and my soul.

As I closed the heavy Chrysler door, he took off with an eerie leer on his face. I wanted to say something to him for not waiting till my door was safely shut, but I kept quiet. The car lurched into second gear as he fish-tailed it over a pile of dirt. My heart thumped with the engine's merciless revving. The car took a beating as we flew fifty miles an hour off the road. The tires dug deeper and the engine

wound harder as we approached the spot and my heart stopped. There was no car, no hope, and I realized that Tricia wasn't with me.

"You see, you stupid slut! What do you think I am, stupid?" Every horrible word roared from his lips, and I panicked. The memories of the pain he would bring to my being because of my stupid actions caused me to tear at the car's door handle. I had to run. My fingernails bent back as I clasped the metal latch. The door flew open, but at the same time he floored the gas.

"What are you, fucking crazy?" he screamed as I made to jump from the car. Anything was better than facing what I anticipated. I wanted to knock myself unconscious. At least it would have been by my own actions. His long athletic frame allowed him to grab me by the hair at the last minute. The combination of the jamming of the brakes, and his effort to keep me in the car, flung me into the dashboard head first. I think I temporarily blacked out. He wouldn't let me up. I guess he thought that I would try to get away. I felt like a rabbit with its fur caught in a snare. He held me head down by my hair in a fist bigger than a mallet. I tried to break free, but his grip was an iron vice. It would have been so much easier to fall.

The moon was a focus point which blurred as each tear formed in my eyes and as the tree-tops flew by. I wondered if Tricia had started to look for me yet. She always seemed to find me. I wanted him to understand me just for once. I clung to his fist hoping for some kind of recognition. I only received more mental anguish as he told me how low he thought I was.

He finally stopped the car and told me to get out. I didn't know where we were, so I pretended to be unconscious. I also didn't want to leave him, for fear that he would go and find another girl to replace the sorry excuse he wanted to leave behind. "You're not unconscious!" he yelled. "Get the fuck out, you slut." Finally his patience ran out, and he opened my door and started to kick me out. Each blow of his foot imprinted my listless body. I let him do it to me. My body rolled like a rag doll until I plopped into the gutter. I opened my eyes to see that I was in front of my home, and I took to my feet and ran as hard as I could. I was hoping to hear the car

drive away, but I heard instead the car door slam. I stumbled as my heart thumped. I quickly gathered myself and ran even faster into the woods next to my house. It was a chance at escaping, but if it failed, I knew Tricia would never find me – and she didn't.

He was like a panther with a devil's wings. I didn't even hear him fall upon me. All I saw were two big arms surround my pathetic frame, and he dragged me to a stop. The rest was all a blur.

It was the removal of self-esteem. It felt more like a powerful surge of a waterfront turbulence in my soul. It crashed and pummeled my mind with each aching wave of pain he inflicted. Why must he be so physically accusing? It was one of those moments that seemed to draw one's strength from ignoring the blows. I closed my eyes tight as I saw the fist fly to my arm. The mental anguish was even more devastating than the physical contact. As the blow landed, I saw red. The pattern blemished behind my lids and it resembled that of dried blood on a re-opened wound.

I used to get angry and fight back, but it only led to harder contact. I learned to lie there and take it. I thought about running again, even though his six foot frame would again run me down. It always did. His final kicks were to my breast and between my thighs. They obviously weren't delivered full force, but at that point the pain was all the same. As he casually got up he spit in my face and walked away. Every part of my body inside and out ached – except my face. It only twinged from being grabbed and thrown. He knew better than to hit me there.

My throat ached too much to cry, but the sobs wouldn't come even if I wanted them to. I tried to hiccup or even breathe, but the agony overpowered my actions. Finally I gasped in a breath and crawled to a nearby huddle of trees. I jumped so hard at the start of his car that my gut wrenched with an acrid twist. The car slowly drove down the block, but I knew better than to move. The farther the car sounded, the easier my breathing came, and I began to feel for the first time the many mosquitoes that nudged at my flesh. It was vaguely interesting to acknowledge each bite because all I felt was a numb touch rather than an annoying pinch. The numbness was comforting, so I curled under a bush and closed my eyes. My body flowed in salt from tears, sweat and possibly blood. It didn't interest me. All I wanted to feel were my arms wrapped tightly about my shaking frame, and the stream that constantly trickled from my soul to the clay beneath my cheek.

□

It Moves Across

*It moves across and over
across the ground
it moves across over the ground
under (by the bridge) the moss
over the moss
across the grass the
grass moves across crossing the
blades of grass into
larger fields
of grass crossing over the
mounds and hills of
nothing but grass on top of
roots of grass
it moves across slowly
slowly into
another field or further
through the forest still
moving by
and by emerging from
the forest small enough
moving
the same rate
under the bridge next to the
trees next through the
trees missing them moving
around them still
crossing like the trees
the trees over
like the blades of grass the
grass over as a bridge goes over
bridges
bridges over the trees
it moves across the hills
like a field over the fields
like field on field
of a hill of a hill
as if the forest
into its forest
on the ground like the ground over
it
stopping over
near a patch of grass.*

by Bernadette Mayer

RAPE MYTH #2

MYTH:

The greatest danger
is from a stranger.

* 80%

FACT:

Most rapes are committed by
someone the victim knows.*

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*Partially funded by the students
at UW-Madison through a
WSA SLIAC GSSF grant*
Designed by Gardner Grady



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by Thomas Good

"Why don't you talk to me and tell me what's wrong, instead of having me try to figure out what's bugging you?"

"What do you think I'm doing? What do you think I'm trying to do when I move my lips and open my mouth?"

"You're so damn stubborn. . .you're acting like an ass. . ."

". . .and all that comes out of an ass is shit," she says snidely completing his sentence.

"That's profound." He pauses, and continues, "I brought this to apologize," he says.

"My mother thinks you're a twit."

"Pardon my French, Anna, you're mother is an asshole."

He knew she wouldn't have much to say to this since she essentially agreed. Seeing that the discussion is going nowhere, he paces to the window. Always was a nice apartment, she did a good job with it - nice view, a lot of space. He hates when they argue because it is a thoroughly protracted process and he has to go home and mark papers, and she elongates these showdowns just to keep him from his work and aggravate him more. And she knows he thinks, or rather that he knows this, and she refutes it before he can even accuse her, further frustrating him. He stares out at the placid city lights below. A breeze from the Boston harbor penetrates his spectacles and dries his eyes. His back is to her, and she's just standing there. . .in her orange bath robe. . .smoking those damn cigarettes that make her fingers smell.

"I know. . .you're busy. You have things to do." She plucks this from his mind, both bothered and satisfied, and breaks the ensuing silence by clinking down her glass of pineapple juice on the glass endtable. She's heard it before. She guides her pleasant, wiry thirty-something body into the white kitchen. He's still staring out the window, tempted to slide the glass door open completely and step onto the balcony and open wide and swallow fresh, clean air.

He turns around instead.

"Look I don't know what you want, you haven't told me what exactly you're mad at. I brought this as an apology and. . ."

"I've been seeing you for eight months. . ." she stops, and then, altering her focus, continues, "alright, why do you still want to see me, why DID you bring this as an apology?" She holds up the flower, a long-stemmed, thornless red rose.

He begins to stammer and she cuts him off. "Dave, why don't you leave me be and stop cheating on your fat-ass wife and kids." She really wants an answer, she really wants to know. Why?

'She was snorting coke before I got here,' he figures. He can tell by her chain-smoking and thirst. He can tell. "When things are good between us I really love. . .being with you. . .I. . ."

He doesn't want to continue because he just knows the next question will be, 'Why don't you leave your fat-ass wife for good?' He just knows it.

She ignores his stuttering: "When things are good? Things? What things. . .When SEX is good, when we can't even talk after sex and you. . ."

"Are you blaming me for uncomfortable sex!" He's angered and feels he should want to thrash her, to land a closed fist to her chin - blood, slimy spit and teeth. However it's not in him. He simply wants to exonerate himself. "You're like a fucking polar bear after sex. I thought the man was supposed to get his and roll over but Christ that's your game. . ."

Silence again. He sits on the couch and puts his head in his hands. Papers to mark. . .papers to mark. Teaching those kids about FDR tomorrow. . .great man indeed. Should I tell them he penned up Japs when the war broke out and the Supreme Court helped him? Maybe I'll tell them he knew about Pearl Harbor. I might as well tell them Eleanor gave good head

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because they don't listen anyway. I'll tell them he had a mistress, though I don't know how if he couldn't walk. . . what good was he? She liked the power I guess. Hey, Kennedy did it, favorite son in these parts. . . Marilyn Monroe. . . oh the things I did to her in my bedroom as a kid. He looks at one newspaper big, brash tabloid headlines and figures they'd have nabbed FDR if he was foolin' around these days. You just don't get away with it anymore.

She reentered the room. He felt it.

"What'd you do get another hit of coke?"

She didn't even acknowledge this question of his as she crossed the room, slid open the window and stepped out onto the balcony. She stood outside, in the same orange bathrobe, in the refreshing palm of the breeze and the night. He just realized she let her hair down. Black, shortish and wavy, but unkempt, slightly greasy and ending at her broad shoulders. It fought the wind, her hair, and she turned around. Her eyes were closed and she was leaning against the railing and sponging up the mellow, wet sea breeze. He looked at her, regretting his comment, and saw the same sexy, dark-eyed kitten he always saw right before they made love. He ached to apologize.

"How're Johnny and little Dave?" she asks. His kids. Why'd she ask?

"Okay." He's still sitting.

She still doesn't look at him but she has no problem with that. She's seen all she wants to see. The little married boy who's a damn good lay.

"I think next year. . . next semester I mean, I'm going to teach a 200-level course, get away from these prissy pissants that high school teachers like you churn out."

"That's great," he says, "Congratulations."

Even if she told him about the guy that was here last night he wouldn't care. He probably wouldn't. She'd tell him about how he painted her toenails afterwards and she pressed her feet against his flat belly and how even in her feet she could feel his hard and fleshy muscles. He probably wouldn't care, he'd say that that was the choice I made and if I wanted, he'd go back to his wife, who probably wouldn't even care if she found out about me, Anna, college prof extraordinare, getting picked up at bars. Whatta body he had though.

"Why don't you kick me out. . . say you never want to see ME again?" He was out on the balcony with her now, turning her question around. It was mid-September, a damp, beginning-of-school breeze blowing, leaves changing, dropping. Then a ringing phone, a technological series of blips.

An impulse seized him—grab her, dip her, kiss her—but he repressed it, she'd get pissed or something, and he let her exit the balcony and answer the cordless. He watched her

walk, feisty body, hard person. If he only had the balls to leave his wife. God, what a mess that would be. . . lawyers, family, kids, banks, money. His wife would probably remain friends with his whole family. They'd love her and hate him. They always love the martyr, the media, the kids at school, the faculty, everyone. He'd be the privileged sleaze who spit in the face of decency for some whore. She really does look like a middle-aged whore, which is not altogether a bad thing. In fact it's very sexy. She has a look that says she enjoys a good drink and a good fuck. What the hell's wrong with that? 'Who's on the phone?' he wants to call, but silence feels appropriate. He walks over to her, hands in his pockets, belly straining against his tight belt. It's her mother. He can tell by the silent way she's talking. Her mother visited once when he was over and met him. 'Ma, this is my married friend, Dave. He's a high school teacher.' That's a joke of theirs when they get around to joking. Anyway Dave, nervous, acted like a fool and indeed, the mother, Filene (whatta ugly name) thinks he's a supreme twit.

Beep! She hung up, blew the hair in her face away with smoke-choked breath and walked into the kitchen to get more pineapple juice. She poured, gulped and became enraged, inside her head anyway. 'This thick, homestyle shit never gets really cold. . . uh!' What to do with this oaf standing over there, again staring through the Boston night. Take him to my bedroom, do it from behind, kick him out, stick with the young, quick-trigger studs from the bars and around campus, although not for long because Harper's had that article about profs and students having sex. She's done it, but can live without it, because it's never been very good, and only the guy gets off on it because it's a power trip. Maybe it's time to settle down, like, with an associate professor in biology or something. Oh joy. He's a damn good lay though, this guy here, condom and all. And she only needs to tell him—how good he is occasionally.

She grabs the rose, swallows it with her fist, and walks up to him out on the balcony. He turns from the city's white sprinkles and looks her up and down and becomes conciliatory.

"I brought it for you. . . as an apology."

"Well maybe you should have come with an apology too."

They smile and touch lips.



Third Person

(for Billy Sauer)

by Thomas Good

The thing is: things got real strange, real fast. I mean, they buried her seven years ago. Afterwards, things went along normally, well, sort of. Until recently. Then it all came apart.

Her name was Holly. I loved her. She died. She was real pretty. Gentle. Then she died. And I sort of broke inside.

It rained at the burial. I hated the goddamned rain. In particular, in italics, I hated the long slow drizzle variety of rain. Anyway.

I used to work, when it was unavoidable, in the financial industry. I did something or other. I forgot. Even when I knew, I forgot. I used to tell people, inquisitive types, that I was unemployed. Unfortunately, I wasn't. But I am now.

After Holly left I got a smaller apartment: one bedroom; a bathroom, and, it was rumored in the lease; a kitchen. I furnished it, after a Bohemian fashion. Bachelor boho: some pictures I cut out of Art in America; some beer cans; cigarette butts; etc. I didn't have much energy, interest, whatever. You know. After Holly. My nights came and went with the regularity of rain. Booze took the edge off the maddening rhythm of the endless precip. The slow flood. Cigarette smoke burned away some of the haze. The Old Dad always said, "you gotta smoke when you drink, otherwise you get sloopy." Thanks, Dad.

One night I went to bed later than usual. Feeling a bit like a kettle left on the stove too long. All dried and brittle. Like Dick Nixon. Kind of. I had stayed up to avoid my nightly wrestling match with soggy sheets. Insomnia. Nightmares. Eventually, a bottle of brandy stalled my consciousness and I slept.

When I came to, I was stuck behind a wall of mist. A thicker haze than usual. A dream? Where the veil seemed thinnest I could see the shape of a woman. My nerves tingled, footwise, as I realized that I was standing barefoot on wet grass. I glanced down at my hand: there was a cigarette burning. I inhaled as deeply as I could. My nerves were all jangly. Too much nicotine? The night was damp. Adhesive. Strangely quiet. I felt very light. As if the law of gravity had been repealed. The moon drifted by, pale white and distant. Through the warm, moist air, the screen of shadows, I saw something glowing. Cerulean blue. A pair of eyes was illuminating the mist. A thirst was penetrating the fog. A timber wolf, pacing its cage, was staring through the night. Her hair tossed in the breeze surrounding her, as a cloud, passing above the catwalk, darkened the stage. As if someone had closed all the window louvers, anticipating a storm. Her sheer gown billowed in the wind. Her fullness flickered beneath the passing cloud. I felt a strange hunger grip my vacant structure, a bell echoing through an abandoned monastery. Summoning the souls of the faithful to worship. My breathing was labored, ragged. I could see her hair, wet with rain. Her lips parted, offering a slight smile. From nowhere, leaves fell, drifting down onto her hair, settling on her shoulders.

I felt the sick feeling you get when the car veers out of control. When the situation gets a little too weird. I inhaled, watching as the cigarette burned my fingers. Exhaling, the smoke hung in the air a moment. Then was gone. The cigarette fell to the ground, coughed twice on the wet grass and was gone. She, that is, her flesh, her skin, was pale, damp. Glistening. And me, a man of shadows, stood alone in her night. Gradually I realized that I

would go to her. My hands would find her. . . I had the incredible experience of feeling her breath inside of me. Suddenly, where before had been tightness, was now the breath of life. My chest rose and fell to the rhythm of her vibrations, her pulse. I felt my self losing any sense of a separate identity. I felt myself getting lost in her dreaming, sucked into her breathing, her being. In the end, I simply let go and then she was inside me. I coughed once or twice, then was gone. . .

* * * * *

Next day: morning came. And left. Without me. I never awoke. I mean, everything still worked. Kind of. My body still functioned. Sort of. But I had the nagging feeling that something was very different. Oops, wrong body, that sort of thing. My thoughts drifted randomly through a stranger's mind. In the mirror alien hands splashed water on another's face. Foamy bristles scratched enamel and gums. Yet, there was one taste, vaguely familiar, that I couldn't seem to wash away. Or to scratch out. The taste of a certain madness. Piercing eyes. A sensual breathing. Wind and rain, and lust, in a churchyard. Leaves falling at midnight.

In the shower, I, no longer quite the first person singular, flexed various muscles. Everything seemed operative. Later, in the mirror again, anonymous eyes stared through me. A comb slid through distant hair. I had forgotten to rinse out the shampoo. . .

The train swayed slightly, bumping me to my employment. The bodies of others bobbed parallel rhythms. Young females swabbed paint on their morning faces: May Flies preparing for their day. The eyes in my mind witnessed men in pinstripes. Each clutching a tabloid, neatly creased in half so as not to exceed spatial limitations, so as not to violate unspoken boundaries. I blinked and a large mosquito appeared, clad in grey and white. This creature sucked coffee from a styrofoam victim. Something squirmed and twisted inside my intestines.

At the office the secretary giggled on my arrival. In the men's room, alone at last, I wiped away, or perhaps merely smudged, the coffee and cream cheese stains on my jacket. I removed the shave cream from my face and collar. A pair of shoulders offered a small shrug to the watchful mirror. Sitting at a vague desk, I trembled slightly as a relentless buzzing filled the office. The swamp. Stagnant and humming. A mosquito, bent over the copy machine, glanced at my representation and waved. The man on the train? Dennis? The hand occupying my sleeve ges-

tered in return. Banal reciprocity. I stared at the sworls on the fingertips I possessed. Incredibly realistic. Lifelike.

The thing is: things had gotten very strange. The entire day had been photographed in some maddening soft focus. A Bob Guccione photo. Kind of. Anyways, later, rather than sooner, the day ended. I saw my effigy nodding terse farewells, saluting various echoes distantly. Eventually the bus blundered me home.

The next few nights I slept without the Dreaming. O.K. Let's be honest: I tried to bring Her back, but couldn't. My every breath was an echo of Her, but She wouldn't come. When I laid down at night I would struggle to induce the Dream. Nothing worked. At some point, after each attempt had failed, my motor would just shut down. Oblivion. Then work. Oblivion. Work. . .

* * * * *

Then one day I woke in a strange bed. There was a creaking, a rhythmic grating, that seemed to emanate from another room. Downstairs? I got up, stumbled toward the sound rubbing my eyes. I groped toward a staircase. And down. In a living room I found the noise. A chair, with its back to me, creaked back and forth. Moving real slow, it rocked beneath the glare of a yellow lamplight. The occupant stood up slowly. Jerkily. It twisted around and lurched at me. I heard a gasp erupt from my throat. The thing is: the Thing had a hollowed face and two, completely empty, eye sockets. Its hands shot out, grasping my arm. I jumped back, horrified. It had fluid running tearlike from the empty sockets. I ran clumsily to the front door. My chest tightened as I strained for air. Shit. The door was stuck. I fumbled the lock. No good. Strangely, everything was coming into focus. The contrast was so sharp it stung. Like an old black and white film. . .expressionistic. . .the Thing moved on me, his face contorted in sheer agony. Panic bit into my suddenly animated flesh. I ran up the stairs. And fell. And crawled. Frantic. It followed. I found a bedroom, slammed the door behind me. I tried to breathe for a moment, then, spinning around, realized I had nowhere to run. My fingers clawed at a window. It refused to open. Outside was pitch black. Where was the morning sun? In any case, the drop to the elusive landscape below would probably be fatal. Then the door swung open. Blind, dead hands grabbed at me. I punched the window. Glass fragmented, slicing my hand. Bony fingers gripped my shoulder. Somehow I got loose, backed up, and charged the window. Glass



by Nanci Richards



by Nanci Richards

shards ripped into my shoulders. Hanging suspended from the fractured window-frame, I realized, as terror gripped me in his withered hands, that I was being pulled back into the house. I screamed. Loud. Then woke to find my form sitting upright in my bed. Soaked with sweat. I called out, instinctively, to Holly. To comfort me. But I was alone.

I coughed sharply and spat myself on this strange quilt of dreams that had become my existence. I felt tears streaming the agonized geography of my face as I saw Holly drown again, her hands screaming for air. I wept as I saw what had become of me. I wept at the return of the nightmares that had begun not long after her death. Morning came as rain pounded on the sleeve of my broken air conditioner.

Right. Now I'd be the first person to admit that I don't always know what the hell I'm talking about, but something very strange was happening. The days that followed the nightmare seemed to be filmed in the same harsh lighting, in the same sharp contrast. A sharpness that I tried to dull with vodka and Camels. I began to long for a return of the haze that had followed the Dream. The haze that had obscured the daze of work, the lifeless nights, the Dreamless sleep. I longed for Her return. I clicked my Zippo lighter absently, endlessly, as I stumbled the sands Time had vacuumed clean of Her footsteps. I called Her name. Wistfully. Mournfully. Angrily. Rhythmically. A drunken incantation as I struggled alternately to remember and to forget.

Several lifetimes later, night fell as I sat pouring vodka on my wounds. I fought sleep as I feared what it might bring. Then, rather abruptly, consciousness faltered and fell through the veil of sleep, backlit by the glow of the new moon, and crashed onto the stage of dreams.

A familiar figure appeared, draped in mist. She advanced quickly toward me. I made no move to retreat. She absorbed me fully, secluding me in Her grasp. For an hour, a day, a year. The new moon cast fingers of longing on our forms. My thirst was all encompassing. The swirling rain was sweet to the taste, sensual to the feel, as She vibrated through my being. As She whispered Her ancestral lust into my aching body. My hands wondered over Her. Her smooth shoulders sloped, so softly, into my caress. We were joined, Her breath inside my chest, in a primordial rhythm. I knew a forgotten joy as I roamed the topography of Her fullness. Her breasts strained against the wet fabric of the night. Her legs embraced, contained my Essence. Her polyphony of hair, Her passion of eyes, created a singular, convulsive deity of our two forms. And then, the Moment was done. . .

Morning arrived and I found myself on the train to work. I spilled coffee, wore newspaper ink, and, in general, was a commuter like any other. The strange sense of being in soft focus, lost in haze, had returned. This time, however, I didn't fight it. This time, Her grip never loosened for a second. Perhaps, my grip never loosened. Whatever. The day thickened. I performed whatever duties I had. I did something or other in the financial industry. Then I went home. Absently. Found myself staring vacantly into a face full of whimsy. A face contained in the compact makeup mirror of my neighbor. When it snapped shut I looked up. As the train pulled away from my stop. Eventually I got a taxi home.

Night overtook my days. Residue of the Dream kept me going – small flashes, remembrances of a Woman, lit up the night mind as I awaited Her return. I missed work alot. Finally, stopped going altogether. I lost interest in eating, drinking, even smoking. My lighter sat on the table as I stared out the window. The landlord, apparently angry over my failure to pay him his due, called the cops. They found my body sitting in an armchair, beneath a halo of yellow lamplight. At the hospital, the doctors were unable to establish contact with me. A course of electroshock treatments was scheduled. On the day they were to begin I was reported missing. The hospital staff, and later the police, did a full search. I had disappeared. Like I said earlier: things have gotten kind of strange lately.

That evening a pale illumination caressed the Earthly landscape as the new moon rose and stretched her rays over the night. Somewhere between Heaven and Earth, I called Her name. The thing is: I had lost seven years. I had seven stolen, horribly empty, years to make up. And so I sang Her name to the night as a light, cool rain began. Gradually, the veil parted and She appeared. Her arms were extended in gentle invitation. I chanted Her name in a joyous invocation and then went, fully, finally, into the Dreaming.



The Poet

*The bed is paid for
The books are paid for
The telephone is in service
The lights are on
The heat might be here
The rent is due*

by Philip Good

Bone Cancer - Heart Disease

My father
on a saturday:

Dark blue lee jeans
Light blue button-up shirt
Notebook pad and pen in pocket

My mother
on a saturday:

Stupid slippers
Thin, almost broken gold chain holding.
Many, many charms.

My mother
before dinner:

Cooking
pacing
thinking - to herself
cotton in her ears

My father
after dinner:

Sitting, in a wooden chair
reading the newspaper. Books
eating ice cream
M.A.S.H.

My father
Dying:

A cane in each hand,
Back brace holding him,
"We need a soft toilet seat!"

My mother
Dying:

Non-prescription glasses
hiding
pain

My father
during a bad day:

Bones
can't lie down
Pillow hurts head

My mother
during a bad day:

Thoughts
aching
her heart

My father
and hospitals:

Months
Wheelchair
Unconscious

My mother
and hospitals:

Seconds
Ambulance cars
Stretcher

My father
and Death:

Pain

My mother
and Death:

Pain

Me
and Death:

by Robert Levine

THE INVASION OF *EGHQUAONS*:

THE DUTCH-LENAPE RELATIONS ON STATEN ISLAND AND IN THE NEW YORK AREA; 1626 - 1657

by Thomas Taaffe

For at least three thousand years before the first Europeans stepped foot on what they renamed as Staten Island, the native inhabitants called this island *Eghquaons*. These people, who called themselves "*Lenni-Lenape*," lived in the New York area (New York City, Long Island and New Jersey). They called their home *Lenapehoking*. To you they are known as the Delaware, a name they received when Lord De La Warre received a grant of land from the King of England that we now call Delaware. The native inhabitants, a southern settlement of Lenape, became "his" indians, and thus became the "*Delaware*."

For a hundred years, the natives of *Eghquaons* had watched the comings and goings of the Europeans as they came, "discovered," traded, fished, looted, slave raided and parked their boats in the winter. Almost from the point of first contact, this "culture clash" was creating irreversible change in the lives of the inhabitants and the lands that they lived on. The tools and weapons that the Europeans brought to the new world, the environmental and economic impact of the fur trade, quickly altered the tone and balance of power between the various nations in the area that would soon become New Amsterdam.

The arrival of the Dutch settlers, in 1623, to set up an American beachhead for the burgeoning Dutch trading empire, sent ripples throughout the east coast of America. These ripples soon turned into waves of transformation that destroyed nations and gave others a brief, but brutal moment of glory. The devastating relations between the *Lenni-Lenape* inhabitants of the New York area and the Dutch settlers in the 1600's, resulted in the decimation of the Lenape nation and their extradition from the New York area and ultimately to a small reservation in Kansas where they live today. This reservation represents but a tiny fraction of the original number of Lenape. The three hundred year journey from the New York-New Jersey area to Pennsylvania, to Ohio and ultimately to Kansas is a sad diaspora that all too often was the fate of the coastal people of the "New World," or for those of them fortunate to survive the genocidal pogrom of the European settler.

Unlike some of the tribes that the United States slaughtered in the nineteenth century, this period of genocide is not as well documented in the popular histories of the modern world. While critics of the American pogroms in the nineteenth century wrote their observations down and others chronicled the words of the native survivors of this peri-

od, only the words of the settlers themselves survive as a record of the events of these early days of settlement.

However, the writings of these men shockingly convict their behavior, as I hope to point out. In order to understand the events that occurred during the early days of the Dutch settlement of the New York area, we will examine the land "deals" that were conducted between the two peoples, the differing perspectives that these people had as to what that agreement was for, and the resulting struggles that came out of it. In order to contain this discussion, we will focus on the forty year period of interaction between the Dutch and the Lenape from 1626 to 1657 in New Amsterdam and particularly those relations on Staten Island.

If we are to understand the devastation that we visited on these people, we need to understand their world, their value systems, their social structure and the terms of their relations between groups within and without their culture. Understanding the makeup of the Dutch settlers, their society and their behavior in the "new world" is also critical to comprehending their actions. We need to look at the inter-relationships between these elements of Lenape life, their relationship to the land and consequent structure of their world view.

For those who only peruse Euro-Indian relations, it is easy to miss the details that make this interaction so horrible for the original inhabitants of this country. It is therefore necessary to pay attention to detail and to ask oneself; "what if this was my land and strangers did these things to me?" It is in these details that the truth is found, the answers to the horrendous loss of life that was visited upon these people no longer becomes a mystery (from a pre-columbian population of 18 to 20 million, 250 thousand survived by 1890). Often times, a banal statement by a settler, reveals the slaughter of many people, or a callous action that caused a tribe to die unseen, forgotten forever by western history.

For those interested in understanding the original inhabitants of Staten Island and its surrounding area, I recommend Robert Grumet's *The Lenape*. This book offers the reader a basic overview of the Lenape in general and with the basic elements and structure of their culture. For details on the particulars relevant to the native inhabitants, R. F. Bolton's *New York City in Indian Possession* and Alanson Skinner's *The Lenape Indians of Staten Island* serve as impor-

tant guides. The Staten Island Institute of Arts and Sciences has a wealth of information and documents, related to their culture, the prehistory and environment of the area, the terms of any land contracts and those testimonies of the eye witnesses and participants in the historical events of the day.

Key to this discussion are three elements. One is the nature of Lenape society on Staten Island and the movement of peoples onto the island from nearby areas. The second is the intentions and actions of the Dutch settlers, both on Staten Island, (set in the context of their behavior here) and elsewhere. The third is the terms of relationship, that is, the struggle for the control of the land.

At the root of this struggle is the culture clash of the differing economic structures of these two cultures, and how their interaction affected the changing culture of the Lenni-Lenape.

LIFE ON EGHQUAONS

Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, life on Staten Island was a relatively relaxed affair. The land was populated by three groups of Lenni-Lenape, primarily of the Unami branch of this Aligonkin people. Skinner reports that from West New Brighton to Tottenville "there lies one practically unbroken chain of sites of the former Indian inhabitations." The northwestern area of the Island (now reflected by the Port Mobil archaeological site) was controlled by the Hackensacks. The southern portion of the island was dominated by the Raritan or the Assanhican people. Their inhabitation has been documented in the discoveries of an ancient village known as the "Burial Ridge" site near the Conference House in Tottenville. As natives were driven from their homes in what is now Brooklyn, the eastern coast of the island soon showed evidence of inhabitation by the Canarsie (Muncey). In addition, the Tappan people and the Rockaway (both Unami) also seem to have had some land use rights, as evidenced by their participation in land sales of the period.

Their chief rival in the pre-contact and certainly post-contact era had been the Mohawk. The Iroquoian Mohawk overran the island as Skinner reports, "from time to time, both in the prehistoric period (as shown by their influence on local pottery, etc.) and in later historic times." These people would quickly figure in the Dutch plans to rid themselves of their Lenape problem.

Staten Island, at point of contact, was a rich ecosystem consisting of hillside forest covered in oak, hickory and maple, and a lowland area used for villages and farmland that sloped gently into an extensive wetland system that merged eventually with Outer New York Harbor on one side and the Kill Van Kull on the other. Bear and deer roamed the forest, beaver worked the streams and wetlands, and the coasts were particularly rich in shellfish, which served both as a food source and, when prepared, as wampum.

Two of the sites on Staten Island are of particular interest to archaeologists (Port Mobil and

Burial Ridge) since they are known places of habitation going back 10,000 to 12,000 years. The Burial Ridge site is known to have remains of Lenape village life dating back at least 3000 years, as well as an extensive burial ground. This spot is one of the oldest archaeological sites of its kind on the east coast.

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE LENAPE

Like most of the eastern peoples of America, the Lenape were a farming culture (corn, beans, pumpkins, watermelons), with hunting, foraging and fishing to supplement it. Given the rich availability of shellfish (oysters, mussels, soft and hard clams, pear conch, etc.), not to mention fishes such as striped bass, codfish, flounder, and sturgeon, seafood logically became important staples in the diet of the local inhabitants. Hunting too, was abundant, as an early settler DeVries had reported, and the locals supplemented their diet with deer, bear, rabbit, muskrat, wild cat, wild turkey, pigeons, partridges and other fowl.

Lenape society was communal in form and fluid in nature. Their society was relatively egalitarian and lacking in the more rigid caste systems of the European invaders. They had civilian chiefs in times of peace and war chiefs in hostile times. These roles were hereditary in nature (drawing from one's mother's clan), but weak or incompetent leaders, as Grumet explains, "quickly lost both their authority and their followers to more capable and popular leaders." People (usually men, but not exclusively) could rise to prominence based on their skills as warriors, craftsmen, medicine men and as well spoken elders of the "tribe".

The greater "nation" of the Lenni-Lenape was divided into three great clans. The Unami or Turtle clan, the Muncey or Wolf clan and the Unalacthigo or Turkey clan. Popular thinking holds that these were political groups and thus formed "nations" or "sub-nations" unto themselves. Grumet observes (and more correctly) that these were "only three of a much larger number of now-extinct matilinealages." This being the case, then men would relocate to their spouse's lands, but retain rights to their "mother's people's" lands.

If membership in these clans was fixed at birth, the villages, confederacies and the smaller groupings that might be called tribes (for lack of a better word), such as the Raritan, Hackensack etc., were fluid and changeable. Their villages were simply constructed and moveable if need or adversity commanded. Each operated with autonomy, and formed confederacies when necessary, based on kin relationships and military need.

MOHAWK - LENAPE RELATIONS IN THE PRE-CONTACT ERA

While the data on these interactions are scant at best, it seems that the Lenape had extensive interaction with the Mohawk peoples before the arrival of the Europeans. Some of the religious rit-

uals of both people were similar, particularly the use of "effigy" masks and faces that evolved into a Big House Ceremonialism and "false face" religious practices that marked both cultures. Mohawk influence is seen in the pottery remains found in several of the archaeological sites around the island.

The point where the Mohawks began to establish a tribute-style dominance over the various Lenape peoples of the area preceded the arrival of Dutch settlement, perhaps encouraged by the increased traffic of European ships in the coastal area during the 1500's. It would seem that hostilities between the two peoples were ancient in origin and existed between Lenape-Iroquois in a variety of areas. Zimmerman, in an article entitled *European Trade Relations in the 17th and 18th Centuries*, notes the violent relations between the Iroquoian Seneca and the Aligonkin Miquas in the Delaware Bay area. The Dutch quickly saw the opportunity in establishing an alliance between themselves and the Mohawk people and used them against the Aligonkin nations of lower New York and New Jersey. Bolton observes that "The Dutch took advantage of this [Mohawk military superiority] and hired the Mohawk in an agreement to defend them from the local tribes, providing the Mohawk with weapons and withholding them from the latter [Lenape]."

FIRST CONTACT

While 1623 marks the beginning of the Dutch settlement of what they called "*New Netherlands*," Europeans had been active in the area for a hundred years before. While much of the evidence is circumstantial, the heavy traffic in fishing vessels had been reported in places such as Newfoundland. Often these ships had to weigh anchor and sit out the winter storms that raged out on the Atlantic. By many accounts, New York Harbor was a popular spot to wait out the winter. While wintering, these fishermen and entrepreneurs traded with the indigenous inhabitants to gain the essentials needed for trans-Atlantic voyage. As time went by, these fishermen soon realized the immense profit to be made in trade with the local inhabitants. In 1598, traders from the Greenland Company established two small forts to protect them when they wintered in the Harbor and to give them a defensible position to trade from.

This trade had repercussions for the indigenous inhabitants. As a consequence of the introduction of new technology, nations that had been enemies for eons, began to compete for control of the trade with the new arrivals. This was the fate of the Lenape, as they felt the increased pressure of the Mohawk to dominate the trade in their area. This may have been the point where the Mohawk began to develop its demands of tribute from the Lenape along the coasts of Long Island and elsewhere.

On the other side of squeeze play that would soon crush the Lenape's way of life, was the violence that the Europeans perpetuated on the

coastal people of America. Stannard in an excellent work called *The American Holocaust*, reports that The French, Spanish, and English "plied the waters off the coast of Florida, Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia — with raiding parties marching inland to capture slaves and spread disease and depredation." North and east of the New Amsterdam area, Bradford, Governor of the Plymouth Colony for most of its first 30 years of its existence, reports a similar (if not as extreme) problem for the indigenous inhabitants of the New England area. It seems fair to suggest that if slave raiding went on both north and south of "*Lenapehoking*," that some of these slave raiding expeditions may have touched on the Lenape as well.

THE INVASION OF LENAPEHOKING

On October 11th, 1614, the West India Company was chartered by the General Assembly and the Royal Offices of the Netherlands. That same year, a permanent fort and four houses were built to establish a full time trading link between the native populace and Dutch traders. Information on who made deals with who are a bit conflicting. Macleod in his book *The American Frontier*, reports that in 1618, the United New Netherlands Company (who had preceded the West India Company) made a pact with the Iroquois to provide security for the Trading camps and to provide pelts. This seems supported by the early evidence of Mohawk domination on Long island and Staten Island that Skinner and Bolton reported in their works. Jennings, in his study of the Iroquois, on the other hand, reported that the Van Tweenhuysen Company had contracted with the Mahican (Aligonquian) to provide the same services. Some of the evidence might lead to the conclusion that two companies had contracted with two indian nations and this may well have been the case. Given the sketchy nature of the early documents and the equally dense task of deciphering second hand sources, however, it may be that these agreements were one and the same and that the Dutch had contracted with one nation or the other. In any case, the consequence of the Dutch presence in the New York area was the advance and struggle of three native nations to dominate the domestic side of the fur trade over land controlled by the Lenape. This struggle between the Mohawk and the Mahican ended in 1626 with the victory of the Mohawk and the establishment of a tribute paying relationship on the part of the Mahican to the Mohawk. This would lead to a Dutch-Mohawk relationship that would soon squeeze the Lenape between two increasingly powerful enemies.

Between 1622 and 1626, the West India Company built a series of forts culminating in their infamous "purchase" of Manhattan in 1626. Having secured a beachhead in the New World, the expansion of New Netherlands sprawled out rudely, as the invading Dutch, armed with "patroonships" (land titles) granted in a foreign land, took

possession (or attempted to) of lands often the size of counties.

Much of the documentation of the early settlement did not survive the years. The settlement of New Amsterdam was a raw and contentious one. Unlike the English, who were organized into one or two colonies with relatively strong central governments, every Dutchman (or so it seemed), armed with documentation, and wealthy enough to take the plunge, started his own "colonie." In this looser use of the word lies the equally looser sense of loyalty the Dutch had to the centralizing concept of a single colony. Semi-organized efforts to keep arms from the locals met the crude truth of *liaise faire* capitalism. The close relationships of the English and Dutch governments, militarily, politically and economically (and their competition with each other), led to treachery amongst the colonists and between each nation's colonies. Compounding this reality, was the mercenary nature of the soldiers (who often served both governments at one time or another) and settlers, who, as in the case of the Pilgrims of Plymouth, settled first in the Netherlands before coming to America. While these men agreed on little, and this disagreement extended to the native inhabitants, the very real physical threat that the Lenape presented (and all other native inhabitants) to the European's attempt to seize the land was one that they all shared.

LENAPE LAND TENURE AND THE TERMS OF RELATIONS

The focus of these peoples' struggle was the land that the Lenape had and that the Dutch wanted. Complicating this question, was the very different ways in which the Lenape and their European invaders held land and perceived their notions of land tenure.

The Lenape did not have the concept of exclusive land tenure such as the Dutch were soon to introduce. Their's was a system of land and resource use rights. As Grumet points out, the Lenape believed that all land was held in "common by all of its occupants." Primary ownership of land was established by precedence, treaty and matrilineal inheritance. This land was not held exclusively, however, and other groups would hold the rights to fish, hunt, etc.. Thus when the Dutch and later the English were negotiating to buy Staten Island outright from the Lenape (following two wars over the issue), attendance was required of the representatives of groups that had not been here-to-fore known to reside on the island. I suggest that these groups had enjoyed fishing, clamming, or hunting rights on the island.

People tended to migrate as land lost their ability to yield the harvest that they once had or war and other circumstances combined to encourage migration. Villages were simply constructed so that migration was a natural part of one's life. This does not mean to imply that aboriginal title was not still held. But since a given group would hold several lands in such a way, they could easily

migrate from one point to another and back again. As people migrated, they would seek to establish good relations with the peoples in the area they wished to settle in. In this way, alliances were built and the primary group was strengthened by the addition of people and fighting-age men allied to them.

GENEROSITY AND "PROMISCUITY"

In pre-columbian society, generosity was the "coin" that secured alliances and "friendships." These issues were far more valuable to the Lenape than any European notion of wealth. In establishing these alliances, the various people often attempted to outdo each other in generosity. Each group involved in a "treaty" or other negotiation would lavish gifts on the other. Wampum belts would serve as the contract of that treaty. For the Lenape, these transactions were not sales of land, but the forging of strategic relationships.

Early documents often refer to the "promiscuous" nature of the natives and their willingness to share their wives and daughters with the new arrivals. Given the fact that these people (the Dutch) had technology that the Indians increasingly needed to balance the military power that their ancient enemies were gaining through trade with Europeans (Dutch, French and English), this willingness to offer women to the Dutch was a traditional attempt to establish long range alliances by quite literally making the Dutch "family." This motive is directly expressed by the Lenape natives when they complained to DeVries (the first European settler on Staten Island) about the butchery of the locals by the Dutch settlers in the first major war between the local inhabitants and the Dutch invaders (1603's to 1643). DeVries, in his journal, recorded this statement by the original inhabitants;

"He related also that at the beginning of our voyaging there, we left our people behind with the goods to trade, until the ships should come back; they had preserved these people like the apple of their eye; yea, they had given them their daughters to sleep with, by whom they had begotten children, and there roved many an Indian who was begotten by a Swanneken [Dutchman], but our people had become so villainous as to kill their own blood."

DUTCH LAND TENURE

Even among the different European countries colonizing America, there were differences in the ways that they appropriated land from the native inhabitants, though these differences were often more evident in theory than practice. English and Spanish law did not recognize native title to lands that were "held" by their crown, and all title was granted through the Crown to their subjects. With the English, even the native inhabitants had to gain their lands by decree from the Crown.

The Dutch, on the other hand, while granting itself title to the new world, recognized that it had

to hold this title by something approximating European legal standards. MacLeod suggests that;

"...it becomes very clear that the Dutch and later the Swedes, felt that they would have a legal controversy with other Europeans concerning their right to settle and trade in North America. They had little chance of sustaining themselves on the basis of Right of Discovery, which the English at first rested their case on; or donation from the Pope, upon which the Spanish claim rested. So they had to find something else. They decided to argue, against the claims of the Spanish and English, that the Indian tribes or nations were owners of the land—as of course they were. This title could be obtained from the natives, they contended, only by conquest, or by gift or purchase."

So while the Government of the Netherlands granted "patroonships" to its citizenry for the establishment of colonies in the new world, it was theoretically required that these lands be purchased from their original inhabitants. However, I found several reports that the governors of New Netherlands were granting their friends land where they liked, and while they might make a settlement with the native inhabitants, they had no intention to pay them. This seemed to be a part of the brutal and conflicting relations both between the settlers themselves and with their neighbors.

Now for the settlers themselves, this "purchase" was not the beginning of their settlement, but the final step of their settlement that protected them, not from the original inhabitants, but from other Europeans who might attempt to take these lands from them. The urgency to gain a document that gave them such title was predicated on the politics of the colony. Ergo, if a settler was not popular with his fellow colonists or at odds with the crown or its representative government in the New Netherlands, then documentation became a more pressing issue than if they held a position that gave them better advantage. Thus people like Melyn, who settled Staten Island and remained at odds with the two governors (Kieft and Stuyvesant) throughout his tenure in New Netherlands, had to keep better paperwork than did the governors themselves, who sometimes unilaterally decreed land and failed often to make any effort to justify their actions.

For the settlers, any contract made with the natives was a deed of land that gave them exclusive rights to that land. Since they wrote these documents, they wrote them to their advantage and then explained them in any manner that would serve their interests in gaining their primary objective. The natives would simply make X marks on the document which would then be notarized by another Dutchman, presumably one specifically empowered to serve as notary. The modern observer can quickly see the opportunity for the unscrupulous to corrupt such proceedings to their own advantage.

These differences in land tenure seem to have

been understood by the Europeans as well as by the Indians. In the land transfers that I found, particularly those of Staten Island, representatives of groups were included that did not have primary residence on the Island. Some of these were peoples that I have earlier suggested were those that had hunting, fishing or other land use rights. That these peoples would be included in a land transfer that was intended to eliminate any Lenape claims to Staten Island is evidence (if indirect) of the European recognition of the subtlety of native land tenure.

WAMPUM

An additional point of difference was the use of "wampum." While barter was and still is a form of trade used in Europe and elsewhere, the Dutch had long adapted to the use of coin and the precious metals that they were made from as a standard of value. In New Netherlands, however, this coin had no meaning, certainly to the natives and often in domestic trade to the settlers either. The natives had been using shells strung together in the form of belts in significant transactions and the settlers "adopted" this practice as the "coin of the realm" for a time.

This however was a significant misunderstanding of the meaning of wampum. Where as when traded as individual beads, or "zeewan", it had the relative value of other traded goods, but when they were strung together into belts they had a different meaning altogether. It was not a form of money, although it was used in important transactions. These belts were not used in minor trade for goods, but rather for treaties and major dealings between peoples. The meaning for the natives was to cement the ties between these peoples. In these treaties, the land, and the goods were gifts, and the wampum was a contract. The wampum was about relationships, not money, it was a material representation of a treaty, worn on the waist (hanging downward with others), to remind others of their obligations in peace and in war. I suggest that to trade the wampum, given by one people to another, to yet a third group of people, would serve to remind the original makers of that wampum that the new wearers of the belt were in a relationship with the people that they had first given it to. Thus the inter-relationships of these people could be communicated visually. An important factor to consider, that in a land where people did not speak the same languages, these belts might well save the lives of the wearers in a war raid. Further, since power came from the strength of one's relationships with others, wampum served as expressions of the power of the individual wearing it.

Under the stress of market forces, however, wampum came to be a commodity that was in great demand in domestic circles. The Mohawk were probably encouraged in their aggressive actions by the fact that the Lenape controlled the coastal areas where the periwinkle shells that wampum was made from could be found. This process was

WE REAL COOL



The Pool Players. Seven at the Golden Shovel.



We real cool. We
Left school. We



Lurk late. We
Strike straight. We

Sing sin. We
Thin gin. We



Jazz June. We
Die soon.

- Gwendolyn Brooks

Dolan '93

infectious, not only among the natives but between the Dutch colony and their neighbors to the north, the Puritans. Brodhead, who wrote a comprehensive history of New York in the mid 19th century, reported that the Dutch were concerned that the Puritans of Plymouth colony had secured significant supplies of Zeewam and might upset their domination of that commodity in the New World.

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE LAND

While there were enormous differences between the natives of Lenapehoking and the Dutch invaders in their conception of land tenure and "money", these differences have to be set back into the context of the motives of the Dutch settlers as they came to this New World. The brutal truth is that they came to take the land and to build a Dutch colony in the Americas, to use Bolton's words, "by fair means or foul." Driven by the wealth they saw being made by French, Spanish and English entrepreneurs, the real issue for the Dutch was making sure they got their market share of the profits to be made in this New World. As Jennings observed in his book, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire*;

"The Dutch Traders of that early period represented no one but themselves, and they were a semi-piratical lot of rough and tough individuals who certainly did not regard themselves as bound by their competitors agreements — or, often as not, by their own."

Thus, one of their first commanders of what was becoming New Netherlands, Captain Eelkens, imprisoned the Sachem (leader) of the "Sequin" (Connecticut), on his yacht. By this act, he so engendered their hostility, that some six years later they were still distrustful of the intentions of the Dutch and wanted nothing to do with them. His successor, Peter Minit, had greater success with the locals. His efforts were not without complications, since the Dutch colony was not one that enjoyed or was very willing to tolerate a centralized government (or any government at all), particularly one that was essentially a company in competition with them for the wealth and trade in this part of the world. The right of the company to monopolize trade was contested, most notably by David DeVries, who later became a Patroon of New Amsterdam and one of its chief chroniclers.

In the early days of the colony, the primary reason for the Dutch to be in the New World was trade. As a consequence, the natives found their presence useful, since they provided goods available nowhere else. Not that this was without its brutality, as the Mohawk and Mahican wars amply underscore. The Lenape of New Jersey were hostile and travel to that region was not to be undertaken lightly. Hostilities prevailed but did not erupt into war. In 1630, this changed. The Dutch, concerned that the English colonies were gaining a permanent foothold in the North America, decided to build an agricultural component to their colony.

They reorganized their charter to encourage settlement and aggressively recruited colonists. Two Directors of the West India Company (Pauw and Van Rensselaer) quickly claimed most of the desirable land, staking out claims that were so vast that they could not control settlement of them. Where needed and possible, these patroons used gunboats and attacked native villages to establish their supremacy.

At this point the Dutch began to seriously encroach on Lenape lands. Attempts to settle the lands around Delaware Bay resulted in the slaughter of thirty-two field hands (Europeans) in 1632. DeVries reports that the South River Indians "were hostile to any Europeans." Indeed they also killed the crew of an English trading vessel the same year. What the Dutch or English had done to encourage this response is not known (nor is it often asked), but most of the other aggressive actions by the natives can be traced to the brutal or inconsiderate actions of the settlers, so one has to wonder.

In 1632, Minit was replaced by Wouter Van Twiller. Van Twiller was a tight fisted soul who reflected the Company's consuming interest in controlling the fur trade and the sea lanes of the New World. Enroute to taking up his assignment in New Netherlands, he commandeered a Spanish trading vessel and brought it in to New Amsterdam Harbor. The Company was less interested in the political interests of its colony than its trade and the profits to be gleamed from it. Consequently, it did not pay attention to the hostilities that were brewing both among the natives and its own citizenry.

At this time, the Dutch were beginning to colonize Connecticut, where the Pequot and the remnants of the Mahican (who had fled there following their war with the Mohawk) were struggling for dominance in the valleys of that region. The Pequot won that struggle and those Mahicans who stayed in the valley, became subordinate to the Pequot.

SLAUGHTERING THE INDIANS

The Pequot (although it may have been another tribe) apparently killed an English trader, Captain Stone, when he and his company were on their way to the Dutch fort along the Mystic River. The Dutch retaliated by killing the Pequot chief and several of his people. The Pequot then declared war on the Dutch. The Pequot turned to the English for guns and powder to support their war. The English, seeing the opportunity to expand their colonial territories, contrived to use the death of Captain Stone (and blaming the Pequot) as a pretext for establishing their claim to the Connecticut Valley. The involvement of the English forces forced the Dutch to withdraw. The English then used the death of Stone as an excuse to slaughter the Pequot and very nearly succeeded in exterminating them.

In 1638, William Kieft took over from Van

Twiller. Things quickly turned even uglier. Kieft was an imperious fellow with little tolerance for "savages" or even the opinions of the Patroons that disagreed with him. The next year, as Brodhead notes, he (Kieft) demanded tribute in "maize, furs or zeewan" from the neighboring indians lest he "employ the proper measures to remove their reluctance." This did not go down well with the Lenape. When he attempts to repeat the effort in 1640, many of the tribes refuse to pay. Meanwhile, the "River Indians" around Fort Orange were becoming increasingly hostile towards the Dutch because of their support of the Mohawk.

In 1640 a ship passing Staten Island absconded with a hog. The local indians were promptly blamed and Kieft sent some troops out to investigate. They responded by killing several of the natives and torturing to death the brother of the chief of the Raritans living there. The Raritans and the Weckquasgeek were by this time beginning to grow weary of the Dutch and began to attack Dutch settlements sporadically. Kieft, in turn, offered a scalp bounty for the heads of the Raritan. This process continued to escalate. The Iroquois, supported by Dutch guns, were attacking the Aligonkin peoples along the Hudson river.

In 1643, several hundred Tappan indians were fleeing Mohawk incursions on them. They sought refuge from the Dutch. While giving them every assurance that they would be safe, Kieft was determined to "wipe their mouths." He then sent eighty soldiers under cover of night to slaughter all of them. DeVries describes the carnage;

"I heard a great shrieking and ran to the ramparts of the fort and looked over to Pavonia [near present day Hoboken]. I saw nothing but firing and heard the shrieks of the savages murdered in their sleep ... When it was day the soldiers returned to the fort, having massacred eighty or so indians and considering they had done a deed of Roman Valor, in murdering so many in their sleep; where infants were torn from their mothers' breasts, and hacked to pieces in the presence of the parents, and then the pieces thrown into the fire and in the water and other sucklings, being bound to small boards, were cut, stuck and pierced and miserably massacred in a manner to move a heart of stone. Some were thrown into the river, and when the fathers and mothers endeavored to save them, the soldiers would not let them come on land but made both parents and children drown ... Those who fled this onslaught and concealed themselves in the neighboring sledge, and when it was morning came out to beg a piece of bread, and be permitted to warm themselves, were murdered in cold blood and tossed into the fire or the water ... After this exploit, the soldiers were rewarded for their services and Director Kieft thanked them by taking them by the hand and congratulating them. At another place on the same night, on Corler's Hook, near Corler's plantation, forty indians were in the same manner attacked in their sleep, and massacred there in the same manner."

After this, the Lenape attacked every Dutch settlement they could. Eleven tribes rose up in open rebellion. Dutch settlements were all coming under assault. War raged on through out 1643. Hostile groups even attacked English settlements in Stamford, killing eighteen people, probably mistaking them for Dutch.

The Dutch then retaliated by carrying the war into Connecticut. This war party was lead by Captain Underhill who coordinated the slaughter of the Pequot when he was working for the English. At dawn they attacked the Indian encampment. They set fire to it and as Macleod relates, "put to the sword and flame five hundred men women and children."

Kieft recommended that the Dutch exterminate the Inhabitants, saying "that to restore peace and quiet through out the country the Indians who wage war on us should by force of arms be utterly destroyed and exterminated." His recommendations were not supported in the Council of Patroons or the so-called "Twelve Men" of which DeVries was the President of the Council. Rather they blamed him for his actions in instigating the locals to war and endangering the settlement, because as the Council of Patroons stated, "it would be injurious to the company, since it would necessitate so heavy an expenditure on so uncertain an event and so little appearance of profit."

One of the problems that the Dutch created for themselves was in their lust for land (and perhaps their need to get away from each other) they spread themselves out thinly across the land, as was determined by a report of the Board of Accounts on New Netherlands (1644). This proved to be a problem when the indigenous inhabitants decided that enough was enough. Killing Dutch settlers proved to be an easy task, and in an atmosphere of terror, many fled first to New Amsterdam, and, if possible, back to Holland.

After these brutalities, there could be no peace. The war dragged on. By 1645, both sides had suffered heavy losses. Peace treaties were negotiated. But New Netherlands was in ruins and Kieft's reputation among his fellow Dutch was non-existent.

In 1647, Peter Stuyvesant replaced Kieft. By this time the English were beginning to settle West Chester and eastern Long Island. North of New Amsterdam, the Mohawk were struggling with their fellow Iroquois and the influence of the French was making itself felt. As pressure increased from the English, the local indians considered attacking the weakened Dutch.

In 1655, the Attorney General of New Netherlands killed an Indian woman for picking a few peaches from his orchard. In response to this outrage, O'Callaghan in his work, **A History of New Netherlands**, reports;

"A party of savages, Mohegans, Pachamis, with others from Esopus, Hackingsack, Tappaan, Stamford and Onkeway, as far east as Connecticut, estimated by some to amount to nineteen hundred in number, from

500 to 1800 of whom were armed, landed suddenly before daybreak ... and whilst the greater part of the inhabitants of New Amsterdam were buried in their sleep, scattered themselves through the streets, and burst into several of the houses, on pretense of looking for "Indians from the north" but in reality to avenge the death of a squaw."

It is important to note that the Lenape did not kill the people whose homes they entered. In fact, it wasn't until they were re-gathering at the edge of town, that Van Dyck confronted them and instigated a fight. This episode ended in the killing of Van Dyck and several others when soldiers charged the Indians. At this point, the Lenape were enraged. They went on a rampage, first to Pavonia where they burned Hoboken to the ground, then to Staten Island. They burned homes, killed who they could and wreaked havoc everywhere.

There could be no more peace between the Dutch and their Lenape neighbors. Their alliances with the Iroquois were weakening in the face of the growing trade between the English and the Iroquois. The English were waging a naval war against the Dutch and slowly but surely closing their colonies and then their armies in New Netherlands. The Dutch colony was ruined and in 1664 it surrendered to the forces of the Duke of York and passed into history.

Simply by their presence and intentions in the New World, the Dutch and their fellow Europeans began to affect change in Lenape society. The intensification of the market forces and the commodification of land, wampum, labor and virtually every other aspect of Lenape life undermined or subverted their ways of doing things by means both subtle and gross.

Wampum, which had been a means of proving that treaties of peace and cooperation existed between people, gradually became corrupted into a crude imitation of "money." The differences in land tenure were exploited to gain land at a cheap price.

The differences between the Dutch and Lenape ways of dealing with such issues of land tenure and wampum were profound and incompatible. The consequences of these differences had a clear effect on the terms of social discourse between the two cultures. But while these differences are important to understand, they threaten to distract history from the rotten underbelly of the matter. The cruel reality is that these differences, particularly those of land tenure, didn't really matter to the Europeans. The Dutch fully intended to take the land either by giving trinkets and claiming it a sale, by granting each other title, or if all else failed, to take title by conquest.

In the modern historical discourse of Euro-Indige relations, the popular notion is that what happened was an unfortunate mistake, by people who did not "understand" each other. The truth is that they understood each other perfectly. The Dutch, like the rest of the European countries that settled

the New World, did not care. They were in violent competition with each other. Theirs was a "gold rush" led by pirates and mercenaries and funded by the royal coffers and the wealth of their aristocratic and merchant classes. They trampled the native inhabitants; and if the Indians fought back, the Europeans only brutalized them again. That within fifteen or twenty years, the Dutch should be moved to consider genocide as a solution, is approximately the same number of years it took the English in Jamestown and New England to apply the same option.

Having viewed the carnage of the Dutch attempts at settling an American colony, the real culture clash was one of the sword. The subtle internal changes that the Europeans affected weakened the health of the Lenape and undermined and destroyed their culture as does a disease destroy its victim. But the destruction was deliberate. The market forces that destroyed the native inhabitants were the same reasons and forces that drew the Europeans to the New World.

The "land deals" were pretexts for the most part, either to satisfy their critics in Europe or to stall for time in the New World, when their hosts still had numerical and military advantage. When this pretext was revealed, the carnage began. Where possible, they got their surrogates (like the Mohawk or the Mahican) to do their dirty work for them thus undermining the peoples closest to them (the Lenape). In the end, as Bolton put it, they were there to take the land "by fair means or foul."

□

The Ant Movie

*Now I make various suggestions
wading thru the pesticide rain
a little bowl, a cup & saucer
of dust
people not breathing within without
a geodesic dome yet before a sluiced
blue sky
with white clouds in it*

*It's green and the floor is green
so so so not so it is*

*A sexual girl is carried
think of the society
why dont you have parents?
you must be hungry*

by Bernadette Mayer

ELEGY FOR A DARKENED ROOM

by Jim Higgins

Tied down in a blackened room, my hands bound to my ankles, the sound of dripping somewhere water increasingly blocked out by the bellowing of the subway just outside.

Sequestered here below the streets, my eyes are wide in the mostly darkness as if they could shine like headlights and illuminate this grotto. But they are merely eye-ball-white dots in the dark.

The grime wet, muckish, of different consistencies, is everywhere and on my body, my face, my arms, like abstract expressionist brooding, but darker, darker.

I am left, bound like an animal, wondering why I am here; thinking and fearing and sweating and breathing. Breathing here is difficult. The air is thick, jungle humid. Swallowing is like drinking, almost suffocating. The sweat drips off my nose, off my lips and into my mouth.

The back of my head throbs where his massive hands tore the hair out like a paper towel, after dragging me here and hurling my body into the walls of this twenty by twenty box. There is blood caked under my nose which is probably broken. The pain in my head has just begun to subside, but my ribs ache and my arms feel badly bruised.

In the corner of my eye, I just barely see him, standing in the opening in the wall, the thing with the fly head and the thick black claws with slender, tentative, hairy fingers, looking at me with a million eyes. Light leaks in from the passageway behind it, reluctantly illuminating that part of the dirty pit. It wears clothes: a dark overcoat, pants, shoes twisted out of shape by feet that bulge out the sides. It is about seven feet tall and very thin, its clothes hanging on the slight but powerful frame, the body twitching.

It walks over to me with a stilted, angular gait like a marionette. It moves jerkily through the muck and garbage on the floor and stops in front of me. It stands twitching, its body spasming as if from brief, stabbing pains. The fly head cocks to one side and then another, the myriad eyes hovering over me taking infinite views of my helplessness. I think while at the same time trying not to that it is considering throwing me into the walls again, or worse, that I have been brought here as food.

Slowly again, the roaring of a passing train builds louder and louder. The sound frightens me, even more than I am already. The fly-thing's twitches grow worse, causing it to fall to its knees. It moves its palsied body toward me and I scream, the sound lost in the thunder of steel.

It is not until it is right next to me that I begin to think that the creature is as disturbed by the noise of the train as I am. I realize that no train passed while it brought me down or during the time it was here before it suddenly left. It touches its insect head to my shoulder. I feel bile rising in the back of my throat which I somehow force back. I cringe and shake and pray to a deaf God to please let me die. The train echoes into silence.

Hopelessness overwhelms me in a wave and I cry; my shoulders heaving, the tears mixing with the sweat and grit and blood on my face. I cry like a child cries, with my whole body, feeling pain, fear, and misery pour from my eyes.

From the fly-thing, the creature next to me, a barely audible whining sound comes, building slowly in volume like the train, until it is strong and clear. It is a high pitched sound, almost like a human voice; it becomes beautiful and rings in the chamber, like a choirboy's falsetto. There are phrases, but no words I can decipher. My weeping subsides as I am transfixed by the melodious voice. The creature sings its sad requiem and I feel that I am somehow a part of it not the cause but a party to a melancholy litany of wondrous and singular sound.

The song flows through my bound form, like waves on a shore, lapping away the

pain into forgetfulness. I feel as if I am dissolving, as if my body is being diluted by the high, crystalline notes, freeing me from physicality, connecting me to an astral plane, where thoughts are liquid, and the wind blows music that sounds like love.

But my eyes have been closed, and it is only after they are open that I know that I am still in the darkened grotto. The impossible choirboy voice still pours forth from the strange, sad creature on my shoulder, resounding through the room like it was a cathedral of pain. The sound that had been fluid through my body begins to gel and take form; somewhere in the core of my being it comes into existence, and I recognize it all too well - it is the shape of loneliness.

His voice continues to fill the dark nest, its high tones rising in a marvelous sweep. A tear escapes my eye, but it is not for me this time, but for the elegiac song of the giant that sits at my side, resting its great head on my shoulder.

R

ANIMALS/1958

(for Jules Levey)

I move around alot - I get nervous
I've been breathing regularly since 1958
(with the quality of an aside)
It seems a magical date
I move around alot - I get nervous
Once I got arrested: I ran down lower Manhattan
with the Wall Street Journal stuffed up my
Well, you know. I was screaming:
'I strongly disagree with mediocrity.'
(I don't think it was the drugs that did this to
me)
I feel disconnected when no one calls
I move around alot - I get nervous
I'm undecided about ambivalence
I only like girls who don't like me
But I do believe love is a possibility
Sometimes I worry about the animals
Like the ones in government
They don't believe love is a possibility
(For them it's still 1953)
If life was fair
All the criminals would be dead
And all the victims would be alive
I miss Abbie Hoffman
(Steal this poem)

by Thomas Good

Conventions do not help poets. At least not young poets. They just make it tempting to try to write like others (famous poets, teachers) instead of finding your own unique way of writing. After all, the individual's embedded structure is the specialty of the writing. All of us, I believe, have poetry inside of us. The way I write poetry is by taking what's inside of me and smacking it down on the paper. Too many people do not do this. They are concerned with practicalities, with thinking "Is this okay to write?" All the stuff that young writers think that of, would be their best writing, their "raw" writing. The anal retentiveness of strictly following conventions (such as what to write and how to write it) needs to be disregarded by young, developing writers. They need to begin by clearing their head and feeling "free" to express their thoughts in any way, shape, or structure. However, conventions can be used to a writer's advantage. This most often would occur after the writer has somewhat developed his/her style. For example, the convention of strictly using punctuation correctly. If a developing writer is overly concerned with how to punctuate something he/she will be overwhelmed. At times, in order to "free write" successfully, creatively, even correct punctuation may have to be thrown out the window. The first step (the most important step) to writing - is to write - freely, without feeling restricted. If someone could do that, they are perhaps on their way to writing for life. Not many people can write free of mental restrictions. Those who can are definitely one example of "writers." My advice to all fellow young writers: At the beginning don't be restricted by any conventions, anything. If and when you feel you're ready, incorporate them into your unique style. Write. Like you were always taught not to do. Free.

I am fortunate enough to have met a poet I appreciate. She has been interested in poetry since the age of fifteen or sixteen. Now she is in her forties. This thirty year span impresses and amazes me. It encourages me. I feel that if she can do it (write poetry forever) maybe I can. Feeling restricted as a poet has always been my largest fear. So I asked Bernadette, my poet friend teacher, if she ever feels restricted in any way by anybody. She responded in two words - "No never." My initial reaction to her response was disbelief, discomfort. Can that be an honest response? I asked myself. Is it possible for an individual to not feel restricted at all? I suppose someone can advance to the point where they never hold themselves back from writing something - which is great. However, unconsciously we are all restricted. Our backgrounds (family life) will affect our writing tremendously. In

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one respect we will be able to articulate our experience - but depending on economic status certain people may not be exposed at a young-enough age to literature or poetry to be effective writers. Although I have not done a tremendous amount of reading in my life, I have been exposed to all kinds of literature. Both of my parents did a large amount of reading in their lives. Although my mother didn't finish high school, she educated herself by reading reading reading. She used to tell me how her father would yell at her to shut her night light and go to sleep. She would - and then she snuck out a flashlight and read - hiding under her pillow. If my family was poor instead of middle class my parents may have had a more difficult time purchasing all the books that they did. They may have had to read through the libraries services; which is not necessarily bad, but I would not have seen all those books books books. When I was a young boy and consumed by my anger, my only form of expression was cursing. Whenever I was upset I would scream a curse. This was an inadequate way of expressing myself. It was unsatisfactory. I needed to find a way to express my thoughts creatively - and in a way that would be, at times, a therapeutic process.

My father died when I was fifteen. About a month and a half after that I wrote my first poem. I remember - I was sitting at my kitchen table (alone) angry. I was feeling inadequate. Just like when I was a young boy cursing. I decided to write my feelings - they came out angry, mad at the world, scared - but they came out. It may not be a talented poem or a structurally brilliant poem, either. It was a poem. An expression of my thoughts and feelings that for some reason made me feel better. It was my own form of therapy at the age of fifteen.

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ME

Hi me, where am me?
Are me here? Are me there?
Me could be anywhere out there.
is me it? is there more for me?
Me is all me knows. Me doesn't know if others exist.
Me fears, me feels, me senses, loves, hates, dreams.
Me is curious, why doesn't me know? Why?
Me is angry with life, people.
Why do people act as such assholes?
Me wants to know -
Why we don't all get together and help.
WE AND ME SHOULD ALL HELP LIFE! ! !

If I didn't have the parents I had I may never have been interested in poetry. Also -

just the simple fact that I wrote this poem because my father died. It shows how my life affects my poetry. Specific events in my life change what I write. For example, most of what I write today is about death. My society influences my writing because my society influences my state of being, thinking, and poems are always running around in my thinking.

When I reached my teenage years I was beginning to realize that cursing was not enough. So, beginning with my poem "ME" I launched into the poetry world. And whenever I got upset I would look at my options. Usually some of them would fail (cursing/verbalizing anger to others) so I would crawl to my desk, curse the wall in front of me and begin to write. Now that I've been writing poetry for five years it is more than just therapy. It is becoming part of my life. Poetry may not be how I make a living, but it is how I will stay alive.

I understand that I may not be able to make money off of my poetry. My curiosity asked Bernadette that question. I asked, "What does it feel like to have to make money from your poetry?" She answered, "Have to? Can't. Hardly anyone can (in 20th century). But poets find other ways to live, like musicians, like philosophers, on the periphery, no 'security.' I have six jobs now, maybe soon none. In different countries, different times, different ways."

Her response frightened me. Also, it inspired me. The frightening part is the truth in it. You cannot really make money from poetry. Not enough to live on, or to support children for that matter. So a young poet like myself needs to think about that. Can I deal with a life of "no security," as Bernadette describes hers? Or do I want to get a job of higher pay, which might take away from my writing time and energy? The fact that I have to at some point make that decision is disturbing. Again, it shows the power my society has over my writing. So, although I don't "feel" restricted, I am - just because of where I live, when I live, how I live. My own writing can be controlled by my environment. Yet it seems all I ever try to do is get control of my environment with my writing.

When I asked Bernadette how her society affects her poetry, she expressed her displeasure with her society. "This society sucks! As a lower class person, father no high-school degree, mother secretarial school graduate (always lording it over father for this reason), I probably couldn't or wouldn't have become a poet before these times in U.S." Basically, it seems that being a lower class person in one respect would tear you away from poetry - not enough access to literature, education. However, in another respect, those who are oppressed revolt with creative energy more than anyone. Maybe after being an oppressed lower class person Bernadette needed a way to express her thoughts and feelings. And, obviously for different reasons than me, she found poetry. Poetry - she seems to be in love with it. Even the word. When I asked her why she is a poet and if it was a

conscious or unconscious choice she replied, "Poet - I comprehended the meaning of the word at some tender age and all I knew after that was that's what I wanted to be. It seemed the most astonishing idea that such a person/job as poet could exist! Even now, when I see the words "poet" and "poetry" in any form of print, or hear them, I am thrilled that the universe (?) contains this concept." This is another statement that inspires me. I have to agree that the idea of "being a poet," of making poetry the "center" of my life is exhilarating - even though it may be a difficult financial existence.

There are other reasons that I read and write poetry, other than therapeutic reasons. Being inspired by other poets, ones that you know and others, is an important factor in continuing to write. It's an important inspirational factor in remaining productive by at least your own standards. William Blake's poem "Eternity" always touched me. Structurally it doesn't strike me as anything special. It even rhymes, which I'm usually not too fond of in poetry. However, I can relate to it. Years and years later, still - I understand. His poem "Eternity" will live for eternity.

Eternity

He who binds to himself a joy
Does the winged life destroy;
But he who kisses the joy as it flies
Lives in eternity's sun rise.

William Blake

His simply put poem eloquently described, to me, how I behaved at the age of sixteen and seventeen with my girlfriends. I embraced them too strongly. I squashed the little relationship we had. Now that I'm older I can sometimes watch beauty without suffocating it. The importance of receiving inspiration from other poets like this cannot be underestimated.

I get inspired by other poets for different reasons. e.e. cummings, for example. His style is very unique. When I read poetry of his, I become more interested in the structure of my poetry than the content. "If a poet is anybody, he is somebody to whom things matter very little - somebody who is obsessed by making." (e.e. cummings) The idea that I am "making" something is definitely stimulating. It makes me think of my mother carefully (artistically) making a four or five course meal every night. Or even when she made a tuna-fish sandwich. Perfect. A perfect amount of tuna-fish. A perfect amount of mayonnaise. And the bread cut diagonally - even. Perfect. An obsession. A creation. So now when I write a poem I want to put the perfect amount of tuna in it - and just enough mayonnaise. If I do - I'm satisfied. Again, e.e. cummings is one of the poets that helps me remain concerned with the process, the language;

how the words are placed on the page. My following poem, DeaTHink, was written in a poetry class. We read an e.e. cummings poem and then wrote a poem employing his structure in any way we chose.

DeaTHink

Dad's	Tell
E	epHone
Ars	Imer
Don'	geNcy a
	ttack
Tell	
H	Don't
Im	fE
Nothing.	Ar.e u
Kancer.	Dead?
Death	moT
mE	Her
A n	Is
Don'	N't
	Koming.

by Robert Levine

His influence was obvious. Previously, I hadn't written in this style. When I use enjambment while writing, I think of e.e. cummings, of his style. That's how I feel rules like punctuating, capitalizing, and sentence structure can be helpful. If you learn them, and learn them well, you can proceed to break them. If this is done successfully usually a very powerful point follows.

I think my advantage is that words come easy to me. Most people are afraid of them. I am not. Most people are afraid to make mistakes with them. I am not. "Mistakes," as people call them, are new language creations to me. Although I often write with specific structures I can also just sit down and write - without being intimidated, restricted, or inhibited.

So where does all this leave me? In a poetry workshop. Sharing my poems with people outside of school, family, friends. For the first time I'm sharing my poetry with poets. It feels good. Appreciated. Will I make a living off of poetry? Probably not. Will I write it forever? YES. It is inside of me. I think poetry. I breathe poetry. Part of me - is poetry. Will I need to follow certain conventions? Well, not at this point. However, if I decided I wanted to attempt at publishing mass amounts of my writing - I may have to. I may have to edit some of my writings. Also, if some of my poetry was to be published - the ones I like the most may not be accepted. I'm sure I would not be comfortable with that. Although I am in college and may use my education to get a "decent paying job," "I am thrilled the universe (?) contains this concept," as Bernadette said referring to poetry.

List

There's a plastic fork
 In the refrigerator
 There's metal baby shoes
 On the stereo speaker
 There's a sculpture
 On the desk
 There's a dictionary on the television
 There's a spider
 Hanging from the ceiling
 And Panda Bears
 Smiling from the corner

by Philip Good

The Magus

If God explodes just once in your skull
 (Scattering bone-bits across the eons)
 Relax: you will return
 In one
 peace
 And BE
 (Despite your mom and dad or Self)
 A junkie.

In sleep I had my first cerebral hemorrhage
 (I have been bleeding poems ever since)
 Awake now always (even in dreams)
 My head is a fountain spewing life-blood all over me.
 Drenching me
 (My hair and clothes cling to me)
 Mad and dying in this waterfall
 I sing.
 Always now always
 Tripping over and through
 myself
 My God! and
 you

by Bill Conte



by Ryan Waithe

"Beauty is simply the total consciousness of our perversions."

- Salvador Dali

"Everybody in Florida shoots dope," Jack said.

Jack was a great dunce of a man, given to uttering half-witticisms. Nonetheless, I accepted the clean syringe he offered me, on the off chance he might be right. I crushed the yellow dilaudid tablet with my spoon, trying hard to imagine the senior citizens of St. Pete stoned on synthetic morphine, their golf carts and tricycles colliding outside South Florida supermarkets. I added ten units of water to the powder, stirred the mix and applied the flame of a Zippo lighter to the underside of my well blackened spoon.

"Anyone with common sense can shoot dope," Jack said.

Jack was a unique individual. I was glad my flight to Key West was leaving in a few hours. Glad to be leaving Miami. And Jack.

"I ain't no junkie, man. Davy, now he's a junkie. . .", Jack slurred, as he fired up his second dilaudid.

"Uh huh," I grunted. I found my main vein, inside my left elbow, and booted the plunger a couple times. The warm dilaudid rush, orgasmic in its intensity, cascaded through my being. I lit a cigarette and stared out the window. When I looked back Jack was nodding, snoozing in his chair, the needle still stuck in his arm. I grabbed a Budweiser from the fridge and headed out. It was eight a.m., time to make my way to the airport. Adieu, Jack. Adios, Miami.

* * * * *

I stumbled into the airport newsstand and procured a copy of the Key West Citizen, the principal rag of the Florida Keys. Perched on a stool in the airport bar, I proceeded to study up on the town I had selected as my next port of call. I flipped through the want ads, marked a few, then turned to page one.

"Man kills lover at the Manhole," the headline screamed. The Manhole? I scanned the article. Apparently, some gay guy had stormed into the local disco, "The Manhole" (how quaint), and gunned his lover down. The bar owners were appropriately shocked and apologetic. I made a mental note to check this bar out when I arrived in old Cayo Hueso.

Threading my way through the maze that was the Miami airport, I bumped into some hot pink tourists. An old timer mumbled something unpleasant. I stepped on his toe, smiling impishly.

There was a long line at the check-in. Looking around, I noticed some commotion at the head of the procession. Two latinos, with loads of carry on baggage, were trying to cut the line. A Dade County Sheriff, one of the best and the brightest, sat and stared blankly as the two interlopers eventually succeeded in intimidating their fellow travelers, grabbing the lead spot on line. Waiting impatiently, I noticed that I was sweating profusely. It was September, the height of hurricane season - a period of inclement weather, and hot as hell. Where was the goddamned air conditioning? I soothed my frayed nerves by visualizing the ice cold gin and tonic I would order, once on board. . .

My seat was near the stewardesses' station and the rest room, in the rear of the plane. A nice view and a handy toilet. I nodded a brief how-do to the passenger on my right, a hirsute fellow with jailhouse tattoos, and proceeded to settle in. The stewardess, a dark haired, blue eyed beauty, helped me jam my backpack into the overhead compartment. A box of condoms fell out and bounced on the carpet. She stooped to pick them up and I gave her a friendly leer, by way of thanks. She blushed and promised to return shortly with my drink. I sat, aisle-wise, as another stew, a busty red head, brushed past me, entering her smallish station. I leaned gently into her ample posterior, offering a polite 'excuse me'.

As soon as we were airborne I felt that something wasn't right. The plane had barely leveled off when a dark Cuban or Puerto Rican man came running down the aisle of the 737, holding a glass jar filled with some kind of liquid. I thought, maybe, the man had a bad bladder, the toilet being located just behind yours truly. But a moment later I heard the red headed stew screaming. Then I smelled the gasoline. Mr. Bladder had dumped his jar of gasoline all over the stewardess and was brandishing a bic lighter. The woman's face contained a look of absolute fear. The

by Thomas Good

Hurricane Season

(for Tommy McMorrow)

smell of gas was overpowering. I decided I'd better put my cigarette out and try to clear my head. Images of heroic acts flooded my sensorium briefly, then I realized that, judging from the shrieking emanating from the front of the aircraft, Mr. Bladder wasn't acting alone. His accomplice (I now recognized the two men as being one and the same with the line jumpers from the airport) had copied his stunt in the forward section of the plane. His captive, the dark haired stewardess, was obviously terrified; her uniform soaked through with gasoline, her assailant waving his lighter and screeching in Spanish. I looked around the plane. It was filled with military types and tourists, all wearing stunned expressions. Mr. Bladder, a baritone, began shouting in unison with his comrade, a tenor, at the front of the plane. It was like a scene from some Wagnerian opera.

Finally, the screaming ceased as the co-pilot, the only bilingual member of the flight crew, began negotiating with the fool (Mr. Tenor) in the front of the plane.

Some time later, the voice of reason came over the P.A. system. "This is the Captain speaking," it said. "We're going to do a little charter service to Havana, Cuba. The temperature in Havana is a balmy eighty-seven degrees and the skies are clear. We should be landing at Havana International in about fifteen minutes. Please remain calm and we'll try to make this additional stopover as pleasant as possible. Thank you."

"Damn. . . my parole officer's never gonna believe this," the passenger on my right said, shaking his head. "I ain't allowed to leave the country without permission. . ."

I muttered something soothing to the halfwit and cursed my luck.

"What if they never let us out of Cuba? They's all communists down there, you know," the dunce continued.

"No need to worry," I said, "the Captain has things under control. I'll tell you what though. I'm going to get myself a gigantic rum and coke the minute we land."

"They ain't got no bars, in them communist countries," the invertebrate interjected.

"Now don't say that," I spluttered, turning away from the dimwit, in hopes of silencing his ridiculous prattle. Time passed slowly, spitefully, as I tried to siphon gin from my empty glass.

I jumped as the Captain's voice erupted from the loudspeaker, informing his passengers that Cuba could now be seen on the right side of the aircraft, and that we would be landing in about five minutes. I leaned across the nitwit on my right, straining to see the island of Cuba. There it was alright, floating in the Caribbean like an overstuffed green cigar. Strangely, the two hijackers chose that moment to resume yelling. Mr. Tenor waved his arms frantically as Mr. Bladder once again threatened his captive with the lighter. You lowlife bastard, I thought, what self respecting smoker would use a bic? I'd been a Zippo man

since I was old enough to smoke. The co-pilot reappeared and calmed the testy skyjackers. Evidently these simpletons believed the Captain was tricking them by taking us to an island that only looked like Cuba.

We landed around lunchtime. Havana International was an airport with a great future behind it. As we rolled down the dilapidated runway, away from the terminal, I saw a multitude of antique, apparently burned out aircraft littering the adjacent tarmac. The Cubans had simply pushed these planes out of the way after they had flamed up. It was an unnerving sight. We stopped a good quarter mile from the terminal. A truckload of Cuban militia pulled up. Using their vehicle for cover, the soldiers took up defensive positions.

"I told you, they's gonna kill us all," the cretin on my flank observed.

"Look, im-be-cile," I said, enunciating carefully, "shut the fuck up." Eloquence is the first casualty of war.

I leaned forward to get a better view out the tiny window. Cuban riflemen, wearing what appeared to be lime green leisure suits, were pointing the business end of their assault rifles at yours truly. I sat back in my seat. The hammerhead seated next to our hero continued mumbling some idiocy about his parole officer. I resigned myself to an early death. Then the miraculous happened. The hijackers opened the main hatch as Cuban troops wheeled a mobile staircase into place. The two ersatz revolutionaries began chanting: "Viva Cuba! Viva la Revolucion!" The Cuban squadleader signaled the men to exit the plane via the gangplank. They did. When they reached the runway they were summarily relieved of their lighters and beaten senseless. Handcuffs were applied and the two villains were driven off in an old step van with police markings. A Cuban soldier entered the plane and ordered the Captain to disembark his passengers.

We boarded a rickety old bus and rambled off the terminal. After some foolishness which consisted of exchanging our drivers' licenses for airport passes (I told the security men to keep mine, it was expired anyway) we were informed that, as we were hijack victims, Air Florida would pick up our bar/restaurant tabs. I knew but one word of Spanish, however, it wasn't long before a rather flat, but quite strong Cuban cerveza was coursing into my gullet. When the waitress, an attractive woman with olive skin and dark eyes, appeared bearing Spanish language menus, I closed my eyes and pointed to food item number segundo. A ham and cheese sandwich that had seemingly been pressed with an iron arrived soon after. It proved inedible. The beer, however, was tasting better by the minute.

Midway through lunch I got a fright. The Cuban militia had removed all of our luggage from the plane. They intended to search each piece of baggage before allowing us to leave. This was

trouble-some to our illustrious protagonist as I had a hundred or so amphetamines stashed in my suitcase. In the end, however, the soldiers seemed not at all interested in the curious bottle of pretty pills secreted in yours truly's Samsonite, passing over said item quickly as they ransacked my personal effects. At that moment, as the soldiers closed my case, I found the Cubans to be a remarkably sensible people. Feeling tremendously relieved, I kissed the waitress (an old American custom) and ran off to the duty free shop.

I browsed briefly in the duty free store, purchasing two boxes of cigars, a bottle of rum with Fidel's portrait on the label and some postcards depicting the Lenin Vocational Training School. I stamped and mailed the cards *poste haste*, sending one with a very oblique greeting (wish you were here) to my former mother-in-law. After some further bureaucratic absurdities (we were x-rayed by some prehistoric East German security device) we were reloaded into our aircraft and sent on our way back to the States. The applause from the grateful passengers was deafening when we finally arrived in Key West, a mere four hours behind schedule. After some insipid conversations with administrative types from the U.S. Customs Department ("but you did leave the country, sir.") and a debriefing by the F.B.I. ("What color socks did the tenor have on?"), we were set loose on the town. In no time I located a seedy hotel in close proximity to several sleazy bars. By early evening I was ensconced in a disreputable saloon called the Bucket of Blood. And there I sat, Cuban cigar in hand, totally exhausted and deliriously thirsty. I ordered a double Cuba Libré. It was, after all, September in Key West, hotter than hell, and the height of hurricane season. Based on my recent experience, I felt that I had to be prepared for anything.

* * * * *

Next day I awoke in a strange bed in a ramshackle hotel called the Tilton Hilton. The Tilton was a remuddled Victorian building, newly outfitted to house bohemian tourists like yours truly. It was situated on Angela Street, a block away from Duval, the main drag in Old Key West. It sat next door to the bus station, just in case. I rubbed my fuzzies and lit a Cuban cigar, reclining in my lumpy bed. Dimly, I realized that I was soaked with sweat. It was seven o'clock in the morning and hotter than hades. Hmm. Time for a drinkie-winkie at the local pub. Then I would start the search for employment.

On the way to the bar I passed a gaggle of marines jogging down Duval Street. They sang a manly song, something about wanting to be a recon ranger. I suppressed an unpatriotic giggle.

I began my day with a Bloody Mary in a place called the Summit. It was given that silly title due to the fact that the bar was located atop an old four story hotel, a skyscraper by Key West standards.

The Summit had massive air conditioning and a panoramic view, its main attraction. I mentioned the marines to the waitress, a charming creature with a delicious Georgia accent, a blond bun and a generous bosom. She told me that there were tons of soldiers in town due to the recent influx of Cuban refugees. My Georgia peach gasped as I recounted my recent adventures in Havana, including some imaginary heroics that I invented on the spot. She leaned across the bar, straining a delightfully threadbare t-shirt, and informed me in a parenthetical tone that there had been a number of hijackings recently, due, no doubt, to the sad realization on the part of the refugees that the streets of the ole U.S. of A. were not paved with gold (contrary to the assertions of the 'secret' radio station broadcasting out of Marathon Key). I asked my charming hostess if I might call on her later, but she declined, mentioning something about a boyfriend. "How quaint," I said, as I took my leave. I envisioned some slobbering redneck fool, his mouth full of chewing tobacco, violating this poor creature. Can't save them all, I thought as I exited, stage left.

Distraught over the cruel fate of this shining example of Southern Womanhood, I postponed my search for employment, vowing to look for work when I had recovered from my trauma. I walked south on Duval, looking for a new haunt, as I was once again passed by the very same gaggle of marines. Again singing that ridiculous anthem. "Oh, for Christ sakes," I muttered, feeling out of sorts due to overexertion and heat exhaustion. At last I found a suitable sanctuary. Turning left on Fleming Street, I entered a topless establishment called the Dry Tortuga. And dry I was. Two shots of whiskey and three beers later I remarked to the proprietress that I was nursing the idea of seeking work. To my amazement she offered me a job, starting that same day. I accepted the job, however, told the dear lady that it would be better if I worked up to the idea slowly, perhaps starting the following day. She understood completely and informed me that, from that moment on, I drank for free. I toasted her health as she departed, stating that it was her turn to dance. Now, as she had done me a service, and she was now my employer, I took a seat at the first table where I watched her dancing with growing interest. She was an athletic redhead, nicely curved and a natural dancer. After her top was unceremoniously discarded, she made her way to the various tables, providing men the opportunity to offer a tip. As I reached toward her gyrating panties, dollar bill in hand, she stretched the elastic, so to speak, offering me a glimpse of why she called herself "Cherry". She whispered that it wasn't necessary for me to tip her. "My pleasure, boss," I replied enthusiastically. She returned to the stage and I decided to amble off, in pursuit of food.

Once again pounding the hot pavement of Duval Street, I passed a policeman. A curious thing. An old man, apparently inebriated, was

lying in the bushes outside a fancy restaurant. The cop was cursing and straining to ram something up the old man's nose. I leaned over and glimpsed an ammonia inhalant being jammed into a reddened nostril. Another, earlier, inhalant was protruding from the man's other nostril. The officer looked up and laughed, informing this citizen that the old bastard was a sound sleeper and a notorious trespasser. "Ah, yes, public enemy number one," I said, as I stumbled off.

I decided to lunch in a place called Shorty's Diner, attracted by a placard in the window advertising "Kielbasa and Eggs" as the daily special. Breaking wind, I exited Shorty's some time later and journeyed back to the Tilton for a siesta before happy hour.

* * * * *

That evening I ventured down the northern end of Duval Street, checking out the Key West nightlife. The Manhole, the gay disco I had read about in the Key West Citizen, was my first stop. I smiled and nodded at the doorman, a big oaf with pierced nipples. He gestured me in. Inside the Manhole all hell was breaking loose. The bar, an elaborate place with oak furnishings and ceiling fans, was outfitted with a variety of sprinklers. The sprinklers were jury rigged to various pillars, light fixtures, etc. Over the P.A., an announcer interrupted a Donna Summer song to inform a throng of men, most of whom were pulsating on the dance floor, that Hurricane Richard was bearing down on the Keys. The barman, a leather clad fellow with closely cropped hair and a thick moustache, told yours truly that I was witnessing the annual hurricane party. He pointed to the sprinklers behind the bar which were flanked by large fans of the aircraft hangar variety.

I decided to fortify myself for the coming storm and so ingested a couple amphetamine tablets, chasing the pills with my newly acquired Margarita. I strolled about the Manhole, drink in hand, bracing myself for nasty weather. An attractive fellow, blond and blue, wearing only pinstriped boxer shorts, grabbed my arm and asked if I wanted to dance. Deferring to local customs, I said certainly.

The dance floor was packed. The P.A. was blasting "It's Raining Men", and indeed it was. I let loose, cut a rug, spilled my drink, etc. Although not the most graceful of dancers, I found myself enjoying the experience. My partner passed me a handkerchief. Eventually I surmised that I was supposed to sniff the kerchief. When I did the aroma of amyl nitrate flooded my sensorium. The room began to swirl and for a moment I suspected I might be the hero in a Fred Astaire film. My partner (Ginger) took my hand and off to the bar we went.

I discovered that Gaston, my date for the evening, was from Cincinnati, where he had attended Xavier University, majoring in bowling

and attending George Michael concerts. I, in turn, disclosed my christened name (I invented something exotic for the occasion) and told dear old Gas that I was from New York, by way of Miami, where I had been attending a convention for fans of the old situation comedy, "Three's Company." I hinted that I had even met John Ritter.

"Really?", said Gas, "You know, John Ritter was the first man I ever fantasized about having sex with. . ."

"Me too," I whispered. Gaston smiled, patting my forearm.

"Barkeep," I yelled over the music, "could I get another Margarita, and a Rob Roy for the gentleman?"

Leatherman laughed and aimed his soda gun at the two of us, spraying us with seltzer. Dumbfounded, I turned to Gaston.

"It's Hurricane Season," he intoned, "and I, for one, am going to get wet tonight." He grinned at me knowingly. The barman delivered our drinks and Gas, nodding after him said, "He's a dear man, your basic faggot. What's your story, sailor?"

"I'm your basic tourist," I revealed, "in fact, I'm writing a travelogue about Key West."

"Oh! Can I be in it! !?," Gas inquired.

"Absolutely. . ."

"Listen, it's O.K. if you describe me as looking like Lana Turner. Do you see the resemblance?"

I bobbed twice in agreement. "Even without makeup," I added.

Gaston kissed me on the cheek and flitted off to chat with another. Your narrator, a bit of a social moth himself, decided to move on. To investigate further this period of tropical turbulence and indecent knavery that the locals termed 'Hurricane Season.'

I ventured down Duval, turning right onto Browne Street, where I opted to check out Captain Eddy's Bar. Immediately outside the bar, a man lay in a pool of blood. On closer inspection I discovered that the poor sod was holding his intestines in his hands, as he tried frantically to shove them back inside the gaping hole in his midsection. I asked the man what had happened and he told me that he had been fileted by an angry shrimper, all because he had danced with the fishmonger's fiancé.

"What sort of dance did you do?," I inquired.

"Huh?. . . a slow dance, I guess. . ."

In the distance a siren wailed - the approaching ambulance.

"Well my good fellow, if I were you, I'd avoid stepping on anymore toes," I said. I entered the bar in a somewhat circumspect manner, negotiating the pavement carefully, to avoid slipping on the man's innards.

Inside Eddy's, a tacky place fashioned from an old quonset hut, sat a number of sailors, a few fishermen, and too few women; most with too much makeup and too many miles. I ordered a scotch and ate another amphetamine, offering one to the attractive barmaid, a colleen from Boston. She

accepted and we agreed to meet later. Kelly had a dark page-boy haircut bordering pert features and a notable physique, however, I soon wearied of the sweaty bar and, for the moment, took my leave.

I stumbled around the area, glancing in at the Famous Sloppy Joe's Bar. It was infested with bikers. A motorcycle mama stood on the corner, just outside the bar. She lifted her t-shirt as I passed, revealing a pair of breasts that gravity had got the better of. "What I need is a good stiff prick," she disclosed.

"Me too," I said, feeling sadly flaccid. I made my way back to the Manhole where Gaston was dripping wet. The fans flanking the bar were on high, driving sheets of water, now jetting full force from the sprinklers, all about the bar. A weather bulletin appeared on the video screen at the rear of the dance floor, informing the hapless dancers that Hurricane Richard was now a full strength storm and only thirty miles off Key West. I ordered a drink from an obviously intoxicated Leatherman. Within minutes I was saturated. Gaston flew by, pecking my cheek, songbird that he was. I found the whole scene a bit much, but I figured, 'when in Greece. . .'

At closing time Gaston and his new date escorted me from the bar. We walked arm-in-arm toward Browne Street. Gas and friend were going to the Fleet Air Wing for a late supper and I was on my way to pick up Kelly.

"Good night, François," Gaston gushed, "do come again. . ."

I waved farewell and figure 1: Sonny reluctantly entered Captain with his revolver. (photo: T. Good) Eddy's. Fortunately, Kelly was getting off as I arrived. She laughed at my appearance, the proverbial drowned rat, and ushered me into her car. In no time we were at her place where she towed me dry and raised my expectations for a soothing end to what had been a whirlwind of an evening.

Over breakfast, which consisted of eggs, scotch and cigars, we waxed philosophical. I told the lovely Kelly that Key West had a dreamlike quality to it. And that, while it was pleasant enough, I was beginning to feel the need for a taste of reality. However harsh it might be.

"I beg to differ," said she, "Key West is the

reality. New York, Boston, even Miami. . .they're the dream."

I demanded an explanation but she refused to elaborate. We grew excited while doing the dishes and were thus forced to return to bed awhile. Kelly, it turned out, was a morning person. I left the house around noon, with an invitation to return later that evening.

As Cherry did not expect me to report to work until four, I decided to walk a bit. I wandered up Truman Avenue, heading north, until I saw something that caught my eye. A man, completely nude, lay fast asleep on the hood of a car. It being

high noon, I decided I had best wake the man, if for nothing else, to prevent him getting an outrageous sunburn.

Sonny, a charming man recently released from the State penitentiary, thanked me profusely for waking him and revealed to me that he had driven home that morning from Miami, after an all night gambling soiree at an after hours club. Sonny told me that he had arrived home exhausted from the drive and had fallen asleep as soon as he had parked his car. I asked the obvious question, to which Sonny replied that he had misplaced his clothes at the party and had been forced to drive home in a state of complete undress.

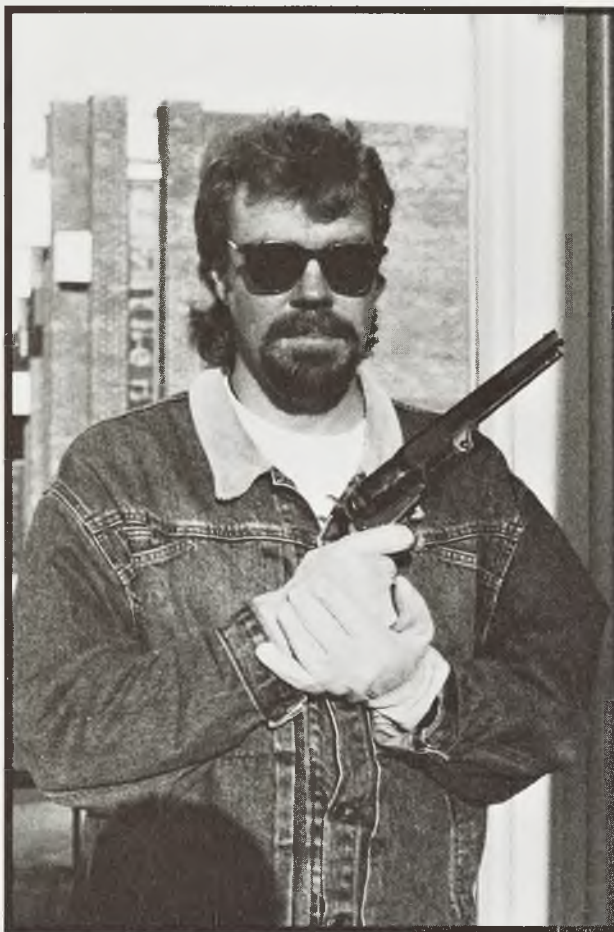
"That must have been embarrassing," I said.

"Yeah, man," Sonny answered, "especially when I stopped to get gas at one of those self serve joints. . ."

As he still appeared tired, I offered Sonny an amphetamine.

He accepted and invited me into his place. It

was your basic bachelor pad: a worn sofa; black and white television with grease smeared all over the screen, and; a thirty-eight caliber revolver laying on a battered coffee table. Sonny dressed and reappeared quickly, offering me a beer. I toasted his recent gambling successes and he offered me some cocaine. A stickler for good etiquette, I accepted his gracious offer. He produced a baggie containing at least half an ounce of white powder. Undoing the twist tie that secured the bag, Sonny dipped it into the powder and inhaled the fruits of his labor. I followed his lead. Sonny informed me that he intended to spend the day relaxing.



"Just me and my gun," he said, fondling his revolver.

Several lines of cocaine later the phone rang. Sonny answered it warily, cocking the thirty-eight.

"Yeah? . . . what? . . . yeah. . . O.K."

I looked at Sonny quizzically. "Everything alright, Sonny?", I asked.

"Nada pasa," he intoned, "just that bitch Monique. She's a coke whore. Likes to do lines off the end of my. . ."

"You know Sonny, I've got to get to work. Sorry to drink and run, but. . ."

"No problemo. Listen, man, you can stay if you want. Monique don't care. She'll toot off yours too."

"Hey, thanks Sonny, but I've really got to go."

We parted like old friends. From the street I could see Sonny staring out the window, brandishing his revolver. What a guy.

I decided I really did have to get to work and turned south on Truman. Near the nine hundred block, I stepped over a man lying in the gutter. He was rolling back and forth, hugging himself, repeating, "that bitch gave me herpes, that bitch. . . ." I offered the gentleman one of my multipurpose tablets. He yelled something unpleasant in return and so I shrugged and continued on my way, taking the pill myself. It had been a busy morning.

By some miracle I got to work on time. Cherry was on stage when I arrived. She smiled and waved. I fixed myself a double Yukon Jack and began introducing myself to my patrons. There were alot of sailors. And a few Cubanos. I struck up a conversation with a regular, an ex-New Yorker named Mack. A sardonic, carrot topped man, tall and thin, with too much lucky tiger hair oil on his head. Mack was ex-Navy, a Vietnam vet, slightly shell shocked and very addicted to heroin. In order to control his habit he bought raw opium and mixed it with water, heating the mixture in a saucepan. When it cooled, he poured the viscous liquid into gelatin capsules. He took two capsules three times a day, to keep his mind right. Mack gave your devoted barman slash therapist two capsules around dinner time. An hour later I was wacked. Mack wasn't far behind.

Around eleven a fight erupted between a drunken sailor and one of the Cubans, a coke dealer, or, in the vernacular, a cocaine cowboy. Mack and I broke it up, tossing the cowboy outside. The sailor attempted to follow, yelling: "I want a fuck or a fight, I don't care which!" I restrained the fool, cautioning him to allow the latino brother to cool down. Popeye the Sailor asked my name. I responded and the drunken lout began to sing: "Tommy Tarantula, he's looking for an eight-legged woman. . . ." I assured the imbecile that he was quite amusing and turned away for a moment. As I attended to another customer, Mister Mariner bolted out the door. I heard cursing and then a gunshot. When Mack and I got there, the cowboy was long gone and the sailor was weaving back and forth on the sidewalk fronting the bar. There

was blood everywhere. Popeye the Sailor had an entry wound just outside of his right eye. The bullet, apparently a small caliber projectile, had exited slightly below his right ear. Popeye steadfastly refused to go to the Emergency Room. Cherry was very upset. I tried to calm her down and keep the patrons happy simultaneously. John Wayne stuff. It worked. Mack was a big help. I invited him to Kelly's later for cocktails. As for sailor-boy, I gave him two amphetamines and sent him on his way. Cherry was very impressed with our hero. After she removed her tongue from my throat and her hand from my genitalia, I told her it was nothing Errol Flynn wouldn't have done. Nonetheless, she promised to thank me properly soon. Not one to question authority, I agreed to her plan.

I later learned that the Police did eventually apprehend the shooter, after he was overheard boasting of his exploits, while waving a twenty-two caliber Saturday night special, in a local restaurant noted for its authentic Cuban cuisine and raucous clientele. The man confessed to everything after being tortured with ammonia inhalants. As for Popeye, he was brought up on charges by his Commanding Officer. Captain Wilson, the base commander, had been angered by Popeye's obvious attempt to damage government property (i.e., himself).

My workday ended around four a.m. Mack and I staggered home, arriving at the same time as Kelly. The three of us sat around a card table drinking cheap chianti and eating smoked oysters, delicacies Mack had discovered while in Vietnam. Around this time I disclosed to Mack that I was experiencing discomfort, as I was unable to relieve myself.

"Mack," said your devoted storyteller, "I don't know what the hell is going on. It seems that I'm unable to go number one."

Kelly giggled and Mack asked, "Do you do it standing up?"

Indicating that standing us was, generally speaking, the way of most manly men, I asked what that had to do with anything.

"It's the opium," Mack said. "You've got to sit down, relax the muscles. . ."

To my surprise Mack was right. Right as rain, so to speak. Relieved that everything came out alright in the end, I rejoined the party in a celebratory mood. Drinks for everyone, said I, chianti all around. About six, Kelly and I retired for the evening. An hour or so later, unable to sleep, I got up to watch the morning news. During the forecast (hot and muggy, tropical storm forming off the Bahamas) Mack suddenly emerged from the spare bedroom and walked silently past the sofa where I was sprawled. I called his name but, as no reply was forthcoming, I refocused on the sports news. I was startled to hear the sound of running water coming from the kitchen, not an unusual occurrence except for the fact that I could see the sink from my perch, and the faucet was clearly not on. My curiosity aroused, I peeked around the corner

just in time to see Mack emptying his bladder into Kelly's refrigerator. Startled, I called Mack's name again. Again, no reply. His mission completed, Mack stuffed his utensil back in its proper sheath and returned to bed, walking right past a stunned yours truly. Peering cautiously into the fridge, I was grateful that Kelly had few perishables, although some of our oysters were now smoked *and* marinated. I cleaned up the mess and finally passed out on the couch.

Next day, Mack apologized for his faux pas. He revealed that he suffered from Vietnam nightmares from which he could not awaken, and would occasionally sleepwalk. I suggested he get a padlock for his fridge at home, but Mack told me that the preceding night's indiscretion resulted from somnambulating in a strange apartment. I quizzed Mack on how it was that he was able to pee standing, while on opium, when I could not. "You're a rookie," he replied. These issues resolved, I asked Mack about another minor dilemma. Being a generally regular guy (one coffee, two cigarettes), I was somewhat concerned with my seeming inability to do number two.

"Mack," I intoned, "I seem to be unable to pinch a loaf."

"It's the opium," Mack said. And so we journeyed to the corner store where I purchased an economy size bottle of prune juice, Mack's recommended cure. Back home, Mack and I sat in front of the TV, smoking Cuban cigars. Mack nursed a beer, and I sipped prune juice, while Kelly chewed her bacon and eggs in the kitchen, occasionally erupting into unrestrained laughter.

Round about two, I realized that Mack and I might be late for our respective jobs and so I called in. Cherry giggled when I told her that, due to a binding obligation, I might be late.

"I could help," she cooed. As this was not an idea without merit, I promised to let her know how things worked out, later in the day.

That afternoon, the prune juice having done its job, Mack, Kelly and I journeyed down Duval Street in the general direction of Shorty's Diner where coffee and kielbasa awaited your bleary eyed protagonist. A block away from Shorty's I heard a high pitched voice calling my name, or rather, my pseudonym.

"François. . .stop the train dear, stop the god-damned train!"

Gaston gestured frantically from the lead car of the Conch Tour Train, a mechanized monstrosity that consisted of a 'locomotive' (propane powered engine car) and a string of canopied passenger cars, each about the size of a golf cart. Gaston was clad in leather panties, a matching brassiere, fishnets and stiletto heels. His fellow travelers were also in drag. The Conch Tour Train came to a halt beside myself and my companions.

"Oh François!", gushed an effervescent Gaston as he pecked my cheek. Kelly, one eyebrow raised, whispered "François?" I elbowed her to silence. Mack chuckled.

"Oh François, we've rented the Conch Tour Train for the day! All of our friends from the Manhole are here, look!" I did, they waved. "Oh François, do come along, we're photographing tourists!" Gaston showed me his 'camera', a child's toy built to resemble a Kodak from yesteryear. Pointing out the obvious to Gaston, he replied that they weren't really taking pictures, just having some fun, and wouldn't we join in? I looked at my compatriots who nodded their assent, and we were off. Three hangovers and a trainload of femme fatales with facial hair.

We traveled the main thoroughfares of Key West, 'photographing' tourists and whistling at marines in jogging shorts. Parents tried to prevent their children noticing us but the kids all seemed to get a good laugh. Rounding Simonton Street, near the Sands bar, we passed a bathing beauty wearing the smallest bikini I had ever seen. She wore a tiny triangle of open weave mesh 'concealing' her tropic of capricorn, and what looked like cotton balls over her nipples (all else was well oiled).

"Oh, work it honey!", exclaimed Gas.

"Where?! Where?!", inquired Gaston's date from the other evening.

"No, dear heart," Gas replied, "she's a real one."

"Oh. . .," moaned a dejected Jacqueline Onassis.

On Roosevelt Boulevard we passed another Conch Tour Train, making its way south. With an enthusiasm that seemed to stun the tourists on board the sister train, we erupted into a cacophony of jeers and cheers. Finally, our tour over, we stopped at the Manhole for a drink. The bar owners had laid out an amazing buffet, including tons of fresh seafood, fruits and vegetables. All of this, apparently for the weary travelers, as the food-stuffs lay on a tremendous table beneath a hot pink banner that proclaimed, in white block letters, "Welcome Tourists!"

We munched on the various delicacies as the afternoon "tea dance" began. After lunch, Kelly and I joined the throng on the dance floor. At about three o'clock we said our goodbyes to Gaston. Mack and I made our way to the Dry Tortuga, after dropping Kelly off at Captain Eddy's.

It was a raucous scene at the old Turtle when Mack and I arrived. A Chicago cop named Bobby was celebrating his thirtieth birthday, tipping the dancers generously and buying drinks for all the patrons of the establishment. He and I chatted awhile and he asked where he could get some quaaludes. I looked at Mack, who shrugged as if to say, "why not?" and then I pointed the well lubricated lawman in the right direction. An hour later, Officer Bobby could barely lift his head off the bar.

The place was full of military types and the girls were making a killing. Inspired by the generosity of the sex-starved sailors, Cherry was now discarding her bottoms as well as her top, placing her tips in a garter on her notable thigh. Mack and

I, aloof from the turmoil, sipped Bushmills and played a quiet game of chess. And so it went for most of the night. At closing time, the bulk of the sailors having gone off to The Big Fleet for a nightcap, Cherry, Mack and I were left alone with a couple of the dancers and Officer Bobby, fast asleep on the bar. The dancers kissed Cherry goodnight and Mack and I attempted to rouse Officer Bob. I don't know when I realized that something was amiss but it probably didn't matter much. The ambulance crew said that Bobby had been dead for at least an hour before we called for help.

The paramedics bagged the body and left without much fuss. They pulled away as Cherry locked up. Mack gave a little salute as the ambulance disappeared into the night.

"Happy Birthday," he said.

* * * * *

Laying in bed, listening to Kelly's breathing, and Mack's snoring, I began to experience a longing to go home. At least for a vacation from Kelly's harsh 'reality' of Key West. At breakfast I mentioned this idea to my tablemates. Mack got very excited.

"I haven't seen Long Island since the War," he said.

Kelly, perhaps inspired by her men, agreed that a vacation would do her good. That evening she stopped by the Tortuga to tell Mack and myself that Captain Eddy had given her a month off. Cherry, overhearing the news, grabbed my crotch, saying: "Can I give you a goodbye present?" Not wanting her to feel rejected, I replied that I didn't see why not. Kelly cleared her throat, in a somewhat dramatic manner, and I, the prudent diplomat, told Cherry that there was no need to overstate the import of my brief vacation. I would, after all, be back to work in a month. As she pouted I told her that I merely wanted to enjoy a little more of the delicious anticipation which I experienced whenever I pictured myself as the recipient of her gift. She brightened at this and rammed her tongue down my throat to express her gratitude.

Work issues resolved, Cherry gave me the rest of the night off. Kelly, Mack and I returned to our respective homes to pack for the trip. I settled up at the Tilton, Mack grabbed some clean boxers and a toothbrush, and Kelly booked our flight and made arrangements for a taxi to take us to the airport in the morning. We met back at her place around midnight and dined on smoked oysters. Mack and I finished off the last of my Cuban cigars and regaled Kelly with tales of old New York. Next morning, the taxi arrived on time and we were off.

The airport was very small and sleepy. A Monroe County sheriff dozed at his

post. We boarded the plane, a compact 737, and took our seats, Bloody Marys firmly in hand. I paused to reflect on my eventful week in Key West, reasoning that I had weathered my first hurricane season rather well, all in all. As I reviewed my recent adventures, a man came running down the aisle, screaming in Spanish. He carried a paper bag from which a fuse protruded. Kelly gripped my arm and shot me a searching look. Mack stared after the man, with a strangely quizzical look on his weatherbeaten mug.

I kissed Kelly's cheek and said to my companions, "You guys ever been to Cuba?"

Please

*I never needed you
to tear down my walls
leaving my back
raw, bloodstained.*

*Your love slashes
like a knife over
tracing paper redefining
nothing, yet with
probing fingers and tongue
you please.*

V.S
Vera Saverino

□

I Hope Mommy Doesn't Pick Me Up From School With Cotton In Her Ears

by Robert Levine

All I heard was the thumping of two canes. One at a time. They were coming up the stairs. More quickly with each thump. I turned on my side facing the wall and closed my eyes tightly. I froze, as if I was hard ice cream that couldn't be eaten. The echoing thump reached the door to my room - and paused. I peeked at my wall.

"RISE AND SHINE!" my father released from his stomach, like a bullet exploding through the whole of a gun. His voice shook me, as if it was the bell he rang when he needed help. A metal, rusty, dying brown - its sound smacked off the walls. I felt like the stick in the middle of the bell. I vibrated. He thumped two more times until he reached my window. Light slowly entered my room, seeping through my closed eyelids.

"Dad - close the blinds. Be quiet," I said, as he turned the volume to my radio up.

"Time to get up, Ring. You have to go to school," he said with frustration in the tone of his voice. He was holding it in. I was scared. I did not want to move. However, I knew if I didn't get up, he would get angry. He would burst like a dropped balloon filled with water. I did not want to be the water - splashing down on the ground. I wanted to get him out of the room.

"Dad, I'll get up in a few minutes," I said, hoping it would get him out for at least a moment.

"You said that a half-hour ago. You're already late," he said while thumping into his room next door. He was probably picking a tie.

I rolled over on my stomach and peeked through the crack where my door opens and closes. As he walked toward the bathroom I was shocked. It appeared that he had shrunk. At fifty-four years old that seemed unlikely. His once strong five-foot eleven inch and two hundred pound frame appeared frail. His shoulders slouched forward. The skull in his bald head seemed to be protruding through his skin. He looked drained - like a football losing air. His bones were the only definition his body had.

After using the bathroom, he went to his room. I heard him dressing himself. He dropped a shoe onto the wooden floor. A second later he dropped another one. All I heard was the empty echo. He began to thump out of his room. I turned back on my side, this time with my eyes wide open. He paused at my door again, then took a half-step in.

"Ring, I have to go to work. Are you getting up? What are you waiting for? You could always take a nap after school. Just get up and splash some water on your face," he said while leaning over to kiss me good-bye. I closed my eyes halfway and felt his beard scrape me like a lazy brillo pad.

"Have a good day, son," he said. Then he left my room. I didn't say anything. I heard his feet shuffle. He was preparing himself to go downstairs. Thump-thump. Thump-thump. I listened to each one. The rubber bottoms to his metal canes landed on the wooden floor, again going faster and faster with each step. I knew he made it to the bottom of the stairs because his canes stopped. My mother was probably still sleeping on the couch. She usually didn't wake up until afternoon. I heard him saying good-bye to her.

"Bye - 'B'. Her real name is Bella, but he said he didn't like calling her that. He said he never called her Bella. Never. I couldn't make out what she said. It was a mumble. It didn't sound pleasant, but I couldn't hear it. I heard the front door open, pause, then close. My father left.

"I made it," I said softly but with energy.

I walked downstairs and the first thing I saw was a clear plastic bag. I knew it wasn't going to be a good day. When my mother had a bag over her head, it usually wasn't. She was lying on her side with no blanket and an old red pillow, which was shaped like a perfect square. The dust bounced off of it. The bag was very tight on her head. Her black and gray hair meshed together. Through the bag I could see her forehead dripping with sweat. She smelled. The odor was similar to cold sweat - cold - like that of a dead person. It rose up in the air and hung there as if it was waiting to attack. I took a step back. I wanted to get a

better view, and at the same time not be distracted by the odor. Her eyes were wide open. They were glazed, glassy. Her lips were moving. It appeared as if they were involuntarily exercising. As the top lip would move up and out, the bottom lip would move up and in. A constant motion. Not an exaggerated movement. It was actually smooth. Her lips would move up and down, her eyes would stare, and she mumbled. Most of the words were incoherent. However, they were spoken very directly, as if someone was actually intently listening. She could not be interrupted. She didn't realize I was standing there looking at her. She intensely mumbled. She looked so upset. Angry. Mean. Her nostrils flared up at a forty-five degree angle and she tightened her lips more.

"Mom," I said. "Mom," she wouldn't answer me. "Mom!" I raised my voice. My own mother couldn't even answer me. I insisted, and decided I'd yell - "Mom! Mom! Mom!"

"What?" She finally answered, as if that was the first time I called and she was wondering why I was yelling.

"I've been calling your name for," I started but seemed to have lost her again, as her eyes fixated on something I couldn't see.

"Mom!" I yelled again.

"What," she screeched with her nasal voice that shot through my ear, down my throat, and stabbed me in the gut.

"Ring," called my Aunt Ginger, "Mommy doesn't feel well." She also called her mommy. Nobody really called her by her name. She had a name and nobody used it.

"Ring," Aunt Ginger called again. "Mommy has a headache." I went in the kitchen where Aunt Ginger was. Her five-foot, stocky frame reminded me of a tank.

"Is that why she has a bag over her head?" I asked, "because of a headache?"

"Yes, Ring. That's why. She just doesn't feel well today," said Gin, as my mother referred to her. "Just stay in here with me for now. You're in the sixth grade now. You can't just miss school like this all the time. Are you hungry? What do you want to eat? A french toast? Scrambled eggs? Pancakes? What do you want?" She rambled on and would only be satisfied if I answered.

"I don't know," I said.

"Well tell me when you decide. Don't you like scrambled eggs? A nice scrambled egg sandwich on toast with ketchup? What do you think? O.K.?"

"I guess," I said, just hoping she would shut up so I could hear my mother mumbling in the other room. Aunt Gin started working. She got out everything and made those eggs. She made them so quickly. It amazed me. I thought she was a scrambled egg machine. Non-stop. She kept on going until after I finished eating. Then she cleaned everything I dirtied.

I was sitting alone in the kitchen and my brother Stick came home. He was sixteen years old. He was always in a rush. Always. He walked right by my mother (who was still on the couch) and came into the

kitchen. The phone rang and he picked it up immediately. That was totally opposite of my mother. It took her about ten rings to get the phone. Stick was talking away on the phone. He didn't even know I was there. He was five feet nine inches tall and a hundred forty pounds. I didn't understand how such a small frame could pace back and forth. It looked like he would break in half. After he got off the phone, he began bothering me.

"You didn't go to school," he said sarcastically, and even competitively, as if him going to school and my not made him better than me.

"No. I didn't feel good," I said.

"Yeah, right," he continued, "Does daddy know you didn't go? Did you tell him?"

"No. He thought I was going," I reluctantly answered.

The phone rang again and he quickly got it, as if he was attached to it. I could tell he didn't want to be home. I knew he was going to leave. Even though I hated what he was saying to me, I wanted him to stay.

"All right, I'll see you in a few minutes," he said into the phone and hung up. Then started leaving the kitchen.

"Where you going?" I said, but he didn't answer me.

"Where you goin'?" I said louder. He kept on going and all I heard was the door close.

I looked in the living room and saw my mother. She was sleeping. The TV was on. Nobody else was home. I sat down on the other end of the couch. I tried to watch TV and relax, but out of the corner of my right eye I saw her. I saw her lips moving even though she was sleeping. I watched them. I watched her. The plastic bag strangling her hair. Her lips continuously moving. And cotton in her ears. She always had cotton in her ears. I always wanted to take it out. Always. I looked around. Nobody was there. It was as empty as the sound of my father's canes smacking the wooden floor. I leaned over her. I looked over the couch and checked her eyes to make sure she was still sleeping. She was. I reached my right hand all the way to her left ear - and paused. I touched it. She didn't move. I wanted so bad to take the cotton and hide it - thinking if I did that she wouldn't use cotton anymore. So I took my index finger and thumb and slowly and gently closed them around the cotton and paused. She didn't move. I began to pull and it slowly came out. A little yellow ball of cotton. I paused again, and looked at her in amazement. I was sure she'd wake up. But she didn't. She didn't budge. Only her lips did. Up and down, in the same consistent motion as before. I put it in the palm of my hand and looked at it. I wanted to hide it. I wanted my mother not to find it, but I didn't want to burn it. I ran upstairs and stuffed it in the back of my underwear drawer - wondering how she'd react if she found it. I went back downstairs and my mother was not on the couch. I looked - and she was in the bathroom, with the door open. I looked in, through the crack where the door opens and closes. She got a piece of cotton out of the big blue box. She put it in her left ear.

Catch Me If You Can

by Thomas Morrissey

"Another one?"

"Yeah."

"Jesus Christ."

"I think we can rule Him out as a suspect. What took you so long? I been here twenty minutes already."

"Man does not live by homicide alone. There's also doughnuts."

A snort of laughter. "Looks like you live by those alone."

Detective Zapantis shrugged and patted his basketball belly. "Lard and sodium benzoate do that to a man. So what're we lookin' at here? Same guy, same m.o.?"

"I think so. 'Grandma Maniac' is written all over this."

"Damn. In the kitchen?"

Detective Ippolito grunted. "Where else?"

Zapantis followed his partner across the foyer and through the dining room. The rooms were about what you'd expect in the house of an elderly woman: homey and neat to near-obsession, with aged sachet and flower fragrance hanging on the free-floating dust. He scratched his bulbous nose and munched a doughnut, trying to finish the pastry before viewing the corpse.

The kitchen had probably been as neat as the rest, but the carnage made it difficult to tell. What should have been sparkling linoleum was slicked with blood. The 'lemon-fresh' counters were hardly fresh, and scattered stainless steel utensils weren't stainless anymore.

The ambulance crew was just loading the body onto their stretcher. Zapantis stopped them and lifted the sheet. "God Almighty." He waved them on and turned to his partner. "Yeah, this looks like one of his."

The attendant, who obviously hadn't seen the condition of the corpse he carted, didn't move. His throat bobbed as he struggled with the question, "To vomit, or not to vomit?" He decided on the latter, but his manner described just how close he remained to the former.

"Jesus, what does he do? Eat 'em? Feed 'em to rats?"

Zapantis shot him with a glare. "Speculations, especially ones like that, stay right here. Media vultures're already having a field day with this."

"Yessir." He departed, sickened and subdued.

Ippolito steered his partner to the refrigerator. "People's exhibit A read it and weep."

Zapantis avoided a puddle of red and squinted. The letters were childlike, written in drying blood on the white enamel.

'Run, run, as fast as you can,

Can't catch me. . .'

"Not yet we can't, you bastard," he muttered.

"All the usual things," Ippolito continued. "No sign of forced entry, no one heard or saw anything suspicious until the screams. That was when one of the neighbors called. No one saw anything or anyone leaving after the screams stopped. She was baking gingerbread men like all the others. Here's our boy's calling card." He nudged a half-eaten cookie figure with his foot.

"What are the particulars?"

Notepad pages flipped. "Mrs. Karen Woods, widow, aged seventy-one, preparing for an Easter visit this Sunday with her family "

"Aw, Christ! Another family." Zapantis dry-washed his face. "Why do the crazies always go after the ones with families?"

"Captain's leaving it to us again to break the news." Ippolito held up a placating hand. "I know, I know, you did it by yourself last time. It's my turn."

Zapantis's relief was palpable. "Thanks. The Crime Scene guys here yet?"

"The photographer already came, the rest are on their way. But one thing since I have to talk to the family, you get to deal with the press."

"Gee thanks."

"Fair's fair."

Zapantis shrugged and took the last doughnut from his bag as he walked his partner to the door. Powdered sugar dandruffed his shoes. "You leaving now?"

"Yeah. Have fun; I'll see you downtown."

The house was being sealed by the lab men who'd arrived, and the media was still on its way, so Zapantis now had the house to himself. His stomach growled. He always ate when he was nervous, and this case had already added a few pounds to the bulk of his frame. He finished the doughnut in two bites and began to prowls.

"What the hell has this guy got against old ladies?" he muttered, picking up an ornate picture frame. A faded family smiled up at him. "And all of 'em with families they bake for. What kind of grandmother you got, scumbag? Or did you kill her, too?"

He paced, pudgy features molded into a scowl, and found himself back in the kitchen. The Crime Scene Unit had better do a good clean-up; the captain would be pissed at any lurid 'on the spot' photos that found their way into the papers.

The oven door was still open. Gingerbread men lay inside on their cookie sheet. Zapantis picked one up. "Doesn't look like you'll be filling any little kid's stomach. Probably end up in the garbage, just like all the others."

The gingerbread man had no reply. His white frosting eyes didn't blink, his white frosting mouth didn't speak.

The detective began to pace, absently tapping the cookie on his palm. "God, I wish you could talk. Of course, that might be a little hard to deal with at the trial: 'Yes, your honor, the cookies all say the accused committed the crime, but the fruits and vegetables are unable to corroborate, as they were in a dark refrigerator at the time.' Oh brother." He looked out the living room window. No reporters yet.

His stomach gurgled. Automatically Zapantis bit the head off the gingerbread man. When he remembered the circumstances, he stopped in mid-chew, then shrugged. "Guess you won't be giving much testimony after--"

Scuttling came from the kitchen, and the sound laced adrenaline through his system. He drew his .38 Special.

"Oh Goddamn, I hope you came back." He

clicked off the safety and slid his back up against the doorway.

"One. . .two. . .three!"

He spun into the kitchen, revolver held out and covering the room.

No movement.

No sound.

No killer.

He exhaled, lowering the gun to waist-level.

"What the hell is going on? Didn't anyone search the rest of the house?" he grumbled.

He went to move around the open oven door when something glinted in his peripheral vision. He glanced over and paused. The cookie sheet; it was empty.

The scuttling came from above and behind him. He turned and was engulfed by a nightmare.

Detective Ippolito was flagged past the tape barricade by a rookie uniform. The captain himself was waiting.

"Mike! Jesus, I'm sorry. I can't tell you "

"What happened?"

"It looks like the bastard came back."

"In the kitchen?"

"Yeah."

Ippolito followed his superior across the foyer and through the dining room. "Deja vu," was all he could force past his clenched teeth.

The captain stopped and braced him in the doorway. "Now, look, Mike, department regs say I have to pull you off this investigation, so I'll have to do that. When I see you. Far as I'm concerned, cop who loses his partner has a right to first crack at the scumbag responsible. Take a look around, then cut out the back so I officially didn't see you."

"Thank you, sir."

The scene was nearly identical to the earlier slaughter, but the gore was thicker, and the rhyme written a second time on the refrigerator. Ippolito knelt by his partner's sheet-covered body.

"Goddamn. Goddamn. Goddamn."

He turned his head away and noted the tray of gingerbread men in the oven. There was one fewer than before; no doubt it would turn up as another half-eaten calling card. But there was something different, something off-kilter. He studied the tray of cookies with a frown. Since when did gingerbread men have white frosting eyes

and red mouths?



IN) punk yo ga (BE DOU-

un-
fold from The
Five Holy Petals as
cold morning peace seeps deep down thru your bones (not yet

looking feel His old smile rumpling your hair) river's
voice in the new woman
brushing your
arm says.
look.

First.
the pattern.
flower-star, stone floor. Then
no-body thunderstorms joking the song (when you

look, do you see) raining voices BOOM music pit-
patter-plop-lub-dup! and
star flower
now looks
back.

Af-
terwards we
swam the pool, dove coins-till
some crazy cow boy (all Pop-eyed and hair like a
hurricane) burst in his braggadumbshow, made it
hard to keep someone from
spilling his
blood right
there.

But
i followed
up Golden Stairs into
Green Garden Promenade, pulled out the mirror (as
he acted harmless) and named him. He wound up on
15th street, open mouthed,
fizzing to
O-zone
for
you.

by John Bostrom

NEO-LIBERALISM, ECONOMIC NATIONALISM, THE LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER AND SOUTH-SOUTH LINKAGES—A DISCUSSION

by Olusegun Oguniola

PREVAILING THOUGHTS FROM AFRICA REGARDING THE QUESTION OF THE CONTINENT'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

"Given the current world political and economic situation, Africa is becoming further marginalized in world affairs, both geo-politically and economically. Africa has no alternative but to urgently and immediately embark upon the task of transforming the structures of its economies to achieve long-term self sustained growth and development that is both human centered and participatory in nature."

—Economic Commission for Africa, (1990)

"[T]he so-called neutrality of the world marketplace [according to the theory of economic liberalism] turned out to be a neutrality between the exploiter and the exploited, between a bird of prey and its victim.... Even if we tried to do nothing except to sell our [Southern countries'] traditional exports [to the Northern countries] and buy our traditional imports [from the Northern countries], we found that we could buy less and less with more and more of our hard work."

—Nyerere, Julius, Former president of Tanzania

"No African country on its own unaided efforts can pull itself up by its own bootstraps. The performance of our economies in the past decade and a half would have convinced us if we needed convincing. Our future lies in greater economic cooperation and ultimately integration. And the fact that so many regional organizations have sprung up in Sub-Saharan Africa in the last two decades only shows that we have quietly come to accept that our inherited frontiers are a bar and not a spur to our economic development and well being."

— (General, retired) Obasanjo, Olusegun, Former head of State of Nigeria

"The future of the less developed countries is one of the most pressing issues of international political economy in our era, and the resolution of this issue will profoundly affect the future of our planet. The intense desire of the majority of human race to escape its debilitating poverty and join the developed world is a determining feature of international politics. Yet in the final decades of the twentieth century, bitter controversy exists regarding the cause of and possible solution to this problem."

— Gilpin Robert, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p.263. Emphasis added.

As we rapidly approach the 21st century, economic issues, one would be hard pressed to disagree, are a most relevant and critical concern in international relations. It increasingly seems that there will persist the polarization of the world into the haves and the have-nots (Some countries have been industrializing [NICs], and they are acknowledged here, but their emergence does not negate the polarization of the greater majority of nations). Whereas it is agreed that a higher standard of living is desperately needed in the less developed countries, the question of how to pursue its realization is not yet agreed upon.

Broad and Cavanagh, in their work *No More NIC's*, for example, have argued that because of structural changes in international political economy and the rise of protectionism in both the industrialized and the newly industrializing countries (NICs), no more NICs will be developing. Thus, they cautioned against the promotion of the NICs as a model for developing countries. In essence, they cautioned the less developed countries against

the application of economic liberalism and export-led strategies in their developmental efforts. They advise that:

"Rather than increasing their reliance on a hostile world environment, developing countries should try to reduce this dependence and to diversify trading partners and products. This approach implies a careful restructuring of trade and financial linkages to conform with a development logic that is driven by internal economic forces."

The focus of this discussion is the review of the theoretical debate and treatise regarding south-south linkages as "the way" to development. The term, south-south linkages as it is used here, and throughout this paper, concerns the attempt of the less developed countries to establish horizontal economic linkage (among nations of the southern hemisphere—for example, trade between Nigeria, Togo, Senegal, Mali, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, etc.) between themselves and thus lessen their reliance on the prevalent vertical economic linkage (from the northern to the southern hemisphere—for

example, trade between Britain and Nigeria, or France and Senegal) which has characterized their economic activities since the colonial era. Primarily, this will be in the form of economic cooperation, and possibly full economic integration. To illustrate these discussions, we will look at the efforts in Africa—as a unit of the south—to establish economic development relations between their countries, rather than between them and the major industrial nations. To this end, I will utilize two such efforts in regional economic cooperation and/ or integration, namely: the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC).

The first of these two is the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which aims to promote accelerated and sustained economic development and to create a homogeneous society. Their goal is to promote economic unity between the countries of West Africa. Their agenda is the ultimate elimination of all customs and other duties on trade among member countries, and the establishment of a common tariff and a common commercial policy toward third world countries.

The second is the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), which was created in 1980, following the independence of Zimbabwe. Like ECOWAS, it aims to integrate the economies of, and to create a free trade zone among, its member-states and to work closely to identify and promote economic activities in the region. Member states include: Angola; Botswana; Zimbabwe; Mozambique; Tanzania; Zambia; Lesotho; Swaziland; Malawi, and; Namibia.

WHY IS SOUTH TO SOUTH LINKAGE IMPORTANT?

This form of multi-national economic development has for some time been advocated and promoted as an alternative way for Africa to attain development. As we learn from Johnson, in his article, *"Economic Integration in Africa: Enhancing Prospects for Success"*:

"A number of leaders in the continent and, even more notably, the Economic Commission for Africa (E.C.A.), have for some three decades pinned their hopes on economic integration as a crucial way of promoting development. This attitude has resulted from the small size of the many African states, the popular view that over the long term the prices of most primary products tend to decline in relation to the industrial goods, and the difficulties of establishing and maintaining international arrangements."

Although Africa has always been serious-minded about building regionally based economic development, this issue has in recent times attracted more serious attention. Several reasons engendered this interest. We will briefly discuss three of these:

First, Primarily for the SADCC, and for Africa in general, there is the anticipated case of South

Africa, where recent events portend the end of apartheid. The concern is that the end to white minority rule in South Africa will have serious implications for the countries involved in the SADCC.

Second, economically, the demise of the New International Economic Order (NIEO) and politically, the end of the Cold War, has resulted in a triumph of the prevailing international economic agenda as established by such organizations as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. As a consequence, these multilateral financial (an Euro-American joint venture) agencies continue to dictate the agenda regarding the international economic order. (The NIEO was demanded by the south, as a collective entity of the non Aligned movement. Its successful implementation would have resulted in a revolutionary shift of the economic agenda setting between the north and the south. One should ponder, for example, the fact that the NIEO had demanded a code of conduct which would have regulated the business conduct of transnational corporations in the less developed countries. An examination of that code, formulated by the now defunct United Nations Center on Transnational Corporations (UNCTC), reveals that the code's stipulations would have empowered the less developed countries to have control over international corporations operating on their soil. This code would have ensured that, in the face of criticism for conduct which would not serve the development objectives of a particular less developed country, the corporations could not simply relocate to another nation-state. Something they have always done among all countries, regardless of level of development.) It was realized that the demand for redistribution of wealth between the world's dominant economies and the less developed countries (as a collective entity in the Non Aligned Movement), as demanded by the lesser developed nations, will not materialize. Consequently, this has resulted in Africa's (as is the case for the South in general) quest to identify and promote other alternatives to alleviate, if not eradicate, their economic misfortunes.

Third, capital flight continues to be a major problem for Africa irrespective of the fact that the majority of their countries have embarked on draconian austerity measures. These programs, formally called Structural Adjustment Programs, were demanded by the World Bank and the IMF, Africa's major lending institutions, as a prerequisite for increased capital transfer. Despite embarking on these austerity measures, the IMF and World Bank have not honored their promise of more capital. Consequently, Africa receives less foreign capital than before the implementation of these austerity measures. This has meant that African countries must look for other alternatives (forming south-south linkages, for example) to facilitate their development efforts. As Thompson, in her essay, *"African Initiatives for Africa"*, points out:

"While some of Africa's partners substantially increased their support to the continent, the expectation of additional net resource flows over and above 1986 levels did not materialize. Indeed, net resource flows to Africa, in real terms, actually declined, from \$24.6 billion in 1986 to \$23.3 billion in 1990."

Foreign capital is now being directed towards Eastern Europe owing to recent developments there. These developments result from the ending of the Cold War and the subsequent emergence of democracy and the acceptance of economic liberalism, as well as other events, which have provided a viable investment environment for western capital (skilled labor with the added advantage of low wages!).

Olusegun Obasanjo, in his article, *"Africa Embattled,"* advocates that efforts to forge south to south linkages in Africa should be distributed as follows: West Africa (ECOWAS); the Maghreb; the Nile region, Southern Africa; East Africa; and Central Africa. To be sure, these efforts, although hampered by internal and external factors, as we shall discuss below, are evolving — as attested to by the cases of ECOWAS and SADCC. However, the theoretical underpinning of this form of regional economic development and the question of how to pursue this policy is not yet agreed upon.

THE DEBATE: AFRICA'S RADICAL THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE OF, AND APPROACH TO, SOUTH TO SOUTH LINKAGES (REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND/ OR INTEGRATION).

The emerging African approach to economic linkages is radical in that it rejects the prevailing neoliberal theory which regulates economic linkage (cooperation and/ or full integration). This theory advocates that the procedure for regional economic linkage should be strictly left to market forces. On the other hand, Africa's approach aims to involve the government (not "the invisible hand") in all economic decision making. In short, what we have is a theoretical struggle between economic liberalism and economic nationalism (mercantilism) as guiding principles for regional economic development. An obvious question which comes to mind is: what is the meaning of these terms, and/ or what do they entail?

Gilpin, in his article, *"Three Models of the Future,"* and Thompson (in her previously noted work) have provided useful analysis which explains these two principles. Gilpin points out that :

"The essence of mercantilism [economic nationalism]...is the priority of national economic and political objectives over considerations of global economic efficiency. The mercantilist [nationalist] impulse can take many forms in the contemporary world: the desire for a balance-of-payments surplus; the export of unemployment, inflation, or both; the imposition of import and/or export controls; the expansion of world market shares; and the stimulation of advance technology."

While Thompson's analysis of economic liberalism concludes that:

"...neoliberal theories [economic liberalism] advocates the primacy of the market's "invisible hands" over the all-too-heavy-handed government intervention in the economy. The government should only be involved as a regulator and arbiter; production decisions, and even most distribution priorities should be left to the domestic and international market place."

But as Nyerere (a prominent African leader, and former president of Tanzania. See note # 2 above) has lamented in the introductory quote, Africa does not trust market forces which work in favor of the dominant western economies. That sentiment (see Nyerere in the introductory quote above) reveals the African nationalistic intentions towards regional linkages. The neutrality of the world market place is, in his opinion, an illusion, for it is one of unequal exchange between the north and the south and is really "a neutrality between the exploiter and the exploited."

Scholars ,too, point out the problems of the liberal theory of economic linkage as it pertains to Africa. Thompson, for example, has argued that the liberal approach to regional economic linkages is unsympathetic to the African experience: She writes that, "this approach has been gaining momentum with the proposed monetary union of the E.C. It is becoming the singular model proposed, no matter how different conditions in Africa of the 1990's are from those of Europe in the 1950s." "In the case of the SADCC," for example, as Thompson further points out, "because the colonial legacies are so strong, with many linkages still in place, SADCC practitioners, for example, did not have the confidence to rely solely on exchange relations [liberal policy agreement on trade measures, for example] to coordinate their economies: It did not seem to make sense to lower trade barriers to benefit South African, British or even Zimbabwean corporations at the expense of other members, as was the result of previous free-trade arrangements."

Thus, because in Africa the confidence to rely solely on market forces (i.e., "invisible hands") to regulate/coordinate economic activities is lacking, the liberal approach to economic linkage is being challenged by the active participation of the government in all decision making processes. There is no popular support for absolute confidence in market forces as the determinant of economic activities. Again, as Nyerere argued in the opening quote:.... even if we [the southern countries] tried to do nothing except to sell our traditional exports [in the international market place (to the north)] and buy our traditional imports [from the north], we found that we could buy less and less with more and more of our hard work.

ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE ON AFRICA'S REGIONAL ECONOMIC LINKAGES (COOPERATION AND/OR INTEGRATION)— THE ECOWAS

AND THE SADCC.

As we have seen, African countries reject neoliberalism as a guiding principle for their regional economic linkages. There is an attempt to formulate new theories of regional cooperation. One that is informed by the concrete experiences of the developing and less developed countries, in their regional and not their national context. These efforts, however, are still in their infancy. Thus, literature on Africa's attempt to institute linkages has been concerned with examining the problems and prospects it entails. For the purpose of this discussion, we need not examine the intricate details of the debate regarding the linkage. It is sufficient to briefly explain its main concerns.

Many scholars have studied Africa's attempt to establish horizontal (inter-African) linkages. Okolo, in his article, "*Integrative and Cooperative Regionalism*," Johnson, in his book, **Economic Integration in Africa**, and Thompson (previously noted) have analyzed that the ECOWAS and the SADCC suffer from internal and external economic and political factors. Internal factors are nationally or regionally specific while external ones stem from global processes. The works of Awori (1992), Lee (1989), Peters (1987), Mehrotra (1991), and Weisfelder (1991) are marked by similar reasoning. Although the specific terms used in their analyses differ, all of these authors note similar problems hindering Africa's economic linkages.

This body of literature reveals that, internally, efforts at economic linkages are hindered by: the lack of homogeneity in size and power of member states, currency diversity, differing elite values, the unwillingness to sacrifice sovereignty, unequal distribution of regional gains, competing national ideologies, and the lack of political will.

Externally, there is the role played by extra-regional actors either directly or indirectly. An example of direct external involvement is the French influence on francophone West African countries and its effects on the cohesiveness of ECOWAS. While the influence exercised on the region of Southern Africa by the United States, through the apartheid state of South Africa, and its destabilizing effect on the SADCC, is a manifestation of this process of indirect external involvement. More importantly, however, is the role played by the IMF and the World Bank. These two agencies have the potential to destabilize whole regions, through their power to fund and defund countries. The consequences of their propensity for financing South Africa while underfunding bordering countries, proves the power of these institutions.

MY CONCLUSIONS.

Contemporary international political economy is characterized by the development of a number of regional economic groupings— the European Community (E.C.), North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC), to mention a few. These

developments provide a clear indication of the emerging future of international economic activity: countries will coalesce into a regional group in which their economic well being will be mutually promoted. Seen from that perspective, Africa cannot afford to be left behind. Their countries stand to benefit from the establishment of regional economic linkage. Thus, the attempt to establish regional economic zones in the continent is a much needed development (see Obasanjo above, for his suggestion of how linkages should be established). However, can Africa embark on this, outside of the existing liberal international economic order?

In my opinion, Africa cannot (as I argue below) pursue that objective— establishing regional economic linkage— in opposition to the existing liberal international economic order. Therefore, the practice of proposing antagonistic measures (see Broad and Cavanagh, above) and of merely analyzing the obstacles to, and prospects of, economic linkages in Africa represents a precarious assumption on the part of the parties concerned. The one, although commendable, is idealistically constructed for it neglects the political and economic reality in which the African countries have to function. The other implies that the theoretical debate is of less importance. These do not reflect the prevailing international economic order, and the emerging so-called "New World Order" that would regulate international relations politically.

A definite assertion that can be made about the liberal international economic order, and the "New World Order" is that the doctrine of economic liberalism will continue to reign supreme! The "New World Order", as is being articulated/ pursued, is one which has as its ultimate aim the preservation of, and the relentless promotion of, the liberal international economic order.

These "orders" are indifferent to radical approaches— economic nationalism, for example— which challenge the existing ways. The nations of the SADCC, for example, have been able to pursue their nationalistic objective of the active participation of government in the making of all economic decisions, while rejecting the neoliberal model, which stresses the importance of market forces as the ultimate deciding force in economic decision making. They have been able to pursue that policy precisely because they have relied heavily on the Nordic countries for their financial— aids, investment— support. This has meant a safe haven from the IMF and the World Bank. Now however, the Nordic countries are now requiring the implementation of IMF/World Bank stipulations— neoliberal measures— as a prerequisite for continuing their financial support.

Yes, we know that neoliberalism is unsympathetic to Africa's experience. The fact is that the liberal international economic order is a competitive environment for Africa, and that trade, between Africa and the western industrialized countries amounts to an unequal (depending, of course, on how one defines equal) exchange.

However, the continent's best hope, I think, is to abandon its radical approaches and work within the international community in an effort to improve its economic well being. No country, anywhere in the world, regardless of its level of development, can afford to abstain from a thoroughgoing, and consistent effort to cooperate internationally, both economically and politically.

In Africa's case, the continent's economic development efforts are undermined by huge debt, among other ills. The interest payments alone absorb substantial portions of the foreign exchange earnings of the individual countries. Consequently, Africa is rendered ineffective in agenda setting, politically and economically. Yet, irrespective of this and other facts, we embark on an analysis which neglects these facts and instead continues to propose measures which in the long run will have negative impact on the continent, for example, such as is advised by Broad and Cavanagh (noted above). In my opinion, for Africa to pursue such an alienating strategy (for dependence reduction must inevitably alienate, and or institute protectionist measures), is to commit economic suicide. It goes without saying that Africa cannot afford this!

We know that economic development is desperately needed in Africa, and in the less developed countries in general, and that efforts are geared to the realization of that end. One would be hard pressed to disagree that the present political conditions and resultant economy, do not give the African countries any viable opportunity to pursue economic development on their own terms. Therefore, a successful economic development oriented policy, I think, is one which seeks to work in congruence with the liberal international economic order and not against it. The term "congruence" as it is used here, is not used to imply passivity! Rather, this word is meant to suggest a more pragmatic and thoroughgoing approach to global economic processes and/or trends. This requires sage political leadership (a useful analysis of the economic and political issues involved can be found in Johnson's work[noted above]). In the final analysis, Africa is still far too dependent on the north for funds and thus is susceptible to the latter's dictates. This is a reality we cannot deny!

august 16

it's kind of a petulant thing
just a few days after you absolutely have to
pay the rent otherwise you
get one of those
threatening letters

like from a father
who may have put his finger
into the modes of address
like from the guy downstairs
who may at any moment arise to
specify that my quiet feet
cannot atone for

tonight everyone is missing
everybody who's a relative of mine is not a song tonight
but hanging with relatives of theirs who
deny my fatal existence

i'd like to find
out what
this is
all about

should the absence then rhyme
with a permanent sadness
Forget it hope!

by Bernadette Mayer



by Colleen McGrham

I c t u s

R e v i e w

Deadlines for Submissions:

Spring Semester 1994

friday, **February 25**

friday, **April 8**

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SHORT STORIES

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Manuscripts should be typed (double space, one inch margins) on white paper. If possible, please include a 3.5" computer diskette (IBM or MAC) with submission. File types preferred: MacWrite II, Microsoft Word, or ASCII Text. Artwork (photos, drawings, etc.) must be no larger than 11"x17". Fiction, Nonfiction and Poetry will not be returned to sender. *Include current address and phone number along with all submissions.*

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