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Au Verso 12

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- Editors

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Essays- Steve Dean & John Squyres

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Cover Design- Sheri Anderson





PRINT: ANTUN TUROK

ONE COLLECTION

(A story that arose in my mind during a discussion in Euclid class;
Can we consider a single object to also be a collection of things?)

Morning appeared outside my window; grey to perfection and full of promises. I wasted no time dressing; searching out my socks from the array at the foot of the bed I headed for the door. A sip of cold coffee from a thermos; two boiled potatoes siezed from the window ledge get slipped into my raincoat pocket. No time to waste, this weather might not continue. I lifted up my satchel to my shoulder and nailed shut the door. Today, I think, I shall go to the park.

But I will explain to you, reader, the purpose of my expedition. I am a collector of a prize that can only be gathered during a certain kind of weather. Bright sunshine simply will not do, nor wind, nor even a steady drizzle. It must be wet without raining; overcast and still.

I collect... Here, let me show you. Do you see those brick buildings lining the other side of the street? Take that one there, behind the railing, covered with moss and ivy... Let us approach it. As I had hoped, the day has done its work. Water hangs from every pointed leaf. Look closer. With cautious observation, each drop is a separate mirror that reflects the world. These fragile scenes, I gather them, preserve them from oblivion.

These particular drops are unexceptional. I have already had enough of aged brick buildings, iron fences, and narrowed ancient streets. But not to be too hasty ... there is material here for demonstration purposes. I will take that one drop that you see hanging at eye-level from the end of the leaf. From here you can see in it the reflection of the red brick house across the street. The freshly painted window trim stands out quite nicely from the brick, shining pristine white like the fine lace curtain inside. There is a cat sitting on the inside sill. Dimly indeed, we can make out the black and white markings, but the gracious motion of its paw is unmistakeable. It is languidly washing its face.

I shall preserve this scene. It belongs in my archive, 'a calico cat framed by bricks'. Now, taking one of my specimen bottles from the rows lining my satchel, I carefully uncork the bottle and, using these tweezers here in my hand, I guide the drop through the narrow neck into the jar. It runs down the side of the bottle and lies there, glistening, at the bottom. Now the jar has been corked; now the scene has been captured inside. I replace the bottle in its case.

Back on the street, moving towards the park... By this time of morning the traffic is beginning to disappear from the streets. All the world but I is settling into place at factory lines and office desks. Only I escape, intent upon my mission.

This low stone wall will lead us to the entrance of the park. Brisk, business-like, I round the corner and approach the gate. No one has entered yet today. The heavy iron lattice is set on heavy rollers. As I push it across the track it groans slightly, tiredly, but still it does not bar my entrance.

The park has become neglected in recent years. There are still the remains of magnificent rose bushes and splendid iris, but the grass grows between the cracks in the stone walks. On Sunday afternoons and holidays the grass is flattened by the corpulent bulks of picnickers. They corrode the air with their chatter. I do not come here then. But this morning the park is mine.

I had neglected to come here while the roses were still in bloom. A pity... by now most of the bushes have relinquished all their petals. A few final blossoms still linger on but the scent that elsewhere fills the air has fled. I catch one drop that is sliding down a blade of grass, and then a few other scenes which I shall, perhaps, later discard... I drift down the path.

But here I may find a treasure worth possessing... Yes, I am sure of it. The fountain stands at the very center of the park. All of the paths commence from this spot where I am standing. Looking up I observe the bronze figure of the winged Mercury, captured in midflight. Water ripples from the basin at his feet. There is a single, pendulous drop suspended on all sides by air, it is an inverse peninsula, within which I can see the numerous pathways of the park, radiating from the basin at his feet. A prize indeed!

The outer edge of the fountain is broad enough to sit upon and I climb up on it without difficulty. But the second tier is another matter entirely; it is green with mold from the water that occasionally spills over it. Placing one foot on it gingerly I edge myself up within reach of the statue, specimen bottle in hand.

"Hey, watch it! You're about to fall!"

I turn around, trying to maintain my balance and my dignity. A young couple has approached me unawares. Their arms about each others waists, they stare up at me with good-natured curiosity.

"What are you up to anyhow?"

I try to justify my climb, knowing full well how ridiculous I must appear to them. "I am a scientist. I have need to gather pond water for experiments. It is necessary to do these things myself, you know, it being hard to find competent assistants in days like these..."

I can feel that they do not believe me. They are continuing to stare at me. I make a furtive swipe at the drop on Mercury's nose, capture it, and jump to the ground, evading the well-intentioned hand that the fellow offers me. I smooth my wrinkled raincoat with my hands. I have been unduly interrupted and have lost all pleasure in my work. It is time for me to leave.

I brusquely thank them for their concern and watch them turn to go. I can feel their amusement at my behavior fading into indifference as they disappear down the path.

I will do no more collecting for this day. But I have not done too badly... a few trifles, a scene or two worth preserving, and one excellent specimen that was certainly worth the trouble and embarrassment that it occasioned. I walk home slowly, thinking of a hot bath and tea.

At home, refreshed and settled, I pick up my shoulder bag and carry it to my desk. I empty the bag out on the desk and turn on the lamp; take the large collecting jar down off the shelf and add my new specimens to it.

I hold the jar up to the light and stare at what is inside.

--Ann Worth

WATER-FIRE-AIR-EARTH-VOID

Birth by WATER always, liquid love:
You have seen ocean moving, tides and waves
That crest at breaking and are air, cloud-foam,
Then drops, whole-seeking rounds, hungry each
For the next, quick-silver joined; from space
How green all globe into an earth sun-glanced,
A bay at evening, where the level rays
Pierce amber through the waves and make them glow;
So love refracts in your translucent mold
And turns its ash, breath, moisture into fire.

The cosmic masses are not earth but FIRE, kindled
In void, space-crystals gone to liquid, vapor, heat;
Until the mass-plunge is stayed, a stilled fire --

Plus and minus balanced into dance, dandled
In passion, as the groove and spool of rutting tame
The Deirdre flame: loins for all asplay, the red lance

Reared for all: as I with you, you whet with me
The craze of flesh, lust-gorging ways --
Dandled at the faithful hearth of play.

Stilled almost to the ambience of AIR,
Almost beyond its nature

As clouds at sunset,
Even of thunder, fold to the light

Rapt limbs of pleasure
Wind-caressed, or water laves a shore

Or thought pervades the limestone of a land
Held in all its breathings, sight and sound.

What is this EARTH-concretion Dante spread, a last
Periphery round the point of fire, as basalt crusts
On lava, salt from seas? Genesis could only risk
Fall by freedom, nature the destruct of quest,
As Leonardo in a mottled wall, we trace in schist
The stilled orogeny of every earth.

Maelstroms of light, black holes, star-sinks in space:
VOID only chambers the death-birth of all;
Fire, air, earth and water, act and word
Mirage from the zero-flexings of that void:
Love knows its calm and aching paradox as God.

-- Charles Bell

TALES FROM A MOUNTAIN DAY

Soft velvet morning
Frost lies asleep as it comes
Gray now, a bird sings.

White bark shakes the air
Golden noise intrudes the blue
As Fall she comes, fair.

Darkness drifts uphill
Inciting leaves to whisper
Then the night comes, still.

The stars sing above
A flute answers, harmony
Three parts now, a dove.

-Robert Ray

STORM

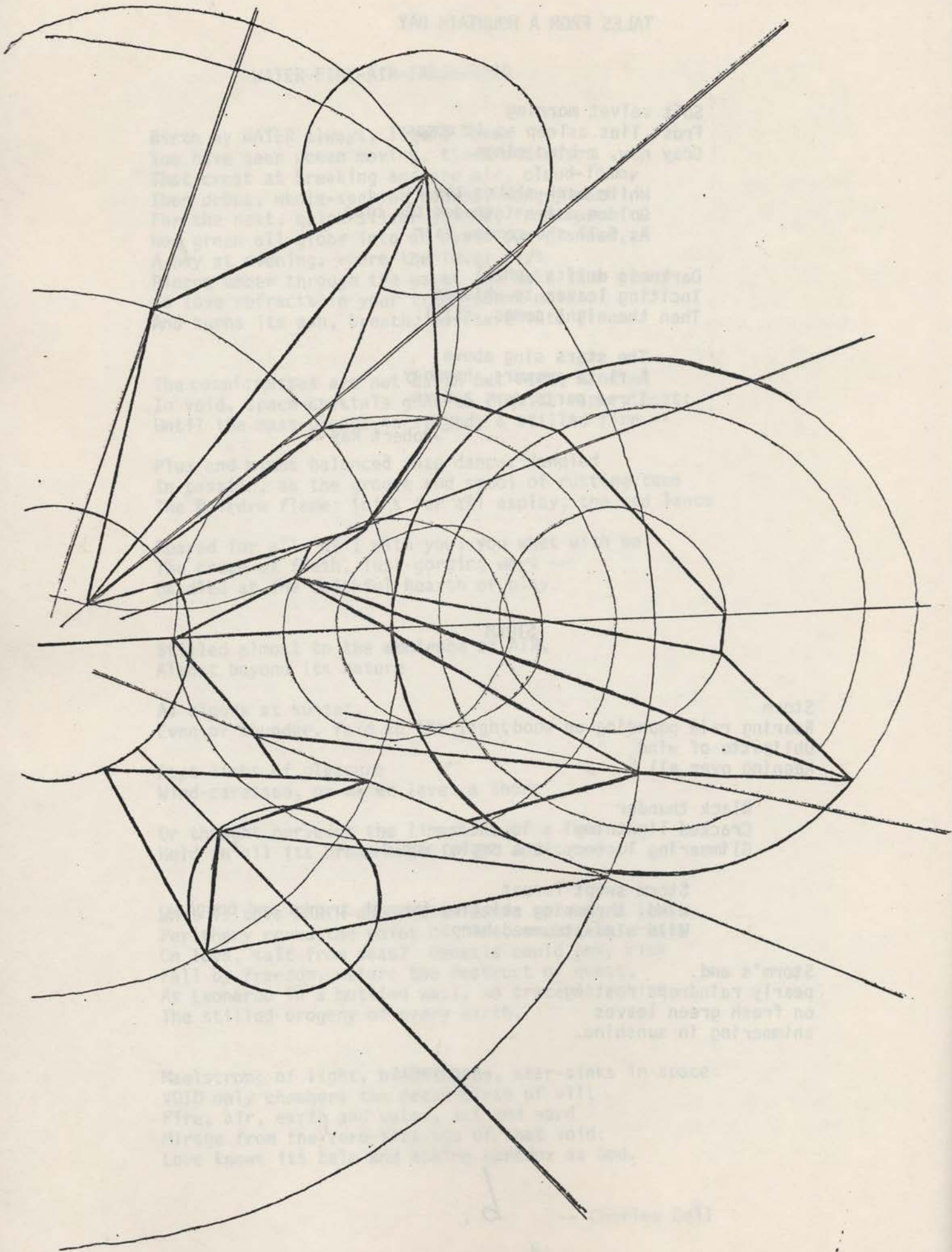
Storm
Roaring rain pounding on wood,
Obligatto of wind
Keening over all

Black thunder
Cracked lightning
Glimmering lucency in a raging world.

Storm swept forest
Wind, thrumming skirling through trunks and boughs
Wild wind-strummed harp.

Storm's end.
pearly raindrops resting
on fresh green leaves
shimmering in sunshine.

-Anonymous



FROM THE MOUNTAIN

Burning-browed carpenter
Drifts down to muted murmers
With velvet-covered hammers in his hands.

Breathing ark to singing breakers
Hangs above the shifting strand
And sees the snaking fakirs,
Below the ledge he stands.

Breaking rage portended,
Mass'd wondring eyes suspended,
Abandoned gifts have lifted,
Block out the light of love.

Cracking thunder crashes as
Against the rock he smashes
Dishonoured tools and dreams
Of something up above.

-McCollaum

THE CIRCULAR CROW

Black body
against the sky
soaring in circular motion,
spiraling slowly,
ever upward as the unending orbit
takes him toward the setting sun.

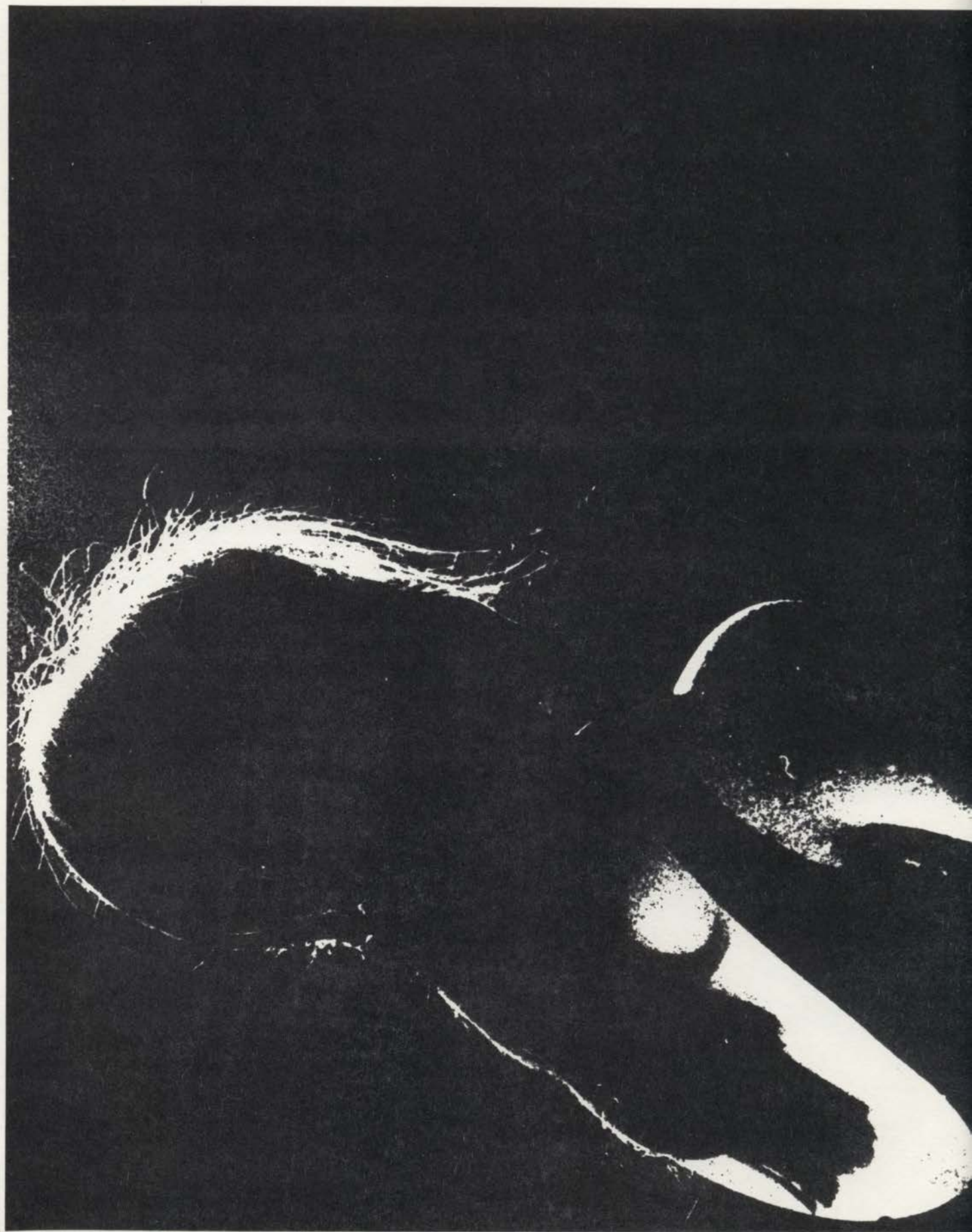
Flash!

Blinding light, reflected,
the body shines white.
But turning,
ever turning, searching,
he returns.
Back again.
Black again.
Yet
Higher, nearer...what?

He will never know.
for the earthegg below
has a persistent call

and his wings tire.

-Kathie Goff



POEM FOR AN ARTIST ON HER BIRTHDAY:

Your images prevail in everything;
there is no way you can escape their call,
and each glimpse shows that more are gathering.
But you've a rising talent to forestall
their press, and join you radiant with them all.
Its rise, their press, though, won't leave you content
till you succeed to (painter's sacrament!)
the microcosm brush and paint invoke
in the best work, or (talent's last ascent)
the Tao revealed within a single stroke.

Their budscales fled,
these days rejoice in springing from the drear;
if now your past is shed,
celebrate the turning of the year!

Your challenge is to make the paints obey
not personality, the past's caprice,
but you as you are shown in strict assay.
The strains of imagery pushed to release
can show this you to you and make your peace.
Your images may wring, then, cry and shove;
you'll climb free to command them from above.
--The moment now suggests a primal wring:
Take up your brush and paint a portrait of
the artist as a landscape in the spring.

Their budscales fled,
these days rejoice in springing from the drear;
if now your past is shed,
celebrate the turning of the year!

You want to dance, to curve in fluent form,
to be an egret joining water and air
in single stride, or gliding on a warm
exalting curve and pulse. The ripples where
an egret lightly steps catch sun and flare,
and brilliant sun glows white upon her breast,
submitting all its light to her behest.
--All of her light already serves your eye
her blood, her rhythm pulses through your chest;
her wings are yours, and tender you the sky.

Their budscales fled,
these days rejoice in springing from the drear;
if now the past is shed,
celebrate the turning of the year!

You've never asked for but you must accept
your beauty. Recognize it as a screen,
a surface bloom that spreads to intercept
a gaze before it seeks what's never seen.
But o, those lilies, floating leaf and sheen!
Monet was not bedazzled, but pursued
the moment joining him to what he hues.
--You too've this mean to join you to your skin,
to make the bloom reflect what can't be viewed,
to root perennial lilies firm within.

Their budscales fled,
these days rejoice in springing from the drear;
if now your past is shed,
celebrate the turning of the year!

You ask a womanhood uniquely yours.
That fluid notion, "woman," trickles free
from any attempted grasp, and forms new shores
that show in turn what its new form will be.
You've called its shape "a grace, a dignity:"
the grace of flowering reeds at waterside,
the dignity of a pool and egret's stride.
--A womanhood is pooling now in you;
an egret lights there from her curving glide,
and near its shores the reedbuds burst anew.

Their budscales fled,
these days rejoice in springing from the drear;
if now your past is shed,
celebrate the turning of the year!

-A. R.

ONCE, AND AGAIN

I remember you,
my beautiful friend.
I see you again
reflected in your poetry.
I am invited by you to look
deeply into this mirror.
which now begins to reflect
a face different from your own.
It is our face.
And, I remember the love,
and vision we shared.

Didn't we once have a dream?
...Our fingers were laced
and we watched for stars
in a cloudy afternoon sky.

On our laps lay
two red roses each.
Naked, we'd caught them
in a neighbor's garden,
treasures which would
never be ours...

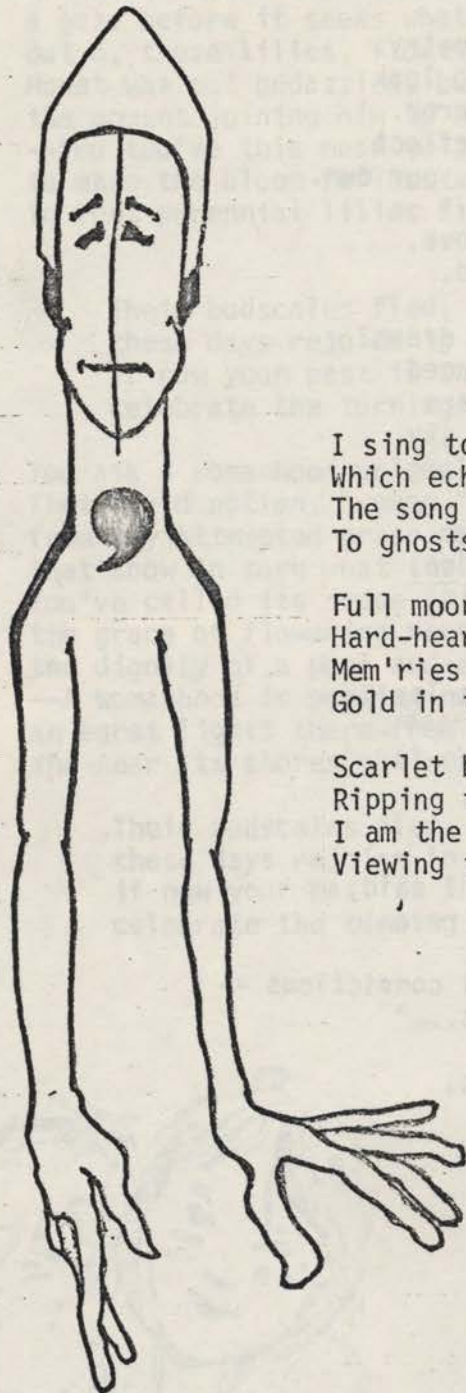
It rained,
and our cool fingers lay
locked in the wet grass.
You said, "Imperfection is
a part of beauty."
"Yes" I said.

The roses laughed.
"The joke's on us," I said,
"Our imperfections reveal
our lifelong truths,
fiery, pure, eternal convictions --
our lovely frailties..."

"Yes" you said.
"We understand nothing,
we can not speak,
let us sing."

-E. Pollard





I sing to myself this song of bleakness
Which echoes and echoes in this closed room
The song I sing no voice but mine whispers
To ghosts not distant, but so far away.

Full moons and darkness reaping their chill, of
Hard-hearted madness when no one is there
Mem'ries through mist, gleam with that touch of love
Gold in the blackness, but imbedded in ice.

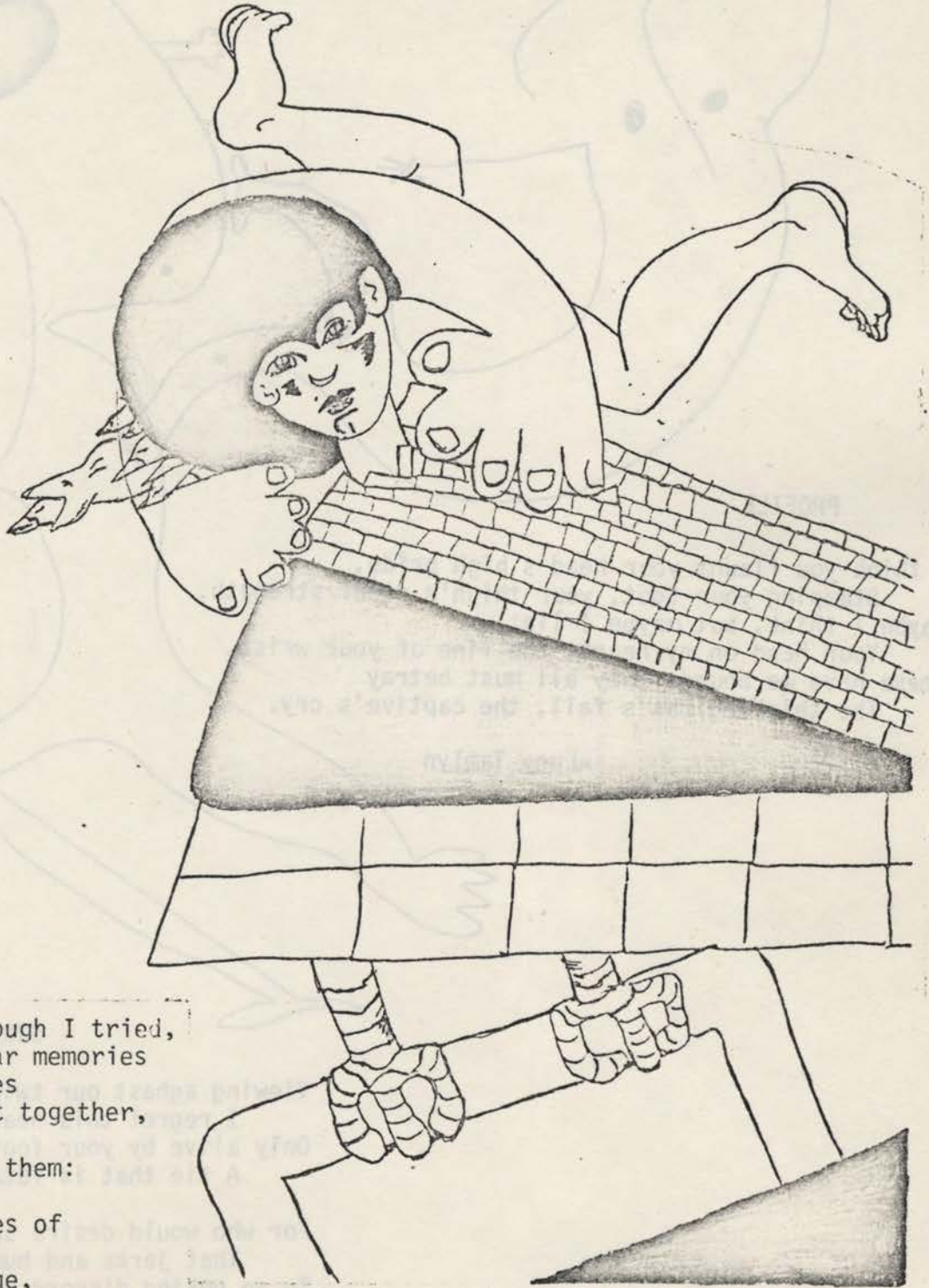
Scarlet bouquets torn from the face of love
Ripping the mask from the sad mimist's face.
I am the player, while on the stage above
Viewing the stage from a seat well below.

-Sue Friedman

You went, but I sought you,
who breathed on my soul
burning up with desire

Eros shook my heart
like the wind bursting into a tree on a mountain

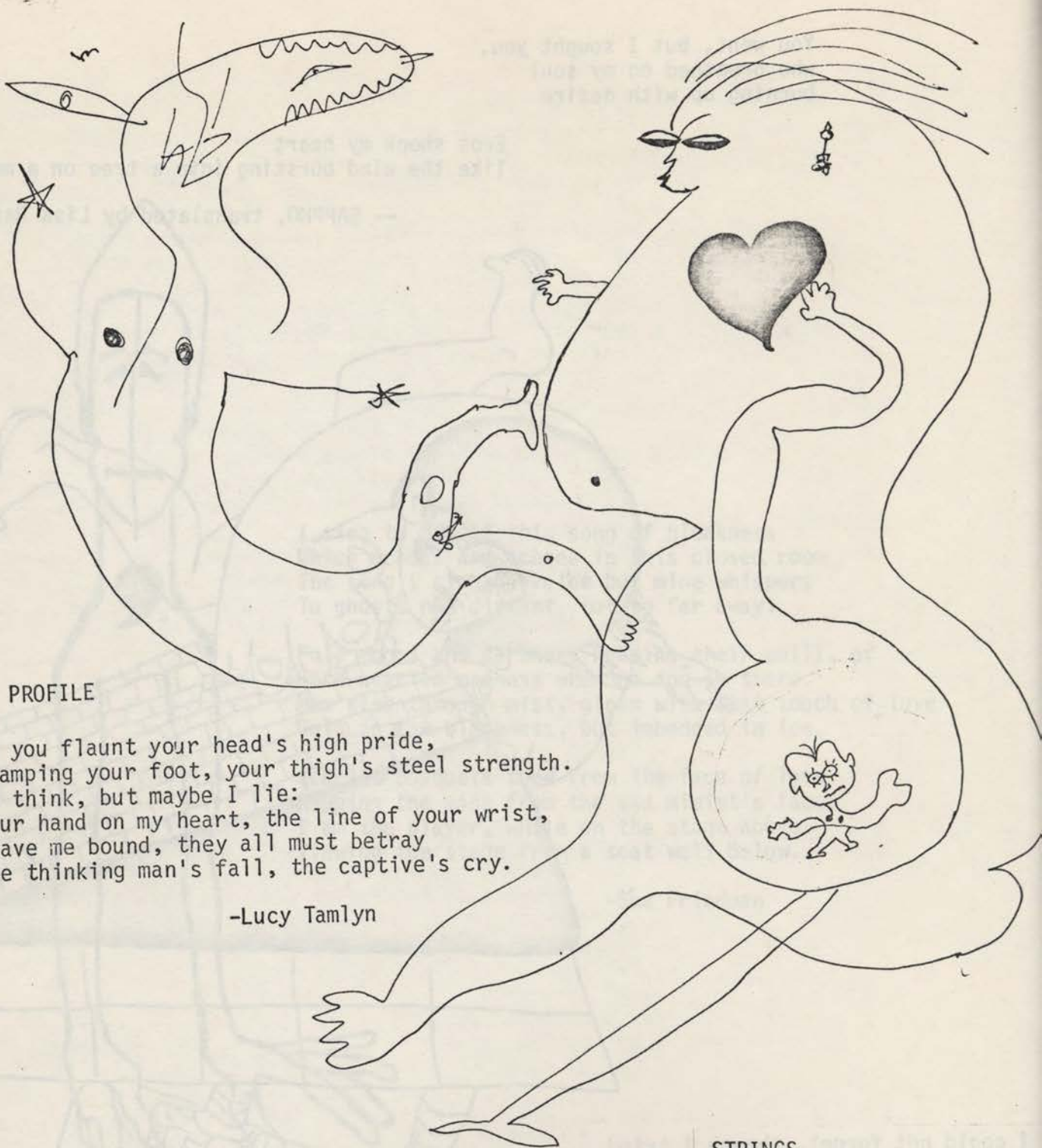
-- SAPPHO, translated by Lisa Rappoport



I could not forget, though I tried,
the hard hidden muscular memories
in my flesh and my bones
of bodies pressed tight together,
skin squeaking.
Nerves safely harbored them:
a kiss released them,
to plague me like droves of
insects stinging.
My body's sure knowledge,
mind-independent,
is a memory-more-insistent-fantasy
than any daydream imagined.

Liz Pollard

-Judy Kistler



PROFILE

I think you flaunt your head's high pride,
 Stamping your foot, your thigh's steel strength.
 Maybe I think, but maybe I lie:
 Your hand on my heart, the line of your wrist,
 These have me bound, they all must betray
 The thinking man's fall, the captive's cry.

-Lucy Tamlyn

STRINGS

Viewing aghast our twining attachment,
 I regret this heart whose beats are bound
 Only alive by your footstep's prediction,
 A tie that is fatal: life by that sound.

For who would desire such stringed up thought,
 That jerks and hums to tunes imagined?
 To an unkind discord now led docile,
 I breathe for you, a sad puppet fashioned

-Lucy Tamlyn



LAMENT NO. 3

A headless statue haunts us still,
We, who danced when it could see.
Our hands bear unstrung mandolins
And withered garlands crown us yet.
Love built our idol in the dark
And in its eyes we had a sun.
When love smashed her own talisman,
The crippled dancers limped away.
In separate caves we dressed our wounds;
The broken gestures did not heal.
Shattered laughter stuck in throats,
Shards of hymns slashed grieving tongues.
We hid our battered feet in boots
And bound our bloody hair in scarves.
Our naked bodies, torn and bruised,
We covered with coarsest cloth.
We stopped our ears to pagan songs
And veiled our flattened, madmen's eyes.
The world then led us from our caves
To hobble through its sterile waltz,
And if we met, we only danced
As weapons quiver, thrust in flesh.
Why did love's shining god deceive?
Does love hate love as much as this?
Why sacrifice herself and us
when all our praises were for her?
Does Love expect us to forget
That we forgot all else for her?
For though love shut her eyes in rage
And uncreated all her art,
A headless statue haunts us still,
We, who danced when it could see.

-Carol Highsaw

THREE SONNETS

1. I ask you how I'd give myself as gift.
I fear, all bared, I'd be bare feet in snow
or find I've stirred your blizzard winds to blow
and bury me beneath their angry drift.

My presents, then, have been mere splits of thrift,
the osiers harvested within my slow
and roily stream of thoughts. I cut, and bow,
and plait, and offer them to you in shift;

and rightly you refuse both them and me.
I can't myself reveal that all you see
's the basketweave of days that hides my light.

But look: the accepting breeze descends to scud
the marshland where a heron hunts in mud;
the heron, trusting, gives himself to flight.

2. The world becomes transfigured through my tear
pendent on elmtwig over streams of pain;
all colors that I see become a stain
dissolving all my finery into fear,

till I, myself a teardrop, at your jeer
am flung from those small hopes that still remain
to me of you, those twigs so hard to attain,
and I am lost in sorrow's strong career.

But you persist in immobility:
securely rooted in yourself, you free
your scattering glances, elmseeds on the wind;

they sprout in those of us who melt, and we
must carry them downstream into that sea
of fear and pain that can no way be thinned.

3. The bark, the leaves, the twigs' and branches' bend,
the scattering seeds are all I note when I
regard your stand. And is there more? I try,
and always fail, myself my view to extend.

Regarding other humans, I depend
for insight on the dim-lit move, descry
as in night windows gestures without why,
as a voyeur who does not comprehend.

But when you sit beside me and disclose
the storm that through your upward growth now blows
you imply a light to overtop all eaves:

however dark you've been to me, or are,
I raise my eyes toward you and glimpse your star
revealed at instants through the wind-tossed leaves.

-A. R.

They say horseman, soldiers, they say a fleet of
Ships, they say are fair, most of all in this black
Earth; but I say that which a man desires in
Love is the most fair.

This is all so easy to make so clear to
All: for she, in beauty though far surpassing
Other mortals, beautiful Helen, went then,
Leaving her husband,

Leaving that most noble of men, and sailed to
Troy; and neither child not beloved parents
Kept she then in memory, lead away by...

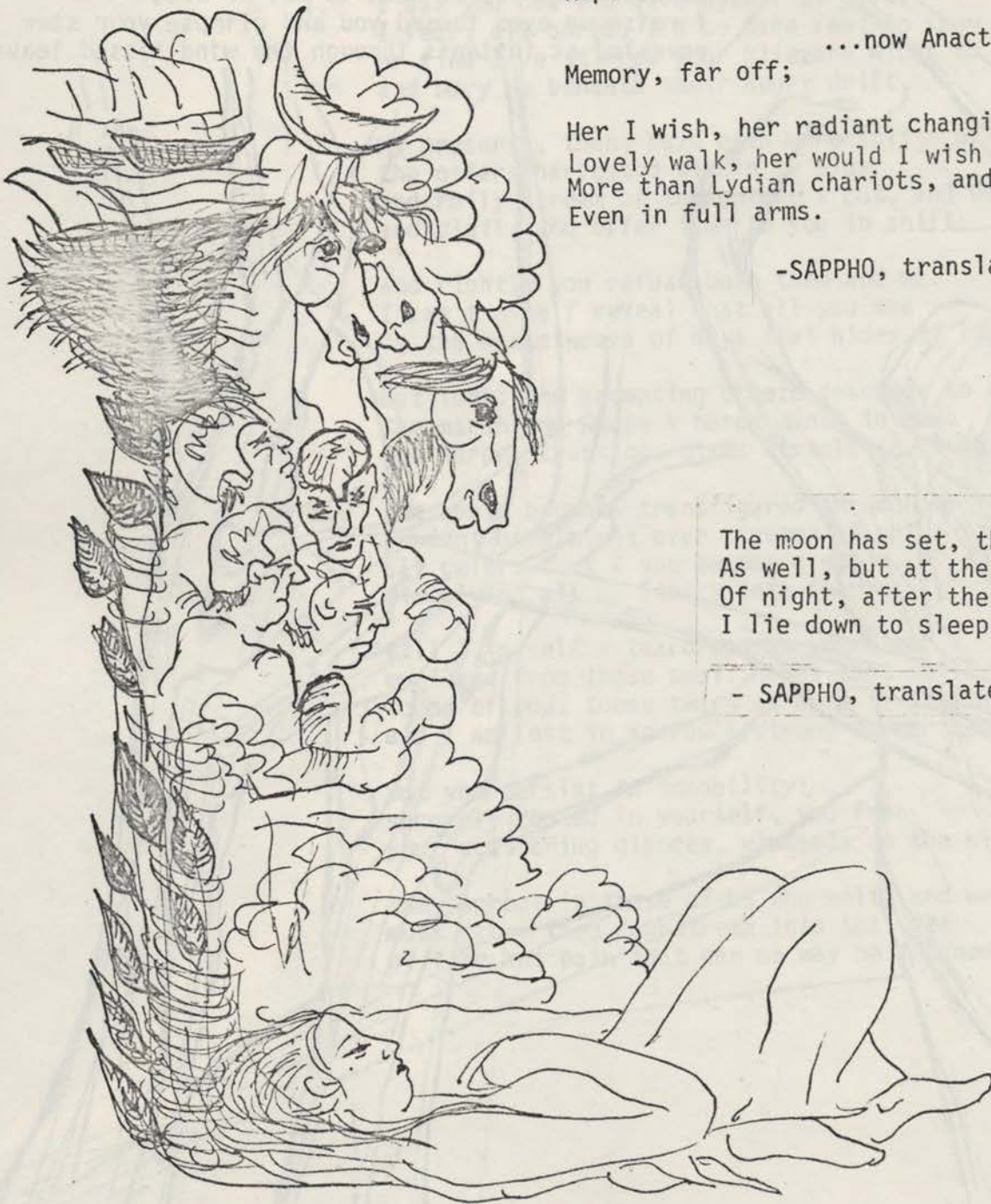
...now Anactoria comes to
Memory, far off;

Her I wish, her radiant changing face, her
Lovely walk, her would I wish to see more,
More than Lydian chariots, and soldiers fighting
Even in full arms.

-SAPPHO, translated by M. Robinson

The moon has set, the Pleiades
As well, but at the middle watch
Of night, after the prime has passed,
I lie down to sleep, alone.

- SAPPHO, translated by Lisa Rappoport



Liz Pollard

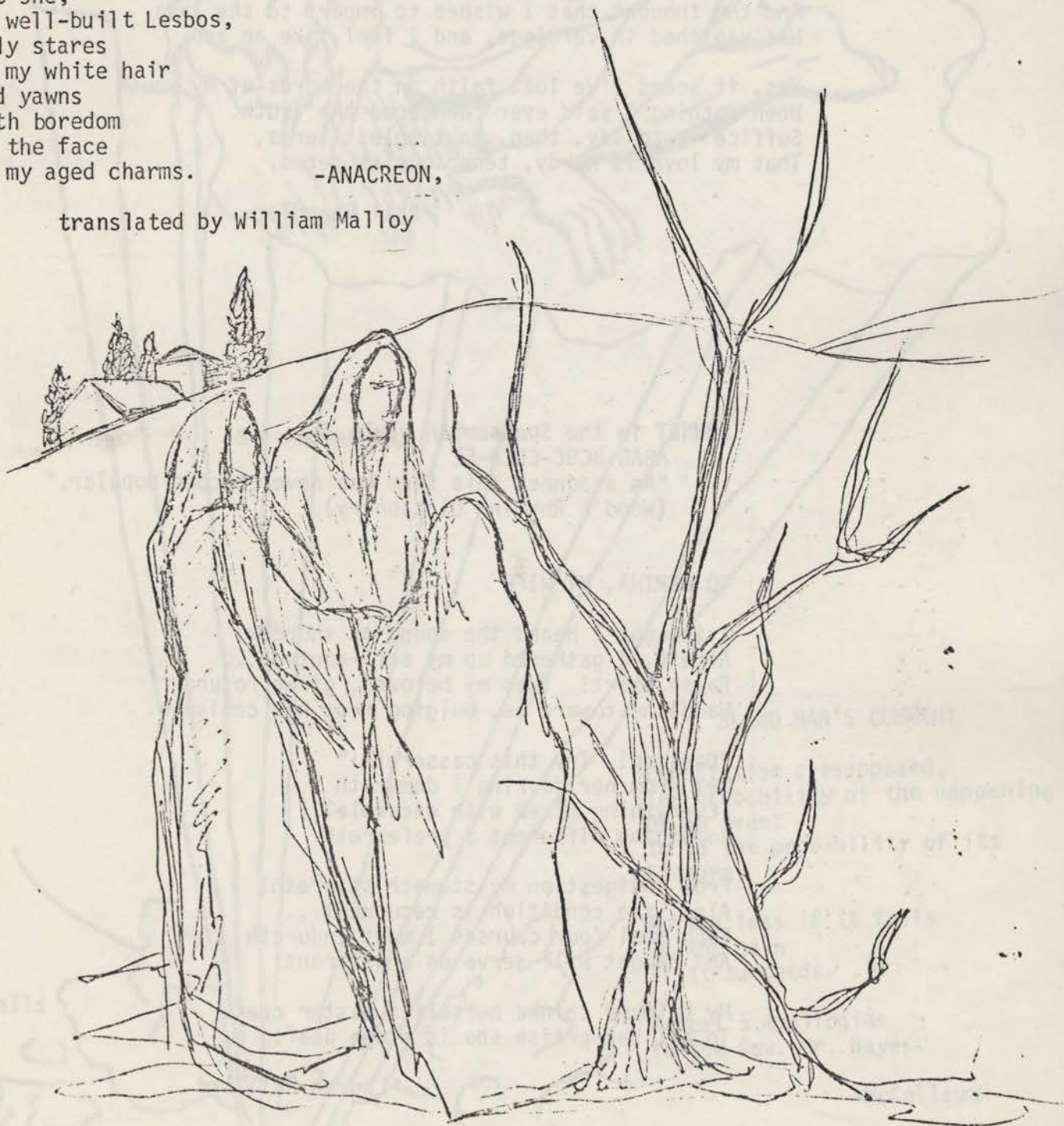
Odysseus, washed ashore . . .

Eros of the golden hair
is shooting his purple
passion-darts at me
once again,
urging me
to invite
a young maiden
of many-colored sandals
to join in sport.

But she,
of well-built Lesbos,
only stares
at my white hair
and yawns
with boredom
in the face
of my aged charms.

-ANACREON,

translated by William Malloy



MY LAST LOVE POEM

Well, it's been many years since I've tried to write rhymes
To a flashing-eyed maiden whose voice is like chimes
And I think perhaps this will be the last time
When my pen dribbles love-balm in anapest lines.

The trouble with words is they hide what I mean:
I think I've found mirrors, but I only have screens.
And the thought that I wished to impart to the lass
Has vanished in verbiage, and I feel like an ass.

Yes, it seems I've lost faith in the words of my youth
When nothing I said ever 'dangered the truth.
Suffice it to say, then, in simplest terms,
That my love is hardy, tenacious as germs.

-Phil Chandler

SONNET in the Spenserian style

ABAB-BCBC-CDCD-EE

"As a sonnet this form has never become popular."
(Wood's Rhyming Dictionary)

TO BERTHA, MY WIFE

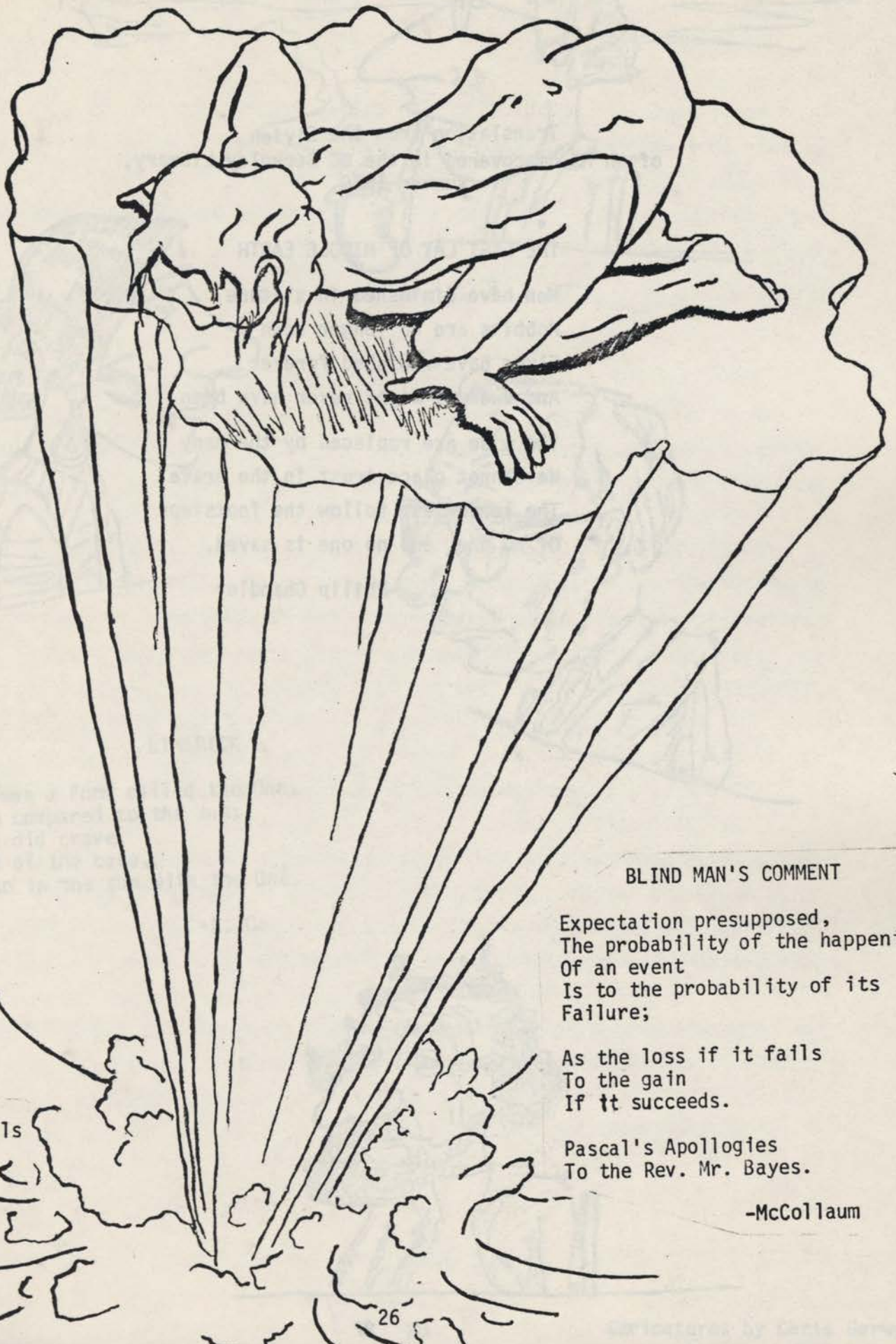
I thought I heard the sound of thunder!
Afraid, I gathered up my self-control...
False start! Twas my beloved, grown rotunder
Waddling toward me, bulging from her camisole.

"Darling! Try this casserole!"
But from her cooking I demureth
(Everything mixed with escarole?!)
Something different I preferreth

From indigestion my stomach stirreth!
Alas, the condition is recurrent...
Each meal four courses I must endureth
And naught will serve as a deterrent:

My beloved thinks herself a master chef,
To all but praise she is stone deaf.

-Lauren Baillard



BLIND MAN'S COMMENT

Expectation presupposed,
The probability of the happening
Of an event
Is to the probability of its
Failure;

As the loss if it fails
To the gain
If it succeeds.

Pascal's Apologies
To the Rev. Mr. Bayes.

-McCollaum

Dean McFalls

Translation from the Elvish
of an MS discovered in the UC Berkeley Library,
summer 1970

THE LAST LAY OF MIDDLE EARTH

Men have diminished in stature
Hobbits are no longer seen
Elves have vanished forever
And dwarves might never have been.

The wise are replaced by the many
We cannot place trust in the brave
The leaderless follow the footsteps
Of no one, and no one is saved.

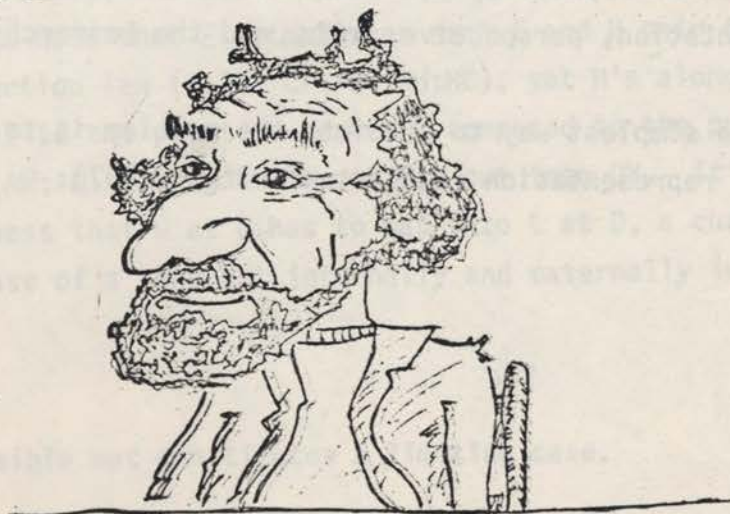
-Philip Chandler



LIMERICK

There once was a form called the One,
Which Plato compared to the sun;
And then he did crave,
We come out of the cave,
And have fun in the sun with the One.

-C. C.



Conic sections are not generally called figures, though the circle is usually so denoted; nevertheless a tendency to speak of an inside and an outside, a within and a without, for conic sections is understandable. However, an illusion may arise thereby, that is not altogether unrelated to this familiar figure:

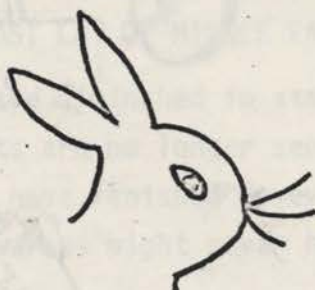


FIG. I.

Such illusions have been erroneously called "misperceptions" but that's another story...I'll return to conic sections.

In Apollonius Book I, Propositions 15-16, the Second Definitions, and Propositions 30, 34, 38 (39, 40, 41), 57, 60 point to an interesting illusion involving the hyperbola and the ellipse: the "outside" of the hyperbola has the logos, though perhaps not the appearance, of an hyperbola or an ellipse. The logos is most succinctly given in Ap. I.38:

<u>hyperbola (within)</u>	<u>hyperbola (without)</u>
1) $AG^2 = LG, GM$	1) $GC^2 = FG, GH$
2) $EM^2:LM, MG::upright:transverse$	2) $EH^2:FH, HG::transverse:upright$
3) $BM:MA::BL:LA$	3) $CF:FD::DH:HC$

This problem has more than ordinary relevance for mathematics, insofar as it is an invitation to projective geometry (which is sometimes explored in Senior Math), and for philosophy, insofar as it stirs up questions about definition, representation, perspective, logos, and the hierarchy of same.

The simplest way to get into the problem is to explore the range of I.38 through representation (consistent with p. 647):

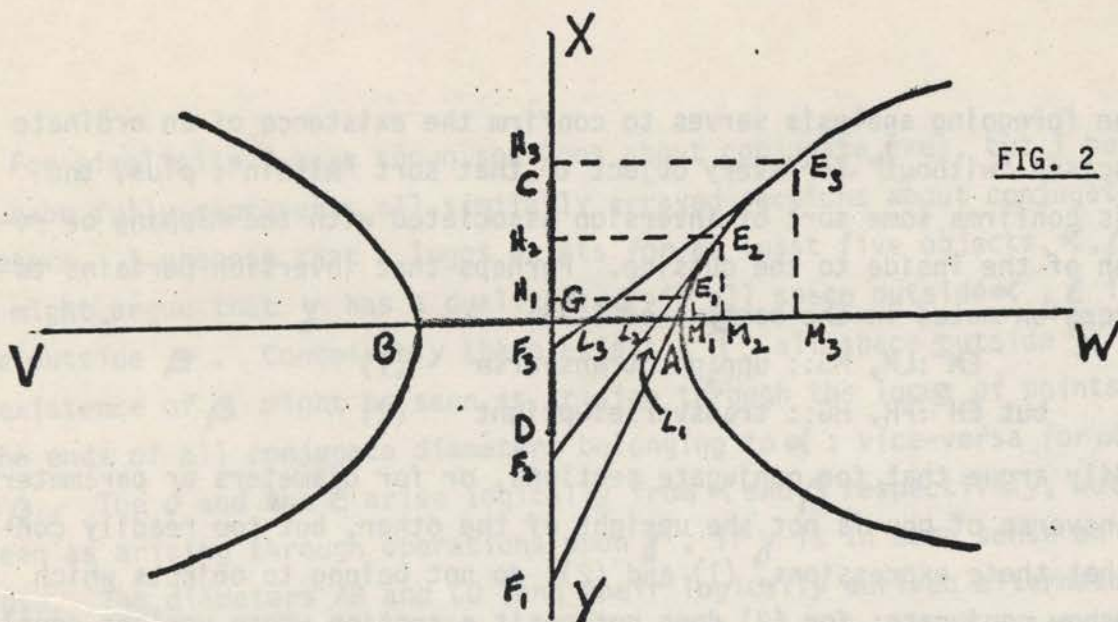


FIG. 2

Patently, the logos of the hyperbola-without (I.38) governs all space outside the hyperbola - regarding any EH to be as bona fide an ordinate as any EM - hence it is not simply the logos of the finite ellipse that may be drawn through A, C, B and D (I.57, 58) nor is it simply the logos of the conjugate hyperbola with vertices C and D (drawn by permission of I.60). There are logoi for these beasts, to be discussed below. I.38 speaks of an additional thing. Further considerations of range, using supplementary representations, reveal: 1) an E can be taken for any place on the section except the vertex, in this case A^{*}; 2) F approaches, in the manner of Zeno's Frog, G, such that EG is the asymptote, tangent to the section at E infinity; 3) for every E there is an M, H, L and F. This latter revelation is not prosaic: for instance, E establishes each L and M pair in a lawful way - the law is the harmonic relation from one perspective, the conic section and its tangent from another perspective - and one can, without a blush, state that each M along AW gets "mapped" onto AG as an L. There is a paradoxical aspect to this mapping, since AG is of finite magnitude, AW of infinite magnitude (M at infinity maps into L at G, zero), and such a paradox is acutely addressed by Galileo and can wait. Next note that E establishes each F and H pair through the same harmonic-conic section law (I.38: CF:FD::DH:HC), yet H's along CX map into GD which is distal to the putative vertex C compared to the proximate posture of AG relative to AW; H's along CG map as F's out into DY. It's a good, if not necessary, guess that H at C has to map into L at D, a curious, singular and degenerate case of a line cut internally and externally in an harmonic fashion.

*Actually, this is permissible but constitutes a limiting case.

The foregoing analysis serves to confirm the existence of an ordinate and abscissa "without" for every object of that sort "within"; plus, the analysis confirms some sort of inversion associated with the mapping or reflection of the inside to the outside. Perhaps that inversion pertains to the inversion noted in the context of I.38:

$$EM^2:LM, MG:: \text{upright:transverse} \quad (1)$$

$$\text{but } EH^2:FH, HG:: \text{transverse:upright} \quad (2)$$

We readily argue that for conjugate sections, or for diameters or parameters, the transverse of one is not the upright of the other, but too readily conclude that these expressions, (1) and (2), do not belong to objects which are somehow conjugate; for (2) does not posit a section whose upright equals the transverse of (1), but only whose upright to transverse ratio equals the transverse to upright ratio of (1). This happens to be true for all relations which have thus far been termed conjugate (recalling Def. 11 and letting t = transverse, c = conjugate diameter, u = upright or parameter):

$$t_1:c_1::c_1:u_1 \text{ and } t_2:c_2::c_2:u_2$$

In general, and for the conjugate case $t_1 = c_2$ and $t_2 = c_1$, hence $c_1:t_1::u_1:c_1::c_2:u_2$ and $\underline{u_1:t_1::t_2:u_2}$ (3)

Statements (1) and (2) in light of statement (3) do not betray an inversion after all, but rather a well-mannered conjugate relation that also exists between statement (1) and its conjugate hyperbola (I.60) and between statement (1) and the finite ellipse that shares the diameters, vertices and parameters of the conjugate hyperbolae. It is time to summarize.

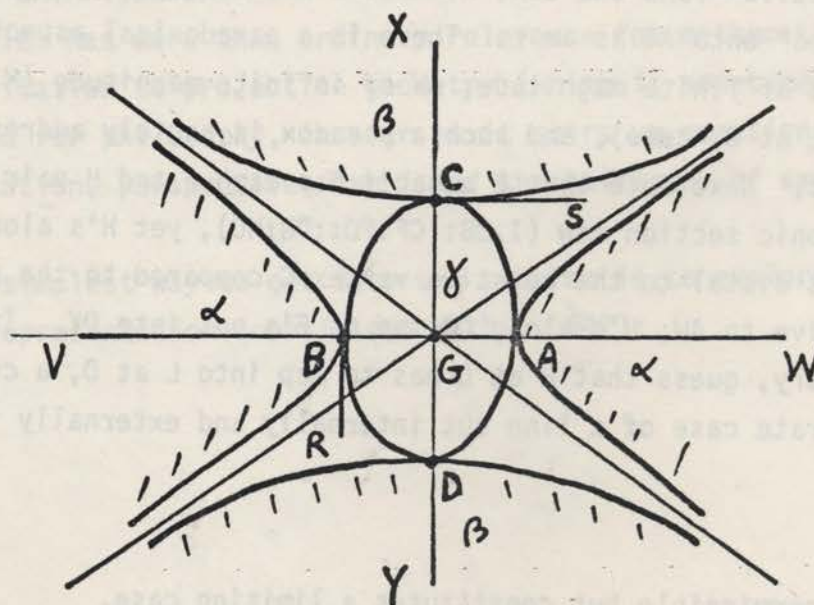
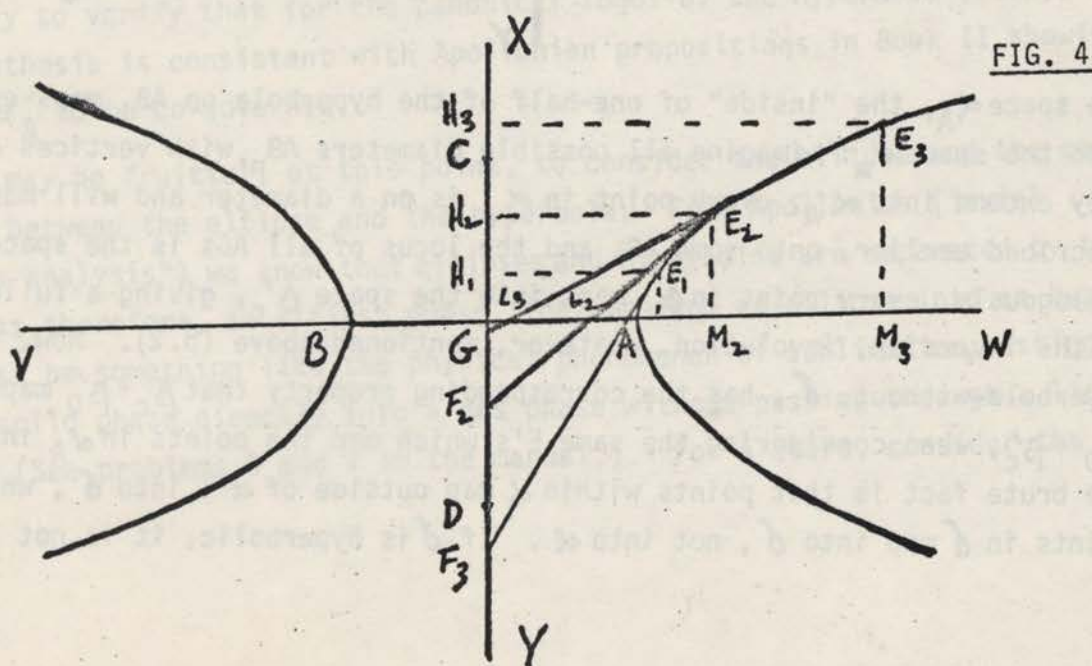


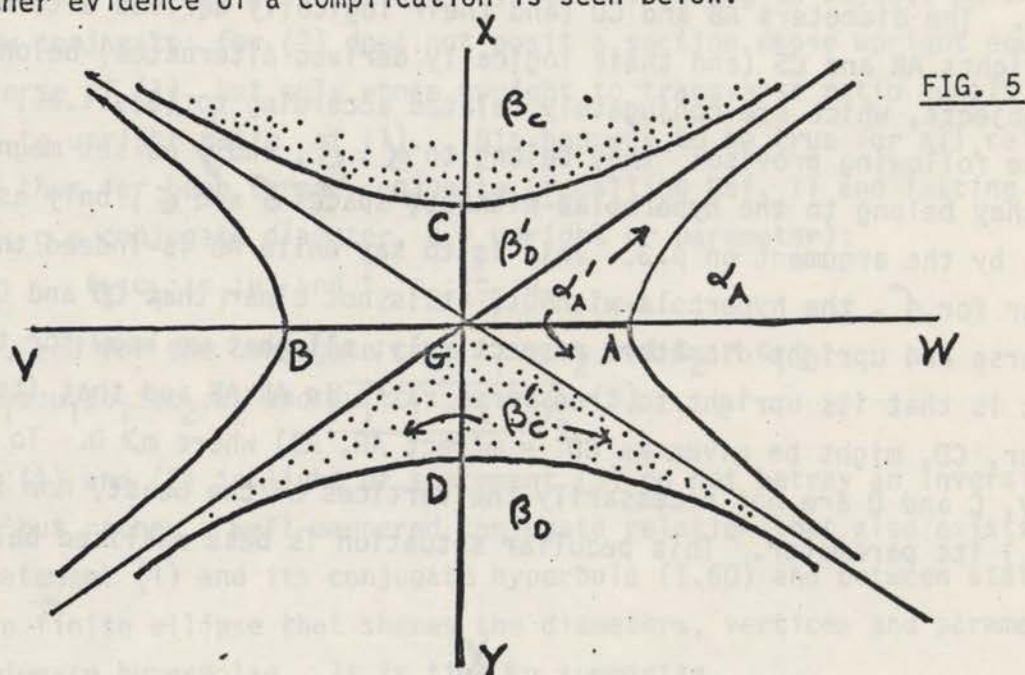
FIG. 3

For simplicity I have shown sections about conjugate axes, but I believe this case fully represents all similarly arrayed sections about conjugate diameters. I propose that a logos exists for at least five objects, $\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta, \epsilon$ (one might argue that γ has a duality); δ is all space outside α , ϵ is all space outside β . Conceivably there exists a \int all space outside γ . The existence of β might be seen as arising through the locus of points defined by the ends of all conjugate diameters belonging to α ; vice-versa for α arising from β . The δ and the ϵ arise logically from α and β respectively, but might be seen as arising through operations upon γ , if γ is in some sense an infinite ellipse. The diameters AB and CD (and their logically derived alternates) and the uprights AR and CS (and their logically derived alternates) belong to all these objects, which are conjugately related according to (3), i.e., $u_1:t_1::t_2:u_2$, with the following proviso: they belong to α, β , and γ as set magnitudes while they belong to the hyperbolae-without, spaces δ and ϵ , only as members of ratios, by the argument on p.3. This is to say while AB is indeed the conjugate diameter for δ , the hyperbola-without, it is not clear that CD and CS are the transverse and upright diameters respectively; all that we know for the hyperbola-without is that its upright to transverse ratio is AR:AB and that its transverse diameter, CD, might be given as $CD^2 = m(\text{rect AR, AB})$ where $m > 0$. To put it bluntly, C and D are not necessarily the vertices of the beast, nor is AR (in the case δ) its parameter. This peculiar situation is best realized below:



E directs the mapping of all points along AW onto AG while it directs the mapping of all points along CX plus CG onto GD and DY respectively. This is to say that the logos for the hyperbola-without has a greater, or at least different, range outside the section compared to what happens inside. The points C and D are significant, because of the singularity mentioned on p.2, but they are not, per se, vertices for the hyperbola-without. This fact bears upon any attempt to apply canonical criteria (I.12, 13) to the space...section...figure that is the space δ . The magnitudes of the transverse and upright for the object are not given; only their ratio is given.

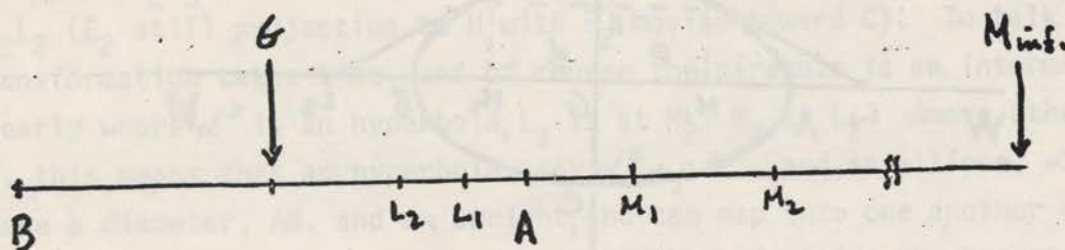
Further evidence of a complication is seen below:



The space α_A , the "inside" of one-half of the hyperbola on AB, maps entirely into the space α'_A : imagine all possible diameters AB_n , with vertices A_n , as they extend into α_A ; every point in α_A is on a diameter and will map, as described earlier, onto some AG, and the locus of all AGs is the space α'_A . Analogously, every point in β_C maps into the space β'_C , giving a fuller view of the inversion, involution, whatever, mentioned above (p.2). Now, the hyperbola-without, δ , has the corresponding property that $\beta_C + \beta'_D$ maps into $\beta_D + \beta'_C$, when considering the same E's which map the points in α_A into α'_A . The brute fact is that points within α map outside of α , into δ , while points in δ map into δ , not into α . If δ is hyperbolic, it is not hyperbolic

in the way that α is. On the other hand, curious as it may seem, the domain called α'_A is "hyperbolic": all of α_A has been poured into α'_A in a lawful way. How can this be comprehended?

Consider the history of what is happening sheerly from the point of view of a single diameter AB, which is no less than the general case of a line cut internally and externally in harmonic ratios:



By the harmonic relation, which is our continuing logos, $BM:MA:BL:LA$; MA is always greater than LA, and precisely $MA:LA::(x+y):(x-y)$ where x and y are general variables. A little experimentation reveals that the closer M is to A, the closer L will be to A, thus L_1, M_1 and L_2, M_2 are harmonic conjugates. M_{inf} and G are the limits, and they are harmonic conjugates, though clearly singular as such. Now imagine α_A as the locus of all M's, α'_A as the locus of all L's. To say the α'_A is "hyperbolic" (an involuted hyperbola) means that EL's, which were the tangents for α_A , become the ordinates for α'_A , and EM's, which were the ordinates for α_A , become the tangents for α'_A . One might try to verify that for the canonical logos of the hyperbola (I.12). The hypothesis is consistent with Apollonian propositions in Book II showing α_A and α'_A to be co-governed.

It may be fruitful, at this point, to consider the ellipse and the continuity between the ellipse and the hyperbola. From Apollonius ("axial triangle analysis") we know that ellipses and hyperbolae are separated by the parabola; therefore, as a first guess, to jump from an ellipse into a hyperbola must be something like the physical phenomenon of sublimation, passing from a solid phase directly into a gas phase without passing through a liquid phase. (See problems 5 and 7 in the manual.). For a start, consider the

ellipse seen through I.38, in particular comparing the figure below with Fig. 2.

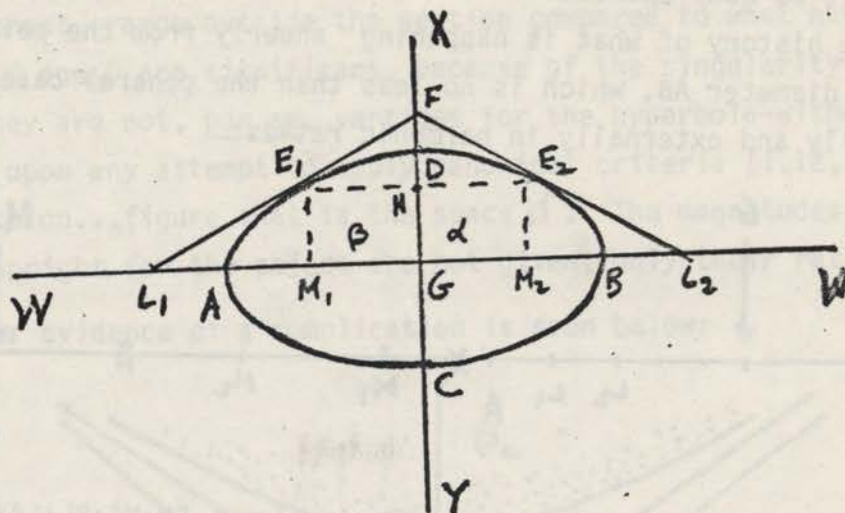


FIG. 6

Recall the logos and compare with that on p. 1:

- 1) $AG^2 = \text{vect } LG, GM$
- 2) $EM^2 : \text{rect } LM, MG :: \text{up} : \text{trans}$
- 3) $BM : MA :: BL : LA$

- 1)' $DG^2 = \text{vect } FG, GH$
- 2)' $EH^2 : \text{rect } FH, HG :: \text{trans} : \text{up}$
- 3)' $CF : FD :: HC : DH$

As before, points on AG (M's) map as L's onto AW, but points along DG (H's) map as F's on DX. Consider all diameters AB_n ; every point within the ellipse being an M on one of those, the space within the ellipse maps into all space outside the ellipse, which is obviously unlike the spaces α_A and α'_A for the hyperbola (Fig. 5). There's more to be considered here, e.g., the "involved ellipse," but I'll proceed along another line.

Taking the ellipse in Fig. 6, the half denoted α is rotated about vertex B exactly 180° and thereafter referred to as α^* :

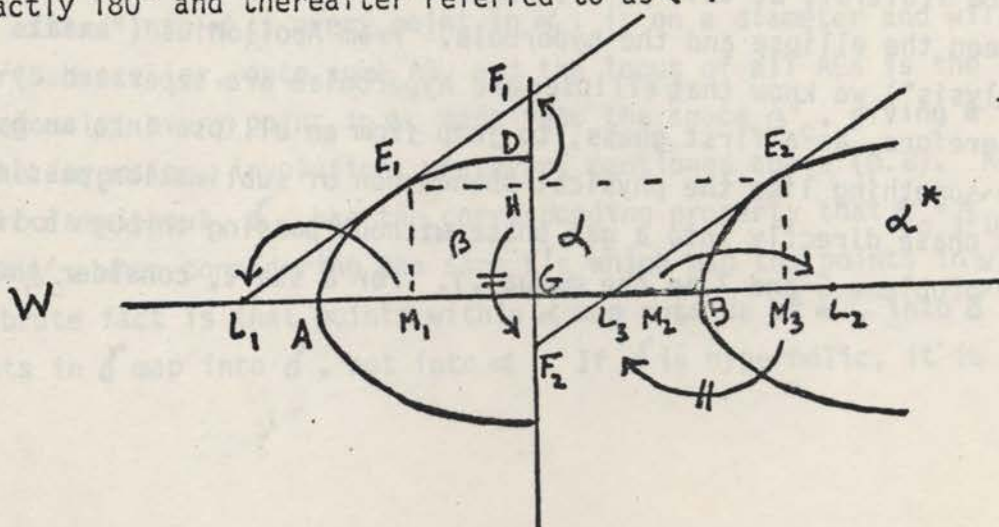


FIG. 7

Now, $\overline{L_3 M_3} = \overline{M_2 L_2} = \overline{L_1 M_1}$ but $BL_3 > BM_2$ and $BM_3 < BL_2$. The mapping of M_3 into L_3 and H into F_2 are disallowed because the harmonic relation is not met; For α intact, $AM_2:BM_2::AL_2:BL_2$ and $BL_2 > BM_2$ (again, $BL_2:BM_2::(x+y):x$); for α^* , $AL_3:BL_3$ is anharmonic with $AM_3:BM_3$, since $L_3 B > M_2 B$ and $AL_2 > AM_3$ [$BL_3:BM_3::(x+y):(x-y)$]. Therefore α^* is not a conic on diameter AB, however it would be a conic if $E_2 L_3$ could be brought to coincide with $E_2 M_2$ and $E_2 M_3$ to coincide with $E_2 L_2$ (E_2 still projecting to H with F_2 moving toward C). To talk about the transformation takes time, and of course the parabola is an intermediate, but clearly where α^* is an hyperbola, L_3 is at M_2 , M_3 at L_2 . Among other things, this means that an hyperbola, say $\alpha^* + \beta^*$, and an ellipse, $\alpha + \beta$, can share a diameter, AB, and an upright, and can map into one another to this extent: starting from the hyperbola, $E \rightarrow M \rightarrow L$ (outside the hyperbola, inside the ellipse) $\rightarrow E \rightarrow H \rightarrow F$, etc., the latter three terms belonging to the ellipse for the time being. However, α^* in toto does not map into α but into α^* (Fig. 5). Why? Because a change in the diameter AB will not change the shape of the hyperbola, α^* , but will change the shape of the ellipse. To re-state the situation: a hyperbola does not map in entirety into a single ellipse; rather, it maps into a multitude of ellipses that in fact fill the space designated as the involuted hyperbola. The latter is equivalent to a multitude of overlapping ellipses, and from this point of view an hyperbola "swims" in a sea of ellipses. Conversely, one can readily show that an ellipse is surrounded by hyperbolae and that a circle is surrounded by a multitude of rectangular hyperbolae.

The above conclusion is straightforward and undeniable; it is not, however, an explanation of I.38, the "hyperbola without," the space I have been calling δ . While ellipses do take up all space outside conjugate hyperbolic sections, we're still interested in the character of the space as a whole outside a single hyperbola. I have suggested that this space is comprehensible as an infinite ellipse; the arguments for such are not conclusive, but they are sufficient to prevent the notion from being dismissed out-of-hand. In particular, say in Fig 4, the "ordinates", EH's, behave more like elliptical ordinates in that they increase at a decreasing rate (while EM's increase at an increasing rate). Thus the range of external ordinates is $AG^2 \rightarrow HG^2$, and

The following problem turns out to have curious application to conic sections ($m = 2, 3, 4 \dots$):

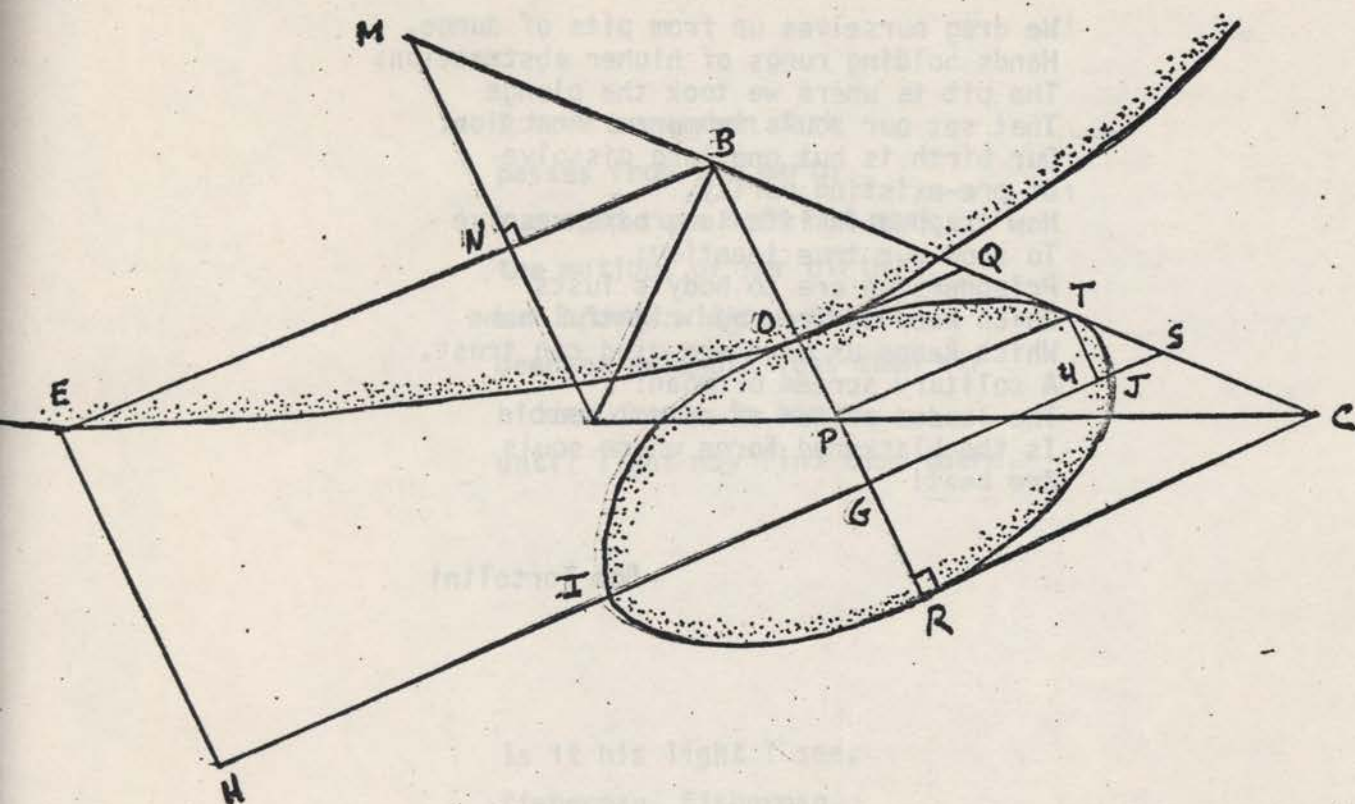
Given: $AB:BC::1:m$; BR bisects $\angle ABC$
and $CR \perp BR$

Ques:- In the figure, $\angle M = \angle R$, $\angle BNP = \angle BRP$.
Given: $AB : BC :: 1 : m$; B
 and $CR \perp BR$
Prove: $BP : PR :: 1 : m$

- Because, in Fig. 8, BP is harmonically cut at O and R, the following relationship of that triangle to an ellipse and an hyperbola must hold:

37

FIG. 9



For the hyperbola and the ellipse, with transverse OR, $RP:PO::RB:BO$;
for the "hyperbola-without," $IF:FJ::JH:HI$

$$OG^2 = PG, GB$$

$$EB^2:PB,BG::up:trans$$

$$PT^2:PB,PG::up:trans$$

$$RP:PO::RB:BO$$

$$IG^2 = FG, GH = UG, GS$$

$$EH^2:HF, GH::trans:up::UT^2:IS, SJ$$

$$IF:FJ::JH:HI$$

$$IT:TJ::IS:SJ$$

Thus $EB^2:PT^2::BG:PG$ and it is as if those ordinates are parabolic.

Note that $EH^2:UT^2::HF, GH:IS, SJ$, the form of the logos relating two ordinates in the same section (I.21)....as if both are elliptical.

Acknowledgments: Jack Steadman nourished quite a bit of the thought herein.
Anne Burrage was the gracious typist.

A Reflection upon New Mexican Sky

We drag ourselves up from pits of dunge,
Hands holding rungs of higher abstraction;
The pit is where we took the plunge
That set our souls in mortal traction;
Our birth is but one long dissolve
Of pre-existing purity,
Now trapped in life-long base resolve
To show our true identity;
Prisoners we are to body's lusts
Which keep us from our rightful home
Which keeps us down ere mind can trust,
A solitary scream or moan:
The leaded prison of primal heat
Is the blackened forge where souls
Are beat!

-Bob Tortolini

Ex Nihilo Nihil Est Fit

Within the dark black body,
Delimited dimension in infinite measure,
The Creature of self-contradiction,
Spawns forest legions of scintillating fireflies;
Antinomies created for no reason,
Out of the tenebrous vault,
Return to nothing once more,
Leaving vibrating light ripples,
In the resolution of dichotomy,
That transcends the corporeality,
To attenuate in propagation,
And disappear once more;
The bipolarity of truth
That spans an empty space and time,
Is the maker of our World
Whose ultimate death is birth,
And everything on Earth

-Bob Tortolini

I have seen when dark
passes from the earth
a cuspid rose does not mark
the motions of her birth,
but broods without stir,
deepest crimsons less than air
hidden chaste in her
until light may find them there.

Is it his light I see,
fisherman, fisherman,
borne coldly on the sea
who was my lover?

I hold him here within,
does he dance
out among daystreaks on the horizon,
is it he or some other?

-Philip LeCuyer

ANNAPOLIS FAREWELL

I

Flaming circles, quenched by a curse;
The curse of movement,
Whispered by space and time;
The curse of madness,
Hissed by the demons who gave us our eyes;
The curse of having to leave.

II


Lying on the fire escape in fall,
She lets down her hair
And bends her neck over the knife-edge of foundation.
Her hair falls free toward the earth
And the world in her eyes is upside-down and small.
Rising again to face the sun,
She tells inverted truths that she has seen.
It does not matter that she sings
As no one has sung before or since;
They are piling logs upon the ground.
Soon, singing, they will kindle them
To heat and melt the fire escape,
To singe her song with its own flame.

III

Grey winter days in Pinkney.
We are stowaways on this ship,
Wrapped in dreams too tattered for the captain,
But warm enough for us.
She makes coffee
As black as the silence of too many words.
We light cigarettes,
Small circles of fire to heat our separate worlds,
And try not to say goodbye.

Sailing on this fiery sea
Is a penance exacted
By those who gave us our eyes,
And yet begrudge the gift:
As if Prometheus, horrified
At fire's permutations in the hands of poets,
Had sentenced them all to be burned.

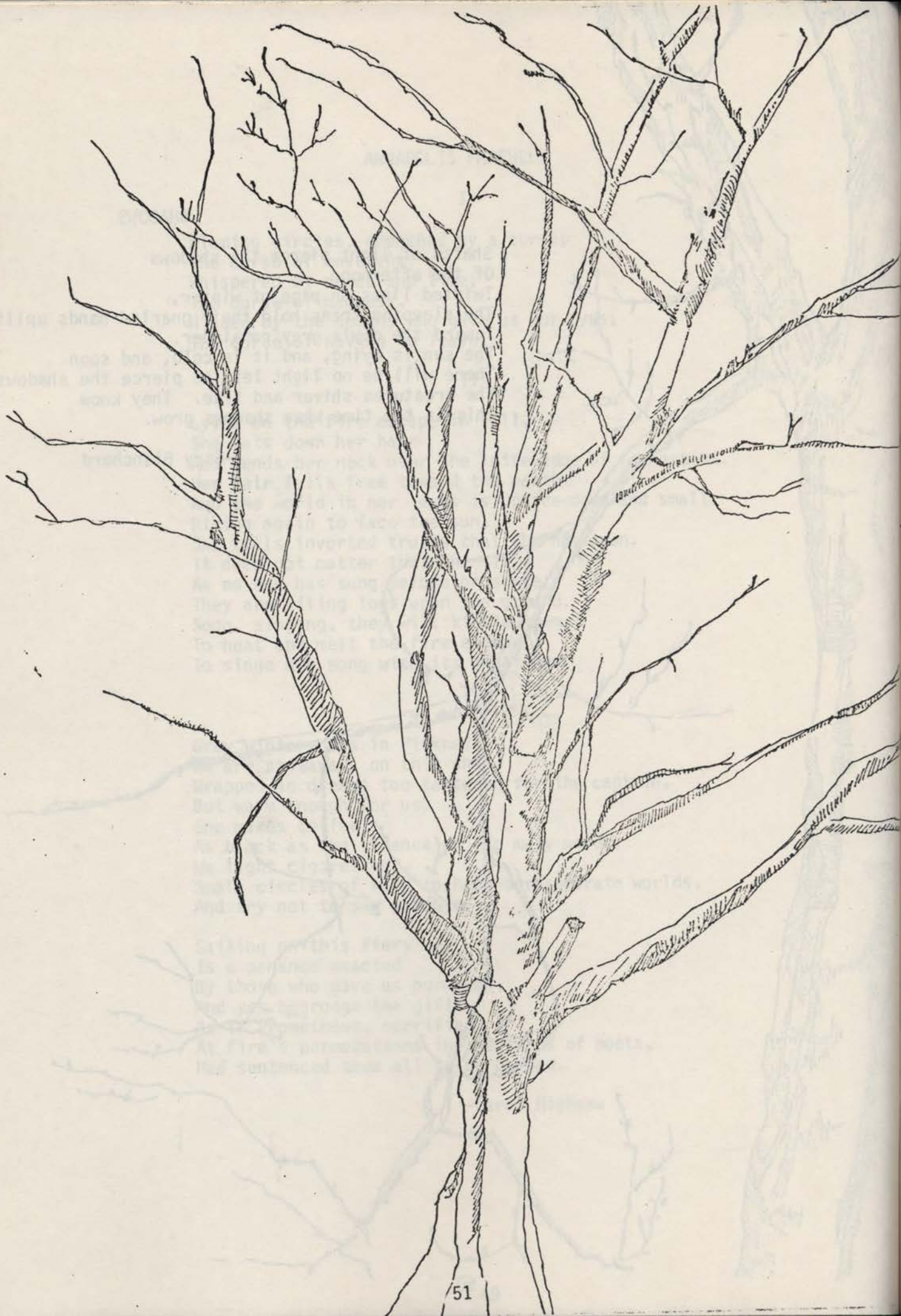
-Carol Highsaw



SHADOWS

Shafts of light pierce the shadows
Of the afternoon.
Twisted lines on page of winter,
The sleeping trees hold their gnarled hands uplifted
Toward the day's grey remainder.
The sun is dying, and it is cold, and soon
There will be no light left to pierce the shadows;
The creatures shiver and hide. They know
This is the time when shadows grow.

--Gary Blanchard



POEM, NOVEMBER

To celebrate the snowflakes,
how they fell upon my arm and shoulder
like crystalline counselors, myriad messengers
of chaos and tranquillity;
each a fragile dagger singing
water's long enmity with air,
Soft in their common clinging,
their endless striving after peace
and vapor, how they fell, how they fell!
And in the forest's cloisters,
and the abbeys of the meadows,
and haloed thoughts of the humble grasses,
they swirled like nothing in this world,
like the passions of endless angels,
each, and each to each, and all
dancing in the mysteries
of immensity and infinite precision.

-Steve Corneli

HE LONGS FOR WINTER, HE LONGS FOR LOVE

Lords,
they said,
have the geese flown,
will the winter come now,
warm smoke over dark woods,
are your colors down?

-Steve Corneli

STICKBALL

When young and green, I danced at boyhood games,
And thought the seed of life lay in a day
Of sun and sweat and grass and friendly names,
Of spaceship tales and shovels wet with clay.
Then did those stickball hours, which filled my sap
With urge to run, become as air so light,
That breath and breath could not my lungs enwrap,
Nor turn my winged mind toward mystic flight.
Now father's grave and lover's shadow hide
My eyes and drain the warmth within my feet.
So cool and dry that day on which he died;
So black the hour she left me incomplete.
Yet still as wet, I play beneath the sun;
With time's green age forever am I one.

-John Verdi



AMERICAN REFLECTIONS ON CHILDHOOD

The simplest of images--
the warm sun melting the morning's vigor--
how they change, how they wander,
as if the fixity of mind or love
were no more than smoke on the horizon
of some ultimate evening or morning.

We sit here thinking (the buffalo's memory
grazes on the surging prairies
of our childhood;
the mother sitting in the sun reflects,
and is numbed by the wispy changes
of her constancy)

Why must we always be learning
the process of sameness?
the unknowing passage of light
on the trunks of thick-barked trees,
as the day marks out the proximity
of light and life to death,

In this we sense soft-whispering wisdom
and the taunting silence of illusion.
Our own form grown old appears
at evening, and in each motion
towards evening, asking,

What has changed in my child, that
he no longer fills my morning with his laughter,
where are the prairies that waved
with original freedom,
where have the buffalo gone?

-Steve Corneli

GENERAL CROOK'S SKELETON CANYON PACT DENIED

Yes eagles vouch Apache light
and brave his sun red brow--
he stared over the snaking river
where mother wife infants
upon the beady scales of night
bled us into the vow
day broke open as he spoke
the renegade called Geronimo.

No lyric makes his dances light
"Apache" means "the foe"--
he sang us into monstrous romance
upon the beady scales of night
on terms of rite war chance
now named after his law
words spoke only as war broke
the renegade called Geronimo.

With rainbow and a shaft of light
Apache fires his soul
upon the greedy scales of night--
the forked tongue of the dragon flickered
the stars and stripes glinted
our answer to the call
day spoke slowly as words broke
the renegade called Geronimo.

May bands of snake fed eagles light
upon the beady scales of night
to blaze his path in blood--
the chill river has slaked his soul's fire
whose holy name can't lie
word broken from a code
war took over as we spoke
the renegade called Geronimo.

-Joe DeGrazia

And the white Boy from the east,
to the west he'll come and feast.
In my mountain he will sleep,
when he's had his fill
Off he will creep.

To feast his eyes on my skies of blue,
Snatch a piece as he passes through.
Save it for mother
and hope it'll do,
Something for her arrogance.
Or maybe Dad will hang it
over his fireplace,
Admire it and flaunt its grace.

So the white Boy from the east,
his presence I will feel,
For two or four years at the very least.
And off my mountain he will dine,
And on my mountain he will sign
his name and the date -
well at any rate,
You'll know he's been here.

Though it maybe true
The sun he's seen at its best,
It is here in the west
he seeks to rest.

It is on my mountain,
This school for the east,
Where they learn all there is to know
about the beast
and the feast.
Where they learn to think and wonder why
pain isn't colored blue
And clouds don't cloud the skies.

And me? Well all I ask for
When you're through, or just passing by,
Is to leave me a mountain
So that I may quench my thirst
at its fountain.
Or please, save me a view of the sky.

For I warn you a time will dawn
When the son will tell
A story of his people
And how they fell,
Prey to the white Boy from the east,
And how they were served
At the great white feast.

-Alex Quintana

I am like the rounded stones
which, having been made dull by the
endless tossing of the current,
are used by men to pave streets.

Once I was jagged as the craggy peaks
upon which no man could tread.

-G. Ironside



Sheri Anderson

THE NUN WHO FEIGNED IDIOCY

In the women's monastery of Tabennesis, there lived a virgin who pretended to be a fool and to be possessed by an evil spirit. Once she had chosen this way of life, no one else tolerated eating with her.

Wandering up and down in the huge kitchen, she would perform a variety of services. She was, as the others put it, "a sponge of a nun." But she was only fulfilling the scripture:

If anyone would seem wise in this age,
let him become foolish, that he might become wise.

Wearing a rag bound around her head (while all the others were shorn and wore cowls), she served in the following manner. None of the other four hundred nuns ever saw her eating during all the years that she lived among them. She would not sit at table and eat a piece of bread, as the others did. Instead, she would sponge up all the crumbs and gather all the droplets of soup into one bowl; she satisfied herself with the leavings of the others.

That one never abused anyone; she never whined or moaned; she never uttered a word, whether great or small. She lived steadfastly, although she was chastised, abused, accursed and loathed.

One day an angel appeared to the holy anchorite, Piteroum, who was secluded in the Porphyrite. Piteroum was a most renowned hermit, but the angel said troubling things to him. "Why do you think so highly of yourself as 'pious' while you sit here in seclusion? Would you care to see someone, a woman, who is more pious than you are? Get up and take yourself to Tabennesis; go, find the one who wears a ragged diadem on her head; she is better than you are. For, in spite of struggling amidst a throng of nuns, she has never once turned her heart away from God. Meanwhile, you sit out here 'all alone'; but in your mind you wander about the cities of men."

And so it came to pass that "the one who never travelled anywhere" got up and travelled as far as the monasteries of Tabennesis. He begged the Teachers to let him visit the monastery of women. Since he was so well thought of, and of such advanced years, the Teachers granted him his unusual request.

Having entered the women's monastery, Peteroum asked to see everyone; but the one for whom he was looking did not appear.

Finally he said "Bring in everyone, for someone is still missing." But the nuns said to him, "We have just one more, a slobbering idiot who is out working in the kitchen." And he said to them, "Bring me that one also, that I might see her."

The nuns went off to call her, but she (either perceiving the situation or having a revelation of it) would not obey. In the end, they dragged her violently into his presence, saying, "The holy man, Piteroum, wishes to see you."

As she was brought in, he saw the rag wrapped around her head. Recognizing this sign, he fell down at her feet and cried out, "Bless me!" But she, also, fell to the ground saying, "You bless me, Sire!" The other nuns were beside themselves in horror at this spectacle. They all shouted, "Father (ἁγίος), do not disgrace yourself in this manner; she is only an idiot."

Piteroum answered them all, saying, "You are the idiots here. This one is a Mother (ἡ μήτηρ) to all of you, and to me. I pray to be found worthy of her on Judgement Day." Hearing this, all the others fell down at his feet, each of them confessing some offense against her. One confessed having poured the leftovers from her plate onto her; another, having caned her; another, having twisted her nose--each one recounted various insults.

Having prayed for them all, Piteroum withdrew once again, going off to his place of seclusion.

A few days later, the nun who had feigned idiocy went away; she was overburdened by her newfound glory and honor, and by all the apologies there were offered to her.

Which way did she go? Where did she settle? How did she come to the end of her days? No one knew.

-- PALLADIUS, translated by William Malloy

A NOTE ON THE BIOGRAPHER

Palladius was born in Galatia (in Asia Minor) in 364 A.D. In his adult life he took part in both the ascetic and the public life of the Church. In his monastic life, Palladius says that he personally knew some two thousand monks, ascetics, and anchorites. He gives short biographies of about one hundred and sixty of these in his Paradise.

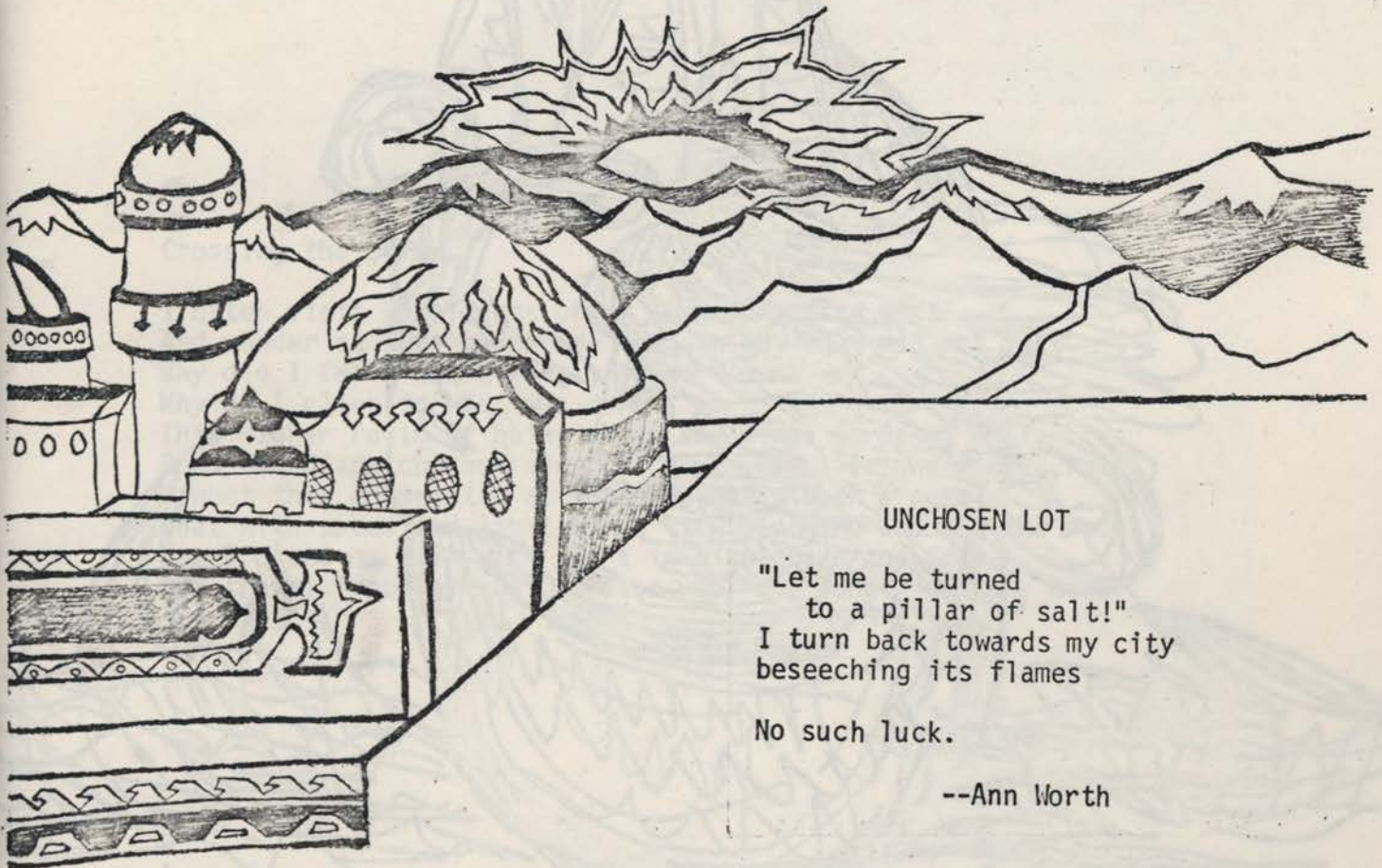
Egypt was the home of asceticism from the earliest days of Christianity. The individual made himself (or herself) a μοναχός (solitary), an ἀναχωρήτης (one who withdraws) or ἐρημίτης (a desert-man, or hermit.) Each worked out his own ἀθλον (struggle), ἀσκήσις (exercise, asceticism), or πολιτεία (program or "constitution" of spiritual life.)

In the fourth century, groups of monks came together under the leadership of archamandrites (leaders of the sheepfold). These communities were regarded and are still regarded in the Eastern Church, as places for those lacking the strength to live in solitary asceticism.

BENJAMIN

In the Nitrian Mountains there lived a man call Benjamin. He had lived for eighty years, always practicing asceticism to the highest degree. He had been found worthy of the gift of healing: everyone on whom he placed his hands, or to whom he gave blessed olive oil, would be healed of all weakness. This worthy man was himself afflicted with dropsy for the final eight months of his earthly life. His body was so badly swollen that he appeared to be another Job. Bishop Dioskoros beckoned me and my companion, Evagrius, to the side, and said, "Come and see a new Job, one with a massive body, who has received immeasurable graces in his incurable sufferings." Approaching this afflicted one, we saw a body so swollen that a man's two hands could not grasp so much as a finger. Since we could not bear even to look at such fearsome suffering, we turned away. But the blessed one, Benjamin, said, "Pray, children, lest the man inside suffer dropsy. As for this outside man, it never did profit me when good things were happening, nor harm me when bad things were happening." During those eight months, Benjamin sat continuously in an enormous chair, for he was not able to lie down on his bed. He continued to heal others, even though he was suffering greatly. I have found it necessary to record this affliction lest we be shocked to see strange circumstances befall a righteous man. When this man had finished his days, the door and doorposts had to be removed so that the body could be carried away, so greatly had it swollen.

-- PALLADIUS, translated by William Malloy



UNCHOSEN LOT

"Let me be turned
to a pillar of salt!"
I turn back towards my city
beseeching its flames

No such luck.

--Ann Worth

Laura MacClay

ON MALLARME'S "BRISE MARINE"

There are masts on that ship
and the handkerchief waves bid her good-bye.
On her way out of the harbor
she passes, reverently, the foundered ones,
themselves taunted by the nests of
sea birds on their broken masts.
And the breeze, the breeze, plays
in their sails.

The handkerchief waves feel the bite
of salt in their nostrils and
fight against the breeze that blinds
them with their own hair.
They think of storms
and walk from the pier.

Neither the grey-shaded morning
nor the long good-byes
can eliminate the freshness
of that sea breeze.

-Lauren Baillard



There is a beautiful world just at the edges of our own. A world where golden light mingles with the darkness of our eye. A world not quite open to the touch that might warm a heart not quite beating.

A vast moment spans the hope of life. Quiet covers the struggling spasms of bodies not meant for time. Fingers reach into nooks of tabernacles. And the sullied charms of tarnish dampen the evening air.

The hand that lights the candle burns the finger. A life that will not hold its own fashions a prayer in the holy darkness meant to distill a mind from liquid fear. Even when the light is out the memory gives sight to our world.

Oh life more precious than our own, whose least breath blesses the whole of mine, makes of lost words a dancing song, and lifts the veil from motions gone ; we do not need but your hope to round the edges of our broken world, and reach the bodies at the edge of time.

Anonymous

Crossing the Ocean

I often visit highlights of my long forgotten past
And wonder as they pierce me through why they did not last.
Why did I fall, where was it from,
Why do I cling to what was done?
This higher realm of being which now sings to me my goal,
Does not dispatch, but connects me to, my life and former role.
Cannot this anamnestic action procede at such a pace
That with speed and light alone it would warp and win the race?
Can I blend my will with yours to rise above the foam
And travel free, my soul at ease, for the longer journey home?

--Suzan Porter

first letter to main street

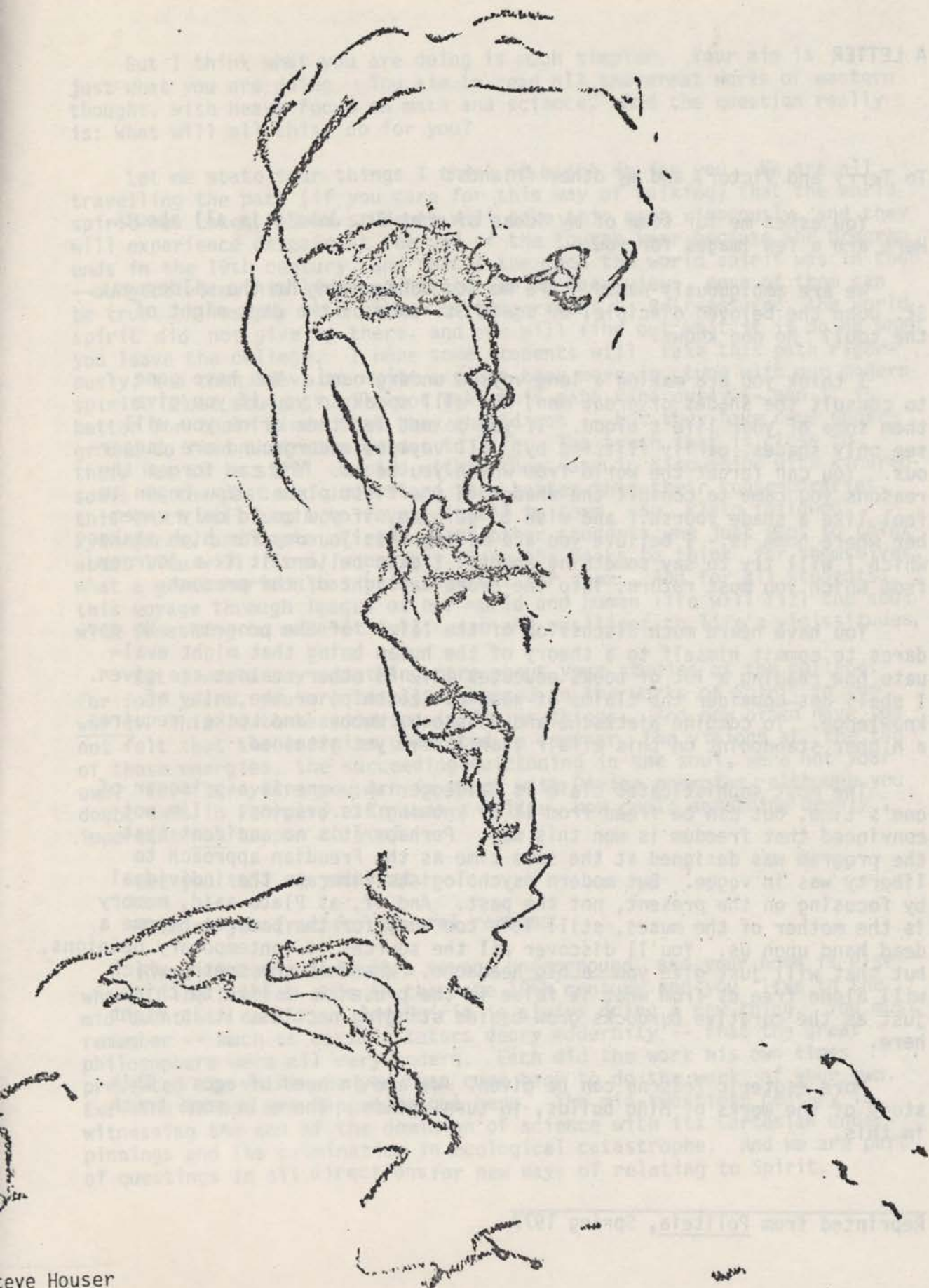
ahem well what further madness is there to describe
that will not be simple recapitulation:
we flew back across the plains and didn't even stop
in amarillo tho all the waitresses and devils
were down on their knees and begging-
after all we had a purpose, you know, in that funny way
that place becomes purpose in itself, arrival is bliss. . .
now i'm in the land of conic sections and shakespeare:
you understand wood, paul; i need to know the difference
between a tree and a printed page (if you see where my
confusion lies then analogous questions come swarming,
for example where the route between the dark grains of kansas
and thick gold liquors of the north?);
at some point i shall lie face down in the fallow earth
and give up all this trembling and remorse,
shifting in a fever from the flesh to hard hot fields
which swallow without choice or passion (both tricks of our
invention out of boredom and despair)
enough questions.

sarah and i left last weekend and travelled to abiquiu
to stay at a monastery of the benedictine order
shot back in the desert, the brothers there wear
boots and bluejeans and play the guitar at sunday mass,
eat simple soups and drink strong tea, weave and meditate
beneath terrible rocks and volcanic smatterings of the anger
of forgotten ages (the indians say the canyon is cursed,
the struggle of spirits hangs over the frozen chama river
like a badly balanced hayfork); contentment is measured
out in bells and candles- i meant to ask if they pray
with their watches on, and what to make of the difference
between translucent wafers and the flesh. . .
enough questions.

i am still with the greeks here, stumbling through hell
with odysseus, waiting for some blind prophet to appear
with words of the honey-sweet slopes of the east, looking
for a lost companion in whose honor i might set to fire
the putrid spears of asian holocaust and be humbled finally
to the beauty of a woman without lust or anger in this devil's breast.
i have little hope, but then i suppose that i was born with none;
i am given up to the speech of men long taken back
to the folds of the brave earth, and i will speak with dignity
til i am to their substance sunk with weapons flaming in the dusk.

write to the east,

Nigel



A LETTER

To Terry and Victor, and my other friends:

You asked me for some of my ideas of what St. John's is all about. Here are a few images for you.

We are ambiguously named. Are we St. John crying in the wilderness, St. John the beloved disciple, or again St. John of the dark night of the soul? No one knows.

I think you are making a long voyage underground. You have gone to consult the shades of great men, who will speak to you if you give them some of your life's blood. If you do not let them drink you will see only shades, eerily flitting by. All voyages underground are dangerous. You can forget the world from which you began. You can forget the reasons you came to consult the shades in the first place. You begin to feel like a shade yourself and wish to go home, if you could only remember where home is. I believe you are making this journey for high stakes, which I will try to say something about. I also believe it is a journey from which you must return, into the broad daylight of the present.

You have heard much discussion of the 'aims' of the program. No one dares to commit himself to a theory of the human being that might evaluate how reading a lot of books educates it. So other reasons are given. I shall not consider the claims of good citizenship, or the unity of knowledge. To combine Nietzsche and Rousseau, Hobbes and Locke, requires a higher standpoint on this affair than I have yet attained.

The most sophisticated claim is Heideggerian: one is a prisoner of one's time, but can be freed from it by knowing its origins. I'm not convinced that freedom is won this way. Perhaps it's no accident that the program was designed at the same time as the Freudian approach to liberty was in vogue. But modern psychologists liberate the individual by focusing on the present, not the past. And if, as Plato said, memory is the mother of the muses, still it's too easy for the past to become a dead hand upon us. You'll discover all the sources of contemporary opinions, but that will just give you a big headache. Where is the truth, which will alone free us from what is false in the present? I like to think, just as the curative burdocks grow beside stinging nettles, it is right here.

More esoteric reasons can be given. We are in need of egos. This study of the works of Mind builds, in turn, minds. There is some truth in this.

Reprinted from Politeia, Spring 1977

But I think what you are doing is much simpler. Your aim is just what you are doing. You aim to read all the great works of western thought, with heavy focus on math and science. And the question really is: What will all this do for you?

Let me state four things I think it might do for you. We are all travelling the path (if you care for this way of talking) that the world spirit has taken. Some students will take this path rigorously, and they will experience despair at the end of the fourth year because the program ends in the 19th century, and that's the mood the world spirit was in then -- subjectivism, nihilism and "there are so many views, none of them can be true, philosophy is a matter of temperament." Be reassured, the world spirit did not give up there, and you will find out what it is doing when you leave the college. I hope some students will take this path rigorously, and then leave to write a great book more in tune with our modern spirit. Most students will not take this path rigorously -- and it is better for their minds that they should not -- but they have come underground to find their own guides to life. The truth that is close to their hearts is still buried within them, and in discussion with kindred souls in the past who understand them better than their contemporaries, this truth will begin to reveal itself to them. So Plato followed Pythagoras, and Dante, Virgil. Yet other students who just want to think about life will find, when they close the books to think for themselves, what a great horizon has been laid out for them. And for all students, this voyage through images of our world and human life will fill the soul with something to make it full, rich and resilient to life's vicissitudes.

But I would say something more about your studies at the college. For four years, you are totally immersed in the works of Spirit in the world. This is to be immersed in Divine things. And how often have you not felt that the energies generated in seminar, the visions at the top of those energies, the succeeding quickening in the soul, were not your own? For four years you are in touch with Divine energies, although you doubt this in February. In such a milieu, how could something deeply important not happen to you?

But you tell me you fret.

I think you fret for several reasons.

First, because this is a voyage underground and your home is elsewhere. The program ends in the late 19th century and you live in the mid-twentieth century. And Spirit is always doing a new thing. You must remember -- much as certain tutors decry modernity -- that the great philosophers were all very modern. Each did the work his own times presented him with. So you must come back to do the work of your own. Exciting things are happening out here. The mid-twentieth century is witnessing the end of the dominion of science with its Cartesian underpinnings and its culmination in ecological catastrophe. And we are part of questings in all directions for new ways of relating to Spirit.

Secondly, I think you fret, Terry, not just because the world spirit has moved on and you are at some new place which you do not know. You fret because you are indeed at a breathtaking new place. Never forget that the great philosophical tradition has been developed mainly by bachelors. It seems very imposing when you are in it, but from outside it is a mere drop in the bucket of human wisdom. With all that preoccupation with ego, will and knowledge of objects, very little is said about life and human relationships, things which may be of great concern to women. Wisdom has practically disappeared from the scene. As a young woman, you may be feeling that you desire to know about entirely different realities--something which has never been seen before. No one can be unaware that Spirit is moving strongly among women in our time.

But finally, you fret because the school has a shadow side. When we draw up great visions of our enterprise, no one says anything about this. But as the psychologist Jung has made clear, every personality has a light, polished exterior and a shadow side of negative qualities, just as every institution does. The shadow can only be acknowledged, accepted, embraced, else it will do us in. Since the school embodies lofty ideals, it doubtless casts a rather long shadow. Here is what I take that shadow to be.

The shadow derives, in first part, from the fact that if we are immersed in the works of Spirit in the world, the other two forms of Divinity are conspicuously absent. I speak of God the Father and God the Son. Relationships not ordered in God the Father are almost sure to be disordered, because lesser items are substituted as worthy of one's ultimate concern. Schools are prone to idolatry--the worship of a program, a power structure, a way of doing things, a tradition. Can you image what might happen if the lowliest freshman and Dean Neidorf knelt beside each other in reverence and celebration? And in what ways we might be able to draw near each other in this ultimate perspective? But it is not just that colleges are idolatrous. I think they force upon us an untrue vision of life. They emphasize a horizontal view of the world--the apparently significant events of our lives are the following of one thing after another through the day. The schedule. But what really matters in human life is the vertical order. God is not afar off, over the mountain tops, but somewhere between breakfast and bedtime. He Himself passes you on the path. The day is His message to you. All this mystery and romance of our lives is hidden from us by institutions which inevitably insist upon the ordinariness of the ordinary. And you come to think that your ultimate project and your self-worth depends on how well you perform in class.

The shadow, in second part, is a necessary consequence of the fact that we read so much. The mind cannot really handle so many ideas in such a short time. Moreover, the mind does not work chronologically along with the history of thought. I could not begin to appreciate Plato until I had understood Kant. Furthermore, reading does not necessarily make you anything but a critic. You may have excellent criticisms of The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals without being able to write one word yourself on the nature of morality. It is all too easy to become a

parasite of books, a derivative mind. Finally, and most important, you must remember that these are all the works of mature men, springing, as it were, fully formed from the head of Zeus. You may forget that these great men were once young people questing for identity and very uncertain of themselves. To read these great works does not instruct you how to begin to write one.

Finally, the third aspect of the shadow. It is a consequence of the other two. It concerns community. We think that is is enough to assemble people together who all have the desire to read books to create a community. But this is not so. Real community requires much effort of understanding and will, and what is now called 'work on oneself.' The great spiritual paths all recognize that we are disorderly beings in need of form. They recognize that our unspoken thoughts and feelings have great power to affect others (women are said to be so sensitive to what lies in a man's unconscious, that negative thoughts lying dormant there are picked up by them and internalized as a sense of inferiority). They recognize that moral character is something to be developed (the intellectual path will not teach you to see angels, but there are paths which will). 'Community' does not come about because we all hold the same opinions--although a common interest helps--but it is built out of caring and confirming relationships with others. In our competitive society, how little we know about how to build these. In general, we act as we wish, we gossip about tutors and students--thereby turning them into objects--and we fill our days with an often meaningless babble of words.

I suggest the beginnings of a way to cope with the third aspect of the shadow. Good communities begin with a right metaphysical vision of ourselves, some understanding which the mind can bring to overcome distrust and envy. We need an image of what we are. Here is an effort to say what that is. Each of us -- tutors and students -- has a final relationship with God, who alone knows the truth of the road we are on. Each of us has the possibility of developing what Paul called "the mind of Christ." To have the mind of Christ means, at the very least, that we have our own distinctive visions of Being. To come to have the mind of Christ is to come, in all ways, to be what one truly is. How does this relate to others? No person in our lives is an accident. We are here because we are meant to be to-gether. We are all ministers of wholeness, messengers of God, to one another. Fellowship together is a necessary part of our individual ways, for we are such creatures that many doors open inward to ourselves, but others have all the keys.

To come to one's own truth, one's own voice. The great books do not say much about this.

But now I challenge you. Our failure is a failure of western thought, which has said so little of how to build good and confirming relationships, which has presented us with competitive models of human being. You must

remedy this failure. Yes. You must think about how we may establish a communion such that we love to be together for this short time, that we can drop our masks, that we can be together in real, deep silence without the perpetual babble of words. A communion in the very heart of the community in which the best self of every person is willing to venture out and grow, and be a gift for others. The tasks facing you are very great. If you find the ideas and attitudes we need, you will transform the world.

What can be the effects of your long voyage underground? I used to think you came here to learn the history of ideas. I now think you came here to begin the long discovery of your own heart's truth, to begin to deepen your lives, and give them integrity and coherence. Your guides in the past can help you with this. As you emerge from your studies of all that has been thought about -- economics, politics, nature, the heavens, the good life -- you are going to find yourself alone, with a great mystery. The mystery of yourself and God. The final relationship, finer than baby's breath, stronger than steel. Then will you begin the deep work of coming to be and to know your true self. For they say that it is possible only as you draw/are drawn closer to Him. As the Psalmist writes: "You knew me before I was born, You formed me in the darkness of my mother's womb." Just as hypotheses were, for Plato, a ladder to the Good, so the works of Spirit in the world, in which you are immersed for four years, are a ladder to this final great mystery, and that relationship out of which will flow the poems, the prayers and the songs of the rest of your life.

Peace,

Lorna

ON MALLARME'S "LE PITRE CHATIE"

The lamps are lit.
The band begins to play.
Anticipated, applauded,
the clown is welcomed to the ring.

Costumed, painted, but recognized,
he performs, he pleases,
he dances and makes them laugh--
and then the show is done.

He limps to his tent, alone, a smaller man.
The costume doesn't fit now.
Sweat makes his paint run in milky tears.

He wipes his smile away,
washes his face in icy water--
and walks home through the crowd, unseen.

-Lauren Baillard



ERRATUM

Rats! We Goofed. The editors extend their apologies for these and other errors we may have missed in our final proofreading.

On Mallarme's "Brise Marine" p. 61

lines 2 & 9, correction: The handkerchief wavers bid her good-bye.

A Reflection on a New Mexico Sky p. 39

line 1, correction: We drag ourselves up from pits of dung.

We regret that Mr. Phil Chandler's essay The Principia's Theory on the Lunar Apse will not be included in this edition of Au Verso due to reasons of copyright.