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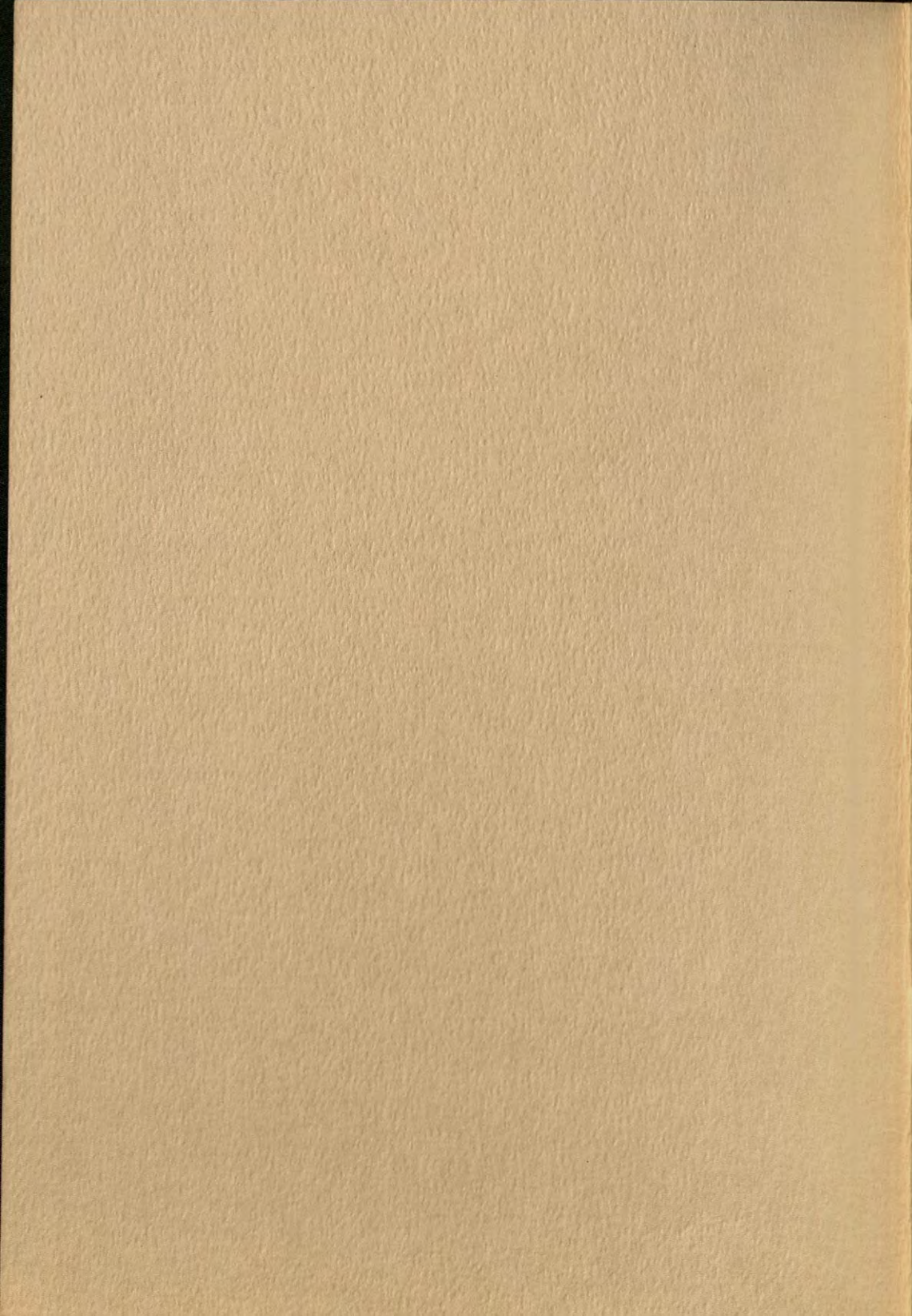
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Vol II No. 2

Spring '60

INSIGHT

Vol. II No. 2



Alice Johnson

INSIGHT

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE
NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT

SPRING 1960

VOLUME II

NUMBER 2

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EDITORIAL

The refusal to make an effort was, for the late Albert Camus, the path of mediocrity. One always wins, he once said, in addressing oneself to that which is easiest for man: his love for inaction.

All writing is a conscious act of creation and any act of creation is a human labor. It is not in sleep but in a conscious awareness of life that man is fulfilled; an awareness which must be expressed through the re-creation of life as man understands it. This is the essence of art, and art for man is a fascinating mirror of his own power: his power of creation.

Insight enters its fourth semester of publication with this issue. The new editors wish to thank the past editorial board for having set as the aim of *Insight* the representation of all creative efforts on the Connecticut College campus. We feel that our goal is a high one and that our cause is a worthy one. We are aware of the difficulty of publishing a magazine which will offer an intelligent and entertaining selection of the thoughts, creative forms and artistic achievements on campus.

The editorial board is conscious of the prevalent apathy resulting from the lack of support for such an enterprise—both from the student body and the faculty. We need to become aware of the fact that talent, creative ability and imagination exist; that a literary magazine is needed and wanted. If the act of creation is a basic need of man, then a medium of expression is his necessity also. We cannot exist without effort—our effort—or without your support.

This issue has been enlarged; it contains material selected from a rich variety of contributions. It is our aim to cover a wider scope of interests, to encourage individual contributions and to obtain faculty support. The future development of *Insight* depends on the realization of this goal.

MARION HAUCK '61

SONG

After John Donne

Try and find a lovely lass,
 Make her heart of stone to melt,
See if you can pierce her mask,
 To make your longing felt:
See if you can break her sureness
Respecting all the while her pureness
 And find
 What sign
She makes when she is being kind.

You think you love for love's torment —
 Pain and sorrow hard to bear —
That your heart is sadly rent,
 Torn in twain with bleak despair;
Then say you'll love forever more,
And lay your sorrow at her door
 And swear
 That there
Lies greater case for cruelty.

I'll have no patience with your woes
 Such martyrdom I'll not applaud;
For in your protest you would show
 That this, your love, had been a fraud.
I'd say
 That you
Had never really loved at all.

RENEE CAPPELLINI '60

ODYSSEY

"I am a lady, Goddamnit!" said the whore as she set down her goblet on the lace doily. The chandeliers tinkled from the laughter that filled the room.

"And what, pray, is a lady then?" said the eunuch in the corner who was taking *réportage*.

"I don't know," said the whore. "Anyone have any proposals?"

"For the definition? or for the lady?" said the bearded brute against the wall who was passing the time.

"The definition."

"How's about a proposal for the lady?"

"Come here, eunuch," said the whore.

The pale, twitchy relic of a man minced whoreward.

"I need a definition," said the whore, "so that I can prove to these slobs that I am what I am. I must know what I am to prove that I am it."

"What?"

"What is a lady?"

The eunuch twitched and the two muddy pools of his eyes stared tentatively at his hand which was clutching a chewed crayon. "I can't answer," he said. "You must find an average. Ask an old man and a young man and a college boy. Then ask a woman and divide all the answers by your personal factor. Then will you have your true definition, my dear whore."

"I shall need money," said the whore. "Anyone have any proposals?"

"For the definition? or for the lady?" said the young boy in the Brooks Brothers shirt, who was there to say that he had been.

"For the definition, through the lady," said the whore. "I am a lady and I do business like one and as one."

"I've got a proposal," said the advertising man who was there to be not somewhere else.

And the whore ascended the stairs with the advertising man.

Alone now and boiling with energy, the whore sat down on her bed, and her cats moved furrily over.

"A lady," she said. "Old man, young man, college boy, woman, divide by personal factor—true definition. What the hell is a personal factor?"

The whore lit a cigarette.

"Footwork," she said. "The mules must go!" She kicked off her high-heeled mules and moved her toes.

"Must be comfortable," she said. "The purple silk must go!" She removed her dress and put on worn corduroy slacks and a loose gray sweater with a moth hole in it. She removed the pins from her hair and washed out the dye. It hung straight and lifeless down her back. She washed her face and stood before the mirror, trying to adjust herself to a different her.

"Hideous!" said the whore. "I'm old. I'm wrinkled. I'm—Christ! I look like a bohemian Buddhist! But I must be comfortable to search for the true—Christ! Searching for the Truth! That is Zen!"

Then the whore went out into the street. "Old man, young man—what the hell is a personal factor . . .?"

A beady black eye gleamed through the mats of yellow hair which covered the head of the being crouched on the stoop. The whore stared at the eye; the eye blinked.

"Old man," said the whore, "I need help."

"Don't think you're the Lone Ranger," said the old man, muffled.

"Tell me what a lady is."

"What do I get for it?" The matted beard twitched when the old man spoke.

"What do you want?" asked the whore.

"Everything. I want everything but I can't use a goddamn thing." The little black eye fixed on the loose gray sweater with the moth hole in it. "You're a lady," the old man said. "Now go away, I'm trying to die."

"How do you know I'm a lady?"

"Come here," said the old man stretching out his palsied hand. The whore stepped forward and the wrinkled fingers pinched her thigh.

"Yes," said the old man, "you're a woman."

"I said a lady."

"Same thing. Go away."

"Point One: a lady is a woman." The whore walked through a puddle.

"Seems obvious, but it takes care of the old man. Old man, young man. Young man. Where the hell's a young man?"

The whore walked on and on. A car screamed and a hack swore. A young man tripped up onto the curb, looking forward, not seeing. The whore ran to him and took his arm. The young man continued to walk, not seeing, not feeling. The whore tapped him on the shoulder and he turned to her.

"What is a lady?"

The young man's huge dewy eyes focused slowly on the whore's face.

"What?" he said.

"What is a lady?"

The dewy eyes unfocused and the young man looked past the whore. Then the young man spoke:

"Life

Around and around, thin white circles with no end for the Thinker
No end.

Parched bone whiteness

No help, no salvation but brief oblivions

So brief

Questions unending; questions as questions; questions as answers.

Questions.

Moving; trying faster paces; forced to slow down.

Forced to slow down or drop, and we must not drop.

O God no! The one thing we must not do is drop.

She can hold us up, who carries the burden

She with delicacy
She with grace
Harmony and . . .
A low crutch, but a crutch
A lady
Beautiful!"

And the young man walked away, not seeing, saying "Beautiful!"

"Goddamn half-wit," said the whore. "But that's the young man. Point Two: What the hell was he talking about? Parched white—Questions, low crutch. Low crutch. Yes—I am a low crutch. I help men up the stairs. I am shorter than they, and they do lean on me, like a crutch. I help men. I do. Point Two: a lady helps men.

The whore scraped the bottom of her shoe on the curb.

"Old man, young man, college boy. College boy. This is hard. How do I know a college boy if I see one?"

The whore walked on and on, and then she leaned against a lamp post and lit a cigarette. A boy walked by in a plaid jacket and the whore laughed. The boy stopped and said, "Say, could you tell me how I can get to the Village?"

"Yes," said the whore, "if you'll tell me where I can find a college boy."

"I am a college man," said the boy in the plaid jacket. "Why for do you want a college man?"

"I must speak with one," answered the whore.

"Love to," said the boy, "but let's stop some where and pick up some vittles. I'll buy you lunch."

The whore and the college boy sat down to lunch.

"What is a lady?" asked the whore.

"Doing a research paper or something?"

"No."

"I *thought* you were a little old—I mean I thought it was P.G. or something. Why you want to know?"

"I must know the truth of it."

"Say!" The boy's eyes lit up. "I bet you're from the Village!"

"No."

"So—you want to know what a lady is." The college boy stroked his smooth chin.

"A lady, I'd say, is a girl that I'm proud to have with me. She'll fit into any crowd. She dresses well, knows how to make conversation, doesn't get loud. She knows when to say yes and when not to. She's poised."

"Thank you," said the whore and she directed the college boy to Greenwich Village.

"Point Three: fits into any crowd. All kinds come to see me. I fit. Yes. Dresses well. What's well? I dress. Fine. Not loud. I'm not loud, and conversation is neither hard nor necessary. Knows when to say yes. That's very easy. Poised. To hell with that—it's the same thing. Point Three: fits into any crowd.

It's all the same thing."

And the whore went out in search of a woman.

"Women are hard to talk to," said the whore. Then she saw one and she stopped her. "Excuse me, could you tell me what a lady is?"

"No," said the woman and kept walking.

"Women are hard to talk to," said the whore.

She stopped another woman who was wearing a mink jacket. "What is a lady?" she asked.

"Do you want a dime or something?" asked the woman.

"No. I want a definition of a lady. I'm doing a research paper. It's P.G."

"Oh," said the woman, "I see." The woman looked at the sky and thought for a very long time.

"A lady," she said. "A lady is . . . is a woman whom nobody can gossip about. She has a mind of her own, of course, but scandal never touches her."

"Thank you!" said the whore.

"That's alright, dear," said the woman. "Good luck on your paper."

"Point Four: scandal never touches her. How do I know? How do I know if people gossip about me? I do have a mind of my own. I'm Boss Madam—no one tells me what to do. Point Four: a lady has a mind of her own."

The whore turned back, tired.

"Point One: a lady is a woman. Point Two: a lady helps men. Point Three: a lady fits into any crowd. Point Four: a lady has a mind of her own. Divide by your personal factor, and you'll have your true answer. What the hell is a personal factor? How do I find out? Who knows everything? Books. Everything is in books. I'll go to a library."

And the whore walked until she was at the top of the library stairs.

"Where do I find out what a personal factor is? she asked.

"Dictionaries are in Room 413b. Walk down the hall on your right, the elevators are on your left. Room 413b is the ante-room of Room 413a which is eight doors down on your right as you get off the elevator."

"Thank you," said the whore; and later that day she found a dictionary.

"Pediform, perpetuance, persiflage . . . God! what a lot of words! 'Personal: 1) of or pertaining to a particular person; private; not public or general. 2) done in person without the intervention of another; direct from one person to another. 3) pertaining to the person or body, as personal charms. 4) relating to an individual, his character, conduct, motives or private affairs, esp. in an offensive manner. 5) rational and self-conscious. 6) designating or of pertaining to personal property.' Oh Jesus Christ! This is terrible! This is impossible! Pertaining. To pertain: to belong or be attached as a part or accessory. Oh God! Accessory . . ."

The whore went home and returned to the library the next day.

"Factor: 1) a steward or bailiff of an estate.' Oh God! 2) One of the elements that contribute to produce a result. 3) Any of the elements or quantities which when multiplied together form a product.' Form a product. Product. This

is beginning to make sense. Personal—that's private. Elements which form a product. Me. I'm the product. *I'm* my personal factor."

Stiffly the whore rose and went out into the street. She walked among the bare trees in the park and up the steps to her apartment. A cat jumped off the bed to make room for her, and another didn't bother.

"How do I divide the answers by me?"

The whore turned on the water in the bathtub and took off her clothes.

"Dividing makes things smaller—shorter. If I shorten the answers—I'll be dividing—dividing by me—my personal factor."

She sat in the bathtub a long time. Then she dried herself, re-dyed her hair, put on the purple silk and the mules, and made up her face. Then she looked at herself in the mirror.

"A lady is a woman who can aid a man—any man, and still keep a mind of her own."

The place was full when the whore stepped into the brothel. The room was quiet when the whore stood up to speak.

"A lady is a woman who can aid any man and still keep a mind of her own," said the whore, draped in purple silk, standing high on a table. "I am that lady. Is there anyone who will disagree?"

The place was silent.

"There is no one who disagrees? Then I AM A LADY, GODDAMNIT!" said the whore.

"Yes," said an alcoholic who was there because he was sober. "So what?"

The whore looked at the alcoholic for a long time and the room was silent. She looked down at the people in the room and they were not looking up at her.

"So what?" she said quietly. "I don't know."

"Let's go," said the Captain with a wooden leg who was there because he was not at sea.

And the whore, with dignity, helped the man up the stairs.

SUZANNE TUCKER '61

NEW ENGLAND TIME

Stiff streets are where I live.
And straight, white houses
With widows walks
Are where I stay
And look out over
Fish sea
Blue and white checked sea
Even and precise at the horizon.

Plain days are what I live.
Duty-measured days
Measured sea-watch
For white, stiff, canvas sails
And seagull echo
Lonely and free
Rising primly in the thin air.
Invisibly stretching home to me.

DIANA BASSET '60

A TRAGIC INTERLUDE

A SONNET

A heavy silence draped itself around
The shoulders of a languid afternoon.
The warm sun drenched the forest floor,
And held a still pool in hypnotic swoon.
But all at once across its flawless skin,
A waterbug dispelled tranquility.
He climbed aboard a lily pad,
And set his raft to sail upon the sea.
A leather frog sat watching in the reeds,
And as the sailor reached the other side,
He loosed his sticky tongue and shot
With perfect aim — to end a pleasant ride.
Devoured! — Stillness echoed motionless repose,
And once again the wood began to doze.

NANCY MIDDLEBROOK '61

THE UGLY LADY

I saw an ugly lady today.
We met criss-crossing on the stair.
She patted a wisp of falling hair and I liked that,
And I smiled for her.

Her face was chopped in half by hair,
Straw-like hair that hung down black.
She moved with jerks but she moved with care and I liked that,
And I smiled for her.

The ugly lady glanced at me
And dropped her gaze that I should see.
She meant so little to herself,
Except for an occasional pat of hair,
That's why I hate the world that they
Should scorn my ugly lady.

I think I know, when she awakes
And has to face her dusty face,
She does her best to compensate and I like that,
But it makes me sad.

Dear ugly lady, and yes you are,
We know about your dusty face.
We know your only feminine flair
Is in the patting of your hair
But we like that
And we smile for you.

MARY ASWELL '62

THE PAINTER

He raised his head and looked at his outstretched hand. The sun, coming through the lancet windows of the adobe wall had stained it red. He laughed at the color of it—to himself—quietly. His throat was parched. He started to get up, but let himself fall back on the straw. They'd be ringing the bells soon.

The sound of voices reached him from the marketplace—hollow voices, empty words in a foreign tongue that penetrated the walls of his room. He covered his ears. Within his shell he could still hear her footsteps in the hallway. She came down the steps and walked to the door. She stood there for a minute, and called to him.

"Pietro. Pietro, open the door."

He lay in silence in his corner.

"Shall I leave the tray here?"

He rolled over on his side.

"If you want to, leave it. Leave it, but go away."

He heard her put the tray on the floor, and ascend the stairs. He heard the keys on her long sash as they knocked against the steps—echoing, echoing. The bells rang in the distance. He pulled himself to his feet, brushed the loose straw from his chest and walked to the window. The sandaled feet of the hollow voices passed in front of him. The bells rang in the distance. The feet gathered speed—the last pair disappeared around the corner. He turned from the window. He crossed to the corner where the oil lamp was. Then, the room was lighter.

He opened the door and picked up the tray. He bolted the door behind him and carried the tray to the center of the room. He squatted on the stone floor and placed the tray at arms-length from him. "No," he muttered, "she wouldn't." He flung the tray across the floor—it crashed into the wall. He could here the keys as she paced upstairs in the kitchen.

He looked around the room. It was his room—she could never change his room. She had tried—years ago, before he kept the door locked. He glowered at the newspaper lying on the tray in the corner. Don't open the door. Never open it. Let her pace. Let her feet feel the pain of years of wear. Wait—wait til her sandals are worn through—til the keys are worn in half from dragging. She'll crawl then, knowing pain. Knowing the pain that I have known—that I feel in my knees from years of groveling before her wooden door. From kneeling beside her table waiting. Waiting for scraps of food—waiting for my discarded salvation. She'll learn to crawl in time. Til then she'll never see the inside of my room. My room—it is my room. Mine, it's plain walls with lancet windows. Mine, its low beamed ceiling. Mine, its layers of dust on the chair 'n tables.

He sat back and watched a spider climbing on the wall in front of him. It was an ugly spider—a large black spider, and with all its bulk it labored. It would climb a little and then, fall back. He smiled at it. Same wall—same spider—same process. All walls—all spiders—all the same process. Climb, climb, climb—fall spider. Fall wall. I'll be here. I'll watch you fall. I'll laugh. My

tables, my chair and I—we'll watch together—we'll laugh together. There'll be no more bells and no more sandaled feet, and no more trays, but we'll be here—my tables, my chairs, and I. We'll sit back and watch—and we'll laugh. Then we'll cry—maybe. If it gets very quiet. If the pacing stops, and if the bells don't ever ring, we'll cry—my tables, my chair, and I. But we'll laugh first. It'll be like that, you know. You'll fall, spider. And we'll laugh. He bent his white head over his arms and cried.

In the sixth hour, the sky grew dark. By the ninth, the heavens rumbled and loosed the rain that settled the dust in the road. The light flickered and went out. He straightened up and filled the lamp, lit it, and looked into its light. He looked at his foot which the lightning outside illuminated: looked into the corner where the tray lay. He saw the white cloth draped over the square form in the corner. He looked at the wooden chair. Just once more, I've got to try just once more. You won't mind chair—we'll do it together. He removed the cloth from the canvas and threw it on the ground. He carried the painting over to the chair and set it down. He pulled the chair closer to the window. From the table near him he took his paints and brushes.

The face on the canvas was fuller, but the resemblance was still there. It was in the eyes and in the straight line of the nose. The body too had changed, but there was still an expression of agility in the twisted form on the canvas—as if he might jump from the height at any moment—that the painter had retained. There was pain on the face in the picture. It was an expression to be worn by one as the painter in his isolation, but out of place before a mass of people or before the gold sky in the painting. The painter looked at the canvas. He stepped forward, selected his brush, and dipped into the brown paint. He started to darken the sky. This lightning outside cast the shape of a man across the floor. The painter turned and faced the window.

The man outside was intent on watching the artist. A second flash of lightning revealed him as an officer, garbed in the helmet and armor customary of his rank.

"At it again, Pietro?"

"Go away."

"That's not a nice way to talk, Pietro. I'd be careful if I were you."

The artist turned his back on the window.

"All these years that I've been watching you, Pietro, and I've never seen your painting. What is it, Pietro? Let me see it."

The painter turned toward the man.

"You'll never see it—you, or any of the others."

"Pietro, I'm your friend. You shouldn't talk to me like that. The others, Pietro, the others think you're crazy. Crazy to sit here all these years working on one picture. But we know, Pietro, you and I. We know that you're not crazy. If I were painting, I'd do just what you're doing. You're right, Pietro, it's best for a man to work alone. You know I'm your friend. Let me see what you've spent your years with. Turn it around."

"Leave me alone."

"I think they're right, Pietro. You are crazy. You spend all these years working on your painting, and you won't show it to anyone. You are crazy."

The artist raised his brush and aimed it at the window.

"Go ahead and throw it, Pietro. Throw it. I'll tell them about you. They'll come for you, you'll see. Throw it, Pietro, and I'll send them for you."

The painter lowered his hand.

"Good luck, Pietro. I'll be back to see it when it's finished."

The painter dabbed at the paint with his brush. He lifted the brush and aimed it carefully at the upper right corner of the canvas. He placed the brush there and made a few short strokes. He stepped back and frowned. He moved forward again, and rubbed the brown paint off the gold-leaf. He reached for another tube of paint, and, taking a smaller brush, dipped it in. Very lightly, he applied a little to the mouth of the figure on the canvas. He stepped back. He smiled. He took some orange paint and blended it with the red along the top of the mouth. That was the difference. The edges needed turning up. That made all the difference. His picture was saved—his years of work, redeemed. Just a small curve of the mouth, and it all fit together, the crowd, the haughty gold sky, and the solitary figure—the one in the painting, and the one before the canvas. Redeemed—his whole life.

He wiped his brushes clean, closed the paint tubes, and put the painting back in the corner. That's it, chair. We've done it at last. It's finished, chair. They'll never see it, though. It's ours, chair—yours, and the tables, and mine. We'll see it—we'll know it's finished, but we won't tell them—the sandaled feet or the bells, or the tray, or any of the others. Stay there, chair. Tomorrow, we'll look at it—when the sun comes again.

JANE MILLS '61

FLIRTATION:

Suborned in this society of
Happily married children-ridden Urbana,
Of desperadoes never to be branded by the Fire,
Of the demure debutante daughter of
Seasoned intent, black-eyed,
Checkered in aphrodisaic white satin.

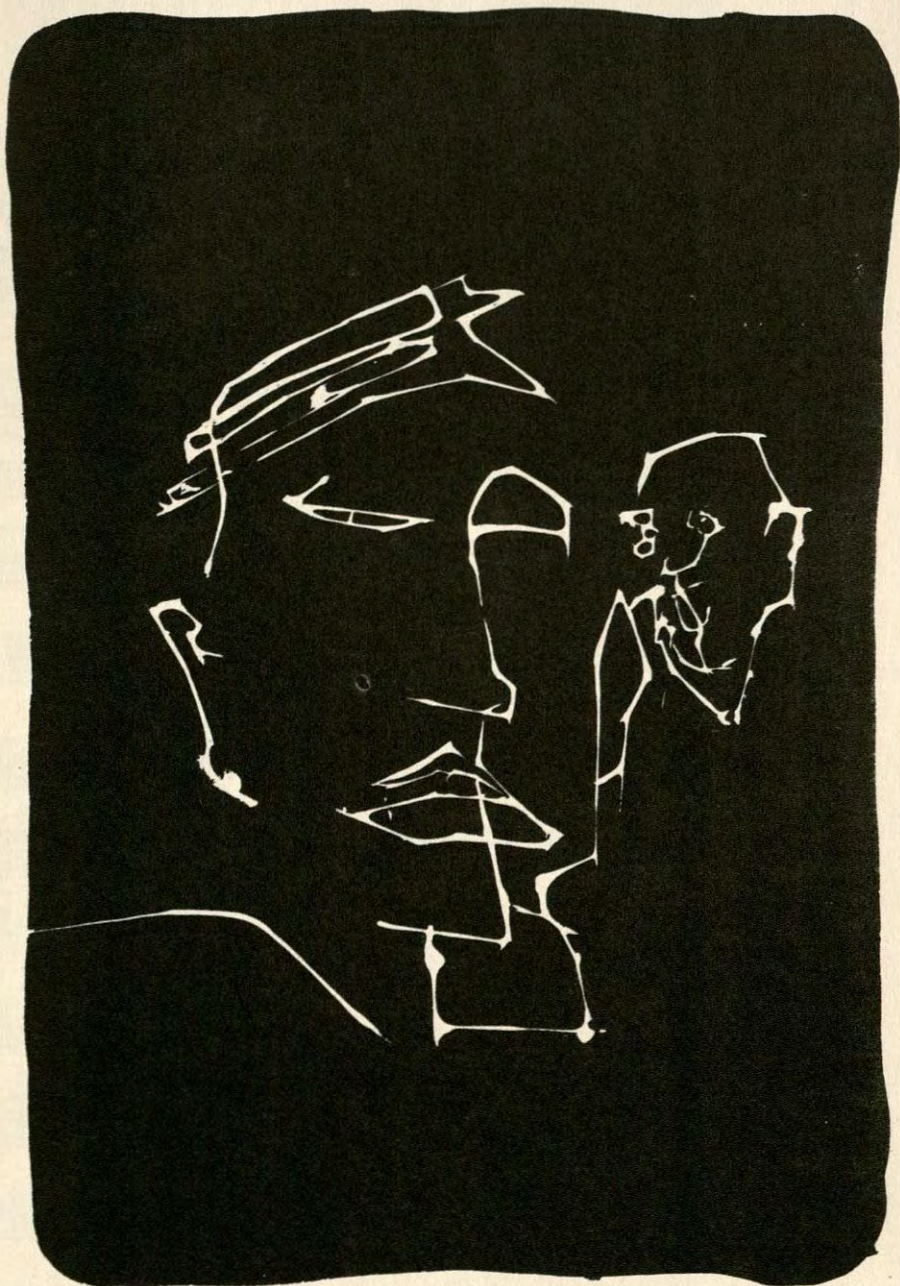
All— y, All —y entree
The brazen female bolt no longer
Picasso "Amateur"
While the big ever-adolescent buck
Balks unlike Jupiter, but quakes
More for Juno's wrath on him
Than Io.

Have we buried under a mountain of
Ace, King, Queen, Jack
The provocation coup d'oeil of the
Brown-eyed fortyish no longer
Mademoiselle but belle — elle qui
Vive dans tout l'esprit de l'ame et du corps.

The flash of lightning never pre-
Storm warned in words
Because only momentary
Firework brilliance — second — of
No genetic consequence, only the
Elysian Realm of Yes.

Is the Budwieser beer beau
Prostrated by the secretary
Chattel talk and the chorus less,
Much less that Arpegey smother?
Can he indulge Martini-desired for the
Hour, the gleam of "perhaps," but — "never"
Firm enough to make the flashing
Orange life jacket safe for both?

Cupid — convinced — lunged through the
Plate glass window to open the taxi door for
Psyche, but Psyche so long sorority-pent
Changed to a butterfly.
Cupid paid the hack.



LE SECRET HUMAIN

SACHA MARTIN '62

Reflection

Quietly

Maxilyu Skorupski

Handwritten musical score for "Reflection" by Maxilyu Skorupski. The score is written on six systems of grand staves (treble and bass clef). It includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *mf*, *f*, *dim.*, and *poco rit.* The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

System 1: Treble clef starts with a whole rest. Bass clef begins with *mf*. Dynamics include *cres.*, *f*, *dim.*, and *mf*.

System 2: Treble clef continues with eighth and quarter notes. Bass clef has a whole rest followed by eighth notes. Dynamics include *f* and *dim.*

System 3: Treble clef has a half note followed by eighth notes. Bass clef has eighth notes. Dynamics include *mf* and *f*.

System 4: Treble clef has eighth notes. Bass clef has eighth notes. Dynamics include *mf*.

System 5: Treble clef has eighth notes. Bass clef has eighth notes. Dynamics include *f*.

System 6: Treble clef has a half note. Bass clef has eighth notes. Dynamics include *poco rit.* and *dim.*

A tempo

Handwritten musical score for piano, featuring six systems of staves with treble and bass clefs. The score includes various musical notations, including notes, rests, and accidentals. Dynamic markings are present throughout the piece:

- mf** (mezzo-forte) appears at the beginning of the first system and in the fourth system.
- f** (forte) appears in the first and second systems.
- Rit.** (Ritardando) is marked in the third system.
- crs.** (Crescendo) is marked in the third system.
- ff** (fortissimo) appears at the end of the third system.
- ten.** (Tenero) is marked in the fifth system.
- mf** (mezzo-forte) appears in the sixth system.

The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of the sixth system.

AT THE TEMPLE OF THE EMERALD BUDDA, BANGKOK

Golden stupa
caught in the web
of dusk
as people pray
with humbled heads
bowed.

Sprigs of flower
incense intertwined
by fingers
that now have touched
vivid past of
present.

Murmuring voices
wash the temple grounds
with faith;
golden robed monks
linger by luminous
flame.

And as night breezes
swing the temple bells
on roofs,
the people rise
faces lit with
hope.

MARIAN BINGHAM '63

NIGHTWINE

We grow old together, the Night and I
And strangers together we press from
The grapes the rich, red wine of life.
Yet, we grow old together, the Night and I.
Our feet run red with wine and blood,
But our eyes are dry and dusty-rimmed,
As on we press and tread our way
'Til none remains but old decay
Of skins, all empty, with bitter pits.
And we grow old together, the Night and I.

NANCI GILMAN '62

BEAT

Yes, me too, I'm tired.
But I'm tired of doing what everyone else is—
Waiting for The Sunrise.

No!

I want my Chance-of-a-Lifetime
for better or for worse
now—

in this screwed-up age
(The Age of Atomics,
disintegrating or fusing,
The Age of Organization
and ergo, ad hoc, ad infinitum,
Conformity)

not umpteen years from now when no one,
not even Nelson Q. Rockefeller,
will care about my wild, fantastic, invention,
or thought,
or World-Shaking, Life-Saving Deed,
or for that matter, and knowing me,
Squawk.

I want to bust out
and get caught up in the world of
Creative Business
where the struggle for thy sufficient daily bread
also hath its lighter moments of
(yes, professor)
Exchange of Ideas
with the enemy.

NANCY WADDELL '60

FRENCH AND SPANISH CONTEMPORARY MUSIC: AN ESSAY

There was no violation of the autonomy of the original music, for unlike Debussy who was guided by an aesthetic goal, they simply sought to nationalize the intensely human quality of the Latin folk expression and the pulsating vitality of the primitive. Thus, this fundamental nationalistic drama has no program, nor is it the specific expression of a given moment in history. Conversely, it implicitly emulates the principles of romanticism: the direct and personal expression of experience and emotion.

Thus we are brought to the beginning of the twentieth century for examination of the representative composers of the two countries under consideration. The nineteen twenties trends in France are reflected by Satie and "Les Six," for French music after impressionism was again reactionary, deriving directly from the pronouncements of Satie, who committed himself to the aesthetic of simplicity and exerted a strong influence on the literature of "Les Six." Spanish composers include de Falla, Granados, Albeniz, and a Brazilian composer, Villa-Lobos. This group of composers are the first Latins to achieve a musically universal stature, and comprise what may perhaps be called the Spanish school. Such aspects under consideration will be melody, harmony, form, rhythm, and finally, the feeling imbued in the music, whether by academic discipline or natural selection.

The treatment of melody within the French milieu shows, generally, a tendency towards more linear and abstract construction. Satie writes, for example, in "Veritable Flabby Preludes for a Dog," in a contrapuntal style that approaches neo-classic techniques. Milhaud, although he displays many more facets of music and justifies his technique psychologically rather than technically, likewise shows a propensity towards more exact melodic proportions. In "Remembrances of Brazil" his predilection for the Spanish flavor is fulfilled by a stylized imitation of folk elements. His use of melody here is restricted to short, expressive themes, and he upon polytonal and poly-rhythmic effects for their vitalization. The nature of Auric's melodic lines in the third movement of his "Sonatine," suggests the jazz idiom, another aspect of the stylized imitation which I find symptomatic of "Les Six." Likewise, Poulenc's nocturnes seem to me to be based on a more modernistic and objective sonoric imitation than was impressionism. In summary, the basic characteristics of melody under the craftsmanship of "Les Six," is an abstraction of diversified twentieth century styles.

The basic characteristics of Spanish melody are, I think, far more spontaneous and emotional. The melodic contour seems to be more cyclic and elongated, and actually shows the influences of the piano literature of Chopin, Greig, and Liszt. Although there are technical modifications in the use of melody, one still senses its authenticity and inherent nationalism very acutely. The academic discipline of German construction is particularly apparent in Granados' "Goyescas," or "Iberia," by Albeniz, in addition to the impressionistic idiom, but the techniques are not thoroughly enough integrated with the folk element. Thus I feel that the music would fail were it not for the earthy element that it embodies.

Harmonically, the two types of music are diametrically opposed. Both types exhibit, of course, dissonant tendencies, but one is a contrived and intellectualized style, whereas the other is a natural one. For instance, Milhaud's "Remembrances of Brazil" shows a variance of keys, or the juxtaposition of two modes. Conversely, the dissonances of Villa Lobos are evanescent, and are dependent upon the sense of the dramatic in the melodic contour. Albeniz, too uses modes and novel harmonies, but scarcely abandons a sense of tonality altogether. Likewise, the germ of the romantic found in, for example, "Suite Floral" by Villa-Lobos would be nowhere apparent in the harmonizations of Messiaen. It is difficult to characterize a harmonic style without specific references to the various styles of the individual composers, but I would say, although the semblance of euphonistic color and special coloristic effects are similar, the harmonies of French and Spanish music can be differentiated in two ways. The harmonies of the French are more linear and more compressed, and do not incline towards harmonization by parallel block chords. And, secondly, the Spanish include ultra-auditory effects of impressionism, romanticism, and construction principles based on the guitar.

Both "Les Six" and the Spanish Modern School show the abandonment of the structural refinement of the Western tradition in their piano literature. Instead, all composers seem to conceive a form as dictated by the mood of evocation or exotic subject matter, and unity is achieved by means of rhythmic or harmonic repetition, or recurring motifs or figures, which represent the object or scene of inspiration.

The most interesting comparison, I think, between the two schools is that of rhythm, especially considering the attraction of the French composers, like Milhaud, to Latin and Spanish meters. Both aspire to achieve polyrhythmic Latin effects, but the results are different due to nationalistic and historic differences. The French imitation of Latin rhythm, the effect is of an artificial tableau, which merely suggests. In Spanish music such as Turiana's "Gypsy Dances" the motion is far more elemental and energetic, the rhythmic effects seeming far more self-sustaining. In other words, the justification of rhythm seems to be for its own sake, whereas the French imitations of the same rhythmic effects are not nearly as organic, but instead, purely illusory, and unable to attain reality or emotional immediacy.

The differences in feeling of which I spoke before, are, in my opinion, due to the involvement of the French in musical history, and the isolation of the Spanish peninsula from the cultural trend of Europe. The music of "Les Six" shows an objectivity which can only come from its modernity, and its original reaction against romanticism. Spanish music, however, is still intact, and still shows the latent influence of romanticism. Likewise, the similarities and differences in both music reiterate this same cause and effect phenomenon of romanticism. There is, however, a difference which is caused by the respective nationalities. The French endeavor to transcribe the delicate world of the ideal, whereas the Spanish are directly expressive.

SNOW

White glowing moon, the
north wind dusted you last night
and shook its cloud cloth.

FULL MOON

A modern sculptor
shaped this perfect sphere
from clay of dulled and
yellow city lights,
but modeled then the
face with hasty hands.

HAIKU

Rich red zinnia
stood erect and proudly stiff . . .
the storm tossed its crown.

EASTER

From black twisted trunk
Thrust in pain tortured hill
Rises a shining white blossom,
Herald and symbol of Spring.

CYNTHIANNA HAHN '62

CHARLIE'S WIFE

They lay in the dark. The light from the street came into the room, landing partially on the mirror, giving each object in the room an iridescent glow that seemed to come from within. An old but highly polished silver dresser set lay to one side of the bureau, restless in its glow. The grey walls shifted just the slightest bit as Agnes stared at them. They outlined the rising slender columns of the mahogany bedposts. Five years ago at their wedding reception, Grandma Pascal had rightly announced the beds as 'handsome pieces,' but Agnes never looked at them, crammed side by side, without thinking they were really too large for the small room. She preferred to remember them as they had looked in the master bedroom in the old house, her grandmother's. They had had the canopies up then, and the pineapples which now teetered nakedly in their exposed, seemingly purposeless and awkward state, had borne the canopies with graceful pride. It had been a north room, but one with a fireplace that Grandma Pascal had always kept burning in the winter and on the beds, tufted white bedspreads that covered the layers of down puffs. On certain days she would climb the stairs to the third floor and crawl up on to one of these huge twin beds and listen to the crackle of the fire. The third floor had only this room and the empty south one, but Agnes had a canopy over her head and puffs smoothing up around her. Here she could let her thoughts go free and draw her writing book from its hiding place in the night table between the beds. It was actually her father's old ledger which she had turned upside down, retitled, and written on the unused backs of the pages. It had to be renumbered, too. Here she would inscribe all the things she wanted, all the things she had seen and heard and thought. Things that she really couldn't tell her sister Martha because she was too young to understand. Even her mother didn't seem to understand her when she tried to tell her. The words never came out the way she felt they should or hoped they would. Alone, she dreamed in the book and in the bed.

Somehow she had never been able to detach from the beds her memories of those special days. Grandma Pascal had died shortly after their marriage, the house had been torn down, even the canopies were now cut from the beds, and, of course, she was never alone now. Charles was there. Even so, the memory came again and again with pleasant warmth through distant echo corridors of time, almost there, but not quite.

Charles turned slightly.

"Charlie?"

"Uhhh."

"You asleep, Charlie?"

"Uhhh." He would answer like this, although Agnes knew he was well into the solid sleep that always came to him after long hours driving his bus route. He turned again, his arm flopping over toward her bed in the turn. She waited a few moments and then laid her hand onto his large one. She had been meaning to talk to him about Martha's invitation to dinner for this Sunday, but now she looked over to his face that lay sleeping beside her, grey like the rest of the room and quiet, yes, and yet not a part of it. While not exactly unfamiliar, his face struck

her anew each time she saw him there beside her in his sleep. Sometimes she would lie and stare for awhile and then slip off to sleep; not really thinking consistent thoughts, but letting things drift through her mind, without stopping to judge them as they came or to follow them to where or what ever conclusion they might lead. Other times she would sit up and stare for hours, holding his hand in the dark, as she did tonight; echoing back through the corridors, the restless grey encouraging her to go. And always she would work through the same memories and toward the same final question—why didn't they have children? But the question never came to her mind so clearly as that. Instead came overlapping pictures and thoughts of herself as a girl, her mother when she was carrying Martha, and Martha herself as she was now carrying. She filtered through these, putting off that picture which inevitably came.

There was the warm humid August night when she had crept from the house to walk along the east road toward the tobacco sheds. She liked the smell of the freshly harvested plants and their newness often fell toward the floor of the shed in a cool mist. Then that shadow that always loomed up from the corner; Durkie, the summer man, who showed up now and again to earn a few liquor dollars. Her father hired him as a matter of habit or perhaps out of a hidden sense of Christian duty.

"What are you doing out on this night, Aggie. Your Daddy let you come out walking like this, huh? Come on over here by Durkie, it's cooler." She thought she smelled liquor or chewing tobacco, and the humidity increased.

"I said come over by Durkie, Aggie. He's not going to hurt you. You're almost as pretty as your mother, Aggie. Your mother's real pretty, you know that?" Undefined, vague, only half-thought-of adolescent fears gathered in a knot in her stomach, forcing all her breath from her. She knew suddenly what was there.

"I'm not going to hurt you, Aggie, please, Durkie just wants to have you look at him, Aggie." She began to shake her head slightly and he came toward her more.

"Come on here and look at Durkie. Look at me, Aggie. You got nice hair, too, Aggie." She winced as he touched her.

"No . . . nooo, Durkie. Mama says you drink, Durkie. Mama says . . . please, Durkie. Please, nooo."

She then turned to look at the man beside her in the room. After a moment of confusion she recognized him. It was Charlie and this was Charlie's hand she held. And the question and her fear of what the answer might be flooded over her as she stared at his quiet grey face. Again she knew what was there and then there were bitter tears. She wept silently for awhile and began half chanting "I'm sorry, Charlie, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Please, Charlie, I'm sorry." And she knew she would not be able to speak of it at all in the morning. She never could. The sound of the even deep breathing and the quiet luminosity of the walls calmed her finally and in these quiet grey hours she hesitantly brought his hand to rest on her abdomen, pressing it gently against her womb, and imagining and praying a new life into being. And tired sleep came as the walls shifted even more and the naked pineapples of the bedposts floated round in elliptical swirls.

He stretched his arm that lay in her bed. It passed over already cooled sheets

and into clear air. A puzzled second of half sleep and he squinted his eyes toward the yellow squares that played on the opposite wall. He smiled drowsily as the warmth of the morning sun reached him and he saw it smoothing over the firm arms that flashed in the rapid strokes of the hair brush. Her hair, a true raven black, sparkled blue and green in the light. He always marvelled at the ease with which she plaited the long strands into the caressing bun on the back of her head. She stopped, her hands cupping the hair up on her head, as she caught his eye in the mirror.

"Better get up, Charles, it's already half past."

"Uhm-hmm." He gazed a bit longer, not wanting to recognize her words which would deflate his round warm picture.

"Charles, really, you better . . ."

"My love, at your request, I'm up!" And he rolled out feet first and padded over to her.

"My love, thou has the most bee-autiful hair that ever was." And he put his face into the plaited mass that she still held. She waited patiently with no response. "Thou hast . . . hey, you know what?"

"What?"

"Today's Saturday and I don't have to work tomorrow. And you and that make me feel good." He backed off a bit as she was starting to push long tortoiseshell pins into the bun.

"It's half past, I've got to go get the eggs on. Your clean shirt's in my closet, if you're looking for it. I did all the ironing yesterday afternoon and forgot to separate them out when I brought them into the room."

He leaned against the bedstead and watched her walk down the short hall to the kitchen. The kettle scratched off the stove, the hot water tap whined as it was turned on, the kettle slammed back onto the stove and the refrigerator door opened. Charles drew in a deep breath and started toward the shower. He paused as he passed the mirror, his peering look somewhat challenging the mirror to give back what he would have liked to find there. But he found only the same male body in wrinkled striped pajamas that had been passing that mirror on the way to the shower for the past five years. He leaned closer, examining the slight puffiness over his eyes. Then he pulled back again to see what it looked like at a distance. Still eyeing the mirror, he groped absently for the bureau drawer. He drew out a clean pair of shorts and a tee shirt and started again toward the shower. Charles liked showers and the soap sliding briskly over his skin. He liked the feel and the look of the damp towel wrapped tightly round his hips. He was glad that his hip and stomach muscles were smooth and taut. Sometimes while he sat for hours driving the bus he felt very sloppy and paunched. But a shower and a damp towel taut on a clean body . . .

"Agnes, where in your closet?"

"What?"

"I said WHERE in your closet. The shirt, I mean."

"To the left I guess, by my print house coat."

"Oh yeah, O.K. I got it." He strolled out into the kitchen in his shorts, buttoning his shirt.

"You're the best shirt ironer any busdriver could have. You know, I was talking to Al about this, and he claims that Claire is . . ."

"Charlie, it's 8:00 already and your egg has been ready for five minutes now. It's going to be cold."

"O.K. O.K. I'm coming. Only got my pants and shoes to go." He returned to the bedroom and put on his shoes and then his pants. He always put his shoes on first and then his pants. It invariably was harder that way but it was a small test to draw your pants smoothly over your shoes without allowing them to catch. This morning they caught and he lost his one footed balance. To restore it he had to place both feet to the floor, crushing one freshly ironed pant leg in the process. "Damn."

"Charlie."

"I'm coming, I'm coming," he said tucking his shirt in as he entered the kitchen, "Christmas, you've been jumping all over me this morning, Agnes. What the heck's the matter? I woke up feeling fine. My shower was fine. But lately you sure have the knack for messing up a fine day."

He skidded the chair across the linoleum floor to the table, straddling it with one leg just before he pushed it under the table so that he seated himself in one continuous movement. Agnes gave a small but audible grunt.

"Charlie," he said, imitating her voice crudely, "When are you going to remember not to drag your chairs on the clean polished floor." He had meant the remark to be mocking but also to be somewhat humorous. Agnes stirred her coffee in silence. "Damn." The egg was just as cold as she had predicted.

"Martha's asked us over for Sunday dinner," she said in a conspicuously pleasant tone. "I said yes, that is, if you weren't planning anything already."

"O.K. with me, I guess."

"I thought it would be nice if we brought something for all the kids. I mean, she was so nice to me when you were away the other month on that long trip and you know that she wouldn't take anything for it. So I thought we could buy . . ."

"Sure. Fine."

"Charlie?"

"Nothing." He spread some jam on his toast. He didn't as a rule like jam and noticing what he was doing, he dropped the toast and pushed his plate away from him. "It's just that you're always buying things for Martha's kids I only wish that—oh never mind." He started from the table toward the hall closet. He put on his jacket and called in an attempted light voice.

"My lunch ready to go?"

"It's right there on the table . . ."

He glanced down. It was right there. No reason to delay so he snatched it up and started toward the door.

". . . but, Charlie . . ."

"What do you want," he asked more flatly than he had intended to, staring blankly into the empty living room, but half hoping she would come from the kitchen into the room.

She appeared at the doorway, but having heard the flat tone and now catching a glimpse of his blank impatient stare, she said, ". . . nothing, Charlie."

A sudden thumping descended by the door as Mr. Schmidt from upstairs ran to catch the bus. It was Charlie's bus, too. He jerked around and ran out after Mr. Schmidt.

He jumped on to the bus. "Morning," he said breathlessly to the driver and nodded vaguely to the other passengers, regulars on the 8:26 bus. It drew away and Charlie could picture Agnes standing there in the doorway. Somebody O'Brien started to chat to him from the right. Charlie fell into the conversation, and except for the feeling of something left unfinished, he temporarily forgot the exact source of his discomfort. His stop came at the central depot and now feeling generally warm and busy with the group of men that had been discussing the union, he started to leave.

"Hey, Charlie. Forget something?"

"Uh?"

"Your lunch, Charlie. What's the matter? Agnes pack you a bad one or something?" And the men laughed softly.

"Oh, yeah, my lunch," he said, "Almost forgot, didn't I?"

He checked in at the central depot and after taking a quick look at the mileage, the gas, and the usual, he pulled out from the garage.

The first stop was a regular one. On came two young boys, going down to the Institute for the Deaf and Dumb in Medford. They took their regular seats right up front near Charlie.

"Hi, there fellows! How's things today?"

The two boys giggled in low tones and after some minor scrimmaging about between them, one jostled over to the guard pole that ran beside Charlie's seat. Glancing away from the road for a second, Charlie ruffled the boy's hair affectionately. The boy smiled openly and unashamed and pushed forward a small brown paper bag. He bit his bottom lip in expectation and his eyes smiled wide.

"Guess you're going to have to open it for me, too. Can't look-no-hands with this boat."

The child eagerly took the package and tore off the bag and again handed the object to Charlie. An icescrapper. Charlie had let the kids have his to play with the other week and one of them had stepped on it in play and cracked it in two. He turned it over in his hand and glanced at it quickly. In crude lettering of blue was, "Charlie."

"Well, thanks, fellow. That's real nice." But just then there was another passenger to be picked up and another and the route continued. It was a busy hour and the bus was soon filled with 'regulars' or so they called themselves. All it took, though, to become associated with this select group was to board the bus, pay your fare, and sit down for two consecutive mornings and you 'belonged.' But the icescrapper lay on the dashboard where Charlie could see it while he drove. Finally they reached the center of Medford. Charlie pulled in and turned around in his seat to the boys. They sat quietly waiting for Charlie's message. It was a little ritual they had established. Charlie had to bring them a riddle every Saturday that was to be solved or guessed at by the coming Monday. The open front and back door drained the bus of its passengers.

"I'm sorry, but I haven't got a riddle for you today, fellows. I, uh, well, I was

really busy at home and just couldn't think of a good one. But I'll have one for you on Monday instead. O.K.?"

Their faces were a little fallen. "But thanks alot for this icescraper. It's really nice for you boys to think to do that for me. You know, if I were to have a . . ." He placed his hand on the soft cheek of one of the boys and looked rather sadly at him. Their faces were no longer fallen, but serious. They liked Charlie.

"Aw, go on, you little scamps, off with you to school, before you make a . . . well, off you go. Take care."

He sat toying with the icescraper for some time.

She stood dumbly in the center of the room for a moment, realizing his abrupt exit. She walked through the narrow slice of space he had cut in his dash to the open door, her hand passing lightly over the table where the lunch had been. The front door lifted out gently with the breeze that eddied a cold draft round her ankles. A ghost of exhaust from the bus slowly flowed and folded itself to nothing in the street. The draft reached Mr. Schmidt's cat that had been walking careful steps from the furnace room. The cat stiffened in the briefest pause and straining to keep its composure, continued in the cold, shifting its direction the slightest degree with each step so as to arrive at Agnes' door. Once it reached the threshold it skirted into the center of the living room where it stopped and looked around quite pleased.

"I knew it would be this way," she thought to herself, "Why don't I ever say it the way I really want to. Charlie, if you'd stayed a moment more maybe I could have showed you. I just don't understand how it comes out this way." She closed the door and sank into one of the large armchairs by the sofa. Her hand idly caressed the cat around the ears. She tried to imagine how she would start a conversation with Charlie about her night thoughts. But her thoughts came in mixed patterns and had no direction to them. They weren't sad or bitter or angry tears that came to her, but silent, tired, and, if they could have been, dry tears. Tears that gave no release, that didn't begin by welling up from inside her or end in calm relief, but still had to be called tears.

The phone rang several times before she heard it and then it didn't startle her. The cat sat a few paces from the chair looking patiently from her to the phone and back again.

"Hello."

"Agnes? For goodness sakes, where were you, in the tub? I began to think I'd gotten the days mixed up and that you might have gone to market with Charlie. Listen, the darn Ladies Aid called from the church. They can't make their minds up on some nonsense about the church supper and they want the opinion of the 'younger set,' as they call it. The phone's not good enough, they say, I've got to come over and look at everything. Agnes, you there?"

"Yes."

"Yeah, well, I told them I couldn't make it until around 4:30 this afternoon or so, hoping they'd say that was too late and to forget about the whole thing. But no. They're tickled pink, because they're all busy this morning anyway. If I come over to get you around 4:00 do you think you could stay with the kids for

awhile? Agnes?"

"Oh, yes. I'd be glad to, Martha. When did you say? 4:00."

"Yeah, I thought you could stay for supper if you liked. I mean Charlie gets home late on Saturday, doesn't he, around 7:00? And Greg said he had some records to go over down at the plant tonight and not to expect him until 9:00 or so. Can you imagine a husband like that? Saturday night and he works until 9:00!"

"I really don't think I ought to stay for supper, though. But I'll see you around 4:00."

"Gee, thanks alot, Agnes. Don't know what I'd do without you. See you then!"

"Good-bye." She glanced at the clock, "11:15 already. Must have been a longer time than I thought."

"Here, kitty, kitty. You hungry? I'll bet you are. Doesn't he ever feed you? Now wait a minute. Here. No, not your foot, kitty, then you'll tramp it all over the rug. That's right. Poor thing."

"You're darn nice to come over here like this, Agnes." A small hand began to rummage in Martha's large handbag. "No, dear, not in Mommie's pocketbook. Now, Agnes, if Kennie starts crying just . . . Elizabeth, I said NO. Now you go play in the back room with Kennie. He's probably lonely, dear. Go on. Lord, it's almost 4:30. I better run before I make myself late." She pulled her coat around her and hustled down the hall. "Oh, I almost forgot. Robbie's over at the Holland's house and will probably call and want to stay dinner. Say no, positively no. That boy's beginning to forget which house he gets his clean underwear from. So long, Agnes, I promise I'll be back by 6:00."

"Don't rush, Martha, I'll be . . ." the door slammed, ". . . fine." Elizabeth had disappeared. Agnes unbuttoned her sweater and started toward the back room.

"How are you today, Betty?"

"Good."

"Your mother told me you got a new pair of shoes. You want to show them to me?"

"They're in the closet."

"Oh." Agnes sat in awkward silence for awhile. "I understand you're going to be five pretty soon."

"I'm four and one half."

Agnes looked at Elizabeth feeding blocks through the bars of the play pen to Kennie. Kennie's nose was running and she took a kleenex from her skirt pocket to wipe it.

"Here, Kennie. Let Aunt Agnes wipe your nose. Blow, dear."

"He doesn't know how to blow. He's only one."

"Oh, of course." She tried to wipe, but Kennie jerked his head up and to the side, spoiling her efforts and as far as she could see, increasing his own discomfort.

"The man came to fix the T.V. You want to watch T.V.? I know how to turn it on," she said as she tore down the hall.

Agnes hesitated between Elizabeth's rug scuffed trail and Kennie sitting

placidly in his pen. She followed the girl. The late afternoon programs were mostly planned for children and Elizabeth seemed quite content to slouch in a chair, watching from time to time and carrying on an occasional monologue with the armless rubber doll. Agnes wanted to organize a game, wash some dishes, do anything but sit silently with the child, walking to the back room to check on Kennie, who was now asleep on the floor of the pen. "It's close to 6:00 now. Martha will be coming."

"Hey, look, it's my favorite show," she said sitting up on her knees in the chair, the doll crashing indifferently to the floor.

"Do you think you should put your knees in the chair like that, dear, I mean?"

"Mommie never minds." And she jumped once in her chair before jumping out to turn the volume up.

Agnes walked into the back room to look at Kennie again. He was asleep on the play pen floor still. She walked over to the pen and squatted down, gently stroking his hair. His temples were so soft and fragile. She leaned awkwardly over the rail and picked Kennie from the pen. She rocked him carefully in her lap in the side chair. He was warm and damp and his small body adjusted easily to the lines of hers. She wanted to crush him into herself, so great was the love she felt for the child. She didn't realize that she was actually pressing the boy rather firmly and was startled when he burst forth in a gasping breathless cry of surprise.

"Oh, Kennie, honey, hush, hush. Quiet, Agnes is right here."

But the child continued and no amount of walking or hushing or rocking that she tried would calm him. His cries became more and more breathless and gasping. It meant so much to her to be able to calm and comfort the boy. "Kennie, hush, fellow, it's alright."

"Oh, Agnes, is he putting up a fuss? I'm sorry, here, Kennie, it's Mommie. Quiet honey, I'll get your supper in a minute." She rocked the boy and the familiar voice and feel of the body made him cease his crying.

"Those ladies, they don't know whether to have pumpkin or mincemeat or both and on down the line with everything. God forbid that I should be like that and have those concerns when I get to be their age." Agnes was staring at the suddenly quiet baby and the casual mother.

"Agnes, what's the matter. You've been so quiet lately and today you've well, I don't know, it's just that you're more different and far away every day. Something got you worried? I know I'm still your younger sister, but I'm a full grown married woman with all the kids and just maybe . . ."

"It's nothing, Martha, I have sort of a tired headache today. Didn't sleep too well last night. It'll go away in awhile."

"Oh dear. You shouldn't ever have come over here today then. Come on, and have supper with us."

"No. Just drive me home and I'll get to bed early tonight."

"Well, if you say so, you're sure now that you wouldn't like to stay?"

"Thanks again, Martha, but I really would just like to go home."

"O.K. Wait till I get the kids' coats on and we'll pop you over. No, Betty, the other arm first, dear. That's right. What did you do with Kennie's snowsuit hat?"

Dark came earlier every night now and already the street light flooded into the bedroom again. She lay alone on the bed; afraid that the walls would begin to shift and her night thoughts return and yet waiting there for them. She didn't hear Charlie enter, she didn't hear Mr. Schmidt's heavy steps.

"Agnes, you home, honey?"

"Agnes," he started to raise his voice as he walked through the rooms toward the kitchen and bedroom, "Where are you . . ." he saw her on the bed and lowered his voice, "Honey . . . something wrong?" He sat down on her bed, the depression making her fall slightly toward him, and rubbed her shoulders gently.

"You caught me napping. Just a little low and tired, that's all. I'll have your dinner on in a jiffy." And she was up from the bed so soon that Charlie took a moment to rise after her. He stopped her at the bedroom doorway, grabbing her wrist and turning her toward him. Then he softened his grip.

"Agnes, look. I like my eggs on time in the morning and my dinner at night, sure. But they're not going to make much difference if I can't get what's going on inside you."

"It's nothing, Charlie, I'm just tired and low and . . ." she started toward the kitchen again, but he still held her arm.

"Agnes, cut it out! You're doing a poor job of kidding me and a worse one of kidding yourself . . ."

"Really, Charlie, I just . . ."

"Will you just look at me, Agnes?"

She instinctively turned straight to him, but it was Charles and his hand.

"Charlie . . . oh, Charlie, if I could ever tell you . . ."

"Come on, honey." And he picked her up and settled both of them on the bed, his back against the bedstead.

"I don't know what to say or where to begin," she muttered through her deep, shaking, yet quiet sobs, "We almost talk about it all the time, but you always stop your sentences and I never know what or how to say it. And I just can't take it anymore, I really can't. You know what I'm talking about. Don't you, Charlie? I mean about children and all. For five years now we've been doing this. No children and no talk. You don't know what I see and hear at night. All the things that come off of these walls at me."

And she went through the whole story for him. She was too deep in her thoughts to notice how his arm encircled her more tightly when she talked of Durkie and the August night. He listened.

". . . And you never mention the subject, but what you break off. I always wanted to ask you about things, Charlie, but I just didn't know how to start. I'm sorry, Charlie." She paused, listening again to his even breathing.

"Well, say something, Charlie." And she was perhaps now afraid more than before.

"It's just that you're forgetting something, honey, he said in a strained voice, "What I should say, is maybe it's both of our faults." He stared very hard and long at her head resting on his chest, the grey sheen rising and falling with his breath.

"Maybe it's me, Agnes."

DOROTHY HEARN '61

ESCAPE

With slums in starvation
And France in frustration;
With race segregation
And H-bomb creation;
A coming space station
And shaky taxation;
With Russia's elation
At Sputnik's sensation;
With Ike's palpitation
And Red infiltration,
We all need salvation—
Let's take a vacation!

GAY NATHAN '61

BEATNIK

should i
belie
the philosophic scheme
blame the theme
the insect's whine
endorses.

PAMELA MAY '61

OH, TO BE AN AMOEBA

Oh to be an amoeba
And live the simplest life,
To open one's mouth whenever one wants
Without the slightest strife
To move is but a simple thing,
The rate of speed is slow.
A foot an hour for a lively one,
Is a good rate you know.
But what if an amoeba gets lonesome?
There is only one thing to do,
Just pick the time and place,
And split one's self in two!

TERRY ROSENTHAL '63



THE SEASON KNOWS

Unlike the girl who wears her hat
Of poppies set on straw before
The season comes when poppies blow
In fields, the winter tarries long
To wear its white apparel. What
It is that makes me often rise
To look outside for snow that came
The night before, I do not know.
The fields are gray like yesterday.
The white that hides the tree's bare shape
Is only fog. It stills the air
And keeps me at my window-sill.
In our despair we want the change
To come before the time is ripe
For snow or spring. I will not see
The silent winter dress the tree.

MARION HAUCK '61

