



BE SELF-
CONTROLLED
AND ALERT
YOUR ENEMY
THE DEVIL PROM
AROUND LIKE
A ROARING LION
LOOKING FOR
SOMEONE TO DE
RESIST HIM
STANDING
FIRM IN THE FAITH
BECAUSE YOU KNOW
THAT YOUR ENEMY
THROUGHOUT
THE WORLD IS
UNDER THE
THE SAME KIND
OF STRATEGY

DK

Point of View 1996-1997

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Table of Contents

Literature

Jessica Bovino

33 *Silent Responses*

Matt Buratto

19 *Rundown*

Nathan C. Clair

36 *The End of It*

Victoria Gaynor

23 *Social Disgrace*

Jake W. Harvey

28 *Three Hours*

Chas Hanners

41 *Fall With Me*

12 *Milquetoast and the Man*

Victoria L. Davis Karls *

5 *To Market, To Market*

Christian Long **

25 *untitled*

3 *Dream Walk*

Anita Singh

3 *Healer*

Colleen Virginia Tomanek

17 *Two Way Mirror*

Toni Zulaski

10 *When I Was Miss Kitty and
You Were Annie Oakley*

Art

Andrea Arrigo

21 *Dr. Julia Won*

38 *Dr. Julia Too*

Chris Cotey

22 *Lionous*

40 *A Mask*

36 *Draco*

9 *Transcendental State of
Consciousness*

Chad A. Dirks

4 *Solitude*

26 *Northern Lights Abduction*

Patricia L. Garrett

44 *Horror Big and Small*

David Kasir

18 *The Shots We Heard*

11 *Pope's Curiosity*

Kim Massey

34 *Hurricane*

Jim Pike

24 *Nightlife I*

24 *Nightlife II*

Elisa Rosenberg

32 *Green Man*

Matthew Judson Sigel ***

16 *untitled*

George Voegel

27 *Biological Form I*

39 *Hand Fed*

Winner of the *Point of View* Award *

Winner of the Vivian Steward Award **

Winner of the Ray Mills Award ***

Healer

Anita Singh

With an accent
of noble equilibrium,
He translates
with sublime precision,
the mute language
of a single wave,
centered,
and acutely lit
inside
the flawed pattern
of particular souls,
and designs for them
specific illuminations--
to purify the space,
entangled,
in their form.

Dream Walk

Christian Long

Like I was a character in some stranger's dream
thinking his abridged thoughts
drowning knowing it'll just kill him
pulling atoms out of the air to build pearled planets
he worries why the sun rises and he cries at its set
riddles games toys minor intrusion
probably the ugliest thing in the world is this accurate reflection
cleaned purified tamed
no cure.
Into stupid visions and misread maps can't find his way downtown
no flow gelled soul coagulating through the night
I'd love to stay myself before
his here-and-there converge on a pinhead
pushing yes and no together until
a screaming flash of lights spell out what needs to be heard,
crowning him high king of self destruction
pretending one orgasm can save the world
warned to be aware find myself not giving a shit
Have lunch with the Pope
Have sex with a convent full of nuns
Live the sick unthinkable
Die un-cheated
Earn his final sentence
Thick curdled tears for all his unlived hopes
burning to be reskinned
shoes filled pouring a human from hell up to heaven
looking looking list'ning finding
Who is the creation



Chad A. Dirks
Solitude
Computer Graphics

To Market To Market

Victoria L. Davis Karls

Joyce trailed behind her mother. She watched the woman's slow progress, her feet testing the smooth wooden floor. Soon, she thought. Soon the service would be over and they could return home. She slid into the pew beside her mother and knelt. Uncomfortable with the small corner of the cushion, she shifted her knees and accidentally brushed against her mother's arm. Mother, deep in prayer, took no notice of her touch.

Words, repeated and ingrained, formed in her mind. Dutifully, she asked for forgiveness and the gifts of patience, understanding and serenity. Joyce finished her prayers and settled onto the wooden bench.

Mother still prayed. It didn't matter how long Joyce remained on her knees, Mother always had more to say. Silently, her thin lips moved to the words of the Lord's Prayer. She finished and nodded, punctuating her discourse with God. She strained to resume her seat in the pew. Joyce reached out, but her mother jerked away.

"I'm not an invalid." The whisper was lost to all but Joyce in the echoing benediction.

"Sorry. I was trying to help." Mother's eyes flashed behind her glasses. Pointedly, she returned her attention to the altar where the clergy gathered. Led by cowering altar boys, they made their way triumphantly down the main aisle. The congregation massed, eager to

depart.

Several women stopped Joyce and her mother. Intent on proving their Christian fellowship, they fawned over Mother. They attempted to engage Joyce in conversation, but their insipid chatter bored her. Finally, they reached the door and Father John. Mother praised his sermon. He shook their hands blandly and they were free to leave.

Joyce looked forward to a quiet afternoon while her mother napped after lunch. Given a choice, she would have been happy to skip church instead of enduring the social nonsense. The few women her age had lives full of husbands and children. Not one among them seemed aware of anything that really mattered, only their own trite accomplishments. She suspected they read the social column of the newspaper and ignored the editorial page.

Years ago, after Daddy had left, Joyce once decided not to go to Sunday services. In retaliation, Mother carped about her slothful ways the remainder of the week. It was easier to heed Mother's wishes than to do what she wanted. A small price to keep peace in the household.

Joyce got behind the wheel of the Buick and started the engine. "Hang on a minute," said her mother sharply. Holding onto the door she climbed into the car. It shifted, accepting her weight. She slammed the door shut. "Don't rush me so."

"Yes, Mother," said Joyce. She pulled onto Main and pointed the car toward home. Her mouth, rich with the taste of communion, tightened as she drove. She would turn a couple blocks shy of Second Avenue. That would save waiting on the blinker and the usual backup of traffic.

Stupid light. It held position slung over the intersection. Again and again it rotated commands instead of triggering as cars appeared. Invariably, there wasn't a vehicle in sight down Second, but a line of cars would be halted on Main. The two churches in town were located on the south end. Because of that, Sundays were notorious.

Prim clapboard houses lined the road. Subtly, they changed as Joyce drove. On the outskirts of town garbage cans and toys were strewn about haphazardly. As they entered the well-established residential area, the house detritus was neatly arranged and the homes well kept. Closer to downtown the buildings wore fresh paint and collars of asphalt, signaling the steady creep of the business district. Unmindful to the changing character of the town, Joyce's mother hunched in her seat.

Joyce slowed as she neared her turn. Mother stirred and snapped open her purse. She withdrew a folded envelope covered in her looped handwriting. Joyce hesitated. "That's not what I think it is, is it?" Bitter, the lingering wine turned vinegar.

"It's a grocery list. What do you think it is?"

"Couldn't we have done this yesterday?" She allowed the car to coast forward and joined the dozen or so cars stopped for the signal. She'd have to wait for the light to change before they made it through the intersection. Maybe twice. The red light blinked and taunted, swaying in the breeze.

"I didn't think of it yesterday. Besides, you didn't get home from work until after five. We didn't have time. I would have missed my programs."

"Mother, I never get home before five. We had

plenty of time to go to the store and get home in time for *Wheel of Fortune*."

"It's all things we need," she said. "What's the problem, anyway? It's not as if we have anything better to do."

That was the sorry truth. She didn't have anywhere to be, or anyone to be with except Mr. Steinbeck and the odd little novel she began last night. No, the only plans she had involved a stack of library books on the floor next to her bed. Mother knew she was engrossed in a book and felt slighted. She had proved that by turning the television to a deafening level last night. From the second story bedroom Joyce clearly heard the game show contestants and their progress. She repeated several pages before she was able to step fully into Steinbeck's world.

Ahead, the light changed and allowed several cars³⁴ passage before it flashed red. Joyce glanced ahead to the busy lot in front of Bender's Market. She dreaded having to weave around in search of a parking space. She hated to shop on Sunday.

Sundays were the worst. Locals confined shopping to weekdays. Saturday and Sunday were left to the others, the new residents of town. Young professionals who bought sprawling homes where corn and soybeans used to grow. Parcels of farmland developed to entice those tired of the overbuilt suburbs. The draw of fast money was too difficult to resist for the remaining farmers hampered with poor weather and abysmal crop prices.

Fuming, she pulled into the lot's entrance. "Why don't I let you out here? I'll park on the street."

"Why? Then I have to wait for you inside and wait

later for you to get the car. You'll find a place."

Joyce turned into one of the rows and waited for a space to open. People herded to the market's entrance and emerged laden with grocery bags. The car in front of Joyce slipped into a vacated spot. She watched in the rear view mirror as exiting shoppers lifted their faces to bask in the mild sun. It was a relief to enjoy a clear day after a sodden April and the usual flooding.

Numerous suits and dresses proved many came directly from services, their clothing chosen to impress. Social pegging at church wasn't enough. The newcomers extended their stratification throughout town. Not long ago the town was homogenous. Now there were those that had and those that didn't.

An attractive woman approached from the market. She wore a suit purchased last week. The color was stunning, the cut flattered her figure. Joyce hadn't lied to make that sale. A cellophane bag of chips peeked from the grocery bag she carried easily in one arm. In the other hand she swung a six-pack of wine coolers. It was obvious she had plans for the afternoon.

As she passed the Buick, the woman noticed Joyce. She smiled in uncertain recognition. Smugly, Joyce returned her smile. Customers from the shop seldom remembered how they knew her. The woman got into a white Cadillac and backed out, leaving a gaping hole.

"Don't park there. That's Hank's truck." A battered pickup was parked next to the open space. Blue paint was barely visible between thick splatters of mud. "Wait for the next spot."

"Don't be silly. So what if it's Hank's truck?"

"Well, just look at it. It's a disgrace."

"The man's a farmer, Mother. What do you expect his truck to look like?"

"He could wash off some of the mud. It's Sunday."

Aware of her thin power, Joyce slipped easily into the parking spot and turned the motor off. "We're here." She stepped out of the car, opened her bag, flung the keys in and zipped it closed. She turned and leaned into the car. Her mother sat, lips pursed, glaring at the windshield.

"Are you coming?" Joyce didn't wait for a response. She began to walk toward the store's entrance. A dull thud announced Mother's decision to follow. Joyce slowed so the older woman could catch up. She reached Joyce's side as they stepped into the shadow of the building.

At the door Anne Winters struggled with her shopping cart. Awkwardly, the owner of the stationary store pushed at the full cart. Gallon jugs of bleach and assorted cleansers weighted the bottom. Broom handles hampered her progress, caught in the door frame.

"Anne. Here, let me help you." Joyce moved the brooms and lifted the front of the cart over the threshold. "What on earth are you going to do with all this stuff? It looks like you're ready to disinfect the town, as much bleach as you have here."

"Thanks, Joyce. That's just about what I'm up to." She pushed the shopping cart out of the way to the side of the building. "Helen. How are you?"

"Anne." Mother wrinkled her nose as she looked over the cleaning products in the cart. "What are you doing?"

"I lost my tenant over the shop." She brushed a few

stray hairs out of her eyes. "Actually, I evicted him. Now I have his mess to clean up before I can rent the apartment."

"That cute dark haired man, the artist?" Joyce asked. She had seen him with a stack of canvasses visiting the shops in town. He wanted to hang his work in the local stores, but had little success. It was hard not to notice him. Long hair on men didn't go unnoticed.

"He may have been cute, but what he was up to wasn't cute," replied Anne.

"What do you mean?"

"It won't hit the newspaper, but it's a matter of public record now. He was handling himself, standing in the picture window on Main."

"You're kidding," said Joyce. Things like that just didn't happen here, or did they?

"No, I'm not. Can you imagine? In front of God and anyone else who might happen by."

"I can," said Joyce's mother. "He didn't fit in. All that hair. He looked like a girl." She raised her chin and glared through her bifocals. "It doesn't surprise me one bit."

Joyce ignored her mother. Her personal standards were a nightly subject. Mother's commentary to the evening news had been repeated so often that Joyce no longer heard it.

"Well, I was surprised," Anne said. "The judge decided he didn't have to do more than pay a token fine, but I'm not going to stand for that going on over my store. I booted him out."

"Good for you," Mother said. "It's about time someone did something about all the wickedness in the world."

Anne smiled at Joyce, pleased at the offhand compliment and amused at her mother's venom. "I don't know about the rest of the world, Helen. I'm just concerned about my little corner of it." She bent to push her cart to the parking lot, then stopped. "Joyce. Why don't you come by later and help me out? It's not a big apartment, but I sure could use an extra hand."

Steinbeck's novel stirred in Joyce's mind. She could see it plainly. Her hair ribbon marked her place.

Anne rummaged in one of the shopping bags. She pulled out a small box and held it out to Joyce. "If you're worried about germs, I bought a bunch of these. Stop by when you can."

Joyce accepted the box of rubber gloves. Steinbeck could wait.

Chris Cotey
Transcendental State of Consciousness
Sculpture (clay)



When I Was Miss Kitty and You Were Annie Oakley

Toni Zulaski

You rode into town
with the Wild West Show.
Looking for comfort
you sought my saloon.
Dusty and dry
from a day on the trail
I offered you a meal
and a nice hot bath.
I led you upstairs
to my private rooms.
You followed, ignoring
the cowboys' hoots.
Leaving your clothes
in a dusty heap
you eased into
the hot, soapy tub.
I scrubbed your back
and loosened your braids
rinsing the trail
from your flaxen hair.
Later, you showed me
your skill with a gun
and I laughed with delight,
Little Miss Sureshot.
Taking a card from the poker table
you tested my courage.

Out in the street
in front of the saloon
a crowd gathered 'round
as I held the Queen of Hearts
high above my head
for all to see.
The crowd was silent
as you took aim.
I stared into your eyes
trusting you completely
my heart pounding with excitement.
A collective gasp rose up
as the shot rang out
piercing the card
dead-center.



David Kasir
Pope's Curiosity
Oil on canvas
(52 " x 35")

Milquetoast and the Man

Chas Hanners

Howard Milksop had never been cut before. The fact that Howard Milksop had never been cut before did not matter to Cabal Malpert. Cabal Malpert cut people, and now he was going to cut Howard Milksop.

Howard Milksop, besides thinking about what his blood might look like as it came out, and the variety of sounds the skin could make as it opened like the fly on a pair of expensive imported Italian trousers, and the way the skin opens like the fly on a pair of trousers, or, if the knife is of lesser quality, opens like the fly on a pair of Levi's 501 jeans, and how much he hoped the knife was not of lesser quality, and how the sound of his skin might change if it is, and of the multitudinous other sensations of texture he might experience as the combined result of the many ways his blood might look as it came out, and the variety of sounds his skin might make as it opened, and whether or not it opened like the fly of imported or all too domestic garments, and whether or not that texture or any of the other aspects, alluded to here or forgotten, of being cut would enhance or detract from the pain of being cut, is thinking about the pain of being cut. Besides this, Howard Milksop is worrying about little else.

After nearly microscopic examination by government censors, a recommendation was made in federal court, that the (unknown) party or parties

responsible for this [piece] be ordered to . . .

At this time the author of this "criminally pornographic shitcake" would like to exercise the remainder of his/her first amendment rights to bring you a live stereo simulcast of the above mentioned court action (already in progress), before the truth can be distorted any further. "Take it away, Johnny!"

" . . . pose the question: Why is Howard Milksop going to be cut by Cabal Malpert?"

"Well, Your Honor, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, esteemed and carefully selected members of the press, the answer to that is quite complicated, but if it please the court, I'll give it to you in as timely a fashion as possible."

The sun-bleached judge yawns menacingly and nods. The jury looks on in rapt boredom.

"Okay. You see, Your Honor, what I had in mind as an author with full creative license," I held up my membership card for the courtroom to see, "was a biography of Pope Pious IV, starting out with a dream sequence in which the Pope is visited by three spirit. But as you can see, that just wasn't working out. I was plagued by the idea of His Worship in navy Armani slacks."

"**OBJECTION!**" screamed the attorney for the plaintiff, although not as loudly nor as authoritatively as the bold faced type, full capitalization, or the punctuation would lead you to believe.

"What's yer like objection, Council dude?" whined the golden surfer judge.

"The witness is obviously trying to sway the jury into believing [its] side of the story. Please, Your Honor, with all due respect . . ."

"Sustained man! The witness dude will please refrain from like, hangin' ten on the believability stuff, 'kay. And strike that last bummer statement from the rec. Cool?"

The author smiles demurely and continues, cool calm collected, as if nothing has happened.

"As I was saying, this is a complicated problem. Not only was I faced with the torment of incessant Italian pants, but it was compounded because I kept misspelling the name of the protagonist, Milktoast."

Note to the reader #1: I'm going to come right out at this juncture and admit that I am indeed the author of this [piece], so that I can, without losing your trust, switch from the third person to the first, which, I think you'll agree, works more effectively with this type of narrative.

Thank You, the Author

I showed the judge my second through forty-eighth drafts (the first was sadly eaten by a Rhodesian Ridgeback), which cleverly revealed the caustic errors.

"You see, Your Honor, every time I wrote Milktoast down, I had a vision of blood swirling into the pan with the toast and soaking into the bread, steadily creeping, up up up . . . oh God, it's happening again. It just makes me want to puke."

I started to cry right there on the stand. I was bawling like a baby.

"And then there were the censors coming to make copy after copy of my manuscripts, and they read so loudly--shuffling, shuffling, and and and now this!"

"I've had to use nearly every person and change tenses, past present and I even would've used future, too,

but I didn't want to give away the surprise ending where an assassin attempts to splatter my brains all over the jury!" (leaving them seriously disillusioned with the American legal system). "And, to top it all off, I've had to overtly conceal my own identity from my loyal readers who I normally hold in the utmost esteem. That's why . . ."

At that moment I sat bolt upright in my chair. The courtroom, noticing my reaction, turned in amazement. The prosecutor fell to his knees. The judge looked on in horror. The sheriffs, hands poised on their guns, awaited a signal.

It was Malpert.

"Yo, Milktoast!" he called to me in a voice reeking curiously of Sylvester Stallone.

"Who, me?" I pointed to myself in mock ignorance, my stomach becoming queasy again. "I think you have the wrong guy. My name is Milksop."

"Sop, Toast, whatevah. You're da one dat couldun keep et straight." Malpert wiped the underside of one nostril with his thumb--the way the tough-guys on TV do it.

The exquisitely well-defined and oiled judge, in what would later be described as an idiotically bold move, spoke up. "Hey dude, what's the sitch?"

"If it please da court, Yer Honah, I came heah ta settle da question pertinent us ta da reason mistah Milktoast dare was gunna git cut by da aforementioned me."

"Judge!" I began to protest.

"Shhh!" shushed the judge. "Let's give this dude a listen. He's like, far-out."

"Tank you, Yer Honah. I'll be brief. Da reason I was gunna cut dis muthafuckah heah was . . ." Malpert took a step closer to me and looked keenly into the judge's

eyes. "Let me put et dis way. Once I was gunna be a kinda holy ghost, like Caspah. And I was gunna help out da Pope, see. Ya know why? I'll tell ya why. Cuz I was smot, dat's why, and I was good, dat's why, and I talked like et."

He casually reached his hand into his pants pocket and edged closer to the bench. He was almost near enough to kiss me. I wondered what kind of pants they were. A tear trickled down his face.

"Now looket me. I sound like I didun even gradgiate da turd grade, and I ain't such a nice guy needah, Pope or no Pope."

I could feel his breath on me.

"And whose fault do ya tink et is. It's dis guy's!" he bellowed to the sleeping jury, pointing an incriminating finger at me. "Da authah, Howard Milktoast!"

There was a hushed murmur in the courtroom. All eyes were upon me. I could feel the vitreous ocular fluid run down my skin like sweat.

"Whoa! Wiiiipe out. What can ya like say to that?" the tanned Adonis of a judge implored.

"Ya got me," I said, holding both hands over my heart to garner sympathy as I felt the full weight of my guilt lifted from me with my terrible admission.

Note to the reader #2: Keep in mind that even with my direct confession of guilt in this matter, I must still be considered innocent until the verdict of the jury is returned, and even then you must hold off definitive judgement until a deluge of appeals have been filed on my behalf, flooding the legal system, and taking years to come to resolution. Meanwhile the profit from my best-selling account of the ordeal can be invested in

cigarettes, making me king of the cell-block, and allowing me to live a more lavish and rewarding life than the average white-collar corporate executive.

Signed, Anonymous

"It was me who wrote the character of Cabal Malpert. It was me who made him into the depraved and ugly figure you see before you, and it was me who took away his power for proper English grammar and pronunciation. I did it! And I'd do it again!"

"But why?" came a muffled cry from the back of the public gallery. "He was going to cut you to ribbons!"

I stood up, looked proudly over the audience, placed my left hand on my heart, and gave what would be considered by future generations as one of the least important speeches in American history.

The lights dimmed and a spotlight bathed me in a halo of unearthly radiance.

"Why? I'll tell you why. Because each and every one of us is protected by the Constitution of the United States of America and has the right to express himself or herself in any way he or she wants, so long as it does not impinge on the rights of the upper class. I was simply exercising my right to explore my thanatos-self under the protection of the First Amendment. And, I furthermore claim that this type of exercise is vital to the stability of this great nation, so we don't wake up one day in a country with some other form of government that means equally as little to us. I claim it is my sovereign right to commit . . .

LITERARY SUICIDE!

The rest of what happened is hazy. It all went so fast. I remember finishing my sentence with a flourish,

pointing my finger skyward like some great philosopher. Then--a shot rang out. It seems Malpert rushed me at the end of my speech, meaning to finish the story with a long, flashing stiletto, but the bailiff, on cue from the judge, shot him in the head, splattering the jury with blood and bits of brain and bone (my oh my, now that's alliteration!). Then the judge, shark's tooth dangling cartoonishly from a leather necklace above his bulging neon orange Speedos, mumbled something about assisted suicide being illegal in California, and "tube-city" at Venice.

I was taken to this cell to await sentencing for stupid and inconsequential writing, and tax evasion (that's how they got Capone).

P.S.: Hopefully my friend Mark Fermin will smuggle me some correction fluid so I can get a hung-jury in the re-write. My lawyer says "Just give me one white-out juror and I'll get a mistrial." We'll hope. I'm also waiting to hear from *Hustler*, *Swank*, and *Boy's Life* about possible publication of what you have just read, and other lewd and socially unacceptable essays.

About the author: Howard Milksop has no vital or interesting information regarding his life, since he still lives with his mother. Currently, Mr. Milksop is awaiting word on the publication of this and several other lewd and socially unacceptable essays from Hustler, Swank, and Boy's Life.

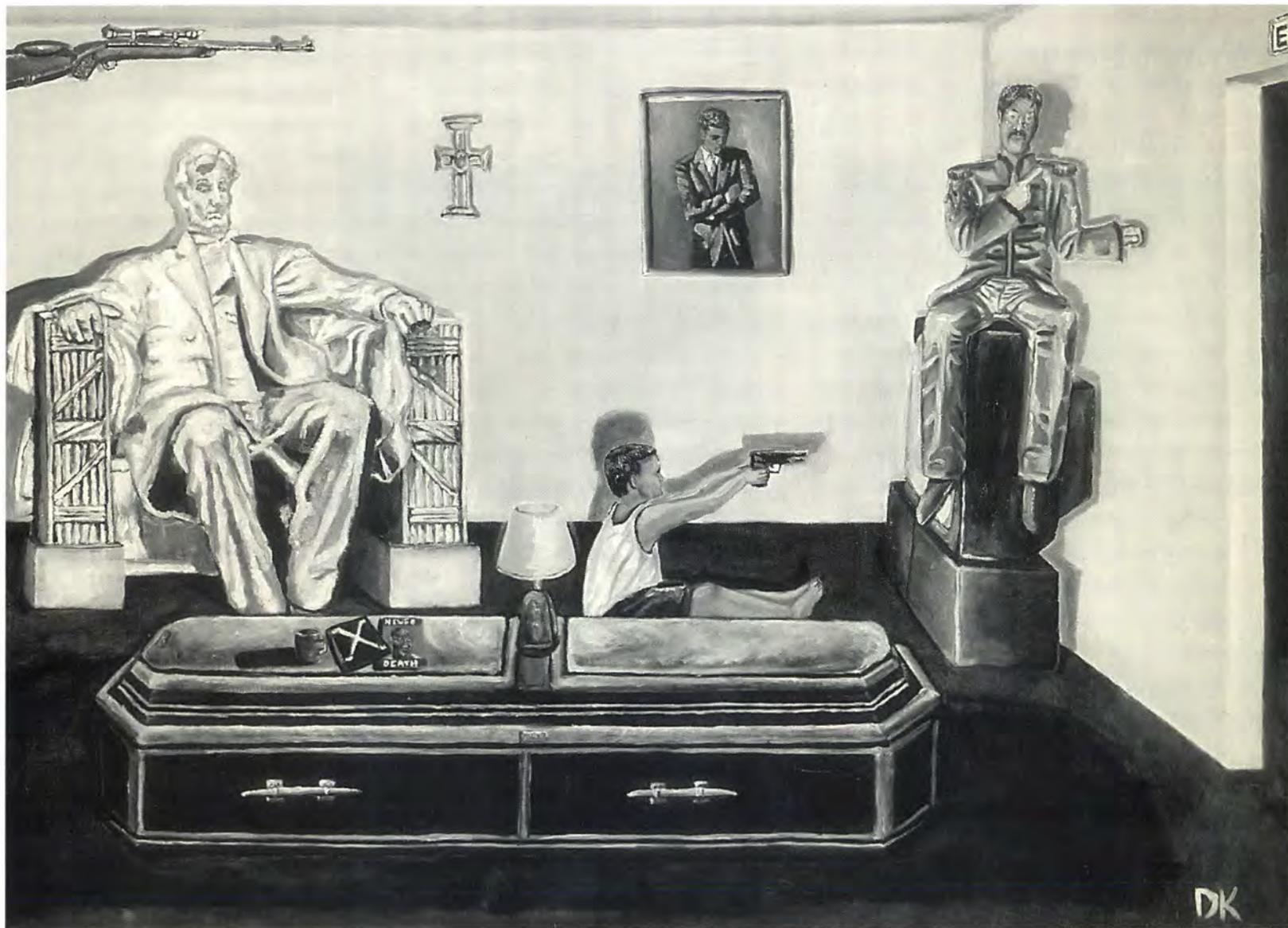
Matthew Judson Sigel
untitled
Sculpture (paper/steel
construction with wood)



Two Way Mirror

Colleen Virginia Tomanek

I shook the other girl's hand when he brought her to the club.
I even asked what her hobbies were and said I liked her shirt
although it was turtle green and checkered with a color of
pink that made your stomach turn on its intestines.
I kept on talking when my man's eyes left my mouth
to watch a short skirt
with five inch heels
curve down the hallway.
When the guy I met last weekend left me standing
by my living room window with a
low cut shirt,
tight pants,
red lipstick,
and big hair
to watch cars drive by all evening and never stop,
I smiled.
But, what people don't see past the glow of my green eyes is
my heart stained with tears.



David Kasir
The Shots We Heard
Oil on canvas
(42 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 60")

Rundown

Matt Buratto

day 1- Woke up freezing. Thought I would freeze to death. Stone sucked life from every pore. Took stock of few provisions—broken filet knife, pen running dry, half of a sodden Entertainment Weekly mag. Grey prevails here. Grey seas, grey sky, grey rocks—just a petrified turd in the north Pacific. Beachcombed for a couple hours. No wreckage, no bodies. Saw a couple seals—they will look mighty tasty in a few days. A black-winged gull and I had an intense staredown—who will devour whom was the unspoken question. No fear yet, just dull surprise.

day 2- Found a better place to crash, much more sheltered. Bolstered up with driftwood and a chunk of plastic sheeting—a good find. Hiked up to the cliff ledges that rim the tiny islet. Found some gull nests, nabbed eighteen eggs and ate six. Speckled brown and black, they are very pretty, but taste fishy, oceany. Tried to replay accident in my mind, but couldn't do it. Time will bring it back and I've got lots of that. Slept early while the wind cooed.

day 3- Ate some more eggs and watched a lost buoy drift by. Read what's left of my mag ten or twelve times. Remembered rolling, shouting, shit sliding everywhere, water like black paint. My fort is working well. The wind shrieked all day. I didn't dare venture far.

day 4- Skua must have fallen asleep on watch. Ran

us right into the fucking cruise ship. Those things follow mapped navigational lanes. How could they see a tiny little craft like the Verna? Skua was snoozing. I hope a thousand jaws take a bite out of that fuckhead's body. No one else made it off alive for sure. We rolled too fast. What an opportune time to get up and take a piss. They all drown in their bunks. Drowning is peaceful closure though, not sucking down seabird yolks, cramped on a rock in the ass-crack of bleakness. Castaway. Fucking marooned!

day 5- Dreamt of hommus and bread, of all bizarre things. I've heard that people in extreme deprivation often dream of food. Saw a speck of a ship on the horizon. Didn't bother screaming. Took rest of the day honing the busted knife into a blunt point. Made up mind to begin stalking seals. Today the Verna would be officially missing. I'm probably officially dead. Maybe they'll search anyway—fly over or pass close enough for me to make a sight-grabbing spectacle. Of course, I'll have to be awake or aware these next few days. Sang out the first three Doors albums today—got some funny looks from the birds. No creature on this earth likes new neighbors.

day 6- Soul drifts out over the grey glass. Wheels above with the noisy birds. It must be fun to fuck in midair like they do. Found a dead one later in the day. Plucked feathers to decorate my stylish, contemporary rock and rotted wood shanty. Less than savvy today, read my mag another ten times. Fell asleep with my eyes open.

day 7- One week since sinking and stranding. Consecutive cloudy and still days. Hiked around to the other end of my islet. More rock, even more grey. Found

stray egg, nearly ate it but the stench nearly tore head from shoulders. Probably would have died. Finished knife before dark. Ready for sealburgers.

day 8- Beginner's luck struck. The shore was quiet and the hunt looked futile when a half-dozen ominous black swords unsheathed from the grey sheen. Killer whales. Several seals scampered up on the rocks, too frightened to venture back in. Crept up on one and dragged it by the hind flippers into a crevice where it couldn't flop away. Beat and stabbed. Felt like shit afterwards—thought of all the Greenpeace donations. Ate anyway—liver, back muscle—not very good. Fucking sick really. Tried not to think about it. Butchered remains on rocks—fended off gulls from it for a few hours. They looked pissed at me.

day 9- Bored out of fucking gourd. Read the summer movie reviews in my mag for the four-hundred-and-tenth time. Just might finally go see "Eraser" if ever able to leave this shit-ass rock. Had a picnic up on the ledges. Watched dolphins leap and pitchpole and gnawed on blubber—imagined it was focaccia and pastrami.

day 10- Gakking and screeching tore into my dreams. The birds got into seal, pecking and nibbling. In a rage, grabbed one, twisted head so eyes stared down tail feathers. Plucked and hung as a deterrent. They ate him too. Who the fuck's hungrier on this island? Wept, then passed out. Woke up, the wind was screaming. Screamed along with it.

day 11- Hiked around entire islet. Clear enough to see nothing on all sides. Couple whales hanging around, coughing behind my back, sending up plumes of mist.

Exhausted, got back late. Seal fat got on my mag. Birds tore it to shreds. Running out of margins to write in. Watched the fog slip in like the breath of the world.

day 12- Disaster. Crept on seal. Leapt and stabbed like before. Bastard managed to turn and bite arm. Tattered deep. Proceeded to drop knife into the drink. Too deep to find. Seal slips away into sea, flicks away effortlessly. Arm wrapped in part of pant leg. Shooting, insane pain. Cried into coma.

day 13- Dipped arm into seawater. Stung like a thousand rabid wasps. Inchoate scream sent entire bird colony skyward. Played "It's a Wonderful Life" over nine times in head. Watched it that many times on Xmas day one year.

day 14- Wound festering. Last strip of margins. Movement tears screaming nerves in half. Maniacal chattering seeps to ears. The gulls have gathered. We know who is not welcome on this island. Voice broke like brittle wax as the Doors were sung. They didn't like it any better off-key.

day 15- Ordered out for some Thai. Pot stickers with peanut dunking sauce. Moon noodles and coconut paste. Biggest gull said he'd fly to Bangkok for it. Told him Vancouver was closer. Saw speck on the distant grey line. Became boat. Jumped up, proceeded to moon and sunshine. It kept going.

day 16- Chink food yet to arrive. Arm funky, oozing virulent pain. Gulls eyeing it hungrily. Are there no fish left in the sea for them?

day 17- Sick of this shit. Decided to swim for it. Gull stiffed me. Pot stickers aren't coming.



Andrea Arrigo
Doctor Julia Won
Jewelry





Chris Cotey
Lionous
Sculpture (clay)



Social Disgrace

Victoria Gaynor

Your caustic blood boils with
 Could it be
 Love
at the sight of the Marlboro Man
sitting on his high horse
savoring soggy squares

Your lifestyle sheet rules that clearly
'love' is an emotion for the ignorant
flirtation is futile
and Fact is fiction
 you never run
 you refute
 you never rethink
 you reorganize
 you never display
 you disregard

Could it be that your sarcasm is sawdust--
a plea for help misunderstood?

You've convinced the Marlboro Man
that you hate him
but I'm not so sure.



Jim Pike
Nightlife I
Print
(2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ ")



Jim Pike
Nightlife II
Print
(2 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 2 $\frac{5}{8}$ ")

(untitled)

Christian Long

alone on nowhere's barren streets
invest my soul into the night
long lonely notes mock my steps
wishing I could be alive inside the back rooms
it's time to sleep but there's too much to learn
I'm endlessly smelling the honesty of a labored-for good time
in a greasy diner eating cold fries
stung by the fluorescent mirror
They enter and leave--I remain a fly on the wall
but we don't care, they because they are better than I and
I, because they will forget me immediately
another bunch enters
there is much to be learned
there is no unimportant experience anymore
it seems that time is running out on fun
responsibility robs me of smiles
insubordination is the only way to react
I, like those before me, long for innocence
I've had my fill of apples and snakes and
I just want to lay in the grass
not much longer in this place
on to another set of streets.



Chad A. Dirks
Northern Lights Abduction
Computer Graphics

George Voegel
Biological Form I
Sculpture (stone)



Three Hours

Jake W. Harvey

The pews are made of fine oak or perhaps walnut. Not cherry though, no definitely not cherry. Cherry is too expensive, you think. They are wonderfully varnished and free of scratches. You look around and wonder when you have seen a more beautiful train station. You sit and put your pocket watch down on your right.

There are no people in Union Station. You rap your knuckles on the pew and listen to the sound echo across the great hall. The sound lingers for a good ten seconds. You look at your watch. It's nine o'clock at night. It's a Saturday. You begin to wonder why you took the Amtrak from the suburbs just to hang around the station. Did you think you would meet some new friends? People don't talk to strangers in train stations and you know it.

It's getting close to nine twenty-five now. You don't want to miss your train back home. You get up and take one more look at the hall, especially noting the pay phone that you tore the "loud" button off with your screwdriver years ago. You've since lost that button. Feeling the cool marble floor through the holes in your worn sneakers you amble through the exit.

You'd heard once that *they* were going to remodel old Union Station and make it more modern. *They* would have to be crazy, you think. Things don't need to be modern as long as they are clean. You walk over the dirty

linoleum tiles and think that this newer section should be *demodeled*. You buy your ticket from a haggard-looking man in the booth. You walk into a mess of concrete and rails and see your train rolling in. You wonder how easily your hand or foot would come off if you let the train roll over it. Suddenly you feel a compulsion to find out but years of training have enabled you to suppress things like that.

On the train you find a seat. It's one of those convertible seats that can be made to face either direction. Flipping the seat back around you see a little boy and wonder what would happen to him if he got his head caught in this thing. You take your seat. The train is pulling away from the station. There's a man sitting at the far end of the cab. He's in a wheelchair. It doesn't look like he was in an accident. He's got a headrest and his hands are all fucked up and he is talking to his companion with the aid of a computer. He has big coke bottle glasses and a misshapen jaw. His neck flails about like one of those old animated mannequins. He's like that Hawking guy, you think, the atom splitter from Cambridge. You can't help but be disgusted. You think that maybe he should just be killed. You know that's wrong so instead you just feel disgusted. You try to see the good in it, telling yourself "there's medical advances every day. Maybe *someday* they can make him normal." But you know that's just rationalization which is just as bad as being disgusted.

"Check out the gimp," a voice from the left side of the car whispers to you. Yes, he is a gimp, you think. He's a disgusting useless gimp.

"I don't appreciate that comment, sir," you say. "He seems happy enough to me."

"Are you stupid or were you just born that way?" the man replies. You look at him. He's missing three teeth and the rest of them are yellow. He's got a dirty beard and a Harley Davidson shirt with holes in it. He's more disgusting than the gimp. At least the gimp looks clean.

"Okay," you reply. "Is it shorter to Dallas than it is by plane?"

The man looks perplexed. He turns his head and stops talking to you. Good. A black man in a blue suit walks by shouting "tickets!" You don't want him to hassle you so you put your ticket in the clip on your seat.

The windows are tinted green. You figure this is to let people sleep. Orange street lights look green. Stop lights aren't there. Green lights look green. Your face looks green, too. You can see your reflection in the window. Your hair is short. You just cut it; it was a twenty dollar haircut but you tipped the girl five bucks and lost the five in the wash so it was really a thirty dollar haircut. Strange how that works. Just like how everything seems to cost a dollar more when you don't have exact change. It's all relative.

You've dozed off a bit but you hear the rumbling names of suburbs over the speaker and feel the train occasionally come to rest. You wonder how these trains stay on the rails as well as they do. You wonder what would happen if the train flew off the rails. What a mess that would make. Not too much death, with so few riding, but certainly a lot of smoke and twisted metal. You wonder

what it would be like to be a conductor and see a kid with his leg stuck on one of the rails. You couldn't stop; he'd die. . . Couldn't stop. . . Stop. This is your stop now.

You feel for your pocket watch. Good! You didn't leave it on the bench in the train station. You step off the train quickly. You remember that time when you held the door open for someone and the doors closed on you and you missed your stop. You're in the parking lot now. You look for your Nissan. You are always forgetting where you park. You feel for your pocket watch. Good! You didn't leave it on the chair on the train.

You're halfway to your apartment now. You're wondering if you should go there and watch television or look for something else to do. You don't have a cat, so you don't need to feed it. There's no reason to go home yet. You turn on the radio. There's some of that industrial music playing. It's very loud. You can't understand it. You imagine that this would sound really good if you were on X and driving really fast with the volume all the way up. You hear an ad for some new dance club that features industrial music on Saturday night. It's in a town not far from here. Why not?

You step out of the car. You feel for your pocket watch. You didn't drop it on the cement when you got into your car at the train station. You've got to stop being so obsessive, you think. You don't know why you are here. There's going to be people inside. You don't have a date so there won't be anyone to dance with. You don't dance anyway. Walking to the door you see there's a bouncer. You show him your fake ID. You didn't need to do that

because this place says it's eighteen and over and you are twenty-three, but you want to get some use out of your hundred dollars. You give him a ten dollar cover charge and slip in.

It's very loud and very dark in here. There's some fog and flashing lights. Fog always makes you dizzy for a few minutes. You wonder what would happen if you had photoepilepsy. You'd probably have a seizure. That would be funny. Unidentified male has seizure while entering dance club alone. You feel for your pocket watch. The bouncer didn't steal it.

There are many teenagers. They are all dancing. The music is hurting your ears. You can feel the bass pass through your chest. It plucks at your diaphragm and almost forces you to say things. You shouldn't be here. You lean up against a wall and watch pierced, shaved, and painted youths acting like fools. You see pierced tongues and faggots and bad hair. Some of the girls look good. Especially that one.

"Hey, come dance with me," she says. She looks really good. You could really go for her. But she asked you to dance so there must be something wrong with her.

"I don't dance," you say.

"If you don't dance then why are you here?" She's really looking good now. You can see her navel and it's pierced.

"The music . . . I don't have speakers like this at home," you lie. You always know just what to say. You press your arm into your side and feel the lump of your pocket watch. She isn't stealing it. That's good.

"Oh, okay," she says. She turns and walks away, back into the fog. She turns her head and looks at you again with this . . . *look*. She looks really, really good. You want to go talk to her, but then you'd be around more people. She couldn't have come alone. She must have a boyfriend. She asked you to dance as some kind of sick joke. You'll have nothing to do with her. It's all for the best, of course.

You get up and follow her. You're afraid. You are not feeling well at all. Your stomach is churning. Are people looking at you? Yes, they must be. They are all looking at you and laughing silently. No, stop being so narcissistic. They don't care about you nor do they see you. They are ugly anyway. You see the girl and her golden hair. She isn't with anyone.

"You came back. My name is Nicole," she says.

"Umm . . . my name . . . isn't," you say. Brilliant.

"Isn't what?"

"Isn't . . . Nichole." Funny thing about names is that you never know how they are spelled. You can't say your name. It's a perfectly good name but you can't say it. She laughs.

"You're funny," she says. This is great; you are funny. She's talking to you. You can't really hear what she's saying because the music just got much louder. Something about school. She's a student at some school. Something about a baby. She has a baby? That's a deal breaker. No, not a baby, she said maybe. She said maybe come back or something. What?

"I said, maybe you want to come back to my place

or something."

The music stops. You're both standing and staring for a moment. She's doing that thing with her toe that girls do when they are waiting for a response to an embarrassing question. Another "song" begins playing. She's so beautiful. She looks like all those girls you never had. All those girls that mom never got to meet. All those girls that you never took to prom. All those girls. . . .

You can have her. You can have it all. She's all yours. All you have to do is say yes. Maybe you'll marry her. Maybe you'll have beautiful children, or at least half-beautiful children. Maybe you'll never be unhappy again. All you have to do to find out is go with her and fuck her. Maybe you'll find out the purpose of existence. Maybe you'll be embarrassed to tell mom about her because you're twenty-three and never had a girlfriend. Maybe you'll contract HIV or hepatitis B or herpes simplex B. Maybe you really *will* have a beautiful or half-beautiful child.

"I'm sorry, I can't," you lie again.

"You're . . . sorry."

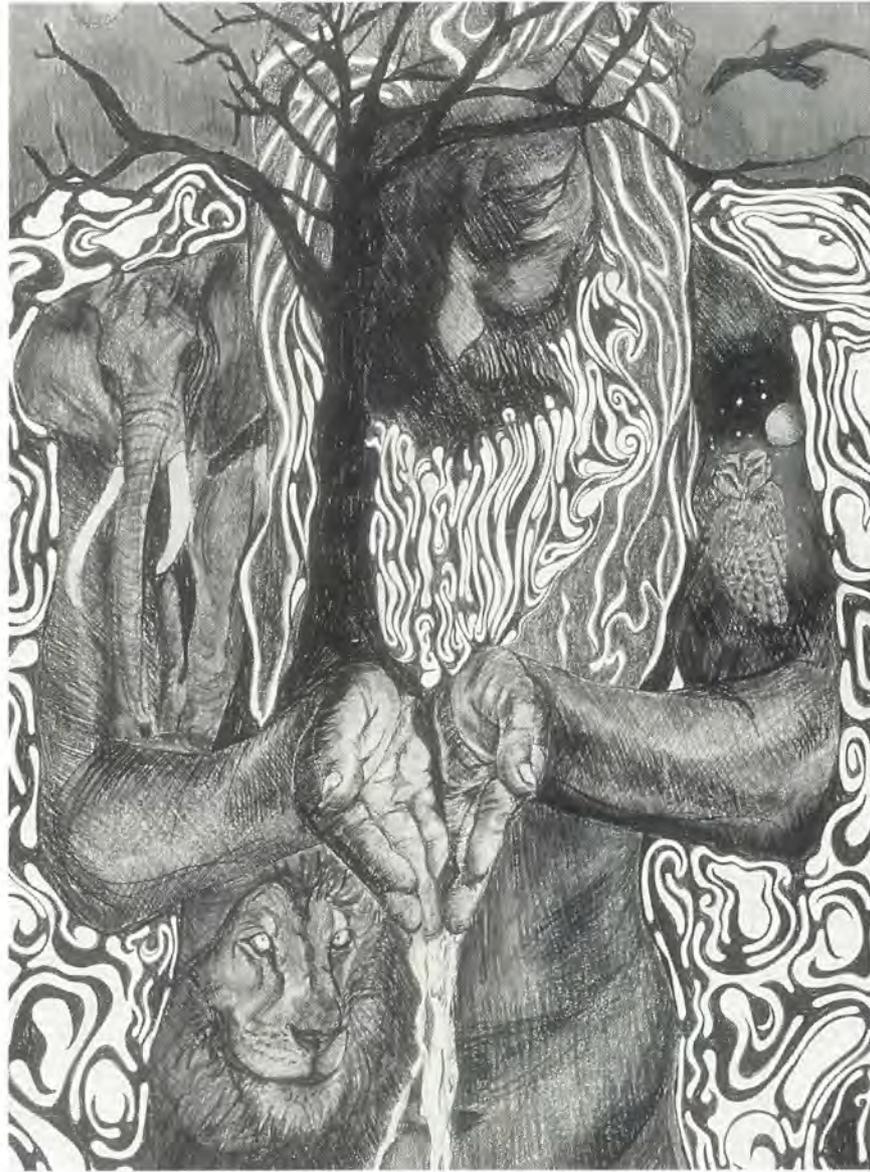
"Yeah . . . I forgot to . . . feed the cat. . . ." That was so bad that you don't even look her in the eye. You just turn around and head for the door. You're outside now. You think that if she walks out of that door now and tries to talk to you again that you'll reconsider. She doesn't.

You take out your pocket watch and open up the dial. It is one past twelve. Morning. You take the fucking thing and you whip it down onto the sidewalk. The crystal shatters. You don't care what it is made of or who gave it to you or how old it is or how much it's worth. You stomp

on it and watch its fine Swiss engineering explode into a mess of springs and cogwheels and pins. You kick its shattered carcass down the sidewalk. Friction kicks up a lone spark which instantly fades.

There's a dirty stray kitten wandering in a dead bush. You take him and get back in your car. You don't bother to feel for your pocket watch. You turn your radio back on. You think you like this industrial music now. You heard there's a good late show playing now. Some cool black guy. Some explosions. Some pretty girls. No gimps. You take off down the road. You'll drop the kitten off at home, give him some milk, and go see the *show*.

And to this theater . . . such wonderful architecture . . .



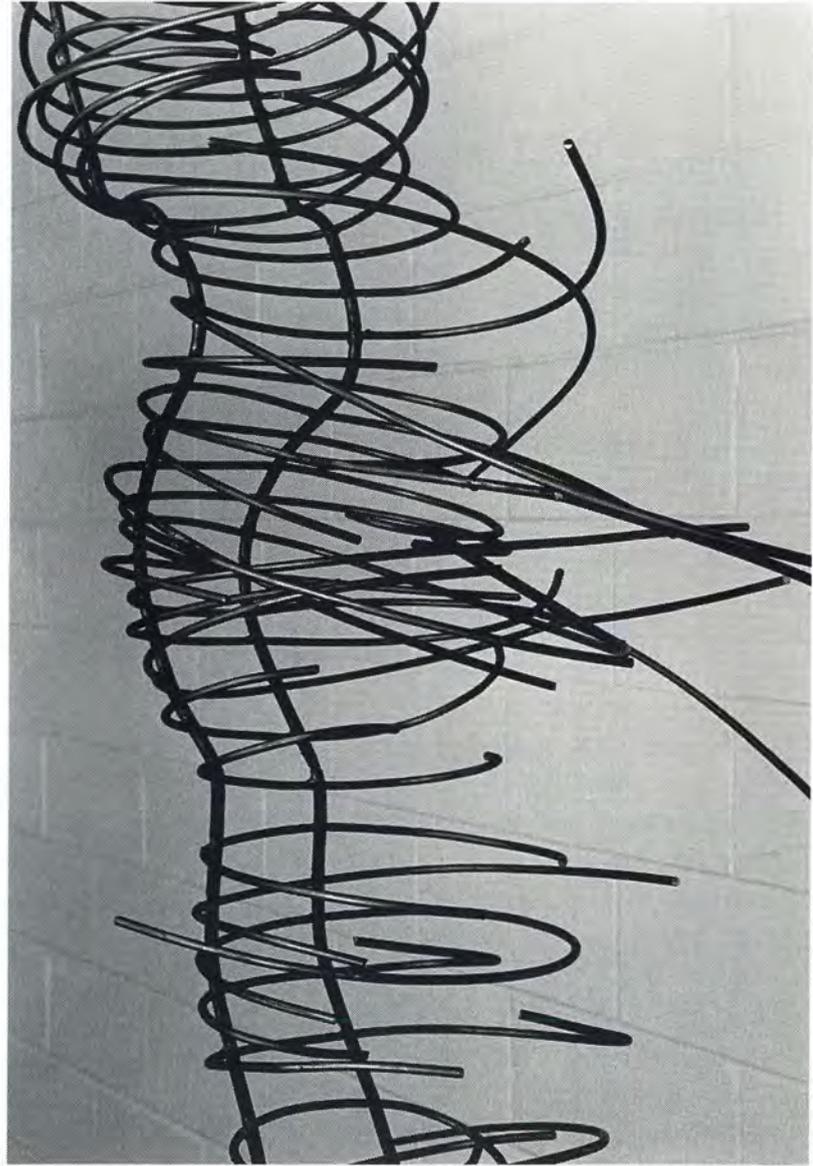
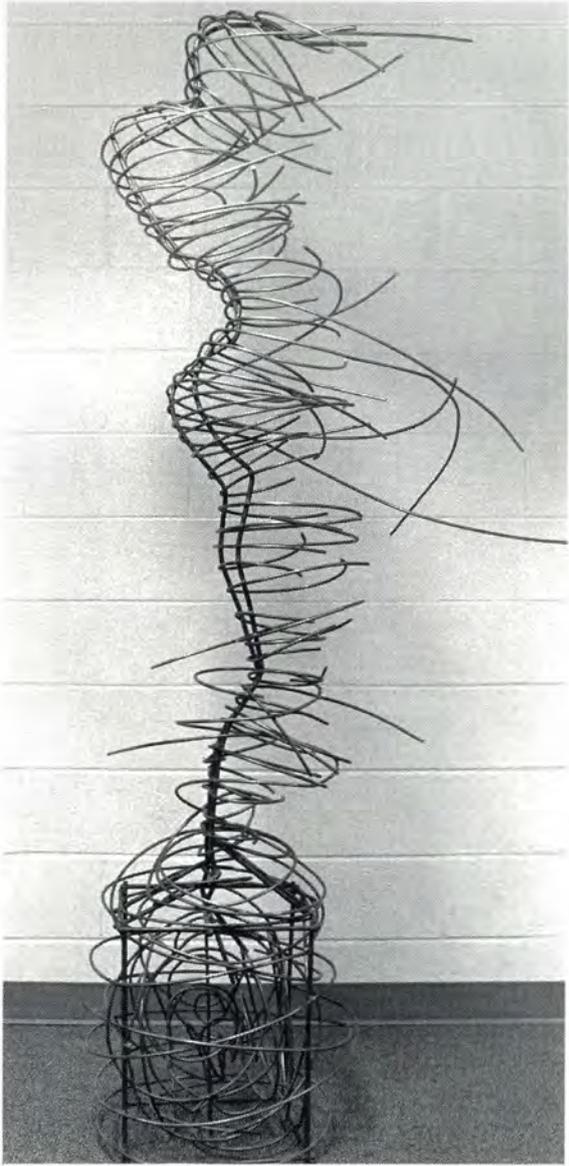
Elisa Rosenberg
Green Man
Colored Pencil
(24 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ ")

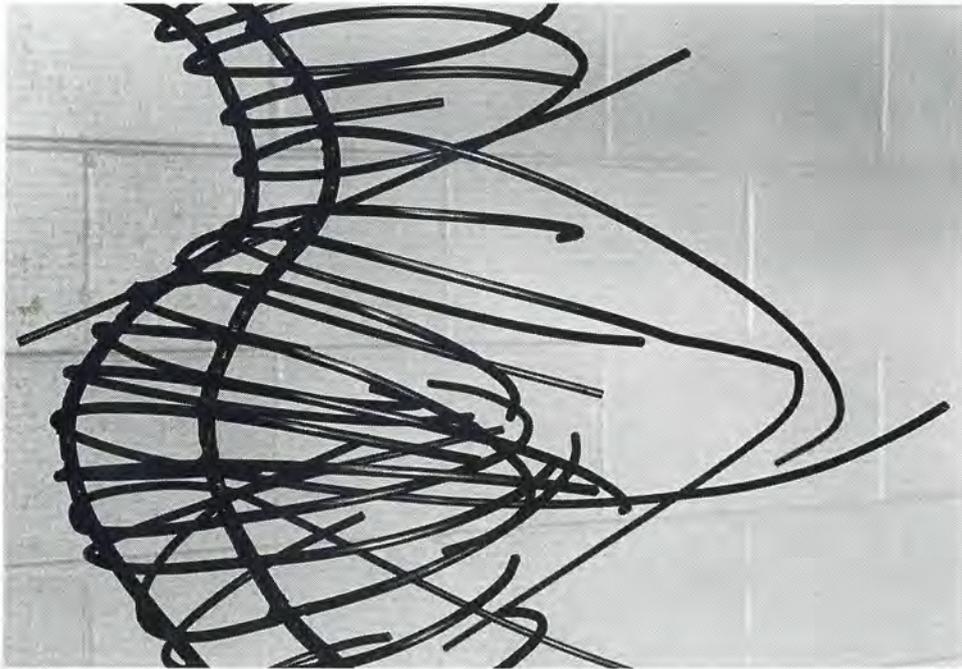
Silent Responses

Jessica Bovino

Silence surrounds, as I sit.
 I wait, stare and think.
I see you lying here.
 A wooden bed encloses you.
The moonlight shines, and it rays
 dance on your face.
I see your eyes.
 Lids tightly sewn shut, lips.
A pale pink bounces back at me, and your skin,
 it is cold and pale as well.
As I sit and watch, I speak to you, words never uttered before.
 Is it last respects I come to pay,
or last words I wish to say?
 Tonight I meet with a ghost.
No one cared more you see, and it was I,
 The one you chose to walk your path upon.
Heavy weights you placed on me.
 Driving me deep into your angry world.
Confusion paralyzes me.
 Confusion, as I see you resting, resting so gay.
"Ana, why did you come here tonight?"
 I will carry on, but no more will I carry
"I know I hurt you . . ."
 the broken promises you so gently placed before me.
"I gave up, oh, I know, I'm . . ."
 Goodbye my sweet, I whisper in your ear.

An empty ear I know, as always was,
 and always will.
"I'm here with you, I..."
 I turn around one last, and send a kiss
into the wind.
 Shouts of sorrow fill this dead air, and
silence no longer remains.





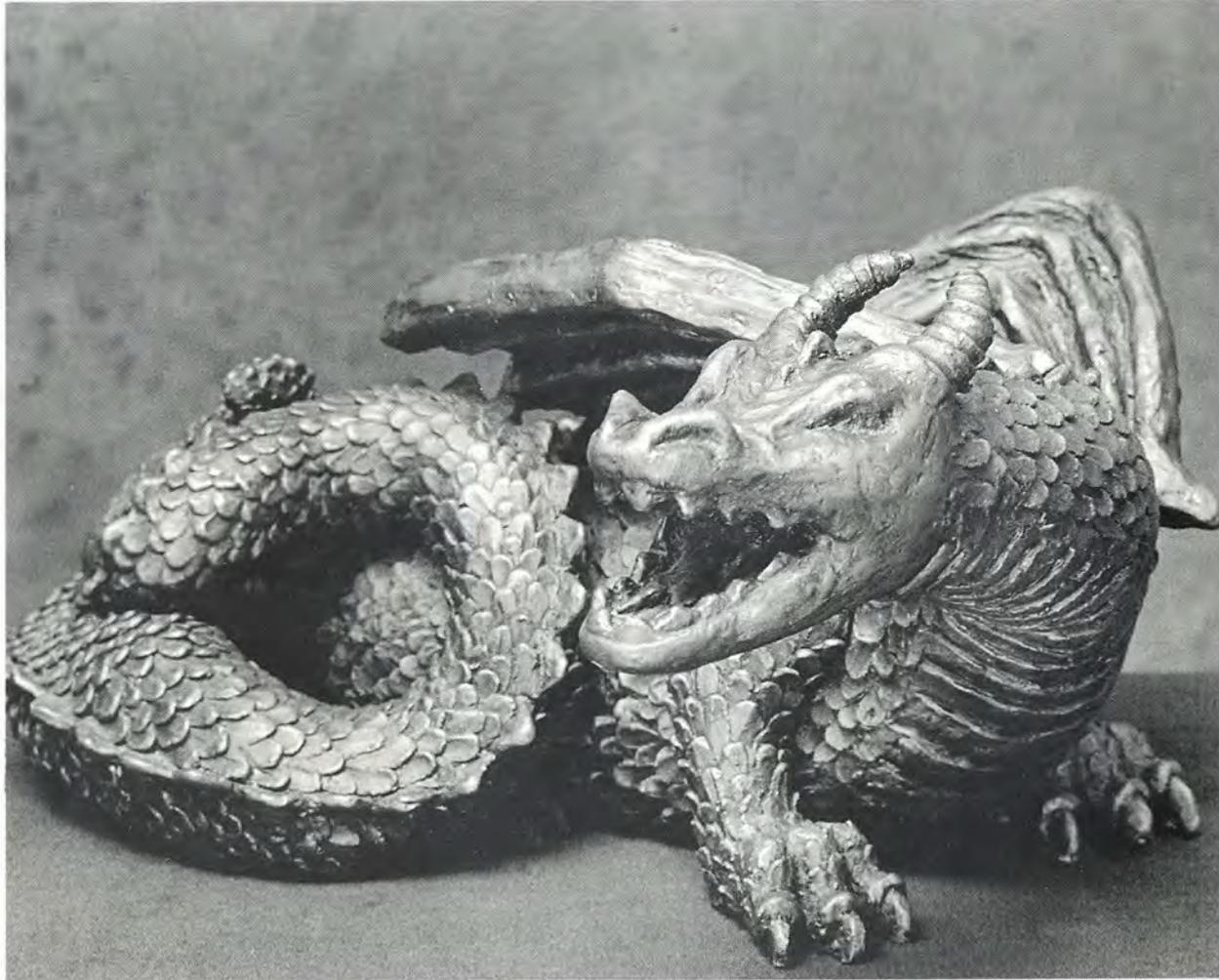
Kim Massey
Hurricane
Sculpture (welded steel rod)

The End of It

Nathan C. Clair

All shapes and sizes
determined by individual capacity
some more gracious and accepting
others demanding a form of me
not consistent with what I am
or have the facility to be
standing by what I'm becoming
not by what others would have me be
furious refusal to cave
and I learn to live with the price

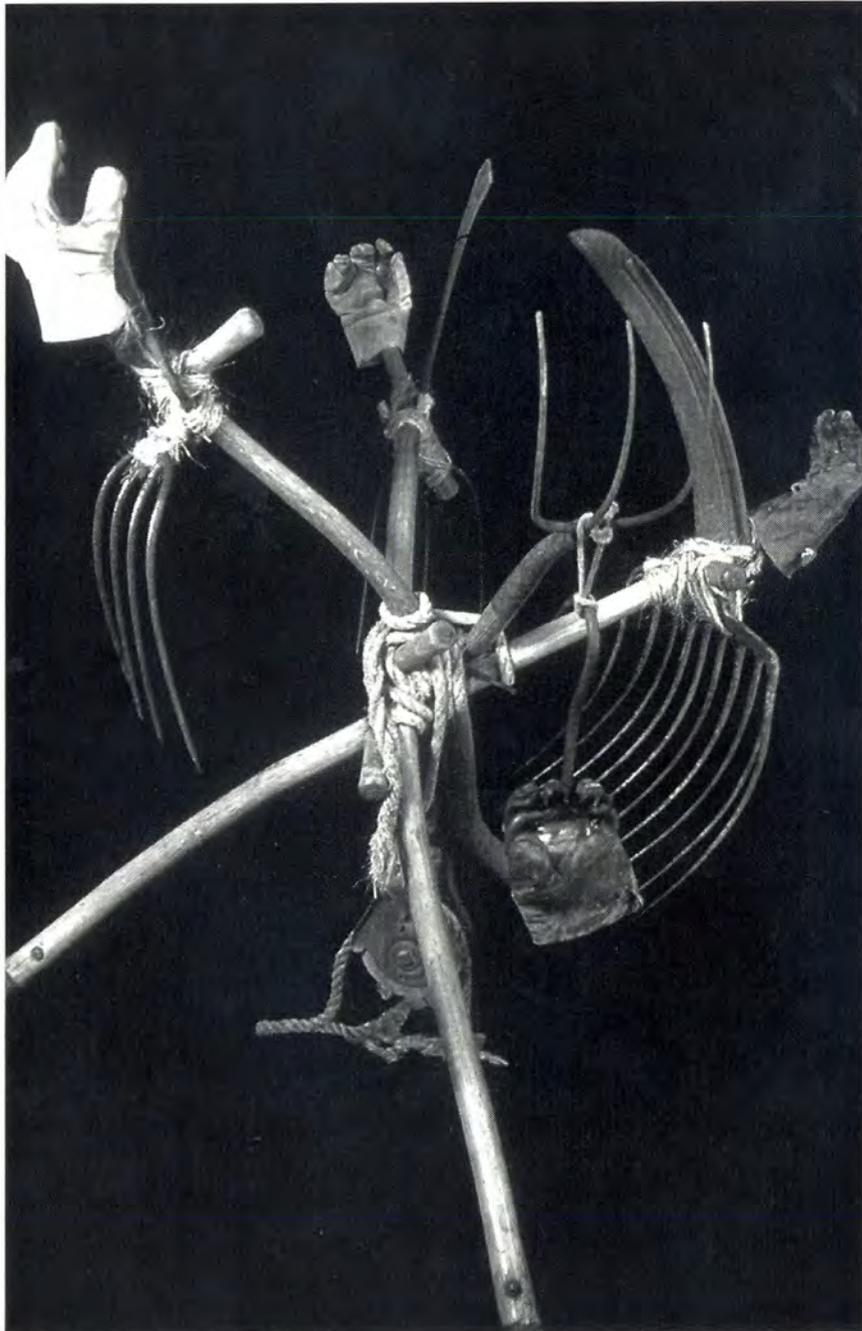
I am left in my own dealings
delivered from mastery
detached from humanity
destroyed by the other's terms
for doing business
heightened rebellion
against the unequitable
results in crusading for
my rights to myself
with vehement speech
inflaming all
obtuse uncovering of
our finer points
figure to pay
for what I buy with my mouth
unlikable statements
and now I'm without



Chris Cotey
Draco
Sculpture (clay)



Andrea Arrigo
Doctor Julia Too
Jewelry



George Voegel
Hand Fed
Sculpture (metal, wood, and leather)



Chris Cotey
A Mask
Sculpture (clay)

Fall With Me

Chas Hanners

God dropped by around three. There was a knock at my door. I was still in bed—you know how it is on Saturdays. What a night! And here was God on my damn doorstep.

"How the hell are ya!" he said to me grinnin'. I was still grinding the crusty shit out of my eyes that two or five smoky clubs'll give you, real sharp and crunchy, and all of a sudden there was this burst of light and a voice like some fuckin' bomb goin' off when I opened the door. Nothin' will prepare you for openin' the door of a dark motel room in the middle of a bright summer day—especially when you're hung like I was.

"How the hell are ya!" he boomed again. "Ya look like shit."

I just stood there blinking. Thoughts were slow to move through my head, but the first one that stuck was, *where the fuck does God get off showin' up on motherfuckin' Sunday morn . . . afternoon*, at which point he walked right past me into the room.

"Forgive me for just barging in, but I was gettin' sunburned."

He walked over to the TV and pulled down the cover to the mini-bar above. "How's about a little hair of the dog, huh? Ya sure look like ya could use it."

I shook my head—a mistake. "Christ, don't ya have

some prayers to listen to or sick to heal or somethin'?"

"Fuck that! I'm takin' the day off. Creation can wait." The lights popped on. "I want to **PARTY!**"

He poured himself a scotch and soda while eyeing the dirty clothes scattered over the floor between empty cigarette packs and porno mags.

"Tits! One of my greatest achievements," he said.

I changed my mind about that drink. "How's about settin' me up with one of those." I said. "I changed my mind about that drink."

"That's the spirit old boy!"

He thumbed through a Hustler while sloppily pouring another scotch and soda.

"And hold the soda," I said before he could fumble the cap off.

"Oh ho ho, start the day off right," he said as he shot me a big grin and a wink.

I was feeling much better by five. God was hammered. Couldn't hold his liquor very well, but he could still walk.

"Where can we get some action around here?"

I shrugged my shoulders. "It's early. It's Sunday. All the action's right here." I pulled a pack of Camels out of my shirt pocket and tapped one out.

"Hey, lemme get one of those from ya."

I eyed God with mock concern. "C'mon," he said, "it's not like I'm gonna get cancer. I am **GOD** ya know."

He waited while I lit mine then his, staring at me impatiently.

"Well?"

"Well what?"

"I wanna have some fun damn you!" He suddenly looked serious.

"All right, what are ya up for?"

"Anything!"

"Who's this guy? I told ya to call *before* ya drop by . . . ya weren't followed, were ya?"

Lenny poked his head out the apartment door and looked both directions seemingly at once. He reminded me of a chipmunk. "Hurry up and get in."

The sounds of the locks clickin' preceded the slam of the door. "Who's this fuckin' guy?" Lenny turned and looked God in the face. "Are you a cop? This guy looks like a cop, Jack. Is he a fuckin' cop? What's your name, cop?"

God was really too shitfaced to move. He blinked at Lenny.

"He's all right, Len. That's Jesus' pop."

Lenny seemed to be sniffing at God's collar. "He don't look like no Mexican to me."

"He's cool man," I said as I rifled through Lenny's refrigerator. The most appetizing thing was some brown and yellow fuzzy goo stuck to the lower shelf.

God seemed to snap out of it. He took Lenny's hand into both of his, and shook it vigorously. "Jack here tells me this is where the action is. By the way my name's Jehovah, but you can call me G."

Lenny turned and looked at me with his jaw hanging down. "Where'd ya get this clown, man?"

"Fuck him Len. Set us up." I held out a couple of

twenties, letting them dangle in front of his face.

I had to help God tie off, but he was such a topper it was easy.

"**HOLY SHIT!** I feel like I'm in . . . h e a v e n . . ." he said as he slowly fell to the floor, flushing the toilet with his head as he went.

The dirty light bulb flickered as I spiked myself.

Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me.

Hot sticky leaves press to my face, but feel as though they're children's hands, such beautiful green. A drumbeat. A whisper. The air is sugar and flowers. A stream murmurs softly. A golden tree reaches for the marbled red sky.

Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me.

Man and Woman dance beneath the spiraling branches, laughing. I watch them for a few moments. I wish to dance. I wish to laugh. To be free. I'm free. Louder.

Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me.

They smile. I sense they have no language, no pain, no fear, no hunger. I smile. The echo of the drums speaks. We dance, and laugh. They are free. I am free.

Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me.

I touch her face. Soft. Her shoulder, her arm. He looks on. The skin of her breast, almond. Lower. She shudders. She smiles. Differently. No no, don't listen to the drums. I am free?

Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me.

Fall with me.

She touches him. No, don't listen. He smiles. His neck, his hand. The drums are deafening. His stomach. Lower. **NO!** I am the drums.

*Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me. Fall with me.
Fall with me.*

They dance.

"Oh God, oh my God, oh God here it comes, oh God here it is, oh yeah, oh God, **OH GOD, OH GOD!**"

"I love when you call my name, baby."

I woke up in a murky room. My head was still swimming, but I thought I heard God's voice comin' from my left. "God?"

"Oh, he's awake. How ya feelin' there Jack? Say looky here. Do ya know when the last time I did this was?" In the flash of a match I saw God take the first drag of a cigarette. A girl sat up next to him. She giggled.

"I gotta get outta here."

"Nonsense, Old Boy, nonsense. The evening's just begun."

"No, this is too fuckin' weird." I could see God's outline in the glow of another drag.

"Stay just a few more minutes. I have some business I want to discuss with you."

"No!"

The lights exploded on. There was no sign of the girl.

"I'm afraid you must stay. You see, I was thinking about a little trade. An exchange of the sacred and the profane, you might say. My kingdom for yours. All that was lost to you."

"Fuck off!"

"No, I'm being quite serious. I'm bored with my life, with goodness. I want this. Flesh, pleasure, pain, sex, envy, lust, hate."

I thought about this for a while—God's offer. I thought of the torment of the fall, of life here. Then the images of a man and a woman flashed in my mind—a smile, laughter, a dance.

"No."

God tried to speak, but I cut him off.

"You chose this for me," and I vanished.



Patricia L. Garrett
Horror Big and Small
Photography mounted on paper

