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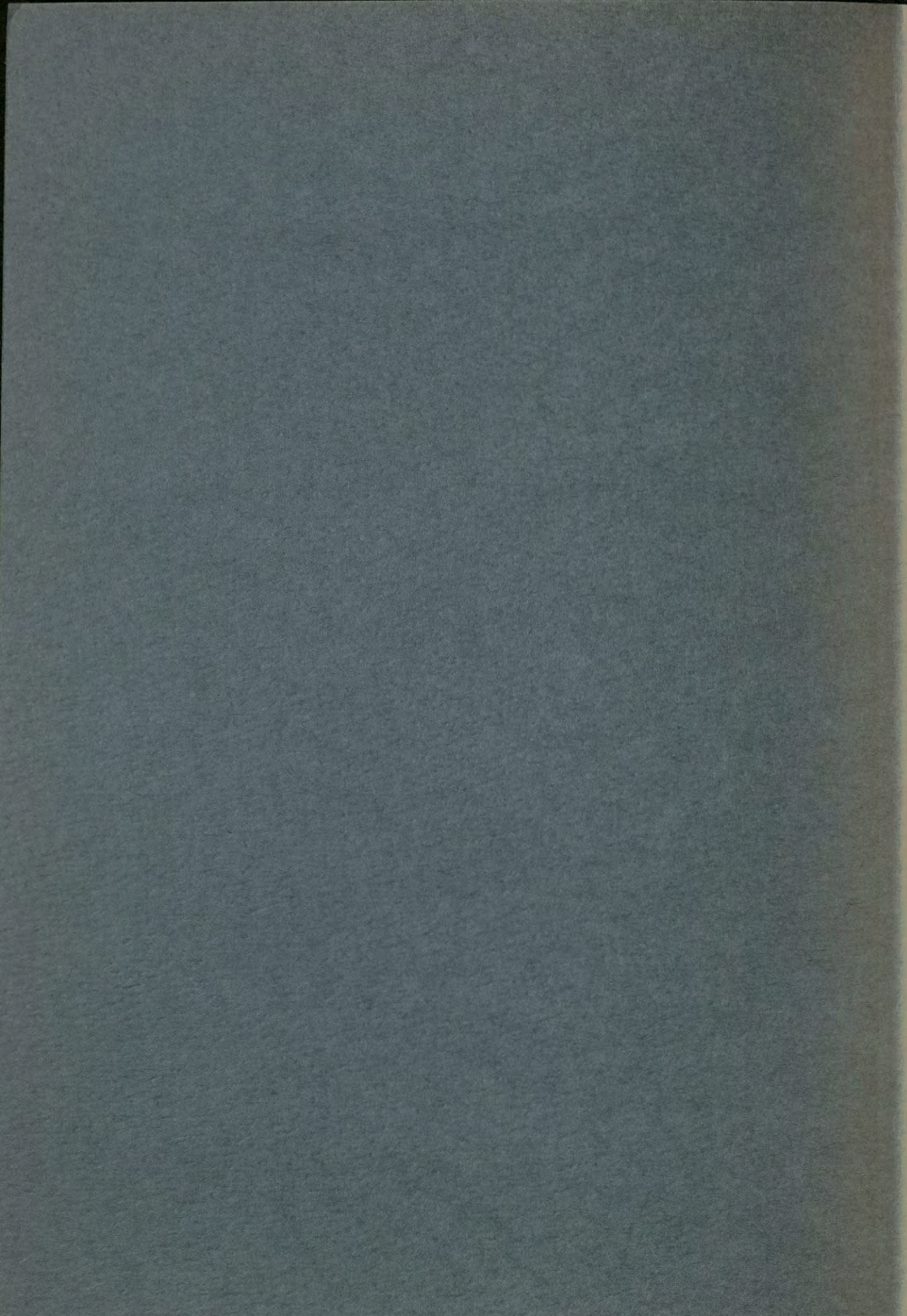
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Spring '66



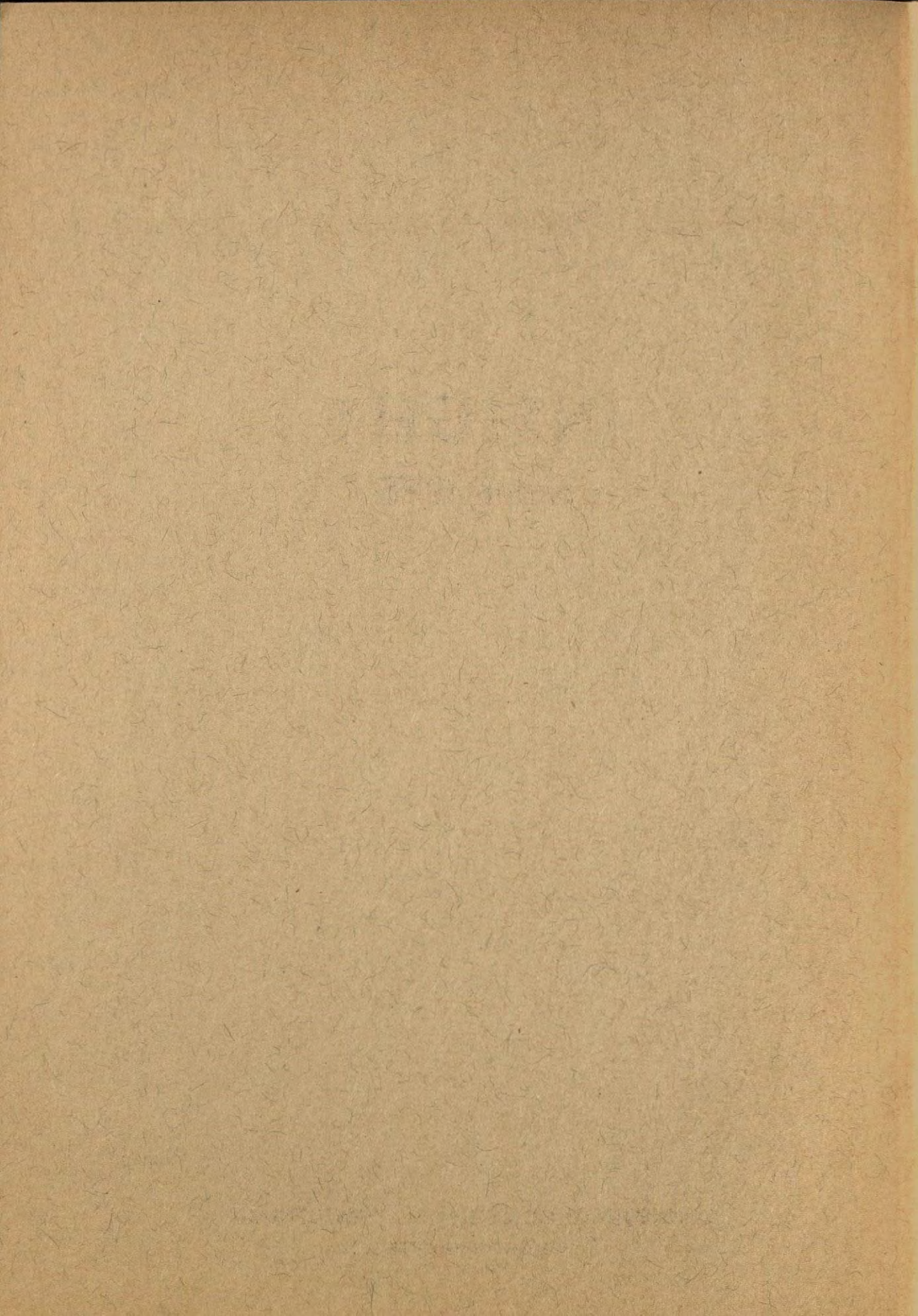
INSIGHT



INSIGHT

Spring 1966

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE • NEW LONDON
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POEM

Jody Callisen

Briefcases, Times, supposed legs
 fly like footless runners
 barrel with the eight-twenty-five
 corridor in the endless clack of New York Central winter
 down through the summergrove: Harlem
 commuters' special, the heavyfruited tree
 of life exposed, scrapped views of a supple leg
 moving cautionless behind the shatterwindows.
 Over, under: the approach to the heart of Empire
 from the river's wash
 to the droppedjaw tunnel, has not yet kept from suburban eyes
 the signs of their triumph. "HUNnerd twennyfifthstreet."
 High enough low
 to catch the movement in the rubble playground, the sun's glint
 ripening out an arm's dark roundness lolling on the sill
 over streetstand clusters, beercans.
 Trestled up enough to miss the provocation
 for the long slow silence of a laugh
 which rumbles visible daily, far below the train's thick-safety
 window glass.
 Rising from the ashes this August's phoenix
 con edison — christened "New York's first
 windowless
 airconditioned
 junior high school" perches in the piles of its present molting.
 Autumn, Harlem: for your children
 a new fall; graceless, eyeless
 conditioned for the grope and lurching
 of the eight-twenty-five's sure thuds to the tunnel.

SAINT FRANCIS' GARDEN

Karen Stothert Stockman

At evening we walked through the flowers
Hand in hand along the cobbled path,
Nodding to the statuary in hiding
Until we reached Saint Francis' bower.
In Saint Francis' shrine amidst the thatch
Sloping next to the Saint's bowed head
A robin built her nest and hatched one young
Whose self was only mouth and crying.
We met a lady wrapped in fur
Walking a honey spaniel to match;
She hailed us with a smile
And we stopped to talk at evening
With the lady and the spaniel in the flowers.
She did not smile at the robin
Safe in her nest in the bower,
Nor muse on the grace of the evening flowers
Or the cradling depth of the sky.
"Yes, a lovely evening," and she talked of royalty,
Of sixty years ago and Mayflower ancestors
And the first Latin School at Cambridge;
Genealogy, French classics in The Hague,
School in Switzerland at eight and mother's character.
Hand in hand we tried to understand
The secret in the lady's eyes,
And her chatter from Henry James:
There are hidden arbors in every land,
A thousand flowers and skies in change
But there is just one Pilgrim ship that sailed,
One girl that danced young in Geneva,
And one lady with immutable light in her eyes.

Suzanne Rossell

SONNET

Julie Baumgold

I talk and you pace around my words
Until I watch you move and the words
Fall off as words and thoughts will do
When the slender body circles round
A time as primary as the pause when she
Watched the serpent unwind from the tree
And forgot God and promise to breed time
That wove up what the snake unwound
Thus the slow and secret movers now are nervous
For what of fault they may release
Though death and pain
Have long since fallen to the ground,
The bruised fruit of the tree,
There still remains for you the loss of me.





Ruth Kirschner



Patricia Chock



LOINS AND LIONS

Julie Baumgold

Loins and lions rule
And make the young man
Whose loins blond
Like lions rule him
Stand this way
Moving very slowly
In the intertwine
Of the forest vine
Where secreted away
The beast undeclared
Covers his prey
While the old night
Ecstatic rolls to
Keep off the day
Until with heavy sides
The blond lions
Of his loins move
And the forest stretches
As he moves
Before sleeping
Well into the day
While the prey
Frenzied in possession
Of her wounds
Bleeds in joy
And looks away
As the blood
Moves privately
Past the loins
Of the blond lion
Who sleeps refusing
Any stray stare
Between the eyes
And thus alone
In the only
Unthreatened beast
The blond blood sleeps
As the dark blood moves away
The loins and lions rest
To keep their sway.

WHITE TOWERS

Patricia Gaynor

She walked down the slippery steps to a mass of heaving, gyrating bodies. It was dark and hard to distinguish the bodies from the walls, but with each beat the mass rose and vibrated while the surrounding bricks were impassive and immovable. Only through this contrast was she able to orient herself, understand her relation to the mass, and plan her route. Hesitantly she stepped toward the area of movement, recalling to herself that she had at one time resolved to keep in touch with the coolness of the brick wall. With one hand she felt for the moisture of the wall while with the other she fended off those who made sly but quick attempts to crush her against the black brick impassivity. It was impossible to hide from them. With each movement they sought her out, knocked her, stepped on her, and looked at her out of the darkness with the same indifference the brick wall had displayed. The moisture of the wall became one with the moisture of the bodies. Their darkneses merged to form one space of nothing filled with everything that moved and smelled. She submitted to being carried by the vibrations until she reached her destination.

Opening the door she stepped into the hot blue light of the bathroom and leaned against the wall, pushing the door shut with her foot. Once there she forgot why she was there, glad only to have survived the indifference of the darkness outside. The room had become an end in itself. Nothing more. She savored her isolation immediately, knowing that soon the haven she had discovered would be invaded by those less responsive and then the outside would come in and she would be compelled to return to the outside as one of them.

Painted pipes crawled up the walls and tried to slip away through the ceiling, but someone had ripped a hole in the thin, cardboard wall and the ends of the pipes were revealed in all their ugliness, their rust, connecting links, and stiff, twisted intricacies. She sat perched on the miniature radiator and looked across the room at herself. With every movement from the outside her image quivered. She sat, fascinated, wondering if she could overcome the continuous quivering by sitting consciously, tensely still. Suddenly realizing she would never control her image she stood up, embarrassed, and moved over to the large brown table to her right. LC and RB. LOVE. FOREVER. She lightly traced all the letters, then looked at her finger which was red with the lipstick of the writing. She moved to the sink. Turning on the water, she sat down on the toilet seat and leaned over to the stained bowl, exhausted, letting her head lie on the rim and putting her finger under the running water. She relaxed in that position for a long time, feeling somehow comforted by the running water which she vaguely felt hitting her fingertip.

They had come. She felt their greeting dripping from her hand into the sink. Her fingertip no longer felt numb; it had been disturbed and was now awake and conscious of the new element. She didn't arise, but sat, hunched at the sink as though asleep, ignoring the hazy, fumbling, obsequious apologies of the outside, letting the still running water wash away all the evidence. The door had been left open and the vibrations jerked and edged

gradually into her refuge. The crescendos and decrescendos of sound reminded her of a train station, of putting her hands over her ears and flapping her hands as the trains went by, distorting the roar to heaving, wailing sighs. It was like that even in the little bathroom with the blue bulb that ironically shed a warm yellow light. It was too bad they had come so soon. In one continuous movement she rose from her seat and stood at the open door, her hand numb, hanging at her side, dripping. She recalled to herself that she had at one time resolved to keep in touch with the moisture of the brick wall.

THE CORPORAL CRAWLS

Karen Stothert Stockman

The corporal lies aiming,
Squeezing, piercing the cloud-rolling beyond,
Wondering . . .
How many souls
Clink in the coffer of heaven. . . .
And the shells chime,
Brass on brass,
A growing, glinting pool
Of waste
In a world of trampled grass.

The corporal crawls
From a couch on the chilled side of a mound
Over the crest,
With his elbow
Grinding the shells into the grass
Dragging them with his battered sleeve,
His knee.
From the corporal's throat
Erupts a visceral grunt
That no one hears —
And no one sees his face, as he crawls
Across the vast, cold weighing-plate
Of a delicate spring balance.

AND HIS VOICE

Meg Sahrbeck

my daddy's face was very
tight and hard
closed tight
and his eyes half
squinting and a little
red
and his voice was like
an unopen
shout
and he said
your grandma is dead

BLACK IMPRESSIONS

Meg Sahrbeck

we were ourselves
and no one knew us

we were them
and they took our hands

and they were holding
their own

they reached for my hands
but their hands were not open

they kissed me
but their mouths were hard

they helped me up
to my knees

VISITS TO THE HOSPITAL

Marianna Kaufman

Last year I made my spring.
Two times a week in an old green Rambler
And drove the fifty miles each way
To where the gardens grow without a plan
To where they put the pieces together again.

Going down I drove with my arm out the window.
The afternoon cooled from blue to gold
The brown beside the turnpike thawed to green
The turnpike warmed and greened to June.
I learned to think about my spring.

There. Still the gardens run random.
The people sit to look, when animate's for spring.
The window too will never open out.
The runners lack the will to root.
When the puzzle lost its picture, I learned.
I said the spring must be my own.

Going back the night-air flowed down the turnpike.
I looked for the pieces with the stars.
What I dreamed I stole from the moon.
While the gardens grayed I planted June.
Only the other world did the spring elude.

AFTER CUMMINGS, LOVE

Meg Sahrbeck

your handinmine
is warm
(strength's
 very softest
hardness

my handinyours
is squeezest
 love
(sometimes
 clutching needly

your handinmy
is
love)

touch my
 is
love.

THE FEASTING TABLE

Karen Stothert Stockman

I sit at a loam-brown board
That stretches out to darkness
Where the fire has smothered itself.
On it, bread, drink, written word.
This silent chamber
Is filled with thirsted boards
That press against one another
Where the fare was spread.
Now empty length leads
From my solitary seat
Out of the circle of my sight
Into receding space.
There, another slow soul
Is swollen with the feast-memory.

POEM

Wendy Green

Much like an unwanted hand
 snaking its way up a naked
 and windwhipped
 neck,
 a rusted steel stairway
 snakes its way up a bare wall.
 In the womb-blackness
 of glistening rain
 casts the moon
 its albino glance.

When the door of
 the rough-bricked structure
 opens: "Hi, honey, listen
 The most beautiful thing about childbirth is that it's natural.
 Remember that."

And when she swings shut
 the thick French door and
 is gone,
 touch the door and feel,
 in this absence of light,
 the delicate knife with which
 the panels had once
 been carved.

Not until ears
 can hear with sunlight
 do the cracking, yellowed teacups
 become pictures
 of Harlow. Dietrich.
 Upon a wall
 streaked gray with the rake of time
 is scribbled,
 like profanity: "What if
 The world was just a toy balloon?"

And now, at last, the window. Giver
 of the sunlight.
 Ears can see
 the larynx of the silent men:
 The billboard, in barren splendor, stands
 pregnant
 with the birth defect:
 a shriveled newborn.

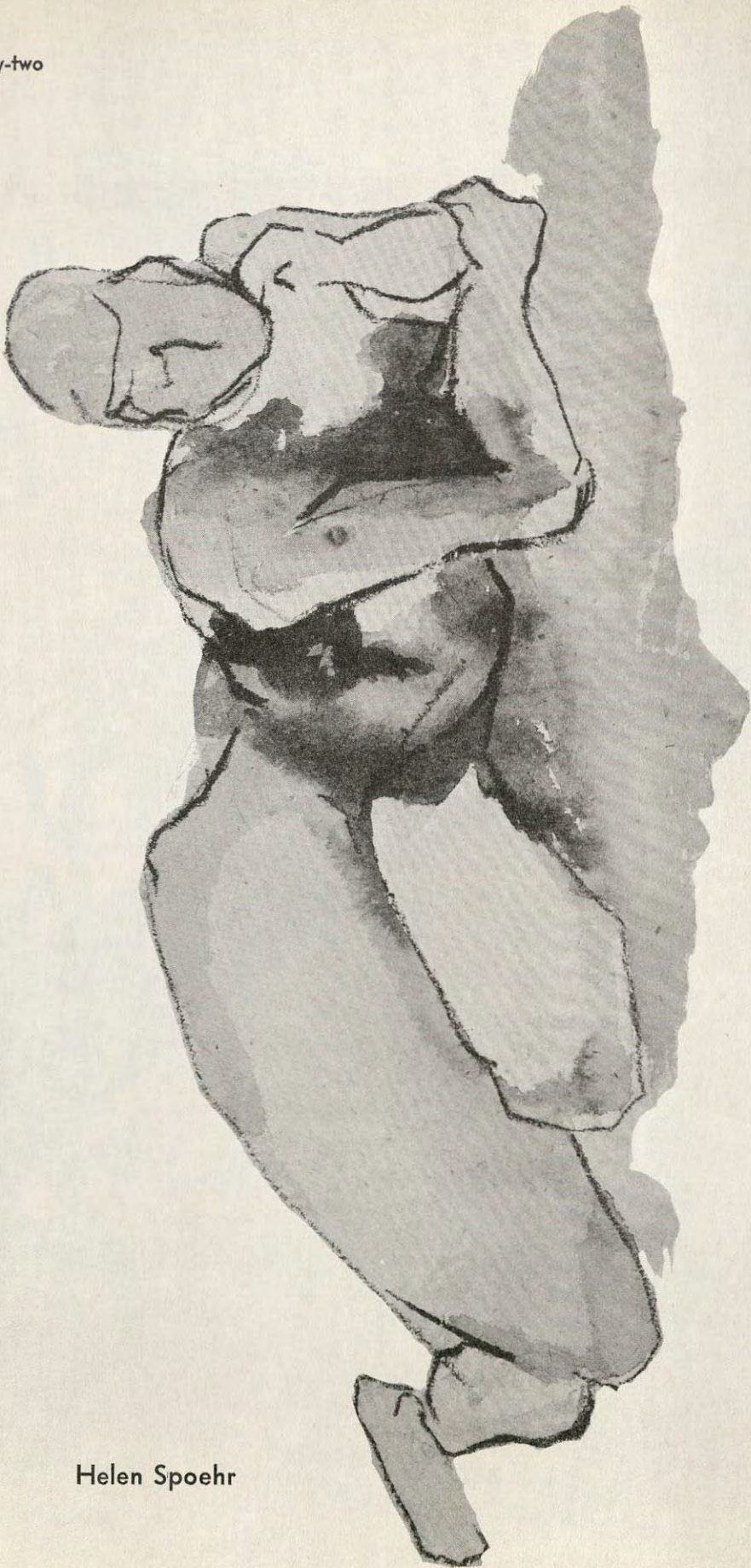
THE HALL

Julie Baumgold

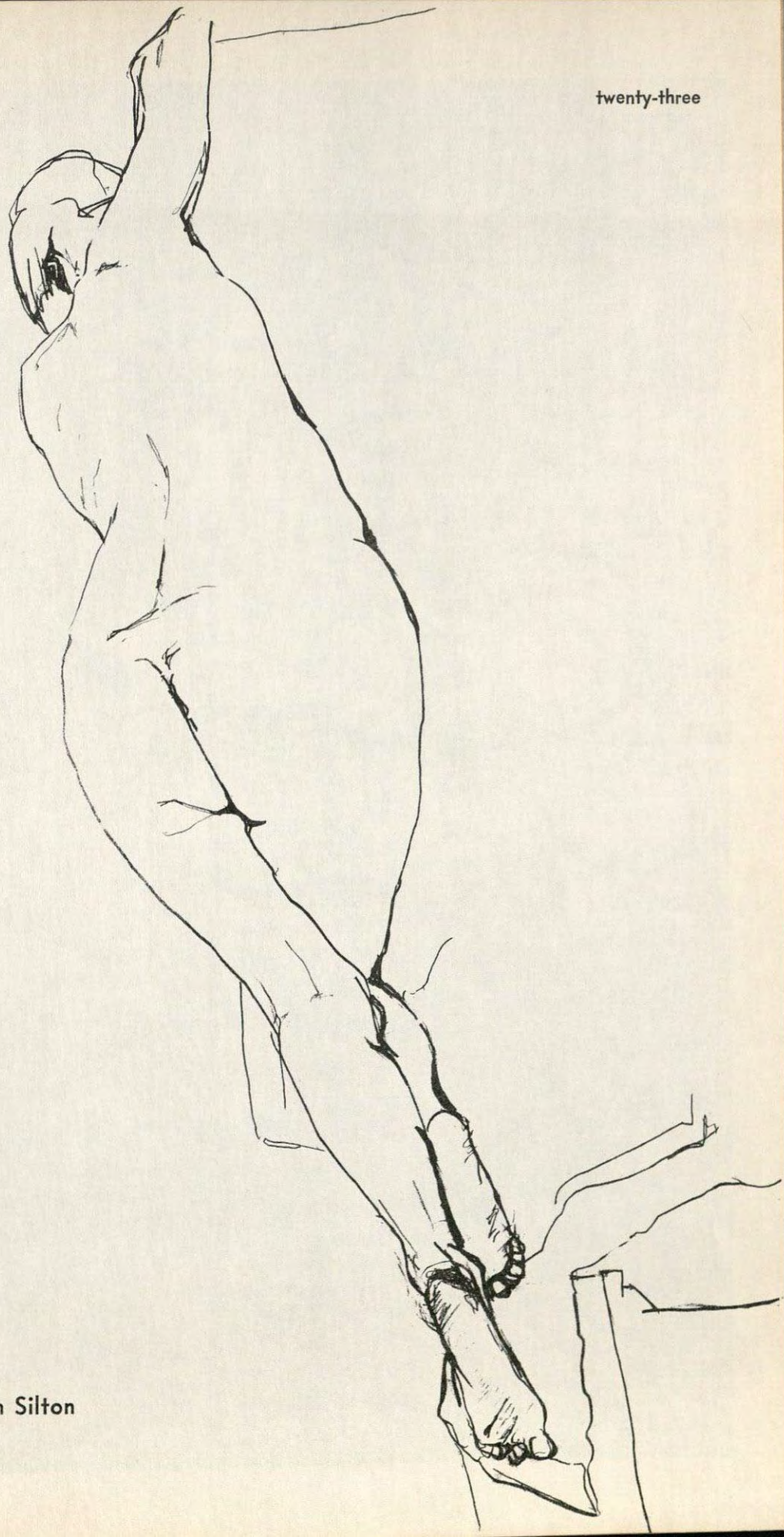
May I propose a toast
To the small blond
New York Jewess of my youth
Who threw a black lace garter
On a table at the St. Anthony Club
And watched the introduced strangers
Pass it round with strained
And liberal smiles
Who leaned on the mantel
Of her impeccable home
As I made the fire
With bellows from Christian Dior
And told me what she thought
Virginia hills would be like

And to the times I have paused
While you gentlemen thought me old
When these words took my mind
Pushed away as I rose
Resigned to live by occasions
With typed reliable cards
And the right ring to my voice
While she walked through the room
Pulling ears, watch fobs, vest buttons
Dancing taunts on the tips
Of black patent leather toes
A chiffon laughing ghostly reproof
To whom I hold out the glass
Feeling her drink and go past
Brushing the old unsafe pain
Once again on my mind
This being the reason
Gentlemen, I resign.





Helen Spoehr



Marilyn Silton



POEM

Marianna Kaufman

I am happy in my house.
Oh sure it's not yet finished, but you can tell
The beams and eaves are beams and eaves.

The house began with strings and pieces
But now a lattice climbs and curls.
I've used the help I've had:
Strong words, wise contractors, and heart.
Carpenters have scraped at old problems.
But it's me that sanded the doors.
And sweeps. And switches out the lights.

If the house turns inward, who's to say?
If there is a corner I will let it be from brooms.
When the house is done, then is just me.

NO PHONE

Peggy Keenan

If only there were more room in the aisle, the two sisters might have danced right there on the bus. They did sing though. Mermaids and sailors rolling back over the waves of the road. Bus stop. The smell of fried chips emerged with a child-on-each-hip woman. The tots' faces were well polished with the grease. Mam sank in the seat in front of me and four aqua eyes took it on themselves to stare over the tattered plaid seat. An abrupt 'hi' increased their stare. My tourist map showed about five miles to Kells. That might take up to a half hour, but just in case I slipped off my loafers and tugged my Tyrolean boots and men's knee socks from my knapsack. Four sea eyes followed my every move. Wool easily slipped over nylons. Doubled top, Boy Scoutish, filled with near holes worn from hours of car-less hitching. The boots no longer looked like anything that had to do with what I originally purchased.

"She's got on boy's brogues!" Giggles.

There sat a few raisons left from morning. I offered them to two new friends who folded them into their earth-coated hands for future use.

Irish Calvary, Kells Cross. Mary's selling potatoes and chickens and eggs. Asses remembering the flight. Christ stone dead.

My knapsack instantly molded to my back. I smiled a goodbye and received a 'God bless' in return. Please, God bless, because I didn't know anything but their name. A slip of paper preserving words written months before in a home fast becoming no more than a dream. "Mr. and Mrs. Michael Garry, Kilskre Stores, Kells." Kilskre had to be within ten miles, but God bless me to find the proper direction. My tourist book said Kell's Druid tower only has three windows, rather than the usual four. I wondered if one faced the Kilskre Stores.

"Oh, it's not really a store," my mother had said. "Sort of a neighborhood co-op cut out of their first floor." Of course she had never been there, only had heard.

I wandered into a shop hoping for a friendly word. An elderly woman approached with a potato-famine-face.

"Michael Garry? Yes, out at Kilskre he is. But ye aren't walkin' are ye? Are ye English? American! praise be, and ye are walkin'? Ye just wait here one minute."

And so I stood in the midst of packaged tea biscuits and fresh feathered eggs. The little bell that tells the owner someone came in, told me she had gone out. She stood at the side of the road until a lorry came by. She raised her hand and the bread lorry pulled over. A word to the driver and then the small bell again. "Michael has a cousin who runs a sweet shop. The lorry driver will take you there and she might get you to the Kilskre Store."

The truck was filled with a whistled I.R.A. tune and yeast smell. My eyes went from shop to shop looking for something familiar, although I didn't know what I was looking for. The bread shifted as we stopped at May Caffrey's Sweet Shop. My door was flung open for me and I emerged wondering if I should climb onto the nearest bus and head back to Dublin.

I felt like an 'ice,' in any case, and I might as well buy it from my cousin's cousin. May stood five feet tall, topped with pixy black hair and eyes that smiled children into buying penny sweets.

"Ye must be Michael's cousin," said she as soon as I was inside. I

started. There were no phones in these shops. The news of my coming to the town was traveling fast. She scurried out the two lads who were drinking minerals and led me through the door. She pulled the shade and locked up. No apology was offered on the door.

"And ye were intending to walk out to Michael's were ye?" (Never tell a secret in Ireland.)

We sat in a curtain-drawn livingroom and sipped tea. There seemed to be no reason for the darkness except lack of time to draw back the drapes and perhaps a mother who was dying upstairs. Their mutt layed at my feet and growled quietly.

"I'll be off to get my brother who owns an auto. He'll take ye out to Michael's. The dog will stay with ye."

She closed the door leaving. I was trapped behind closed curtains and a shut door. I went to open the shades but the dog's tone of voice changed markedly and I returned to my assigned seat to wait in the gloom. In time I was jogging through the country in a small car talking about 'Mammy's illness.' The road crews were out with their bikes and shovels, talking by the road. We stopped at a stucco, lace-curtained shop. A sparkling woman ran out and greeted me. "Ye must be Michael's cousin from America. And ye were planning to walk all this way!"

They had no telephone.

"THURSDAY"

Peggy Keenan

It was Thursday. Slaughter day. Michael had the look on his face that he had had every Thursday for forty-three years. He opened up the shop. Every little while a lady would come on her bike to buy a thing or two, but mostly to stand outside the kitchen door and call 'Lilly, Lilly, are ye about?' And to have Lilly open the door and invite them in for tea and bread washed down with old gossip, all of a kindly nature, of course. In a while, it might have been nine or eleven, but no one knew or cared, Michael, himself, came into the kitchen. He took the rifle from beside the fire place. He fumbled through the rosaries and old letters in the hutch drawer until he came upon the pellet box. Not a word did he say to me or anyone. No one noticed him and I knew I was not supposed to notice him either. His foot steps went up the staircase and overhead into the bedroom. We talked of Kate Gregory's daughter who didn't come back from England and had married a Protestain, and had always had a funny way about her. Michael walked through the room in older clothes than before, nodded and picked up the gun. Out the door. I waited through a few tidbits and then said I had to go out back. Lilly knew where I was really off to, but she said nothing.

As I approached the barn door I heard the crackle that I used to hear when we lived by the woods. I opened the door. Michael was leaning over the twitching corpse, not yet a corpse. He held the head over a basin like we had at Girl Scout camp to wash up in, but this one was filled with near solid redness. I asked Michael if it was the brain that thickened it and he said, "No, 'tis not, just the air." After the twitching stopped he lowered the beast. A knife cut easily down the center of the belly and down each leg. He skinned it and rolled the coat into a ball. The naked animal lay on the concrete floor. Michael cut through and started to remove the innards of blue and red.

I went around to the front and took Lilly's bike and rode until my eyes cleared of the red and blue. When I came home Michael was in his early morning outfit. We had eggs for tea.

THEM

Sara Walbridge

So jump why don't you Abigail
Henry believe me, I would if I could
but I'm afraid.

So a quick razor on the wrists Ab
Henry doll, blood makes me sick and
anyway I love you.

So here's some Bennies Abby babe

Cryin dont do no good
an neither does nothin
so turn your heart off
and shaddup marie
he hates youse an so do I.

THREE DAYS

Sara Walbridge

Today
 the lumps in the morning cereal
 stuck in my throat
 all day,
 and when my love
 said hi how are you
 I couldn't answer.
 When I swallow I can still feel the dents
 on the way down.

Yesterday
 with the radiator steaming
 and all the windows locked,
 I sat on the floor of my room.
 Someone came in
 and I yelled get out
 without even knowing who had intruded.
 Sometimes I have to be alone
 in a too hot room
 sweating out fear.

Tomorrow, shall I say if it ever comes?
 Tomorrow I think I'll read some
 trashy magazines
 in the library.
 The contrariness of time
 wasted in that throbbing machine
 pleases me.
 I protest in a private way.

FOR GREAT AUNT CATHERINE

Jody Callisen

Aunt Catherine never married. No, but in Morocco
walked through dust.
Alone (they said) she went in caravan
down with the heat to Marrakesh.

White-swathed, parasolled,
off-setting the black muscling backs: Catherine
smiling from her camel-seat
out of an aged photograph, still casts the shadow
of a burning outline on the sand.

"Never sick a day." She chose to live
in the native quarters
adding her own Victorian remnants to bazaars.
In rugwalled festering streets, Aunt Catherine learned the smell
of myrrh, hashish and sores. Childrens' sticky hands
clutched at her skirts in the color of evening.

Her Newburgh family wanted facts: were there tea-times?
Mineral water? Had she sat and talked
on colonial verandahs?
Back from deserts, parlored, Catherine made up answers.
At last unnoticed, she looked for the sun
through the thickening curtains.

Aunt Catherine, (still not married) fell
and died in the Newburgh stairwell. The family wept.
They had not seen Arabian fires
but only wilder eyes
shine from the shattered skull: so were consoled.
"At least she didn't die the death we feared," they said
"alone and stranded
in a foreign land."

THE NUMBER SYSTEM

Louise Geltman

When I hear history coldly told
In neat statistics line by line,
I feel the snow at Stalingrad
And winds that tore at Ypres fields.
The teacher stands in pressed blue suit
And fidgets with his spotless tie
In utter boredom as he quotes:
That "At Pearl Harbor some men died.
They never really knew
What happened to the smoldering world,
But corpses hardly care at all
What sun will set and sun will rise."
But if man wants to end this death
God! Think of eyes that see in dreams
The liquid grief in dead men's stares
And hear their frightened questioning:
"Why is it I no longer sing
Or touch the fragile face of Spring?"
When I hear history coldly told
From black bound books with pointed word,
That say all things are black and white,
Black words against a bleak white page
Some scholars found in archives, dead,
I know war as it's always been,
Just dates that fight among themselves
And names sealed in no memory.
But if you stare at neat white rows
Of crosses, like a picket fence,
They bring back thoughts of laughing days
And Smiles that folded by the way
Where leaves of autumn fold and fall.
One flower mesmerizes War,
And one hand cupped with lovers' tears
Will serve someday to flood the earth
With tenderness and empathy.
Man can erase the frozen dates
And break into the tomb of names,
And find new answers to the rule
That War is equal to the sum
And density of soldiers per square yard.

