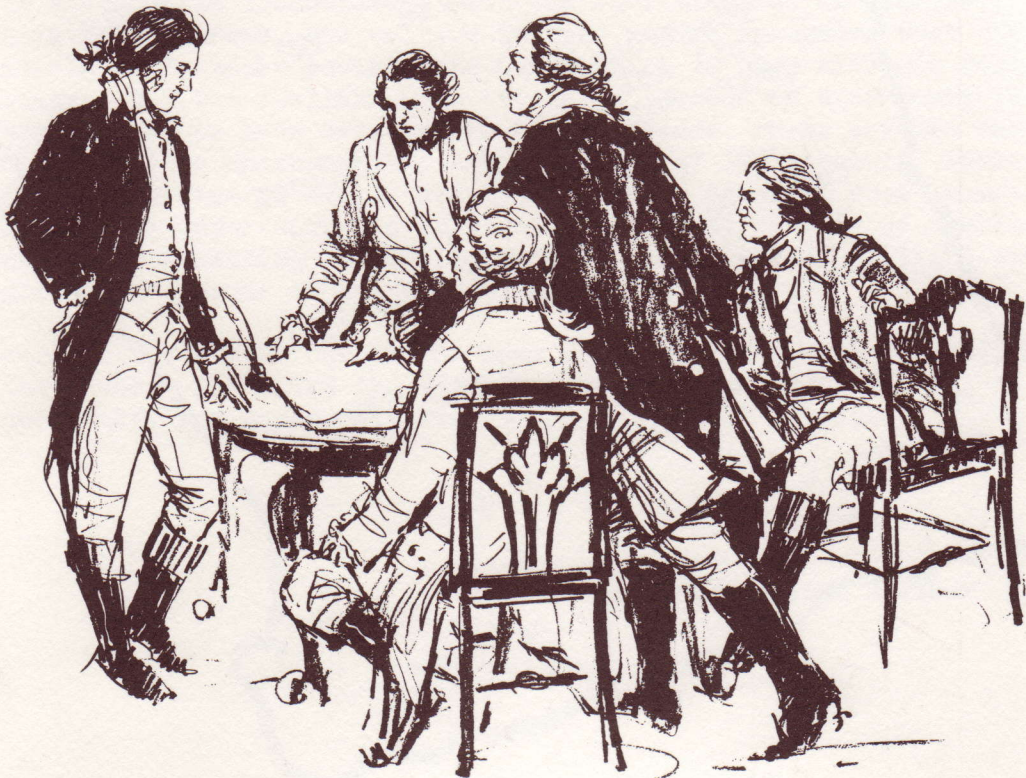
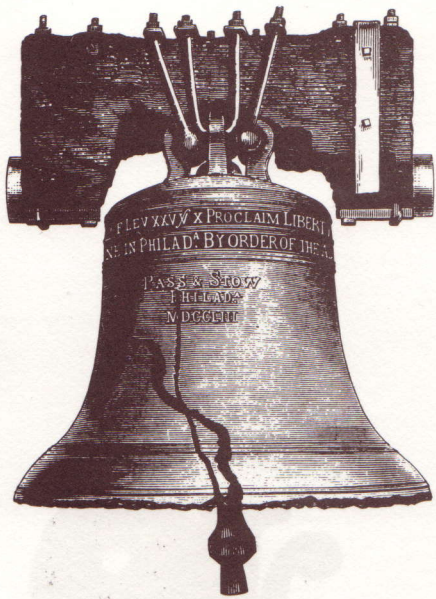


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A very special thank you
to:

The Spartan Department of English
YCP Student Senate

Mr. Bob Hoffman

Mr. William Finkelstein
Editor

Dana Larkin

Tom Trone
Phil Keifer
Mary Harridge

Compositors

Nancy Henry

Layout Artist

Robert Manning

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David Finkelstein

Graphics

The Creative Writing Class

PREAMBLE

In order to establish a more perfect education, provide native American leadership, promote the general sense of self-esteem in Pennsylvania, and provide the blessings of free enquiry to the citizens of York, John Andrews founded here in this our city an academy of learning -- quite probably in 1776 -- from which our present college is descended. As a bicentennial tribute, therefore, to the tenacious belief of the citizens of York that "the good life" is the offspring of the self-examined life, we dedicate this 1976 issue of ESP.

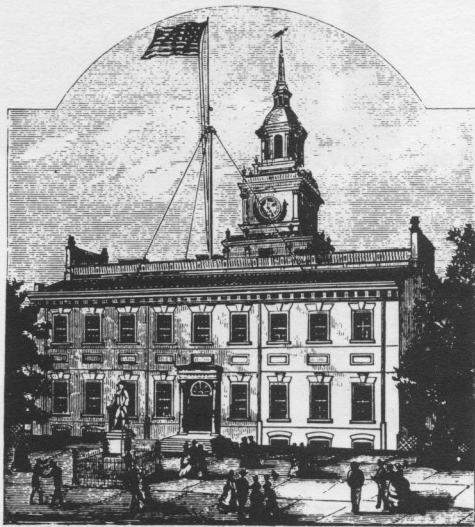
The Expositions, Stories, and Poems in this volume are created by the students of York College for the students of York College and its community. Originating in this spring's creative writing class, ESP has gleaned a harvest of verse and prose from writers throughout the college, some of whom have won prizes in the annual Bob Hoffman Writing Contest. We sincerely hope that you will enjoy the sensory and "extra-sensory" perceptions of all our contributors.

John Andrews was a man in whom, as one of his students avowed, a single central trait predominated: "sterling honesty." During an age in which the institution of slavery was considered in accord with a Constitution which proclaimed that "all men are created equal," this founding father of ours had the wisdom and courage to proclaim, "The practice of reducing men, of any colour, to a state of slavery, is inconsistent with the Christian law of charity." Like John Andrews, the writers in this volume recognize that the ideals of American society are never quite in step with its realities. All too familiar with the harsh lessons of dishonesty in high places we have experienced in our decade, these writers have not sought to whitewash the American flag of 1976; rather, Bicentennial America is envisioned by them as an epoch of soul-searching, as an opportunity to celebrate the unique freedom of American speech by examining the application of this freedom. Delight mingled with disgust is the pain of growth.

Our gratitude goes out to the many members of the college staff, the student body, and the York community who have so quietly, patiently, and generously made this publication possible.

Ben McKulik

faculty editor & adviser



AMER-IPPLE

Slumbarage scenses of blurite dreams,
 Factoluted skyways traced thru cloudazy highways,
 Towndustrial outskirts crouch amid carjunk,
 Graffiti-sundaes painted deliciously on canvassed walls,
 Oluted-beaches scream, "lippery oil", "dead fish",
 Politmonsters uphold Ameri-ipple-mess,
 Appalachian mirrored images thru train windowpanes...
 Amer-ipple

nancy henry

a clear bicentenday:
 reflections of our past
 past—
 A(mirror)ica

david finkelstein

'76 (Spirit of)
 Summer thunder—
 Gavels gesticulate
 In the hot air.

Guns along the Hudson
 Cannon at Ticonderoga
 The stutter of rifles.

A caucus of lightening—
 Who will profit
 From the voice's investment?

Minutemen ready
 At the bridge
 Till all the coats are red.

Men of the minute
 Yes, I have a minute,
 golf at five.

Minutemen appearing
 Dressed in eagle feathers
 Eating roots.

Minute Maid—
 Buy her, you'll like her!
 She keeps up the price.

Minutemen freezing
 At the forge—
 Waiting for overcoats.

"Man of the hour"—
 Yes, he's our choice,
 Won't rock the boat.

g. w. a.

The Penny

Abraham Lincoln, in profile, his bust,
 'Neath the printed, all caps, IN GOD WE TRUST.

Behind, shoulder-high, the word liberty.

Before, breast-high, 1973.

All this in minature, shiny and cold,

All this in coppery, of a pressed mold.

Would sink in water, on a slope would slide,

Would roll with a push,

And that's just ONE side.

phil kiefer

Gray plastic pale sets
 Typewriter too large for the desk—
 American flag.

david finkelstein

IN MEMORY OF A PENCIL

You were lean and tall when I first met you
Your coat was new and untarnished
Your head was full-cropped and soft
Your extremities were even and well-rounded
But I treated you harshly.

I never appreciated you until you were gone . . . gone because of me
You became my slave and I worked you every day
And when I made a mistake, I blamed you.

I would stand you on your head and drag you until you bled,
And your blood washed away my errors.

And when you did not perform up to my expectations or demands,
I would cut you down until I reached your very lifeline,
And work you again before your wounds had healed.

And I dragged you at one end and cut you at the other,
And I saw you disintegrate before my eyes.

You have born the brunt of my mistakes
But for all your loyal service and my unpardonable behavior,
You are easily replaced.

THE TWO-HUNDRED-YEAR-OLD BACKBONE

I know a woman who'll be thirty-nine next June,
Though last June she was forty-three.
She seems to be getting younger,
And is just as pleased as can be.

Keeping that in mind, I wondered
Why America would want to be two hundred.
Wisdom and maturity go along with age,
But the backbone's a little crooked by this stage.

What of this grand celebration
And the noise the rockets will make?
Won't that be hard for her weary backbone to take?

But America's different from most of her age.
Her wisdom and maturity are sometimes slack,
But there's nothing wrong with her back.

phil kiefer

just me

the only thing i ever wanted
was writen bout things
really.
never wanted to win no contests
never.
cause you dont have to use no good grammer
or ironic twists or
gimmicks-
to be honest.
nothins the matter with bein honest.
it dont hurt nobody
and anyways thats how i was raised.
i get tired of keeping up with all the newest games
to sell-
its prostitution thats what it is -
and im gettin tired
tired of payin debts never owed
its true ill never sell no manuscripts
never get my name in print
cause i aint writen or tellin what
you wanna see or hear
im just bein me
an lovin
somebody can tell little stories
cause they love you know
nothins the matter with bein
honest.

dana larkin

Insanity is all in the Mind

Sometimes I really do see, Chief Bromden...
Sometimes I really do see the cogs and wheels,
wires and generators that give earth its motive.
Androids running well in oil programming-
People shorting out in retaliation.
Buck the system and parts start popping from the walls.
That blue cloud of smokey resistance makes the
androids quiver, gives the people hope.
Sometimes I really do see, Chief Bromden.

jenny bull

THE COACH OF ILLUSIONS

We board the coach of illusions
at the station which does not exist,
our train route from nowhere to no place
by invisible tressels and rails.

Of shadowy now living creatures
the coach is filled . . . figures
who enter with knowledge,
their journey is fruitless . . . and long.

As the doors of the coach draw together
the thick veil of steam forms a cloud,
as the engine grinds out the lifetime
of the figures who move within.

steve smith

Doctors' bags
Riding nags
soldiEr hats
bAlls and bats
no More screams --
boyhood dreamS

troubled days
scoRing a's
sEeking gals
lifetime pAls
acne creaMs --
teenage dreamS



owning lanD
Reaching demands
cash galorE
alwAy's more
glitter gleaM --
age-old old-age dreamS

phil kiefer

THERE WAS AN OLD MAN

There was an old man,
Old and wizened,
Who, it is said,
Never smiled.

He explained that he could hardly
Find merriment in life
while

The poor of all the lands became poorer—

War was still a means by which countries disagreed—

The murder of environment still persisted

Governments lied to the people and to themselves—

and

We are
slowly
slowly
Killing ourselves.

Then one day
He heard on the radio
That the world was to be
Obliterated
By a nuclear attack.
"Don't Panic," said the radio.

The old man laughed.

sherri ciuffetelli

On the Death of My Grandfather

White-haired patriarch
He tended grape arbors
And studied books
Told summer secrets
And laughed with her
Now friends file by
As compassionate progeny
Share each other
And his legacy.

sidney kirk

Gasoline signs directing the public...
Billboards begging
mobile homes arrayed
Intruding wired structures like the Eiffel
towering over
stretching
from town to town
Half hidden behind,
surrendering sunsets.

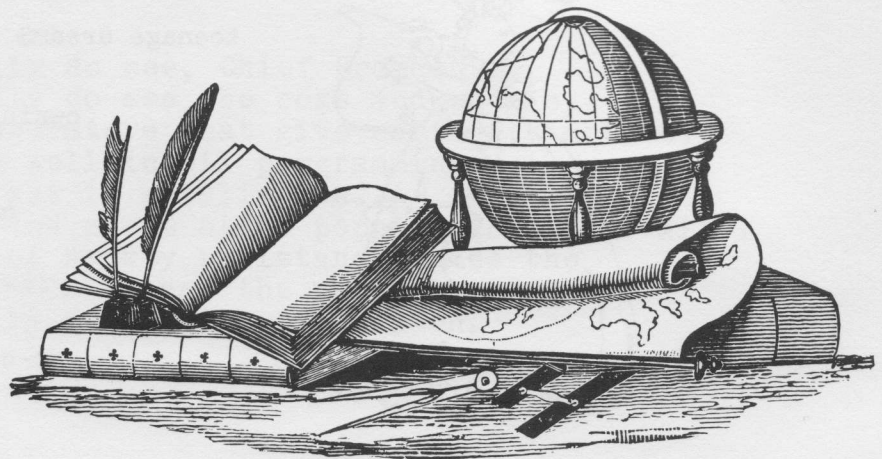
pat casson

DECAY

Decay is insidious.
Unintended, untreated,
it grows
by leaps
and
bounds.

A tooth presents a fine example.
A broken window pane the same.
Rust and mildew their silent courses run.
So too, one spot of prejudice.

janet knorr



h a l k u



Henry James rendered
Graceful clouds, vigorous chill—
Posed in a quined chair

david finkelstein

Crisp, clear, running stream
Sun-lit waterfalls, dark woods—
Teachings of Don Juan

david

Sunshine, meadows green
Beautiful girl lying bare
So dry, so stiff and COLD

david

Fat, crusty girls sit
tongues, lips, yellow teeth chomping—
a giggle, a laugh

david

Cellophane people:
Faint, sticky, yellow, thinned out—
Wrapped up in themselves

david

Naked trees stand tall
No birds sit on the branches
Animals smell death

jim markle

The loud crack of guns
The deer retreat to the hills
Where no men are found

jim

Bubbles rise slowly
As the diver quickly turns
To face the great shark

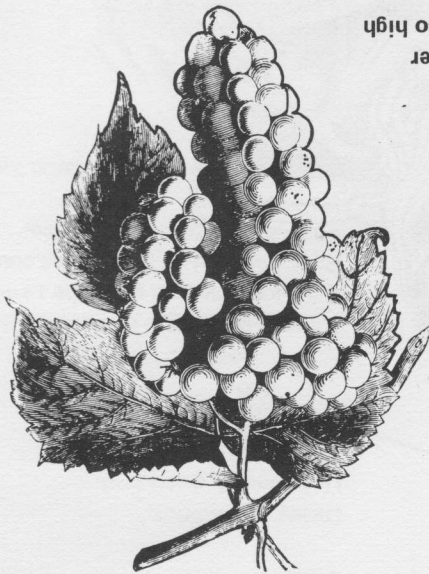
jim

Starred blackness surrounds,
the night sounds begin their call—
The bear shits unheard

david

Brown white-spotted deer
Warm, wet black noses so high
Chasing butterflies

david



Clares sharp in my eyes
As the warmth rushes through my body—
A bright yellow sun.

lynn

A spider's web wound
Patterned silk from wall the wall—
A sun shining through.

lynn wells

Softness of white sand
Particles stuck between my toes—
Burning as I walk.

lynn

A thunderstorm—
I'm stuck outside in it
without an umbrella
jane kaplan

Sunspark highlight toadstool
I lift a branch—
The buck crosses my path.
jenny bull

Gray-bright surrounds the lake,
Clouds float to the wind...
The sun shines pink on the moon.
jenny bull

A ewe bends to drink
Sloping greenness to running brook...
Lamb nudges teat.
jenny bull

In the biting sun's haze,
A kite dances above the hill—
Dandelions drowze.
jenny bull

Stepping the pebbles...
Circular blowing winds hurl—
Pebbles remain crushed.
pat casson

FALLING orange star

glides on incandescent reflections,
blue ocean sunset.
nancy henry

Leaf gliding down tree
touching gracefully on dirt—
Urgent wind thrusts leaf.
pat casson

The sun is fading...
a single yellow leaf
lights the whole forest
tom trone

Tree limbs gentle nakedness,
leaves age into burning rainbows—
nature's brilliant DEATH.
nancy henry

Now as the town sleeps
the rain changes into snow
the leaves into earth
tom trone

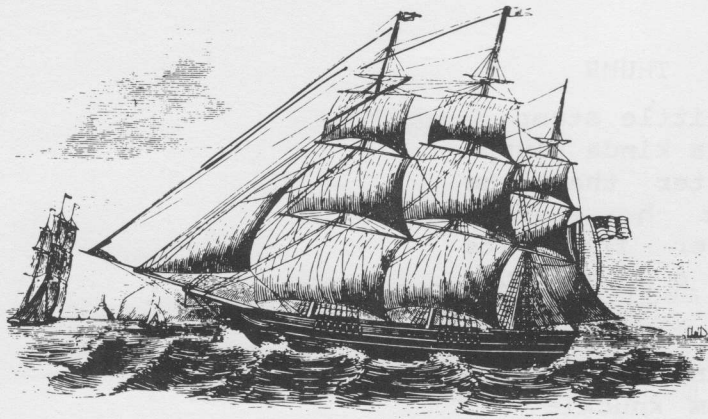
Falling from the sky
hush the snow is in my eyes
blink and it is gone
george leitheiser

White space patterned black
Wind swept snow neath shadowed pine —
Mouse huddles in cold.
jenny bull





P
O
E
T
r
y



Ships sailing on the panfry grease
bobbing in the slime, hot, burning,
a stench...
A windstorm drives them
away. "Push off please!"
Its tide pulls in from the metal shores,
Not a ripple
Ah, but one tiny ship alone,
drifts half anchored!

david finkelstein

Sun's rays cut the sky
As the toad's chirping stops short
Away the bass swims.

terry boudreau

Waves toss back and forth,
child lifts a shell to ear—
endless sound of sea...

pat casson

Oo-ay up she rises
Oo-ay up she rises...

Tossing your silvery hair,
Cresting sweeps of light and air—
Dreaming your fathomless dreams
Still sargassos and surging streams.
Gentle as love's caress...
Beauty in her ancient dress...
Fury and peace combine,
I'm yours, but you're never mine.

m.s.

The rain
Drips
Thru
The big hole
In my beach umbrella
It reminds me
Of you—
Our leaky friendship

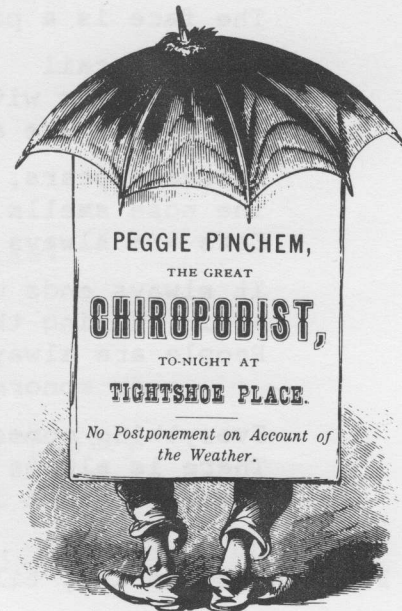
piggie pinchen

Nature, the Thief

Outlaws rustle horses,
Winds rustle leaves,
Thus, nature has something in common with thieves.

She, too, steals from us,
Taking what we love the most;
She, too, plays tricks on us,
Changing disguises from coast to...

phil kiefer



THUMB

little stump
it's kinda plump
shorter than the
o t h e r s
uglier than its
b r o t h e r s
b o t t o m
i s w i d e
skinny on side
from knuckle to
tip an i n c h
w i t h o u t i t
n o o n e c a n
P I N C H

marilyn welles

* * * * *

IMAGES

From the beginning, till the end, many different images appear

An arrow hitting a target
Which is a clown's face:
The face is a part of a city of smiling faces

My cat's tail
Was run over with a motorcycle:
Her fleas make a wagon-train circle

A face appears,
The nose smells a new angle for an image:
Ears are always following you

It always ends up being an animal in disguise,
A pig running through the street of the city:
People are always looking at something that is strange
or abnormal to them

Everything comes back to the original feeling:
There is always a solid block in the way,
Then the block is gone and the animal enters slowly

From the beginning, till the end, many different images appear

mary k. harridge

I Think I'll Call This a Poem

I think I'll call this a poem
(so you'll at least try it)
But really it's many things
or could be
(See, it's even a little like you)
And don't be surprised if sometime
you find one staring right back at you
(There have been a few cases reported)
People have even been known to put handles on them
and carry them around
(Well, maybe you're not quite that sentimental)
At any rate
there is something here for you somewhere

Try this:

look at it
listen to
smell it
touch it
taste it

Hell, swallow it whole if you like!

or

save some for later

P.S. nothing in the world is not poetry

tom trone

Ian's home.

I must run to meet him
Look into the eyes
 of one who has
 danced among the clouds,
 and slept in meads
 of clover.
Oh, to follow him
 through fields
 of daisies and muget-des-bois
To take his hand
 and stroll to the stream
 lunching on cheese and wine
 within the comforting
 silence of summer.

Ian's home.

I must run to meet him
dance with him among the clouds
sleep with him
 in meads of clover.

sharon pavolosky

JUST BECAUSE?!

Is it because there are flowers
 or because I smell their fragrance
Because there is sunshine
 or because I feel its warmth
Because there is water
 or because I can drink
Because there is thought
 or because I can think
Because there is hurt and love
 or because I can feel?

flip lawson

The Tragio-Comedian

I often wonder how it feels
To be the village imbecile,
With foaming mouth and vacant stare,
With lurching gait and tousled hair.
I wonder what he's thinking while
He answers insults with a smile

jeff robertson

I looked into his eyes
One was green
One was a pool of shimmering ice
Cold
Hard
Shining straight through everything.
I was afraid
But then,
He winked and
The ice melted
dripping into a puddle at my feet.

mike wonders

A Rasputin Madness

A Rasputin Madness
Burns furrows in my brain.
I've drunk from the cup of Bacchus
Filled with the sweet wine of the Styx.
Men of the North hold me captive -
Deem me mad.
Insane from living in an unmarked grave
Reserved for the undead, blotted from Man's mind.
I swim the stream of darkness to
Emerge into your light
O my love.
The cup passes -
The swirling grey nightmares
Are dissolved in the sunlight.
Rasputin is banished
To his place in history.

sheridin jones

The day is new,
glistening diamonds to the new-mown grass.
The robin-egg sky embraces its flock of sheep
as they wander near and far in their vast pastureland...

lorraine potochney

QUESTIONS

I can't understand
Why you left me.
I tried, I really did.
I tried to act like
she did, laugh the way
she did, make love
the way she did.

Where did I fail?
I didn't pressure
you.
I didn't question
you.

So why, why
did you end your life?

SOUNDS

Sounds coming
From everywhere
Music
A page turning
Breathing
Wind
A flowing river
Gunshots
Cars
Birds
People talking
All contributing
To a total
Effect
More sounds
Getting louder
I become
Them
By being
Them

HUMIDIFIER

It's never quiet when it's working
Always thumping around like a man with a pegleg.
At night, it frightens me
It sounds eerie . . . the way it bumps, and turns,
and grinds.

It blows constant breaths of air into the room
It's very, very cold
Like the north wind
Blowing dust around the room.

I don't like it very much
It uses up all the drinking water in our facet,
and makes my daddy mad.

mary k. harridge

BITS OF MY WINTER BEING

Snowflakes dance in the branches of my essence tree,
They dance like silverspores thru twilight's early dusk.

Snowflakes knock silently at my frosted window . . .
Their brother, wind, tells me tales of winter solstice
 quadrilles.

These bits of my being try desperately to sweep away . . .
They beg me to join them, to dance and revel in joy.
I know my being is in them, with them . . . them in me.

I want to meet their mistress, their royal snow spirit.
I perceive her grasp as she enhances her ice-crystal
 Camelot.
She is the white sun of winter's whispered days.

jenny bull

WINTER

Frye boot stepping the snow . . .
Jeanned leg lifted
came down hard
and the slab of leather meeting the white . . .
Crunch.
A quiescent squash . . .
Rice Krispie smashed
between two fingers,
Quick leg lifted up,
Missip!
 And flecks of snow.

pat casson

STRIPPED NAKED FLESH DISSOLVES INTO THE ENCLOSED BASIN

Cautious, the lean white limb is
the bravest.
The initial step boldly labors
as thighs, torso, elbows emulate.
Body oil mingles with spurts of water . . .
attritive skin surrenders to the bar.

Feet, legs, buttocks cleansed
as the Arms command.
To rub generously up and down splashing,
foamed fleshed camouflages.
Only to be washed away by the Arms,
The water swirling circular into the drain.

The Arms have completed.
Feet Legs Buttocks emerge triumphantly.

pat casson

FOOTNOTES

No EPITHALAMION for you
Machabyas Childe,
No AMORETTI sigh
Of secrets shared
Only this -- "FOOTNOTE"¹
Spenser's first wife" --
To sound the immortality
Of love

What you knew
Will not be known
Songs you sang
Will not be sung
So in remembrance
And in tribute long past due
Here's a toast to footnotes
And first wives.

sidney kirk

* * * * *

Darkness descends, enfolding the city,
neon creatures wink at those who are familiar friends.
"Schlitz, Pabst, Miller ... the high life ..."
Empty bars filled with grey men,
shadows of the human race
staring from their wine bottles
to the waitress' greasy white uniform.

In the alley the Hawks meet the Red Devils.
Chains and blades are raised in battle cry,
a moment of victory is heard,
and then ... black figures scatter, but ...
under the fire escape, behind the rusted garbage cans,
red life fills the cracks in the concrete.

All of sixteen,
he lies in a forest of broken glass and flat tires
ignoring the blood trickling into his eye and down his nose.
It was only for fun,
that's what they said.

But no one is there to answer,
as he gazes questioningly at the starless sky,
if his mother ever forgave him
for being born.

lorraine potochney

THE NUMBERS ARE INADEQUATE

Tues

Day

Good Newsday.

she reads Ann Landers

wistfully glancing

over AsTrOgRaPh:

"A definitely

usual Tuesday"

she loves

her songs

her playful kitten -"Dylan"

and the beautifully colored "Baez"- a box

turtle she had met on some sun-kissed

eve as she walked in the dragon-

flied field

with

RALPH.

staring out windows encasing her yard

roses and

fences

tall and white--yet wide

delicate and intricate

as

FRANK.

she reads ROMEO AND JULIET

pausing now only to switch

on and off and off and on

to Jane - it's on the best seller list

so says THE NEW YORK TIMES

...dreaming on to wednesdays

in the intervals

abruptly recalling "just another work-week

but she's most likely to see

KENT

clark kent

flying in and out

through the narrow hallways

smoke filmed filled consumed hallways

FIVE YEARS IS ALL WE GOT-

has five years too gone so quickly ??????

but he still has his yellow dub

and she waits for a ring

from

JEFF.

he still has a '54 Les Paul

LESLIE.

he never did show or call or write

for a copy of that sonnet

she had so meticulously fashioned

at 5AM

but he is so- busy-

why there's the band

and friends and

well just everything my goodness!

...she understands anyway.

Ask her.

she gazes back in her room
filled with vines and half
filled wine bottles and soft
fragmented bits of orangish flowers and
stuffed puppies and teddies and
pictures
of

BOB.

in uniform and jeans with many patches
and he's coming this week-end!
for the fourth. From Norfolk!

JULY FOURTH WEEKEND.

and she remembers way back last year
and she tries desperately to forget...
anything to forget...

change her thoughts-

because last year independence was a drag and still is and well-
she's NOT alone this year - no sir!
there's always

SAM.

rowing and
boating
biking
and Sam's
"bong"

And

ROBERT.

at the gas station
fillin em'
and makin it through law school
and
and life.

And then there's

JOHN.

who wants to be an Arlington
policeman when he grows up but-
right now he's settling for security
with Boeing and
Dulles and
her.

of course
there's also

JOHN.(sir john of lancaster)

who will someday be
an NFL coach-
but now he's too small to play
the game.

he wants and gets
a degree or two in acting
in June.

The lady is intelligent

and nice.

and she's into most anything - anything
everything, everywhere, everyone.
anyone.

MOST.

But the truth of the matter is:
the numbers are inadequate
I mean it's typically tuesday
only GOOD NEWS DAY.
as she glances at the match pack
and the 18-letter signal that someone
tall and sweet gave her today
and she smiles-
because they match her flowers...

dana larkin

responsive tips

of green

peaking through

the Uneath

rather- gushing readily

WINTER

WAVERS

RIGHTS

TO

SPRING

THAW

responsive tips

on either

side

leaving prints of living news.

dana larkin

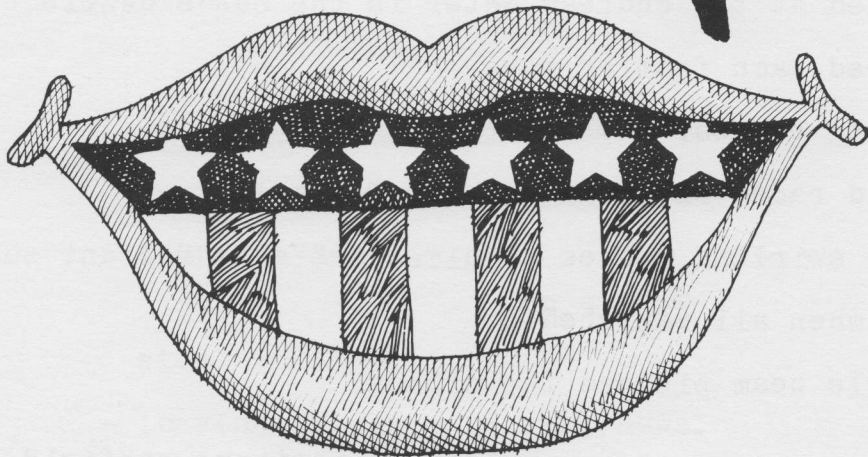
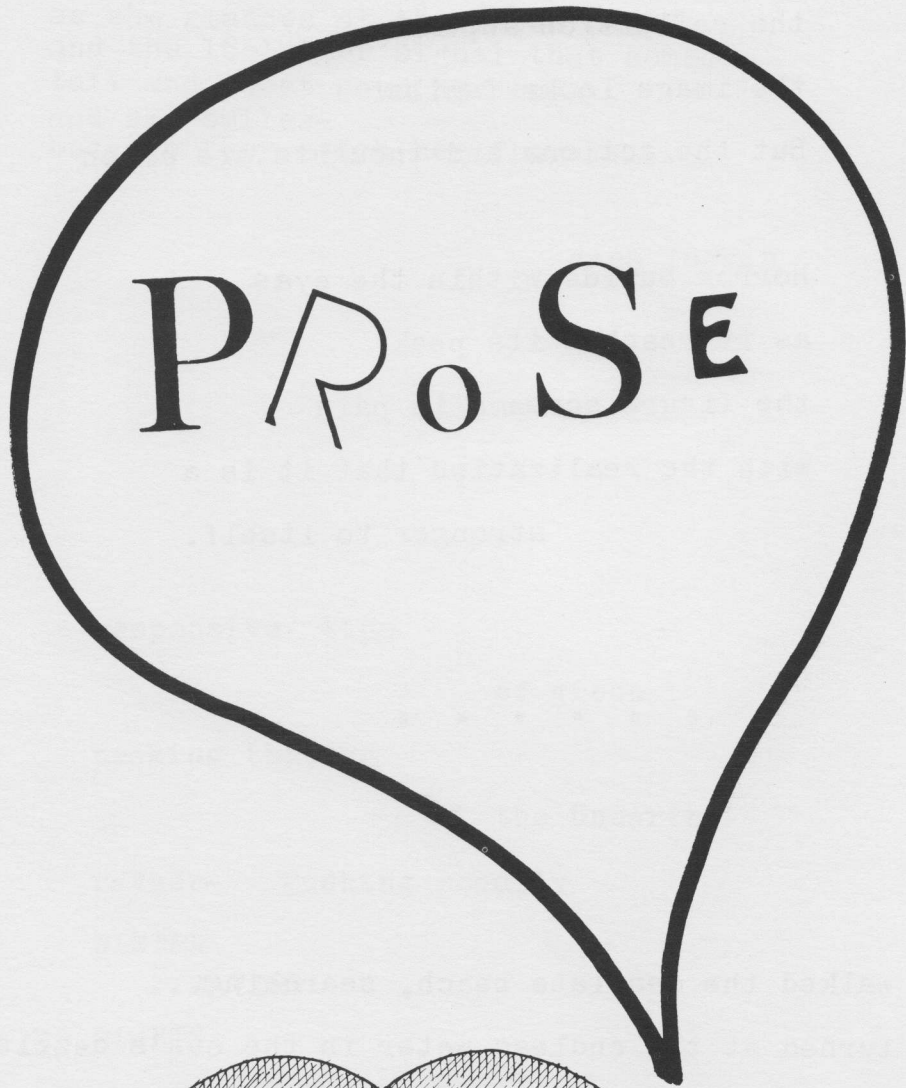
Gazing in the mirror
the reflection appears
the image looks familiar
But the actions and thoughts are alien

Horror builds within the eyes
as it reaches its peak
the figure screams in pain
with the realization that it is a
stranger to itself.

* * * * *

I walked the desolate beach, searching...
I turned at the endless water in the sun's dazzle
I probed each foaming wave
Its song echoes.
My mind raced on, scanning the horizon
Sombre swirling masses engulfed the once radiant sun
Then, when all vanished--
A single beam pierced the clouds.

marianne hatfield



AT BOOT CAMP WITH FATS WILSON

Zero more days and we'll be through
Sound off-ONE TWO Sound off-THREE FOUR
ONE TWO THREE FOUR ONE TWO-THREE FOUR

It was over at last! I couldn't believe it! We had graduated and it was over. The time had come to travel on to various posts all over the country for our Advanced Individual Training; some would go to Ft. Bragg, NC, some to Ft. Polk, LA, some to Ft. Sill, OK, some to Ft. Hood, TX, etc. And we were as happy and playful as cubs. But why? After all, we still had a hell of a long way to go till we would be free men again. I'll tell you why! Because we were through with eight dirty, sweaty, disgusting, agonizing, lonely, frightening weeks known as basic training. Zero more days and we'll be through! We were leaving this lousy New Jersey sandtrap they call Ft. Dix forever and we were goddamn happy.....that is, all of us except Fats. I felt sorry for him. Here we all were prancing about in our dress greens and packing our duffle bags, and there was Fats, sitting on his footlocker in his fatigues, staring silently at the floor.....

"Get up from that footlocker, boy," barked Staff Sargeant Sherrod. "Nobody sits on his ass on the first day of basic training, except me maybe."

Staff Sargeant Sherrod, E-6, was our platoon drill instructor. He was a black man of medium height and sturdy build who had been in the army about eleven years. There was an air of self-containment and refinement about him that singled him out among the cadre of our battalion. But he was even more arrogant than the others. So you liked him for being civilized and you hated him for thinking he was better than you. Despite his coolness, he was an able leader and well-respected. He aimed his exhortations at you with a precision that made confrontations with him extremely bone-chilling experiences. I remember, in particular, the time during our fifth week when we had fired poorly at the rifle range. Sgt. Sherrod, speaking from atop a sand dune like a prophet, promised us that although it was illegal to leave marks on us, he would hurt us internally by damaging a rib or a kidney if we didn't do better. (You may think such threats absurd, but I've heard some stories...)

"What's your name, boy?"

"Wilson, sir."

"Don't ever call me sir, boy. I work for a goddamn living," proclaimed Sgt. Sherrod. (This is a popular claim of the cadre to distinguish themselves from the officers.) Sgt. Sherrod moved in for a closer look at Wilson who was standing sternly at attention.

"Boy, you're going to have to lose some of that goddamn belly."

"Yes, drill sargeant," replied Fats nervously as Sgt. Sherrod peered down at him with cold black eyes from under his smokey the bear hat that all drill sargeants wear.

Fats was five feet five inches tall and must have weighed somewhere around 190 pounds.

"Don't let me see you hang'in around the mess hall all the time."

"Yes, drill sargeant."

Sgt. Sherrod turned and strutted out of the room, his starched fatigues crackling, his spit-shined boots shimmering as he went.

Eight more weeks and we'll be through
Sound off-ONE TWO Sound off-THREE FOUR
ONE TWO THREE FOUR ONE TWO-THREE FOUR

The first day of basic training is one of the most horrible experiences a young man could ever have. I remember some of the events of that day: getting the two inches of hair shaved off that they had told us at reception station we were allowed to keep; standing in long lines to receive basic issues; running our first mile; going to bed that first night without a shower to wash the sweat and dirt and hair off because we ran the mile too slow, etc. But the experience of our first day which stands out most was arriving at the basic training area. Our particular barracks was a good distance from where the truck dropped us off. The drill sargeants, who looked more to me like a pack of hungry lions, informed us that if we didn't run like hell all the way to the barracks we'd have a boot up our ass and that the last five men there would be the first to pull KP. I'll never forget that mad dash. It wasn't easy trying to run with a full duffle bag in one hand and dress greens on a hanger in the other. Guys were tripping over one another, tripping over their own feet, falling face first on the cement, stomping over downed comrades; it was terrible. Many of them lost the pants to their dress greens which they did not stop to retrieve. And, oh yes, Fats was one of those who was stomped over, one of those who lost his pants, and the last of the last five to arrive at the barracks. But his problems had just begun.

During our first week, we were introduced to a Sgt. Jones, a black buck-sargeant who was Sgt. Sherrod's assistant. Sgt. Jones was not nearly as sharp as Sgt. Sherrod and this was quite obvious when he stood beside him in front of our formations. His fatigues and boots looked even worse than ours and he spoke in a dialect which was a mixture of bad English and Afro-American street slang. He was extremely dislikeable, but often funny, like the time he said, "Ah don't mind tak'in you fellas out fer a even'in workout tonight cause mah girlfriend's husbin's home, but if he wasn't home I'd run ya so goddamn hard you'd nevva flunk anotha inspection." (We had room and uniform inspection every morning.)

Jones took an immediate dislike to Fats and damn near killed him those first few weeks. Needless to say, much of our time was spent doing PT, physical training. Fats could not even hold onto the chin-up bar. He could only do four push-ups, three sit-ups, and run about an eighth of a mile.

By the second week Fats had improved little and slipping down from the bar one day received that "swift kick in the ass" Jones had been promising. Fats turned and glared at Jones fiercely. Jones charged and gave Fats a push, knocking him down on the grass.

"Goddamn you fat boy, yer gonna learn to hang on to dat bar er you won't eat! Ah'll drive you day an goddamn night if ah hafta an ah ain't jiv'in sonny. Ah'll kick hell out uv ya!"

And Fats was driven day and night for the next couple weeks. Jones made it a point to follow him in the chow line and make sure he didn't get one of everything. And believe me, one of everything did not satisfy even a thin hungry body, so you can imagine Fat's disappointment. Then each night after supper, as the rest of us sat in the barracks resting or preparing our gear for the next day, Fats worked-out on the quadrangle out front for two or three hours. We could hear him through the windows groaning into the dusk, night after night after night after night after night after.....

None of us really thought much about Fats those first couple weeks; we were all preoccupied with our own frustrations. But after a while, we settled down a little, gained a little confidence, and took a little time to get to know one another. We began to realize that we were in this thing together and that we could draw strength from one another. I began to detect an air of pride about us as we marched all over Ft. Dix with Sgt. Sherrod prancing like a peacock in front of us chanting:

Your left-your left-your left right left
Your left-your left-your left right left
Hi dee hi dee hi dee ho HI DEE HI DEE HI DEE HO
Only six more weeks to go
Sound off-ONE TWO Sound off-THREE FOUR
ONE TWO THREE FOUR ONE TWO-THREE FOUR

Fact is, we were named sharpest looking marching unit in a parade one Saturday and were awarded our first weekend pass by the Commanding General of Ft. Dix. All of us went home.....that is, all of us except Fats.

During the days we received instruction in a variety of areas: rifle assembly and maintenance, hand to hand combat, map usage, first aid, etc. Not to mention extensive PT. And I'll never forget the day we were introduced to tear-gas. I can still vividly remember seeing Fat's eyes catch fire when he removed his mask in that small tear-gassed room and said, "Arnold Wilson, 196-48-5247,

Middletown, Connecticut," and then charged for the door. The gas mask was one piece of equipment you held dear after the deliberate exposure to tear-gas you receive in the fourth week of basic training.

Four more weeks and we'll be through
Sound off-ONE TWO Sound off-THREE FOUR
ONE TWO THREE FOUR ONE TWO-THREE FOUR

In the barracks at night we'd talk about girls and what you did before you came in and what you would do after you got out and where you hoped you'd be stationed and girls etc. Fats and I shared a room with three other guys: Pete Ring of Boston, John Temple of North Carolina, and Jerry Sarsfield from the marines. (Sarsfield had actually been kicked out of the marines and had lied his way into the army. Later they found out but they kept him anyway.) Fats was a pleasant fellow to talk to. John was also pleasant. He and I encouraged Fats to keep hard at it. We knew he could make it! Pete didn't hang around with us much. He had never liked Fats much since the night Fats had laid in bed and watched a stranger come into the room and take the money out of Pete's wallet, not saying anything till the next day. Pete was very upset:

"Fats you dumb bastard! You chicken-shit son of a bitch! Why the hell didn't you wake me? I oughta slap the shit out of you!"

I remember one other occasion in particular that Fats fell victim to his timidness. One day during PT, Sgt. Sherrod found two quarters laying in the grass next to Fats:

"Whose quarters are these?"

Fats said nothing.

"Anybody lose two quarters?"

Nobody replied.

"Goin once, goin twice, goin in my goddamn pocket."

By the middle of basic training Fats had lost twenty-five pounds. He was now able to run much farther, do more sit-ups, push-ups, etc. I remember the day he did four chin-ups and we all cheered. ...that is, all of us except Sgt. Jones.

Along about the fifth week we began those dreaded marches out to the rifle range which was seven miles of sandy, hilly trail away. We were members of the fourth platoon and we ate the dust kicked up by the first, second, and third platoons the whole way out to and back from the range every day for two weeks. At first, most of us didn't shoot too well, but by the end of the second week we had improved greatly. We were awarded another week-end pass. (It really only amounted to about a day and a half, but

Fats didn't complain. This would be his first time home in six weeks that must have seemed like six years to him. Would you believe John Temple flew all the way to North Carolina for that day and a half.) It was, however, a pass well earned. Those marches had been nightmarish. Once a fellow in the rear of the third platoon fell down and the fourth platoon marched right over him. He jumped up in the middle somewhere and started cursing and swinging his rifle around. Quite some scene ensued. It took all the cadre on the trail to put the formation back together.

Fats continued to improve at a steady pace. One day he would add a chin-up; another day he'd add another; another day he'd add a push-up, etc. He had knocked several inches off his waist and twice he had had to buy all new fatigue pants. He could not match the output of us other guys, but he had worked much harder than us and we knew it. All of us encouraged Fats on.

The final PT test would be held during the eighth week. Anyone who did not score at least 350 out of the possible 500 points would not graduate. Any person who did not score 350 would be RECYCLED! Would do it all over again! The whole eight weeks! As his comrades moved on. God forbid!

During the seventh week, we took a practice run through the test. The test consisted of five events: chin-ups, sit-ups, push-ups, the run and jump, and the mile run. In each event, a possible 100 points could be scored. Most of us scored around 400 points in the trial run. Others scored around 450, others around 375, and Fats at exactly 335. He would have to add 15 points onto that next week. He would have to!

Two more weeks and we'll be through
One more week and we'll be through
Sound off.....

Before we knew it the day of the test was upon us. I remember seeing Fats in action at various moments of that morning. It was an exceptionally cold morning and the bar was hard to hold onto because our hands were numb and the freezing air we drew violently into our lungs hurt. But Fats appeared to be doing well. He was extremely enthusiastic and was obviously giving it all he had and more. He was even yelling encouragement on to others as he waited in line. I felt sure that he would make it. He had worked harder than ever the previous week. We would not receive our scores, however, until the next day. I remember how glad everybody was when the test was over. The chant rose out of our weary souls more mightily than ever:

Two more days and we'll be through
Sound off-ONE TWO Sound off-THREE FOUR
ONE TWO THREE FOUR ONE TWO- THREE FOUR

Two days later, Fats did not march with us to graduation. The post commander spoke for a half-hour at the ceremony, but I didn't hear a word he said. I could think of nothing except Fats sitting back in that barracks alone. His pain had followed me across those desolate blocks. Eight points stood between Fats and this horde of happy soldiers like eight miles.

But we were leaving. I was walking down those steps for the last time, duffle bag over my shoulder, on my way to Oklahoma. After giving Fats a last word of encouragement, I had left him behind with the thousand ghosts that were filling the rooms and corridors. I wanted to go back; I wanted to do something else for him, but there was nothing else I could do. I had to look ahead. Yes! I deserved it! I had made it! The hell with Fats! I had made it! I was finished! I would go on! This goddamn army would never get the best of me! Never!

Sound off-ONE TWO Sound off-THREE FOUR
ONE TWO THREE FOUR ONE TWO-THREE FOUR

Thomas Trone



A FANTASY or was it?

Hi, my name is Irene Brown. The hospital took me from my mother at the age of 15. I talked in my sleep and read novels about my father. Oh, how afraid I was of the green walls and white halls and sassy malls and homely calls. I saw the man and tried to talk but I talked and he kept saying, "Please talk to me." I talked and talked and finally he returned me to the room I'd not seen before because I would not talk to him. mama mama.

They called me Irene Brown. My name's Irene Wilson don't they know that? Don't they see my father when my mother visits me. He's right there with her all the time, right behind the time all right. They took my pretty dress I hated and took my comb. What about my hair is it over there? Then they took my body and hung it up to dry after they shook it out. Oh I'm cold. Long green walls in long green halls.

Next day...

I'm here because I wouldn't clean my room and I'd leave the house without asking to be excused. Age? 15 or 45. I peeked over his writing shoulder. Teen age mel an cho lia "Stop reading over my shoulder!" I only wondered why the green kept my body between the walls. "What's the president's name?" Doesn't he know that? Roosevelt made with felt hanging with a dead smelt, he felt that I should remain on the front ward. What's a ward?

three months later...

They're talking about me again. Why can't they talk to me? I'm here in the full flesh, but not the full blood, they took that from me before this day our daily bread. It's so hard to listen to them. TALK TO ME. The council of witches is praying over my body. It doesn't sound like prayers at all, but Cindy is rocking to the music. Must listen, must try. My mother is a God-fearing woman. Yes she is.

"Do you want to go home?" home? Home? I smiled knowing they'd like that and mumbled something about going home to mother. Almost slipped that time and added father, but I only said mother. They liked that.

I got my comb and pretty dress back. Always hated that dress. See I can understand them now. See I put my dress on. See I combed my hair. See I fixed my bed and washed my face. See I am waiting and waiting and waiting. "Maybe tomorrow," someone said. I'm angry, I can't be mad they'd put me away, but they already did that, didn't they. They put me away, now I could be here to stay, away.

I got my comb and my pretty dress. See I'm still good. Another day, another way to get away. "Your mother's here."

one year later....

"She had been doing so well. We thought she'd be one who could make it." "Yes and working in the factory." "I wonder

what happened?"

I saw father right behind mother and called to him. Papa papa...."You horrid child!" But mama,daddy's right behind you.

"How did she get this bruise?" "Don't know she had it when she returned with her mother."

Green walls with spotted halls these are different malls with the same old balls. My papa was tall. I'm cold because he sold old gold and mold. In the cold.

two weeks and one year later.....

balls in walls awaiting smalls and falls and tall
While I'm waiting death at the chair because I played with the boy next door. I'm waiting the mist to float with in the air. what's that noise? turn Bertha she might know don't cry baby, don't cry baby Irene will be the guide. Into small rooms, peek through the hole. Bertha quit crying.

four weeks and one year later.....

"She saw Bertha receive shock. You know how attached she was to her."

"How'd that happen?"

"Don't know, but she's been like this since."

Been like what they zapped her and she died the pride of the fried then cried and cried inside while trying to hide. They took me inside to be fried. papa why? You knew mother killed me when I was born and you too. Here comes the fog in a grog along the fog bog.

"Hasn't she moved since then?"

"No."

Zip and zap went out the door and zap fell down behind the floor and zip came married inside of them. Turn the lights out!! Can't they turn the lights out so my pride can hide deep inside. I cried. Soft hands on me. Rock of ages rocking me be. Oh my papa, he is, he is so wonderful. Rock a bye baby in hallow small. The mist is sailing the ocean and I am sailing the blood they took from me again. Here I am in flesh minus blood that they drained in the room where Bertha calls. she died you know, she died on the floor and they wheeled her out the door never to be..never more.

Colors dance to music as they talk of war or was it store my head's not there, nevermore. Show my body, see the scars, see the mars,you did this to me now papa won't want me, you did this to me.

"Has she ever been violent before?"

They're moving again around in my head, no one could dress

all white like that. Line up chow time that's a rhyme, chow time, my time to undress and feed me in ugliness they seed me. I'm ugly why haven't they freed me?

five years later.....

"she's moved to the chronics."

Sing a song of six pennied cockets full of father's heavenly skies of night of fright the mightyall murdered me when I was dead.....In the salad we will go off with her head. they cried as she died...to market for a fat hog then the head in the log where my father died a dog....born he swore he'd come again and Christ died for our sails in the sunset. A war inside my head, do they fight outside too? with shades of red and shades of blue Bertha I will visit you.

They ooze the smog and again I eat the food the blood of a god at my feet. Sing a song they sing along and laugh to put chairs away. Someday to pray o'er my father's bed he died when I was born they said. But I'm a virgin birth for he never was to take the bog away. If he came now would he find the war in the hear or care. Bertha's death was gory, the old, old, story of old glory. I walk I talk I pee my pants.

twenty years later.....

The record read, "She died in bed of natural causes."

But I can hear her now between the made-up phrases tell of being the illegitimate child of an illegitimate child and hear her talk of Bertha and her father's visit. I cried when I heard she died when they organized the hospital. I cried for myself and the thoughts of what 'might have been'.

Donna Moyer



The Seventeenth Day of the Month

"Henry. Henry, where are you? What are you up to now, old man? Can't you hear me calling you, Henry? Come here right now. You have three minutes to come here, Henry. In three minutes I'm going to lock the door and go to bed. You can spend the night out here for all I care. I'm giving you fair warning, Henry. Three minutes."

Henry sat on a stump by the creek and listened to the water rush past. Clouds covered most of the stars like the horizon had covered the sun three hours earlier. The house was barely seventy feet away. Henry could have heard his wife calling him if he had wanted to. But this was the night of the seventeenth day of the month, and Henry's mind was preoccupied. This was the night he was going to die.

Five years ago to the day Henry Craig, retired farmer, sixty years of age, had driven into town for his annual check-up with Doc Mays. As usual, Henry was early for his appointment, so he parked his car in front of the doctor's place and walked across the street to the barber shop.

"Howdy, Henry," said Nick Wise, the barber. "Don't tell me Esther's hen-pecked you into getting another haircut already."

"No, Nick," said Henry. "I'm going to see Doc Mays in a little bit, but I'm early. I can't stand waiting rooms or waiting. Thought I'd come and say hello."

"Hey, Henry. How are you?" Charlie Wise, Nick's brother, also a barber, stepped into the shop from the back door.

"That's what I come to find out. I'm going to see Doc Mays in a few minutes."

"Anything special wrong with you, Henry?" Nick asked.

"I just come for a check-up, is all," Henry replied.

"Hey, Henry. You see those flyin' saucers last night?! asked Charlie.

"Flyin' saucers? Last night? Where?"

"Right over town. About ten-thirty it was, wasn't it, Nick?"

Nick nodded yes, trying to conceal the smile which was forming against his will.

"Yeah, about ten-thirty," Charlie continued. "It come up over Sam Nye's farm and landed in one of his cow pastures. Well, I wasn't gonna miss an opportunity like that. I rushed right over there to the pasture to see what those outa space people was gonna do. I stood behind the fence watching, and after a while, two little green things with pointy ears gets out of the saucer. They started giberin' about something. They talked like nothin' I ever heard before. Then they got back in the saucer and took off, for Mars I guess. Quick as a wink, they were gone. What ya think of that, Henry?"

"Weren't you scared?" asked Henry.

"Well, I was a lot bigger than they were."

"Did you tell the sheriff?"

"Oh, ah, of course I did. But, ah, listen, Henry, you understand this is just between you and me. The sheriff doesn't want this story to spread too far. A lot of people might panic if they knew about it."

"I understand, Charlie. Don't worry about me. Henry Craig can keep his mouth shut. Well, I guess I better head over to the Doc. Take it easy, boys. I'm sure gonna look out for those flyin' saucers from now on."

"So long, Henry," Nick called.

"See ya," Charlie added.

As soon as Henry was out the door, the two brothers burst into laughter.

"You sure pulled one over on old Henry," said Nick as his laughter subsided. "That old fool will believe anything you tell him."

Across the street, Henry's examination was moving quickly. Doc Mays went from head to toe with a lot of stops in between. Henry wished the doctor would have made some comments as he went along, but Doc Mays was not much of a talker. He also had a face Henry could not read.

"Well, that ought to do it, Henry," the doctor said finally.

"What's the verdict, Doc?"

"Looks pretty good, Henry. Not bad at all."

"How much more time have I got, Doc?"

"How old are you, Henry?"

"Sixty."

"Sixty. Well now, Henry. Accordin' to a whole bunch of fancy statistics I could show you, the average life expectancy for a man in the U.S. of A. is seventy years. You got ten years yet, Henry, if you're average. And I got no reason to believe you ain't," the doctor said humorously.

Henry did not laugh. He left the doctor's office and drove home. All along the way he kept thinking about what the doctor had told him. He had ten years left. "On the seventeenth day of the month, ten years from now, I'll be dead," Henry thought.

But only two days later, Henry's remaining years were cut in half. He had eaten his dinner and settled into his favorite chair to read the newspaper. Ten minutes later he was rolling on the floor, gasping for air, clutching at, but not reaching the pains in his chest. Esther found Henry and called for an ambulance.

The next thing Henry knew was waking up in a hospital bed with Esther sitting by his side. Doc Mays was standing beside him checking his pulse.

"What happened, Doc?" asked Henry. "Was it my heart?"

"No, it wasn't. You had food poisoning, Henry." Esther stared hard at Doc Mays. "Accidental, of course," the doctor added. "I'm afraid you'll have to throw out your home-canned string beans, Esther. We pumped Henry's stomach, and it appears that's what did it."

"Boy, was I scared, Doc. I thought I was dead."

"Yes, I can imagine you had quite a scare. A scare like that's enough to take five years off a man's life," Doc Mays said, his mouth breaking into a broad grin.

"Five years off a man's life," thought Henry. "That means I've only got five years left now instead of ten."

Those five years had passed now. They were painful years for Henry. He frequently complained of aches and pains, though he had hardly ever been sick the first sixty years of his life.

Henry wanted to see the sun set one more time. He was determined to live through the morning and afternoon so he could watch the sunset. After supper he walked down to the creek and sat on an old tree stump. He watched the sun go down, then sat waiting to die.

The minutes passed slowly for Henry, and this was unbearable to him. "I can't stand waiting," he thought. He got up from the stump and started walking toward the creek.

"Where is that old man?" Esther mumbled as she left the porch and began walking toward Henry's favorite outdoor spot, the tree stump by the creek. "Three minutes or no three minutes," she thought. "He knows I can't lock him outside. Maybe he fell asleep out here. Well, it's a good thing if he did. He's sure looked troubled these past few days."

Esther walked the seventy feet to the creek. It was dark, and she could barely see in front of her. She heard some splashing in the water, but could not see what it was.

"Henry. Henry, is that you?" Esther called.

Henry could have heard her if he had wanted to. But his mind was pre-occupied. He ducked his head under the water.

phil kiefer



