



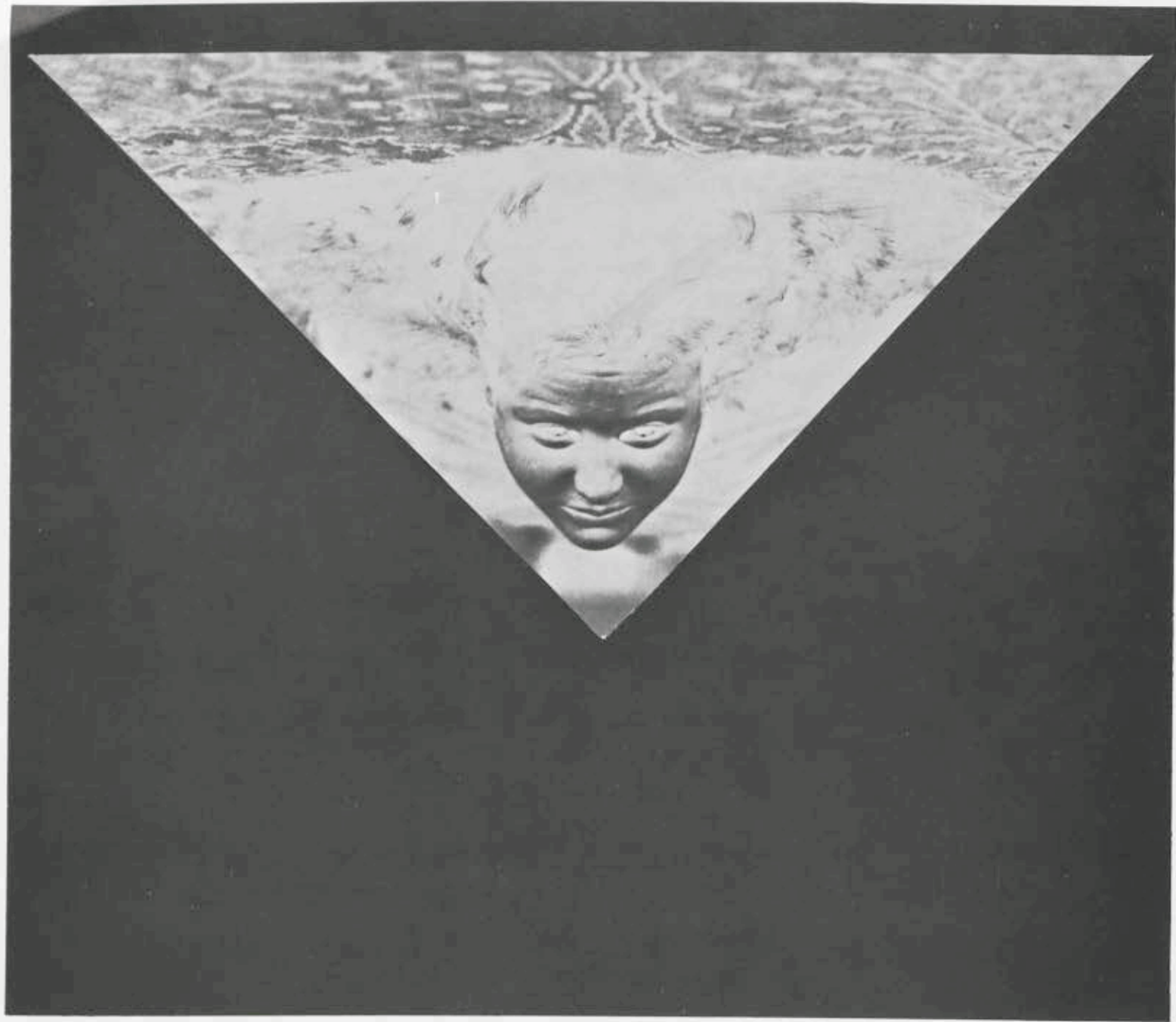
I D O L

“So this is independence . . .

canned soup every day,

lots of T.V.”

Maria Helm



Jane Engel

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Somewhere between New York and Istanbul
I lost it
Maybe it was even in Ohio
I don't know
Nobody seems to know because I lie a lot

I always ate all the cookies and threw away the wrappers as if they disappeared
I always took quarters off dad's dresser for cigarettes and blamed my brother
I even blamed the car accident on my best friend

Maybe it was Neil who stole it in Matala—no, I liked him
Fuck maybes
It was Kevin I know it was but I won't admit it

I left it for him on the blanket
and he didn't find it til the morning
I didn't lose it at all
I gave it away
and I won't admit it

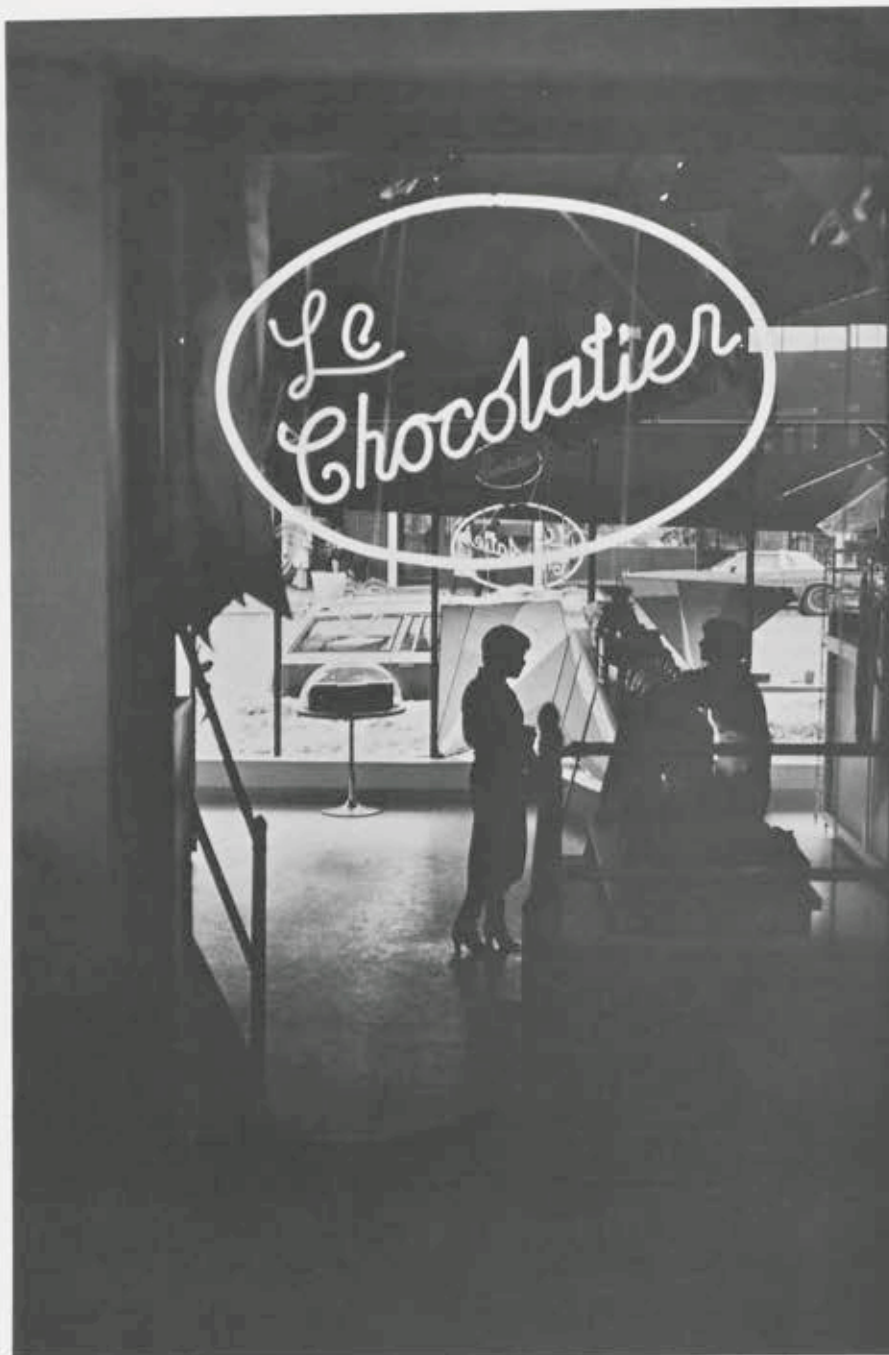
I don't know
Nobody seems to know because I lie alot
Not even Kevin

Margaret Shue



Bruce Rasmussen

AΔΦ Halloween



Thomas DeMarco

Snow in New York 1902

I was always careful to step lightly on Sunday mornings. My mother slept to eight o'clock, and she cherished those few extra hours. Sometimes I woke her up and she'd just sigh. I'd giggle, and she would say be careful, and I would.

The carriages were out even at this early hour. Mother says the Catholics are serious about their religion, too, and that I should keep quiet on Sunday mornings. I did my best.

There was still some of Uncle David's milk left over in the bottle from Friday and I poured myself a little glass of it. I knew it was all right because it was so cold. I wondered what Daddy was doing, in Kovel. He really wasn't a clear memory to me anymore. Oh, he had a beard, but when I wasn't sure I'd ask Mommy if he had a beard. And she would say yes just like your Uncle David's, except it's longer and wiser. Mostly, Daddy was a letter. Sometimes Uncle David would bring us a letter from Daddy. He said that some of the people who came into Ellis Island that week from Kovel had brought it with them. You should have seen my mother's eyes when Uncle David would come in and say Sarah, Mr. Federsable, do you remember he worked with Irving the rebbe? Oh, why do I tell you, you don't remember at which point she would say Yes I do he brought a letter from Daddy? and Uncle David would give it to her and she would cry all over the

letter before I got to see it and the print was all runny and the black ink got the white paper all dirty but Uncle David said my father always wrote me be a good boy. And I was because that's what Daddy wrote and Mommy said and Uncle David said.

Uncle David was a very important man in our community. He was paid by the rich Jews from Germany who lived on 5th Avenue near Central Park to try and help the poor Jews from Poland and Russia and the Ukraine settle. I guess we were poor Jews but Uncle David said we should just see the rest of these people if we wanted to know what was really poor. Sometimes on a Sunday morning he'd come down real early and wait for me outside. We'd walk from 27th street all the way up to Central Park and then Uncle David would get money from the rich Jews to give to the poor Jews. Then we would go to Central Park and he would let me chase him with a snowball which I learned to throw the American way from Angelo down the street. Angelo was a nice friend but he went to church on Sunday mornings and I didn't know why. I didn't know what was inside of a church. One Sunday morning when Uncle David didn't come to get me I followed Angelo to his church. I was very quiet and I felt like a Cossack spy that my mother used to tell stories about. It was so early in the morning that the street lamps were still on and I was able to follow them by moving from shadow to shadow. But Angelo saw me and excused himself for a minute and told me

I'd better beat it because Jews weren't supposed to be near a church on Sunday mornings. He told me that the important man said that the Jews killed Christ and I said oh and Angelo said he didn't like Jesus because Jesus made him get all dressed up and see his grandmother who also went to church on Sunday mornings.

After Uncle David and I went through the park we would walk home along the Hudson River. On the way there somewhere around 59th street Uncle David would ask me to stay in the street and look for Cossacks while he went in to see a man about a horse. I asked after he came out if he was buying a horse where was it? and he would say in New Jersey and I would say oh. One day he did this and when he came out I said Uncle David where is our horse? and he said it's in New Jersey and I said do you think I'm naive? Uncle David looked a little nervous and then he reached down to pat my head and he told me I was too young to go around using words out of context and I asked him what was context?

The winter was long and the winter was cold but I loved the winter.

Uncle David hadn't come to get me two Sunday mornings in a row but I didn't really think much of it. I would just walk to the river and watch the tugs. Sometimes I would think about Daddy and his beard and his books and our temple and the more I thought about it the more I wanted Daddy to come here but I didn't ever want to go back there. There was no Central Park in Kovel, there was no Angelo to

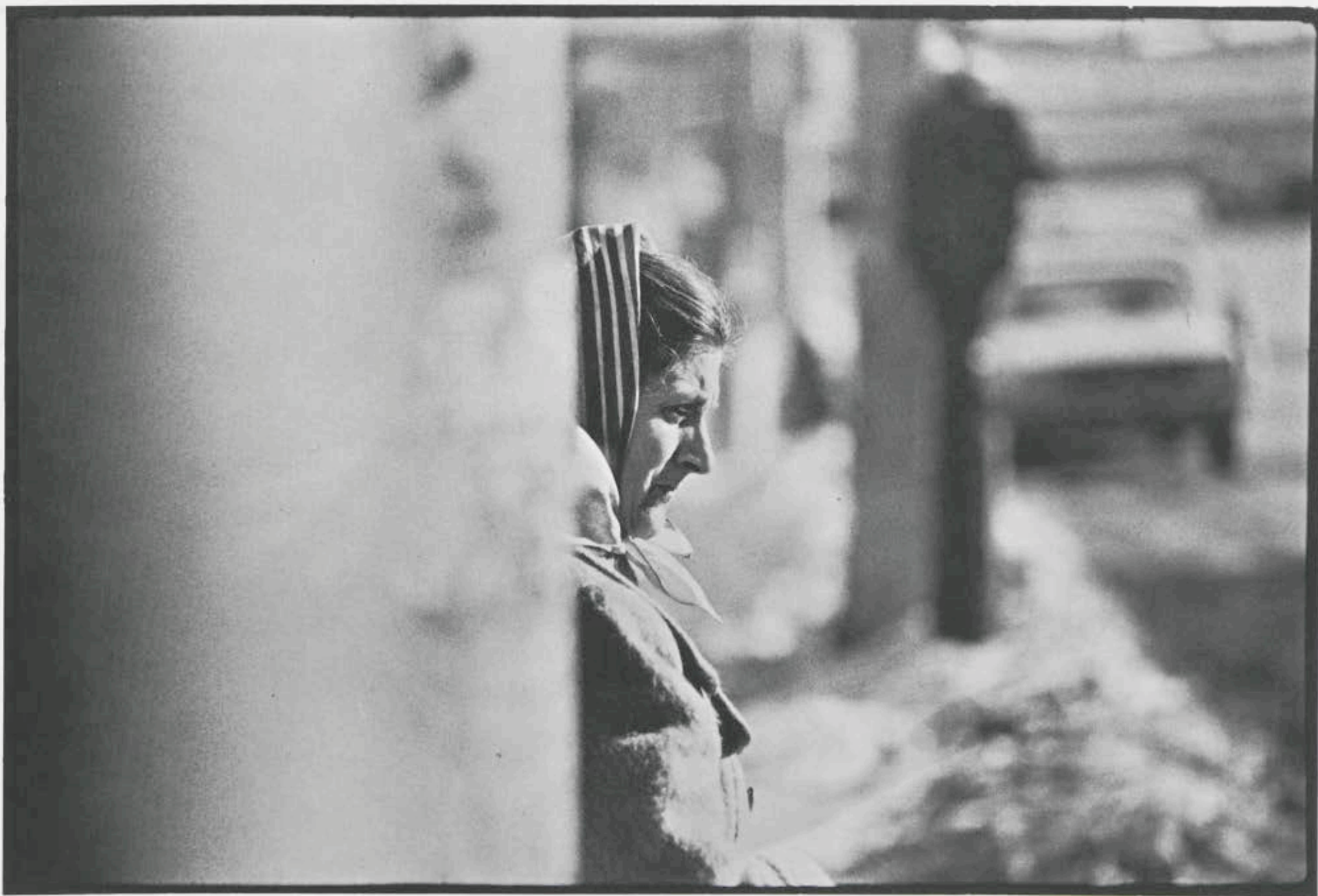
throw snowballs with, and Daddy would make me work after school cleaning the temple. I hated cleaning the temple!

Uncle David and Mommy and me celebrated the American New Year at a party given by a rich Jew from 5th Avenue. They made me get all dressed up and stuff. I knew I had better not roll in the snow. We even took a carriage uptown. It was a big big house. There were lots of people inside dancing and things and there was this orchestra. I sat at the table all night and Uncle David and some rich men asked permission to dance with Mommy. Then I woke up in another room with lots of coats and hats next to me on the bed and I heard Mommy say something about it's a shame to wake him up he is so cute when he sleeps. They carried me downstairs and into the snow. I asked Uncle David to put me down and he did and I asked him were we going back into the rich Jews house tonight and he said no so I did a somersault in the snow and threw a snowball at the carriage and Uncle David laughed and Mommy yelled at me for getting my good clothes dirty.

When spring came and the snow melted something bad happened. Mr. O'Shaugnessy the policeman from around the block came over and told Mommy something about Uncle David and bezzle. Mommy said she didn't believe it and started crying. I thought Mr. O'Shaugnessy was an ugly man. The next day a rich Jew from 5th Avenue came to our house and said something to Mommy about

embezzlement and poor Jews and Mommy cried but now she believed it. Mommy told me Uncle David wouldn't be around for a while and she started to cry again and though I didn't completely understand I started crying too. The next day we went to see Uncle David in the jailhouse and he said it was all a crazy mix-up and don't worry Sarah don't worry. He said we should go to his house and bring him some clean clothes in case he was there awhile. So Mommy and I went to Uncle David's house and the old Jewish lady who let us in didn't like us and she said be quick about it. When Mommy went into Uncle David's closet to get his clothes I climbed up and sat in his desk chair because it was so big and soft. There was a white piece of paper on the desk like the ones Daddy wrote on. It was only half-written but I didn't want to read it because Mommy should always be the first one to read a letter from Daddy.

Andy Sobel



Jeffery Erskine

Meet Me At The Alex Wonder Bar Goldie

It was just that I hadn't been here in years. The place has changed so. Alex died three years ago. The bar exchanged hands about four times since then. The wonder in my eyes has died a bit since then too. It has. Why do I feel as if I'm lying? I could never lie about myself, let alone anything to my one undying image of flash and fun that I could never pull in the reins on. Different drum, my ass. I don't know. Ever since I felt my small right finger pulled out of its socket and into your heart down the hall in front of your locker under the April sun I have had a hard time trying, no, not trying to pull it out but it's so damn tough to try, it really is, yet I don't try. I can't try. Bye. It was o.k. talking to you, looking at you shine. Yeah, maybe, I'll try not to get drunk next time. What? What did you say? Oh, I always thought it was my small right finger. Maybe you're right. Remember, I hadn't been there in years.

Thomas Karoff

Satin Shoes in Muddy Waters

Splashing
Puddled drops
First
Slap cement
Then
Splatter

Heated headlamps
Pitch
White fire
Scalding
Memories black

Searing
satin crepe
chiffon
Sparing
satin red

Red satin shoes
Outshine the light
But not
The air-borne brown
Of muddy waters

Walking
Still
I hear the footsteps
Of sullied satin shoes

Marcy Wilder

Yudis Prize for Fiction Winner

A Haunting Memory

I was sitting in my room at the maple wood desk my father made for me two Christmases ago, when I heard a faint whistling coming from the crack under my door. I got up and glanced in the mirror over my bed, to see if I had broken out since I came home from school, then walked to the door and pressed my ear against it. That darn baby, crying again. I'm not going to pick her up; mama told me she would leave me in the crib and let me cry all day long; she said it made my lungs strong. Daddy will tend to her anyhow. I went back to the corner of my room and turned on my desk lamp; it was getting dark outside, and just having the ceiling light on strained my eyes. Poor reading light, mama called it. I sat down and picked up the history book. I hadn't done any work all week; it was too heavy to carry home every day. Our class was reading about the Civil War and the best parts of the book were the vivid details of each battle; more violence occurred in ten pages than in twenty years in this town. I sat there for a few minutes, trying to read and concentrate on each line of the page I stared at, but I kept thinking of my sister's crying; it reminded me of something I wanted to forget.

* * * *

I remembered the heat and how sick it made me feel, as we walked two short blocks to our church on Easter Sunday. My mother made me wear an outfit she bought for me the week before: white patent leather shoes, pink socks with white lace, a pink ruffled dress with a big bow which tied around my back, and a white hat. Everything was one size too small; I had grown a little since last year and my mother wasn't thinking when she cleared off the sale rack at Montgomery Ward's.

We were walking along the edge of the church lawn when I thought of the brown withered palm leaf I forgot to bring. My Sunday school teacher told us, last week, to bring our palms back to church next Sunday so we could talk about the Easter story from the very beginning and the significance of the palms. I didn't care about what the palms symbolized. I used them in sword fights against that new red-haired kid who always sat in the back row of the church.

Reverend Holister stood at the church door, wearing a long black robe and swaying from side to side, giving each foot a moment of relief. He greeted us with a forced smile. I don't think he ever forgave Daddy for taking money from the treasury; Daddy used it to buy the adjoining property and expand the church. The congregation was pleased with the idea; Rev. Holister saw it as an unnecessary expense. I smelled the sweetness of Daddy's cologne as he stepped into the lobby; he always wore it with the Navy blue suit which matched his eyes. The



Bruce Rasmussen

Self-Portrait

Rev. held out his hand to help my mother into the lobby; she grabbed it and held on to the white cardigan sweater draped over her shoulders. I followed them, kissed my mother goodbye, and walked down the steep spiraling staircase to my Sunday school classroom. Everyone was sitting around the four card tables wearing their new outfits. I walked over to where my friend Jane was sitting. She told me about what happened when she went to the department store with her mother, and how her voice was drowned out by the loud discussion between her mother and the salesclerk about which dress to buy.

"I don't go with my mother to shop for clothes; I figure that she likes to do it, so I'll let her enjoy it now while she can."

"Who are those two over there?"

"I don't know, I think they are brother and sister—the girl's nose is a little bigger than his. It makes her look stuck up."

The room grew quiet as Kenny, the teacher, entered with a bible clutched under his arm. He wore his coke bottle glasses on the edge of his nose; sometimes he took them off during class and showed his ugly, beady eyes.

"All right class, did you bring your palms in today?" I looked around and saw everyone pull out their palm leaves from their bags, laps and pockets.

"Where is yours, Claudia?"

"I left it at home. Sorry."

"That's okay."

I know; the discussion isn't important anyhow.

For the next half hour I sat in my chair, staring at the small speck of dust in the middle of my table.

"Claudia, could you please stand up and tell us what happened after Jesus saw Pontius Pilate?"

As I slowly got up from my chair, the superintendent peeked in the classroom and told us that the assembly meeting started in about 5 minutes. Thank God.

"Class is dismissed. Claudia, may I speak to you for a second?"

I hated when I was singled out from the rest of the class by the teacher; the worst part was when my friends asked me about every detail afterwards.

"Next time, listen in class. You might learn something, you know."

I rolled my eyes and walked upstairs. I noticed my father standing in the lobby, talking to Debbie Jean, one of the few unmarried women in the congregation. It bothered me. Jane walked over and asked what was wrong. I wanted to tell her everything I felt at that moment.

"Nothing. Let's go inside."

The sun seeped through the brightly colored stained glass windows, creating a picture of God on the ten rows of pews; I sat down in the second row and the wood warmed my thighs. Jane and I were the last ones to enter and sit down; the superintendent gave us a disgusted look, but continued to talk about the Easter egg hunt and other activities held later in the day. I

used to be excited about running through the grass in the church yard, looking for brightly colored easter eggs among the scattered piles of cow dung; now I was more concerned with taking of my mother and "growing up."

Assembly was over several minutes after I came in. Everyone gathered in the lobby to talk with family and friends, and the church swelled with people. I walked to the back of the church, near the entrance door, and watched everyone walk in. I noticed a lot of familiar faces from last year's Easter service. My mother's face glowed as she sat in the second row from the front with Mrs. Hagsdale, Jane's mother. Mama enjoyed being pregnant. She told me that it was heaven-sent; no matter how long it took, if you asked hard enough for something, and if you really wanted it, your prayers would be answered.

"Its been a long time since I've been pregnant with you. I didn't think it was going to happen again, but I guess it was just meant to be; I just had to sit around and wait for it for a while."

I couldn't believe it, that the baby was heaven-sent; she was just lucky that she was pregnant again.

I was baptized two years ago in the small muddy pond in the woods behind the church. I felt a chill in the small of my back as the Rev. put me under the water. I cried after I came out. I cried all day long—for the first time I knew how the old ladies felt when they cried every Sunday during the sermon. Since then, I've lost my faith; maybe I lost it on the way home from

an exam in which I depended on my faith to get me through it and not how much I knew. Mama said that one day my faith would be tested; until then, I was not worried about it.

The choir marched in, and regular service began. I sat next to my mother. Reverend Holister talked about the "Easter Story"; I read through each line of "Nearer my God to thee" in the hymn book, trying to find a meaning in each word, a meaning which I could not find alone. Something inside told me to turn around and see what my friends were doing. Instead I saw my father, sitting next to that woman, whispering in her ear. I quickly turned around and looked at my mother, who was intently listening to Rev. Holister. She probably didn't know about any of this. I wondered how well he knew her and how long he had been seeing her. All those nights when he was supposedly out with friends, he was with her, alone, looking into her eyes, caressing her long black hair, and kissing her, slowly, on the ear and neck. My body grew hot with anger. I felt betrayed.

The sun was embedded deep in the cloudy sky as we walked home together, my father's arm across my mother's shoulders. He kissed her passionately on the cheek and said I love you. My mother trusted my father, she told me her vows were sacred. When we entered the house, my father walked to the den, pulling his tie from his neck, and I followed my mother into the kitchen, which smelled of sweet meat and vegetables. She tried to reach the plates on



Raymond A. Masse

Feminist Theologian

the top shelf of the cabinet; I helped her by standing on the foot stool near the sink and stretching my arms until my ribs felt tight. I managed to reach the small stack of porcelain dishes wedged in the corner of the cabinet. Mama put the roast and green beans on the table and feebly called to Daddy down the hall. It took him a few minutes to get up from the soft-backed lounge chair he always sat in to relax after church; his brown ragged slippers hung off his feet as he shuffled into the kitchen. We sat down, and Daddy said grace. I watched their heads bowed as they said prayers. I considered myself privileged; I was able to keep my eyes open during prayer, and not be seen. When he finished I made it look like I had said grace with them by closing my eyes just before amen. It was quiet around the table. I listened to every chewing sound, and each scrape of my fork on my plate; I could feel the slow hush of wind coming from the window on top of the sink, caressing my neck.

"Church service was nice today, wasn't it Tom?"

"Yes, it was. We attracted quite a large crowd. I was surprised. Folks usually don't come out on a hot day like this." I studied my mother's face; it still glowed. My father's face showed no trace of guilt.

"Hurry up and eat your dinner child, before it gets cold."

* * * *

My father got up from the table, put his

dishes in the sink, and stared at the setting sun and the patterns of pink and white that traced the sky. He stood there for a long time; it was as if time had stopped for a minute, as if he were given a few extra moments to think. My mother's stomach was resting on the edge of the table; she looked at me and smiled, the way she always smiled at me, like I was a little girl.

"I'm going out visiting. I'll be back later tonight." He went into the den, grabbed his hat, and walked out the door. I helped my mother out of her chair and told her that I'd take care of everything in the kitchen. She patted my hand and slowly walked through the door, holding her back with the palm of her hand. I began scrubbing the dried food on the plates with soap and small pieces of steel wool.

"Claudia!"

I rushed into the room and saw her sitting in the old rocking chair, clutching her stomach. I was frightened by her tears and the deep wrinkles pasted on her forehead.

"Call the doctor!"

I ran into the living room and picked up the phone book. My palms were bathed in sweat, each page stuck to my fingers. I trembled inside. The minutes dragged by; I couldn't find the number I desperately needed. My mother had stopped crying; I was afraid to go in and see her. Wild thoughts went through my head; of God help me, please, help me now. I breathed in deeply, and noticed the number printed on the top of the back page of the phone book.

* * * *

I had fallen asleep on the green tweed couch in the lounge area. The clicking of keen-toed sandals down the hallway woke me up. My father sat across from me with his hat on his lap.

"The doctor called me and told me what happened."

"Where were you?"

"I went back to church. They had something going on all evening there." His eyes gleamed as he spoke. He was lying.

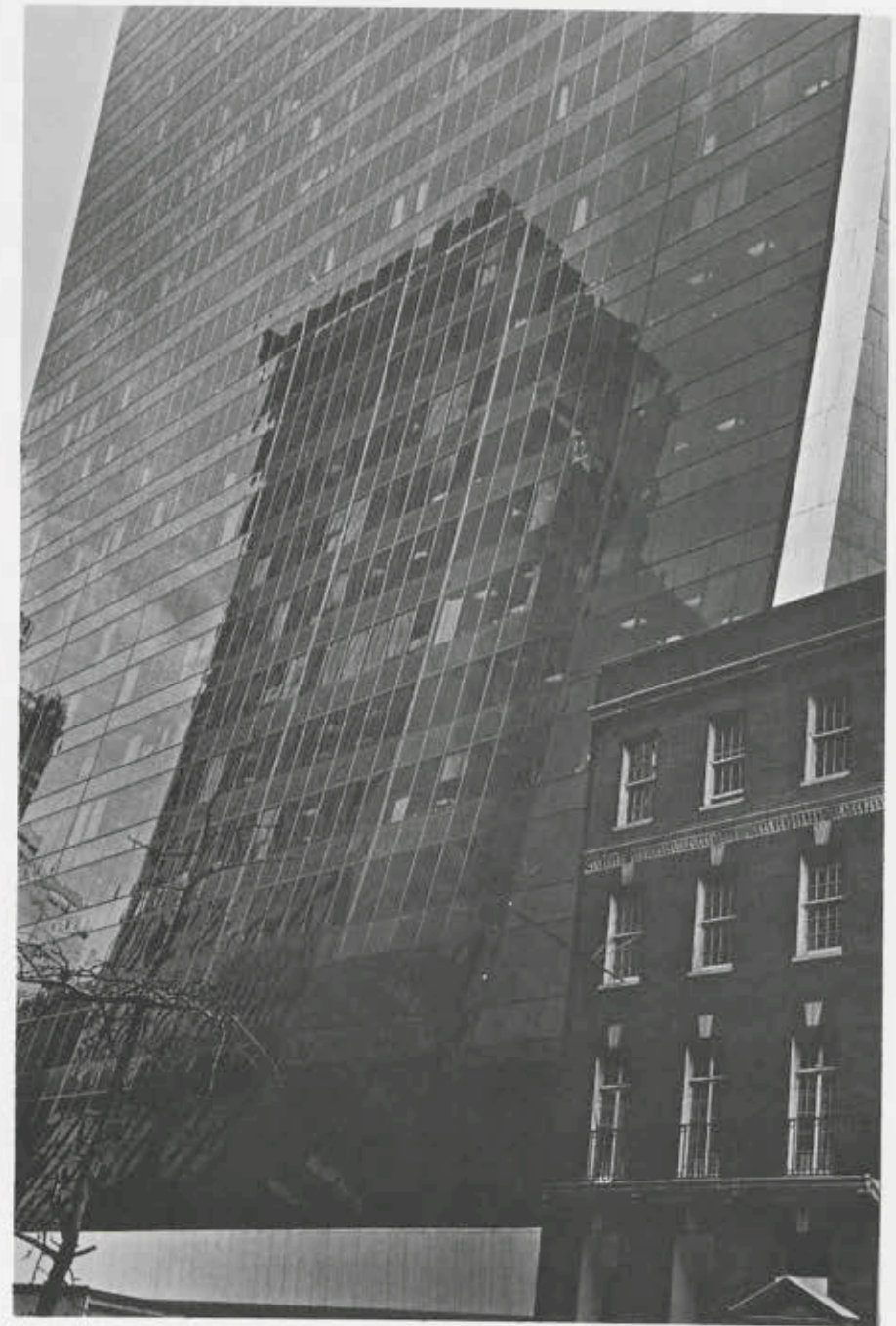
"Your Mama is only 8 months pregnant, you know. This hospital isn't as good as those big city hospitals, with modern facilities and all that. I hope everything goes along okay. You did good, callin' the doctor and everything."

A white-robed man appeared through the swinging doors of the lounge.

"You have a new baby girl."

I looked at his expressionless face; I knew something was wrong. He silently looked down at his feet. I turned my head, and noticed a cross hanging on the wall.

Beverly Graham



Raymond A. Masse

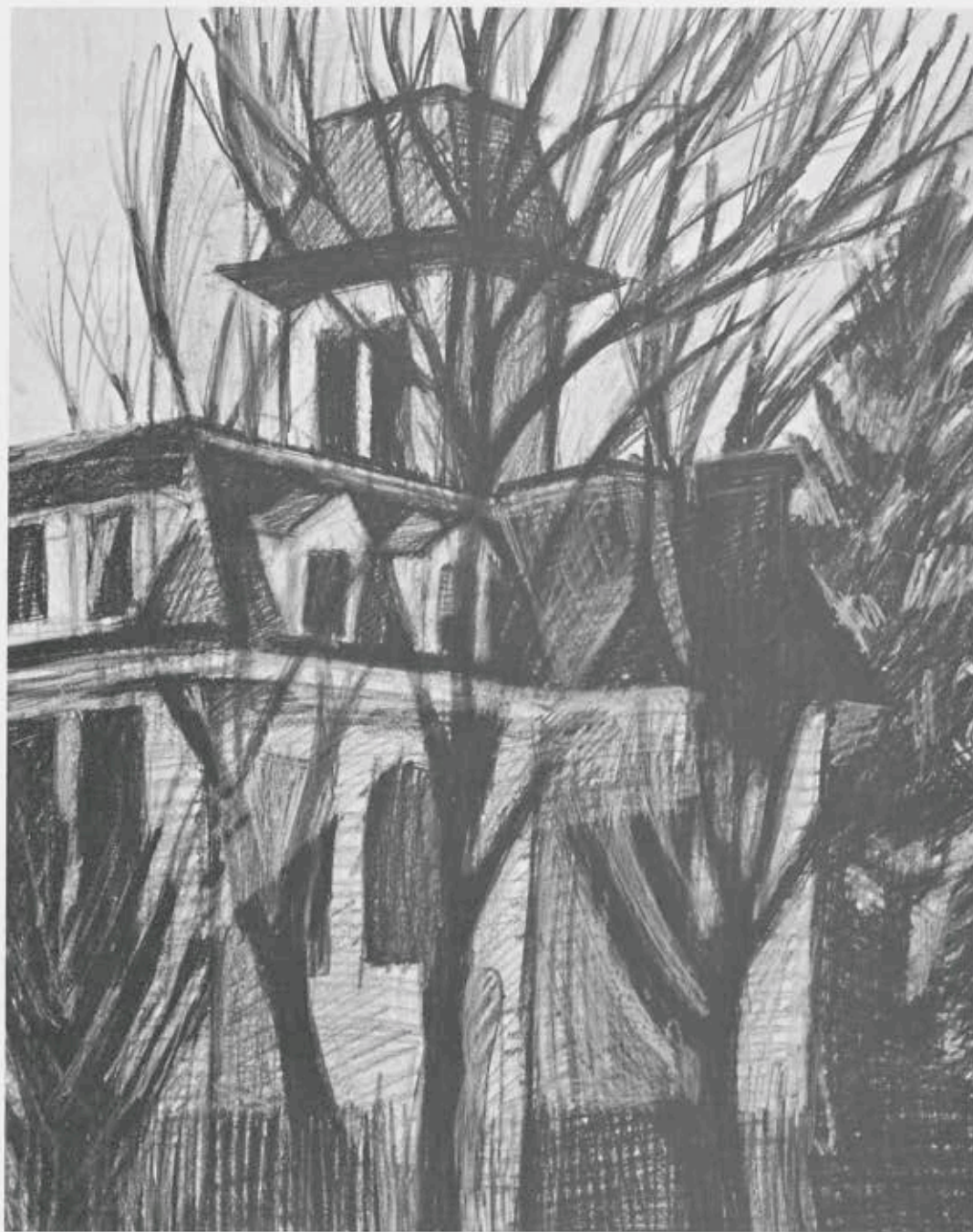


Amy Zimmerman

Suicide like the horizon
out of big windows
under big skies
rolling over
everything rolling over
softly falling edges.
I sleep at night.
I wake up on schedule.
Days rise and set.
Shadows always move.
Some things are always the same,
the curve of the earth like love,
the shape of mountains like glory,
the arc of the knife, mundane,
like the weather.
Nothing you can do about it.
But live with it. Pay the rent.
See a show. The radio won't work.
Lights pop. Windows crack. Men

keep walking by on pavement.
Life moves out of big windows.
Gorgeous days,
over and over and over again
until sometimes the light is too pretty
to look at, too human to look at.
Certain thoughts like the sun
over and over and over again
until everyday the heavens burn
and a dead coffee cup
holds the secret of living
and I don't know what to do with it.
and I can't stop thinking these things.
I can't stop thinking these things.
Please don't call again.
I've got to go.
No more rooms with views.
There's too much to do.

G. Jones



Katy Briber



One Shadow of Liberation

Father sits in the ancient chair,
And rocks with knees held tight,
Toes pinched together,
Letters on his lap and in hands,
While mother sits nearby,
In the corner of a sofa for four,
Glancing with ringed blue eyes through
 strands of hair
That have escaped from their band,
At a crisp shining "Nursing Journal,"
While the kettle yells,
And the phone hails,

A brother,
Whose "communication device"
Never rings thrice
Who eats, goofs, collects and
Loves to press perfect numbers on
 precise buttons,
Compared to her who does not love precision
 at all,

But loves these three figures
Seen through opaque blue-green eyes
Each turning to their own degrees,
And casting strange angles on she
Whose image vibrates on these tongues
Which spin her
Into a Botticellian smooth soft Grace
Belonging to a wrinkled canvas past,

Planning a smooth surface for the future,
So she can easily slide
Into Degas dancers, Brueghel bouncers,
 Michelangelo Marys,
To jump into the
Evil pearls of a dark forest, if she'd rather,
Proving to each of them,
That they no longer need
To fit the past-grace so gracefully.

Shawne T. McCord

The soft mouth of clouds would catch on the hooks
 of his words,
 and he would un-reel.
 From bunched cords
 in his belly, semiotics would swell up, sluice up
 through his throat,
 and un-coil through the gap
 in his clenched front teeth.
 He could feel it,
 see it swallowed by
 the solid breath of the sky.
 (A dark skinned acrobat,
 the muscles of his neck and shoulders popping,
 hung with iron teeth)
 Saliva would trickle down
 to the end
 of long sentences, making soft, pink noise,
 until
 the clouds would move, rolling up under the stratosphere
 and being coy.
 And then the cords got tight, and yanked up taut
 he'd let loose, and fly...
 wordless wet small-talk
 passing mouth to mouth on that slim connection, the seams opening up
 like immense sad orchids, his howling pushing through
 the soft, white condensation
 he was dangling by his muscled tongue,
 he was hooked on the lies that bind, he was all done up
 until the barbs ripped out of his mouth and tore
 the marbled smoothness in the hollow below his arms and snapped
 the tendons of his inner thighs...
 (the mark of vociferous sighs pressed there
 like thumbs
 in spoken flesh)
 until he would drop, dazed with release,
 calm as free-falling steel,
 the taste of his own blood
 as sweet as that first adolescent love
 and its
 unspoken fantasies.

Composition 1

This poem was read by 3 stoned hippies, who, after about 15 years of almost constantly studying it, returned it to Montgomery-Ward's with a false sales slip, claiming it was defective. Montgomery-Ward repackaged it under the title: "Borax—The Cleanser of Our Souls", and sold it to a small boy with a Fisher-Price pull-toy, (the author). I think that the boy's father took this poem from him when he got home, but in any case, we have it now.

Edward P. Sinkora



Jane Engel

Self-Portrait

Sketch in Blue

The mountaintops are midnight blue like a Crayola, and they fade darkly into a blue sky heavy with thunder. Those who sleep and wake in the mountains' womb know this time is for watching, listening. The dusk-dimmed figure knows, and stuffs her hands into her pockets as she crosses the crest. Her empty hands can't hold the mountains' purpling mounds, but the picture stays with her.

Below the crest now, her walk relaxes as she gathers speed from the decline. She watches the thick evening clouds darken the pale, almost-winter blue of the western sky. Twenty minutes and the entire sky will be a single stroke of color, bold as a child's first crayon drawings. But, unlike those impassioned strokes, the paper can't be held; only the picture stays.

The walk from the crest to her house goes quickly, and the woman clomps the last steps down the road even before night replaces dusk. The dog rejoices at her arrival; their nightly ritual has begun. She has to shake her hands before feeding him, for they are large, and stiffen from her pocket's cramped space. She smiles as Cut thumps his tail against her bony legs, strong from years of walking, twice a day, those two miles to the barn.

Placing each foot carefully upon each step, Norah pauses now and again to watch moths congregate around the porch light and

recklessly fling themselves at its meager warmth. The night is chilly to Norah, too, and she pulls her sweater tighter.

The new addition to Norah and Cut's ritual yammers at the pleasant silence that, until last week, surrounded them at this time every night. "I'm coming, I'm coming," Norah mutters as she enters the house, though the telephone interrupts even her unaimed words.

Her knobby hands grasp the receiver. Their largeness almost is overcome by its unyielding plastic, like tenacious Virginia Creeper that unfurls around the unforgiving post. Norah answers the phone's ring with an equally ungracious "hello?" She knows, from a long week of experience, whose voice would answer back and what it would say.

Hello Ma.

Yes, Ruthie?

Is everything all right tonight, Ma?

Yes Ruthie.

Are you sure?

Yes Ruthie.

How are the animals?

We're all fine Ruthie.

C'mon, Ma . . . how can you be fine? You got to be lonely. It's so many years you been there all alone. Please, Ma; now me 'n' Jimmy have been settled for a while, and we can take care of you, we want to take care of you. I get so scared thinking, seein' you out there with just them animals. Even Cut's got so old he couldn't protect you. How can you be fine Ma, how can you say so?

Norah's hands clench and unclench, the unmarked rhythm of leaves falling or an old woman's tidy footsteps. The fist is not empty now as Norah envisions her daughter's flatland life, but that picture won't stay.

Ruthie, I been telling you but you just won't listen. I like it here! I'm strong, and Cut's got nothin' to protect me from.

But you're all alone and you can't move fast like you used to. How can you like it when every day and night you do the same old thing, and you just got Cut to talk to when you finish?

My eyes are good Ruthie. Every time I'm out I look at the colors around me. I watch young things be borned and grow old and die, and me still left here watching. And I tell myself, "Norah, you're lucky." I think how much I like this place, how good it is to me. Now my hands argue a bit when I pick things up, sure, but I reckon they hold all that needs to be held, and these old eyes still see to the back ridge. I couldn't take sitting all day, Ruthie. I'd be sad knowin' I wasn't a part of this place any more.

I guess you won't come stay with us, then?

That's right Ruthie. You're a good girl, but I'm your mama to take care of you. I already got something taking care of me. Now, you best let me go. This'll be costing you too much money.

Ma, please, are you sure?

Yes Ruthie.

You'll take care of yourself?

Yes Ruthie.

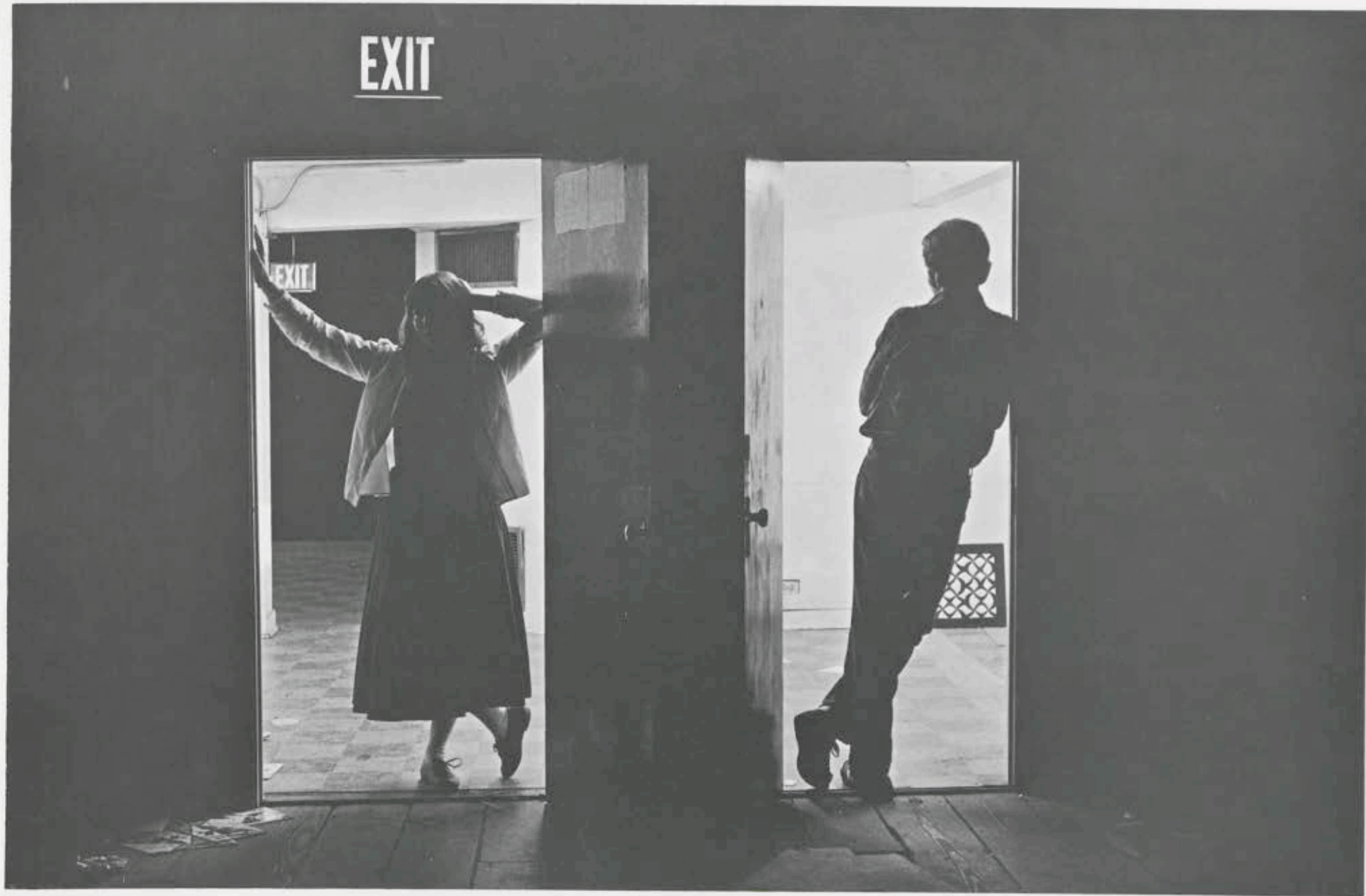
Well...bye Ma.

'Bye Ruthie.

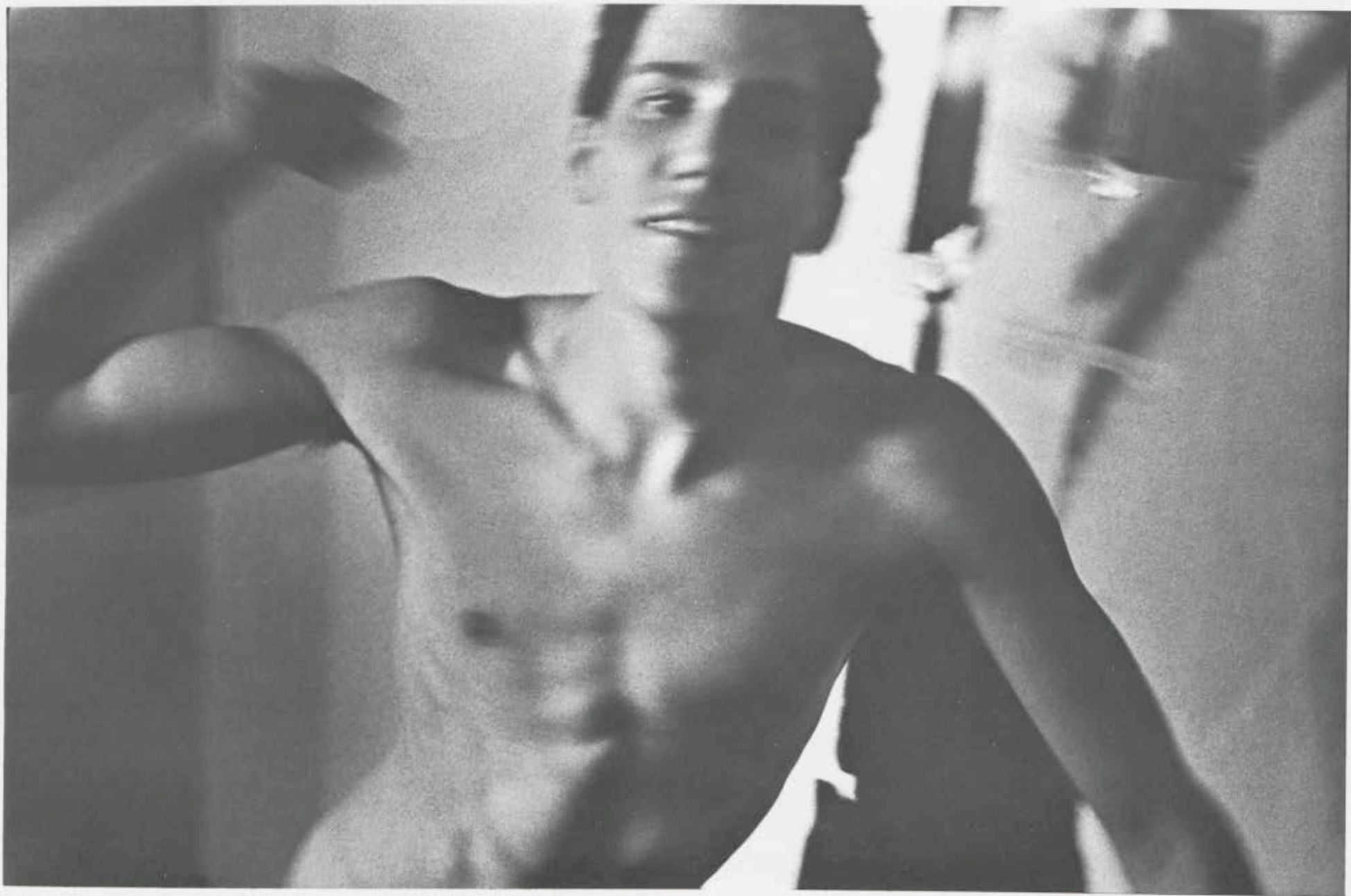
The hands put the receiver to rest, the argument asleep at last. Norah walks to the door, looks out at Cut as he lies waiting for the ritual's conclusion. "'Night, Cut," and the light clicks. She waits, looking out, for her eyes to accustom themselves to the minimal light of the storm-heavy, night-blue sky. The woman's figure stands enrobed by the dark, watches the dog's shape settle into a sleepy mound before she picks her way to the bedroom.

Nora lies curled in bed. Her hands rest easily on the quilt they fashioned long before she slept under it alone. As she grows warm enough to sleep, the heavy clouds unclench their knotted fists. The rain, strangely warm for October, keeps time with the soft staccato of the sleeping woman's breath.

Mary M. Richardson



Raymond A. Masse



G. Jones

Running/Happy/Mike

War

Winters aren't as cold now
as then—they're just a reminder
of a time when
there were bills to pay
and work every day
me and my daughter Emily
made uniforms in an Army factory

Husband died young years before
and my youthful sons
went off to fight a war.

I made the suits my sons
would die in.
Sewed the seams that would be torn
with youthful dreams.
Pressed the sleeves that
they would cry in.
I made the suits my sons
would die in.

Peaceful times come and go
I'm eighty-one
I ought to know.
So if you find yourself
working in an Army factory
Pray to God you do not
make your children's misery.

Mandy Abrams

Yudis Prize for Fiction Winner

Sylvia

Sylvia paced across the room to the window. Her gaze wandered across the large, carefully kept lawn surrounding the house, paused momentarily in the orchard beyond the lawn, and then hurried down to the boys swimming close to shore in the large lake. She let out a long breath, almost a sigh, of a mixture of loneliness and simple melancholy. She turned from the window and looked at the clock.

It was already four o'clock, and it didn't look as though Vic would come out to the old house today. Sylvia turned to the window again, to gaze down the long gravel driveway, which connected the house to a maze of other roads. Occasionally, Vic would turn off of that maze and come up to the house to see her. More often, though, he didn't, and Sylvia spent the afternoons gazing out of the window at the boys swimming naked in the lake. She shifted her gaze from the driveway to the boys.

The boys were too far away for her to make out any features, but she was now able to tell them apart. The black haired boy was the largest, and often dunked the others. The brown haired boy, whose hair was getting lighter as the southern summer wore on, was the smallest, and the quickest. It seemed that he

and the black-haired boy were friends, for he often got away with sneaking up from behind and dunking the black-haired boy, which none of the others had ever done. There was also the red-headed boy, who somehow stayed pale in the hot sun, and often sat on the edge. When he did swim, he would swim out farther than the others, although he always finished last in the races that the others would often organize along the shore. Today, Sylvia noticed, there were two girls swimming with the boys. They, too, were naked, but their bodies were too young to distinguish them from the boys from such a distance. Instead, Sylvia was able to separate them because of their longer hair and the way they acted. They would swim together most of the time and never took part in the races along the shore.

Sylvia was never able to learn much about the girls, because none of them showed up frequently. The two who were swimming today, one with long brown hair and the other with shoulder length blonde hair, had appeared at the lake for three days now, and Sylvia would be surprised if they showed up many more times. Girls never did, although Sylvia had never seen anything happen that would prevent them from coming as often as the boys. They simply didn't.

Sylvia's gaze returned to the driveway. She was sure now that Vic would not be coming today. He would remain on that maze of roads beyond her driveway, and she would remain at the window, until the boys and girls left the

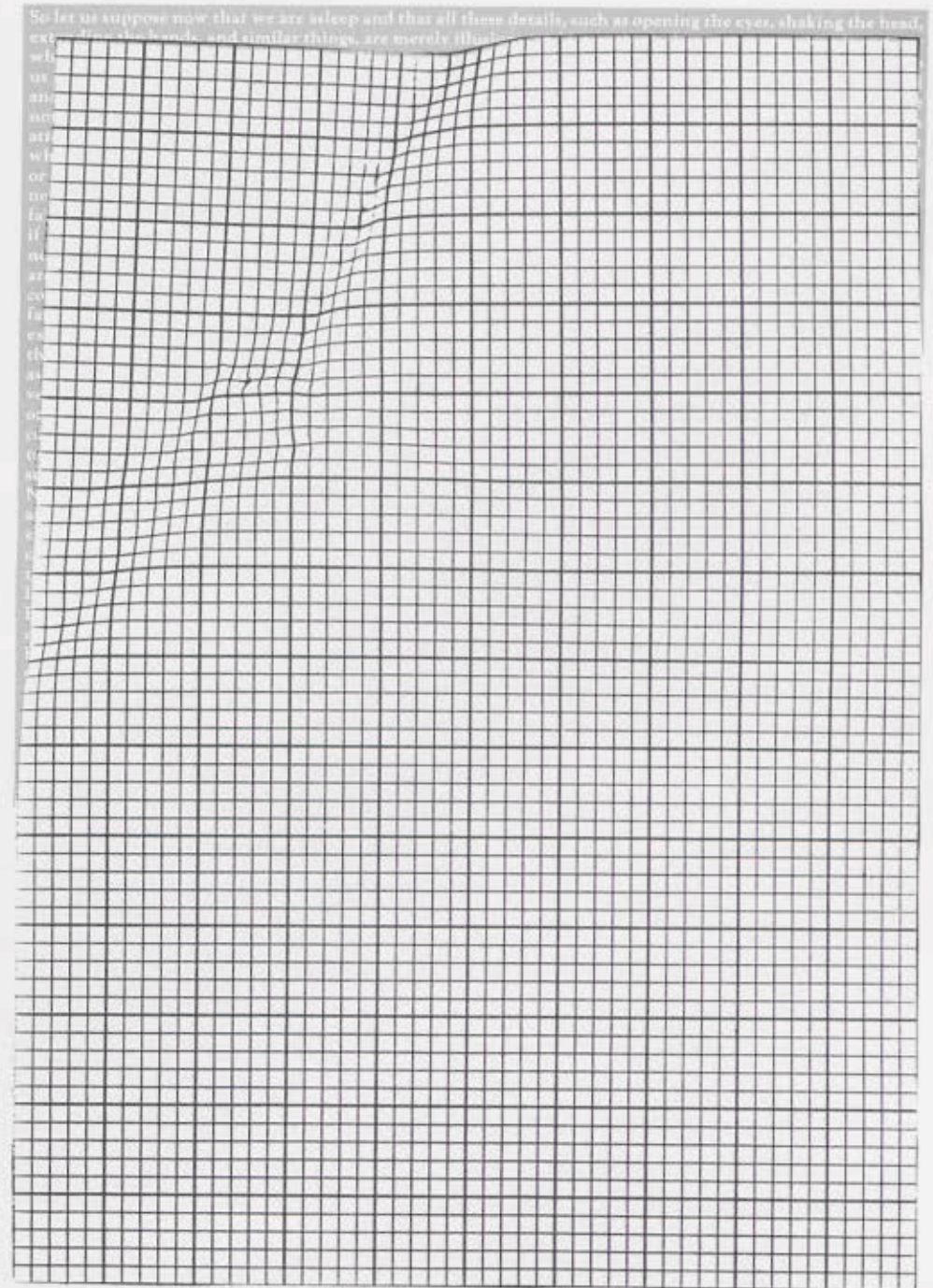
lake to go home for dinner, and the day dimmed into night.

The boys and girls were now splashing each other. She could tell that they were laughing and shrieking. She was too far away to hear them clearly. Perhaps if she could hear them, she would hear notes of nervousness in the shrieks and laughter of the girls. She doubted it, though.

* * * *

When the boys and girls had gotten out of the lake, dried themselves off and gone home for dinner, and the day had dimmed to dusk, Sylvia lay down on the couch. As night came on, and the crickets began their southern music, she decided that she would go swimming alone that night, as she often did. She had always loved swimming in the lake, and she often considered the days that she spent swimming with the boys as the most unblemished days she had ever enjoyed. The easy comradery she had shared both with the boys and with herself remained unmatched in adult life. Even the time she spent with Vic seemed a shallow and empty substitute for those times. The only moments that even approached those exuberant and innocent days were the times when she went out to swim alone. Laying on the couch now, she wondered, as she often did, how, exactly, those days had ended, and why.

* * * *



Xerox Piece 2.1

There never was a real reason for Sylvia to stop swimming with the boys, at least that she could remember. The summer that she had stopped was the summer that her body had started to change, and that had something to do with it. It wasn't anything so definite. She just began to feel uncomfortable about her swimming, and she stopped going after a while, although she never could say why. Of course, her parents started to seem disapproving, but they had never really told her to stop. There was never any single statement they made that made her stop swimming. There just was a general feeling, that she should not go to the lake with the boys anymore, and she stopped.

It wasn't only that, though. She had disobeyed her parents before, and she had even gone swimming with the boys after her parents had started indicating vague disapproval. It was almost as if something had stirred up within herself, as if some other part within her had told her to stop. She simply felt odd with the boys, and she couldn't be sure why. She became suspicious of the way the boys looked at her, although she really couldn't find that they were looking at her any differently than they always had. Nothing had obviously changed, and even the changes in her body, she knew, were so subtle as to be almost unnoticeable. All that she could be sure of was that her attitudes had changed, and that she became nervous and suspicious.

She had tried to hold on to those days by fighting against the odd feelings that she was

having. Perhaps if she had a swimming suit, she thought, it would be different. Her mother had taken her into town to pick one out, and she picked out a bright, striped one that she thought was beautiful. When she got dressed in it and went swimming with the boys, though, she found that it didn't help. She still felt odd and ashamed, and soon she stopped going altogether. She realized that even if all the boys had started wearing swimming suits, too, things would still be different. Things had changed, subtly and inexplicably, but definitely and permanently.

Sylvia had made up her own mind to stop swimming with the boys in the lake, but she still somehow felt cheated. She had loved those warm afternoons in the lake, and she didn't understand how they had been spoiled. There was nothing that she could blame it on. There was never an ultimatum from her parents. There was never an incident with the boys which had made it clear that she was no longer welcome, or no longer welcome in the same way. There was never any of that. There was nothing, really, and yet there was a change. Sylvia felt cheated that there had never been anything that she could struggle with or understand.

* * * *

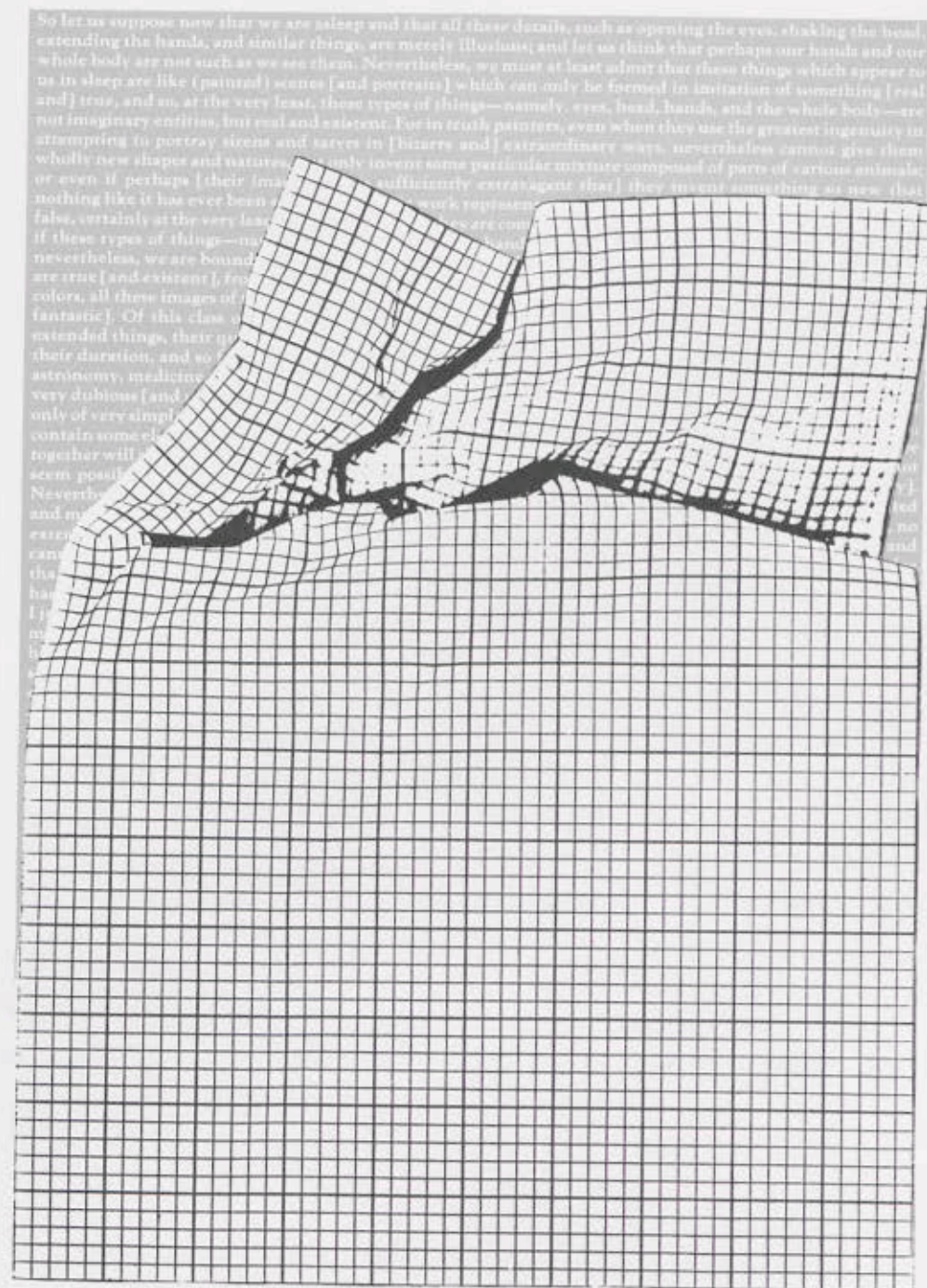
The full moon shone over the lake, over the orchard, and over the house on the hill. Inside, Sylvia was getting ready for her swim. It was a warm summer night, at once silent and

full of sound. There were no trucks or cars to be heard on the highways, and yet there were night birds sounding their calls over the moonlit landscape. There were no children shouting down by the lake, but the sound of the gentle waves coming in on the shore filled the air all around. The night was quiet, and yet there was much to be heard.

In the house, Sylvia took off the loose cotton dress she had worn that day. As she reached for the terry cloth robe she would wear down to the lake, she saw her naked body in the mirror. Vic often told her that it was a beautiful body, and yet it just seemed plain to her. Vic often told her that her breasts were "full" and "firm," but to her, they were just outgrowths on her chest. Vic often told her that her skin was "smooth" and "soft," but Sylvia knew of the tiny scars on her knees and elbows that she had earned when she was a happy tomboy. Sylvia was glad that her body was pleasing to someone else, and took a sort of pride in that fact, but she didn't really understand. Her body was her body, and if Vic enjoyed looking at it, that was fine with her, but, looking in the mirror now, she couldn't see why it was either good or bad. Sylvia turned away from the mirror, wrapped herself in her robe, and left the room, leaving the light on.

* * * *

Sylvia left her robe on the shore and walked slowly into the lake. The water was warm, and the calm waves welcomed her into



Xerox Piece 2.2

the water by gently massaging her body. When the water reached up to the middle of her stomach, she began to swim. She loved the way it felt when she went from walking in the water to swimming. It was almost as if she was walking along the sidewalk and began to fly. The same sort of weightlessness and freedom was there. She closed her eyes and rolled under water, rejoicing in the momentary freedom of not knowing what was up and down. Then she soared to the surface, bursting through the surface and gulping in fresh air. Sylvia then turned and swam out on the surface of the water, her arms and legs working in perfect time to propel her so that she felt as if she were skimming across the surface of the water. Sylvia swam farther and farther from the shore of the large lake, exulting in the way the water and the strength of her body made her feel as close to absolute freedom as she could ever feel. Floating, diving, soaring, Sylvia swam out in the depths of the lake until her limbs began to get weary, and then she began to return to shore.

Sylvia guided herself back towards the shore where she had left by looking up and swimming toward the light which she had left shining in her room. Sylvia swam slowly, partially because she was tired and also because she was in no hurry to leave the lake, in which she found her happiest moments. Gradually working her way in to shore, she began to hear the voices of boys. Looking ahead, she saw that the boys had returned to the shore for some midnight swimming.

Sylvia turned and swam out to the deeper water again. What could she do? She couldn't come into shore naked, in the full view of the boys. The moonlight was bright, and she couldn't possibly let the boys see her, fully developed woman. It wasn't so much that she hated to have people see her, but she hated the idea of shocking those young boys with her full breasts and the patch of hair at the top of her legs. The thought horrified her. She couldn't expose them to a naked woman coming in under the moonlight, dripping with water and awful sexuality. Sylvia swam out farther from shore.

Sylvia ruled out the idea of swimming to another part of the shore. Her robe was near where the boys were, and she couldn't go walking around the shore naked. No, she decided, she would just wait for the boys to finish their swim before she would come in. She knew how to tread water. Her arms and legs were tired, though, from her wild swim. She had worn herself out in the enjoyment of her freedom. Her left leg began to cramp up.

* * * *

The boys were shocked when Sylvia came in.

"What's that?" the brown-haired boy asked, pointing out toward the middle of the moonlit lake.

"I don't know. It's probably just a log or something," the big, black-haired boy replied.

"Let's go find out." The boys all swam out

toward the thing floating in the lake. The pale, red-haired boy reached Sylvia first.

* * * *

The sheriff answered the call, got of bed, and reached for his pants.

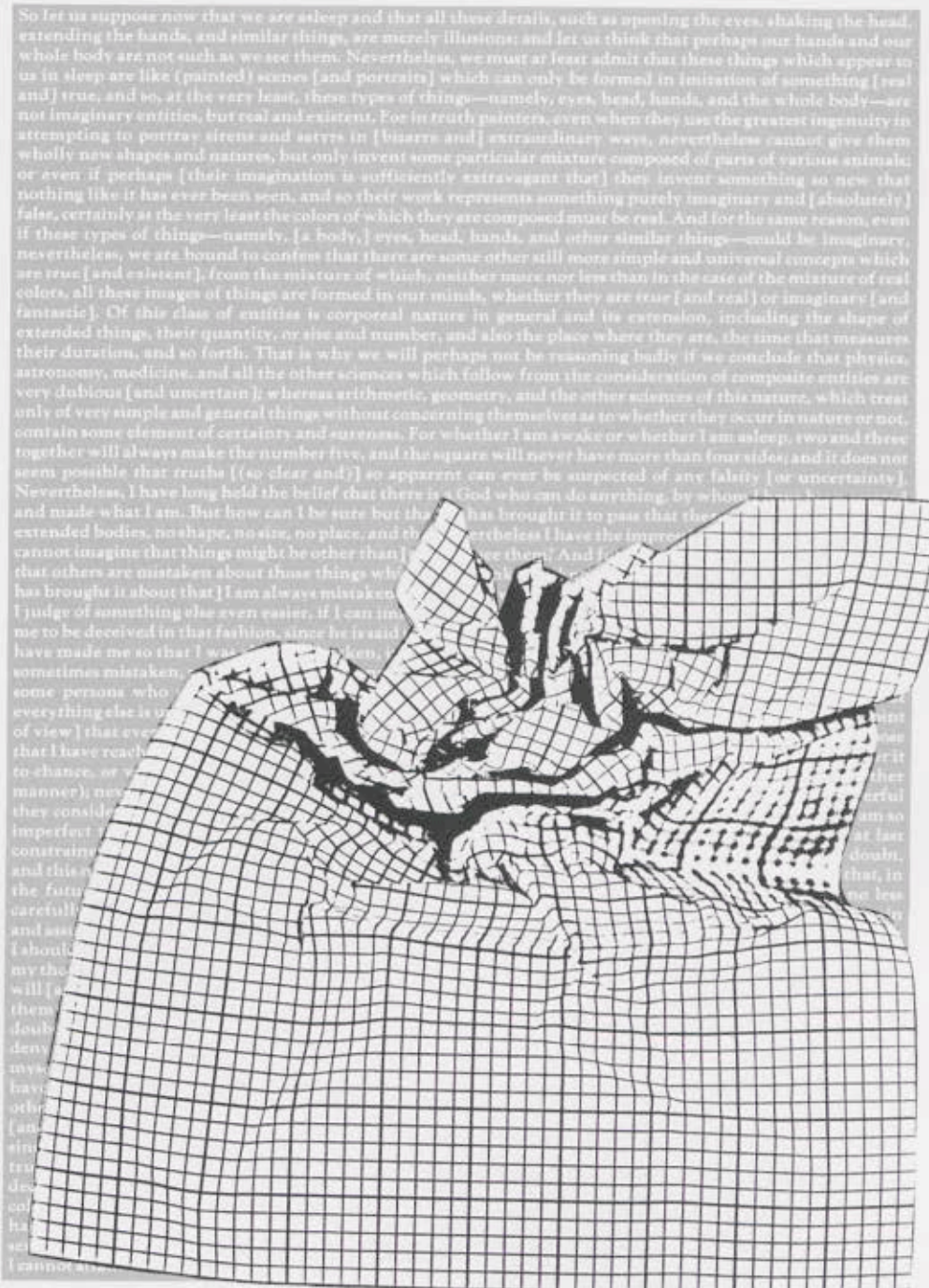
"What's going on, honey?" the sheriff's wife drowsily asked.

"Some boys found a woman drowned out in the lake. She was naked. Don't you worry your head about it. I'll be back later."

"Who was it? What was she doing in the lake without any clothes on?"

"It was that girl who lives in that big house by the lake. She must've been out skinny-dipping with that man she sees from time to time. You know. I better call him up and find out if he knows anything about it. What was his name, anyhow?"

Dan Ryan



Academy of American Poets Prize Winner

To her husband

You stand here beside me now. There is a new
mat on the bed. Are you welcoming me back?
Now there are new kao-liang stalks on
 the roof. . .
Silence—what is it you are thinking of now?

A long time ago, do you remember, Jen?
When your father set down the two packages
on the table—dark red paper, white letters.
I picked them both up (they sighed, did
 you notice?)
And they prepared the sedan chair for our day.
Out of fear, though—I took them but I
 was scared.

And that is why I ran away. I watched you
that night, talking with Kao Li-san on the porch,
tongueing the scum from your teeth and
 scraping it
off with your black fingernails, smudging it on
paper to glue your cigarette together.
I was afraid of getting prettily wrapped
presents I would have no choice but to accept.

So I let him drag me along the snowpath,
dry snow like hot, burning sand searing my feet,
bound in rags—aching, numbing, all the way to
Ma-t'ou Market? We would never make it there,
I thought, watching him sleeping—he was
 sleeping
in straw mats, a cocoon planted deep in snow,
still shivering, breath rising into the sky
like the smoke—like the smoke from your
 cigarette.

And he knew we would never make it. He knew.
For when I woke the next morning, he was gone.

And I saw myself, watching from the inside—
and the smoke rising from your black
silhouettes.

I won't run anymore. I'll let it well up
inside me, let my body bloat with the thought.
I will let it bloat until I have burst.
And I will let all of the woven straw fray.
Most live like that—most just let it fester.

I stumbled back to Lu yin, temple of the
Three Forces—the priest knew me and let me in.
But feet cannot be unbound by water or
protected by earth, and the incense offered
no relief from heaven. I stayed there four days.
And you found me, took me back to
Kuei-ch'ang.

Here we are, you in the doorway watching me,
I want to tell you everything, Jen, about . . .
but I won't—
most of them just let it fester.

James Heinegg

So let us suppose now that we are asleep and that all these details, such as opening the eyes, shaking the head, extending the hands, and similar things, are merely illusions; and let us think that perhaps our hands and our whole body are not such as we see them. Nevertheless, we must at least admit that these things which appear to us in sleep are like (painted) scenes (and portraits) which can only be formed in imitation of something [real and] true, and so, at the very least, these types of things—namely, eyes, head, hands, and the whole body—are not imaginary entities, but real and existent. For in truth painters, even when they use the greatest ingenuity in attempting to portray scenes and natures in [bizarre and] extraordinary ways, nevertheless cannot give them wholly new shapes and natures, but only invent some particular mixture composed of parts of various animals or even if perhaps [their imagination is sufficiently extravagant that] they invent something so new that nothing like it has ever been seen, and so their work represents something purely imaginary and [absolutely] false, certainly at the very least the colors of which they are composed must be real. And for the same reason, even if these types of things—namely, [a body,] eyes, head, hands, and other similar things—could be imaginary, nevertheless, we are bound to confess that there are some other still more simple and universal concepts which are true [and existent], from the mixture of which, no less than in the case of the mixture of real colors, all these images of things are formed in our minds, whether they are true [and real] or imaginary [and fantastic]. Of this class of entities is corporeal nature in general and its extension, including the shape of extended things, their quantity, or size and number, and also the place where they are, the time that measures their duration, and so forth. That is why we will perhaps not be reasoning badly if we conclude that physics, astronomy, medicine, and all the other sciences which follow from the consideration of composite entities are very dubious [and uncertain]; whereas arithmetic, geometry, and the other sciences of this nature, which treat only of very simple and general things without concerning themselves as to whether they occur in nature or not, contain some element of certainty and assurance. For whether I am awake or whether I am asleep, two and three together will always make the number five, and the square will never have more than four sides, and it does not seem possible that truths [so clear and] so apparent can ever be suspected of any falsity [or uncertainty]. Nevertheless, I have long held the belief that there is a God who can do anything, by whom I have been created and made what I am. But how can I be sure but that he has brought it to pass that there is no earth, no sky, no extended bodies, no shape, no size, no place, and that nevertheless I have the impressions of all these things [and cannot imagine that things might be other than] as I now see them? And furthermore, just as I sometimes judge that others are mistaken about those things which they think they know best, how can I be sure but that [God has brought it about that] I am always mistaken when I add two and three or count the sides of a square, or when I judge of something else even easier, if I can imagine anything easier than that? But perhaps God did not wish me to be deceived in that fashion, since he is said to be supremely good. But if it was repugnant to his goodness to have made me so that I was always mistaken, it would seem also to be inconsistent for him to permit me to be sometimes mistaken, and nevertheless I cannot doubt that he does permit it. At this point there will perhaps be some persons who would prefer to deny the existence of so powerful a God, rather than to believe that everything else is uncertain. Let us not oppose them for the moment, and let us assume [according to their point of view] that everything which I have said here about God is fictitious, even in whatever way they suppose that I have reached the state of being that I now have, whether they attribute this state to chance or refer it to chance, or whether they wish to explain it as the result of some other cause, in any manner; nevertheless, since to err and be mistaken is a kind of evil, and since they desire to avoid any other evil, they consider the author to whom they attribute my origin, to be imperfect, that I am always mistaken. To this I am constrained to admit that there is nothing in what I have said here about God, and this not for lack of thought and attention, but for the imperfect nature of the future. I should [withhold] and I should carefully from believing them, and I should be assured knowledge [in the] future. I should take care to bear in mind that I am not my thoughts, my long and short, and I should almost in making them and having faith in them, as I have just said, I should doubt them. That is why I am myself in pretending to have so balanced my thoughts, and my judgments, and my judgments, and the straightness of the line, since it is not possible for God, I who am so deceitful than people, colors, shapes, sounds, and so forth, has used to trick my senses, yet falsely believe that I can not attain the knowledge of the truth.



Jeffery Erskine

Vernal

What stunted creature
forages, aged
here beneath the thirsty heather
of a rustling silent moor.

An anchored moon
falters
across the starless arc
a bitter glow
metallic sharp
seeking to be swallowed
by a crouching tarn of jet
a weary season,
slack mouthed
craving.

This windless dawn
the blighted earth yields
to hoary blades of green
straining for azure.

Beth Propper

So let us suppose now that we are asleep and that all these details, such as opening the eyes, shaking the head, extending the hands, and similar things, are merely illusions; and let us think that perhaps our hands and our whole body are not such as we see them. Nevertheless, we must at least admit that these things which appear to us in sleep are like (painted) scenes [and portraits] which can only be formed in imitation of something [real and] true, and so, at the very least, these types of things—namely, eyes, head, hands, and the whole body—are not imaginary entities, but real and existent. For in truth painters, even when they use the greatest ingenuity in attempting to portray sirens and satyrs in [bizarre and] extraordinary ways, nevertheless cannot give them wholly new shapes and natures, but only invent some particular mixture composed of parts of various animals; or even if perhaps [their imagination is sufficiently extravagant that] they invent something so new that nothing like it has ever been seen, and so their work represents something purely imaginary and [absolutely] false, certainly at the very least the colors of which they are composed must be real. And for the same reason, even if these types of things—namely, [a body,] eyes, head, hands, and other similar things—could be imaginary, nevertheless, we are bound to confess that there are some other still more simple and universal concepts which are true [and existent], from the mixture of which, neither more nor less than in the case of the mixture of real colors, all these images of things are formed in our minds, whether they are true [and real] or imaginary [and fantastic]. Of this class of entities is corporeal nature in general and its extension, including the shape of extended things, their quantity, or size and number, and also the place where they are, the time that measures their duration, and so forth. That is why we will perhaps not be reasoning badly if we conclude that physics, astronomy, medicine, and all the other sciences which follow from the consideration of composite entities are very dubious [and uncertain]; whereas arithmetic, geometry, and the other sciences of this nature, which treat only of very simple and general things without concerning themselves as to whether they occur in nature or not, contain some element of certainty and sureness. For whether I am awake or whether I am asleep, two and three together will always make the number five, and the square will never have more than four sides; and it does not seem possible that truths [so clear and] so apparent can ever be suspected of any fallacy [or uncertainty]. Nevertheless, I have long held the belief that there is a God who can do anything, by whom I have been created and made what I am. But how can I be sure but that he has brought it to pass that there is no earth, no sky, no extended bodies, no shape, no size, no place, and that nevertheless I have the impressions of all these things [and cannot imagine that things might be other than] as I now see them? And furthermore, just as I sometimes judge that others are mistaken about those things which they think they know best, how can I be sure but that [God has brought it about that] I am always mistaken when I add two and three or count the sides of a square, or when I judge of something else even easier, if I can imagine anything easier than that? But perhaps God did not wish me to be deceived in that fashion, since he is said to be supremely good. But if it was repugnant to his goodness to have made me so that I was always mistaken, it would seem also to be inconsistent for him to permit me to be sometimes mistaken, and nevertheless I cannot doubt that he does permit it. At this point there will perhaps be some persons who would prefer to deny the existence of so powerful a God, rather than to believe that everything else is uncertain. Let us not oppose them for the moment, and let us concede [according to their point of view] that everything which I have stated here about God is fictitious. Then in whatever way they suppose that I have reached the state of being that I now have, whether they attribute it to some destiny or fate or refer it to chance, or whether they wish to explain it as the result of a combination or interplay of events (or in any other manner); nevertheless, since to err and be mistaken is a kind of imperfection, to whatever degree less powerful they consider the author to whom they attribute my origin, (and how probable that I am so imperfect that I am always mistaken. To this reasoning, I have already replied in the preceding chapter; and I am at last constrained to admit that there is nothing in what I formerly thought of which I can now somehow doubt, and this not for lack of thought and attention, but for want of a more powerful author. I find that, in the future, I should [withhold and suspend my judgment] about all these things, and myself no less carefully from believing them than I should from believing the dreams of others. And any certain and assured knowledge [in the sciences]. It is not enough to say that I should take care to bear them in mind. For these things, which I have just now recurred to in my thoughts, my long and familiar acquaintance with them, and the great number of times that I have used them will [and almost to make themselves masters of me] I have not been able to doubt, as I have just shown, even if I had been able to doubt them. That is why I think that I would be doing myself in pretending for some time that I have so balanced my former and my new judgment, and my judgment will not be false [and the] straight road leading to the truth. Since it is not now a question of attaining to the knowledge of a true [and] God, (who is very good and) who is not so deceitful than powerful, has been so often deceived by colors, shapes, sounds, and all the other things which I have just now recurred to in my senses, yet falsely believing that I had attained to the knowledge of any truth, and that all that is in my mind is true.



Xerox Piece 2.5

Deliverance Sought

"squeal like a pig"

I Serious

The air is moved
by my motion.
No wind exists
a sheath of warmth,
fluid parts for my progress.

II Heartbreak

Telekinesis into telepsoriasis:
the ability to cause
skin disorders—at a distance
by power of mind
eczema from Bronx to Schenectady
no charge

III Picture Tube

She had an obvious thing
for T.E. Lawrence
(of Arabia)
Orson Welles spoke of deepest wells
from which bubbles rise.
She saw her mission purified
glorious flapping figure
obscene white grace
cumbersome black shapes
midnight in the IRT trainyard,
green bottle grasped overhead
spraypaint approval, can clamor.
She stopped washing
and blew up
spontaneous combustion, you know.

IV My Part

"I read, much of the night, and go south in
the winter."

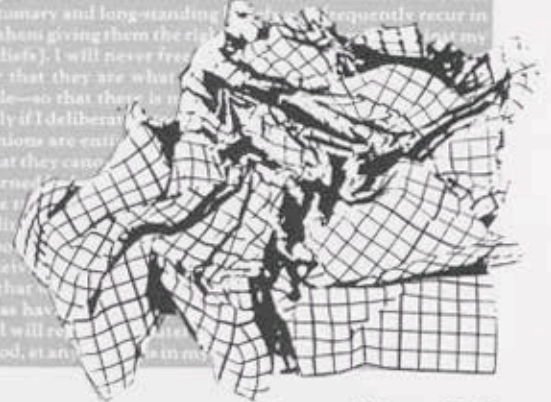
too many poets
too many films

Sit in the shade of Moroccan secrets
grasp that whiskey
dangle that hand-rolled butt
from a strong jawed pair of lips.
Ask Sam
a black man
a constant
piano pain
requested echoes.
Hit that table
controlled anger of memories
the head does not lower
the camera follows.

V Classical Tragedy It's Not

Beth Proppe

So let us suppose now that we are asleep and that all these details, such as opening the eyes, shaking the head, extending the hands, and similar things, are merely illusions; and let us think that perhaps our hands and our whole body are not such as we see them. Nevertheless, we must at least admit that these things which appear to us in sleep are like (painted) scenes (and portraits) which can only be formed in imitation of something (real and) true, and so, at the very least, these types of things—namely, eyes, head, hands, and the whole body—are not imaginary entities, but real and existent. For in truth painters, even when they use the greatest ingenuity in attempting to portray sirens and satyrs in [bizarre and] extraordinary ways, nevertheless cannot give them wholly new shapes and natures, but only invent some particular mixture composed of parts of various animals; or even if perhaps [their imagination is sufficiently] extravagant that [they invent something so new that] nothing like it has ever been seen, and so their work represents something purely imaginary and [absolutely] false, certainly at the very least the colors of which they are composed must be real. And for the same reason, even if these types of things—namely, [a body,] eyes, head, hands, and other smaller things—could be imaginary, nevertheless, we are bound to confess that there are some other still more simple and universal concepts which are true [and existent], from the mixture of which, neither more nor less than in the case of the mixture of real colors, all these images of things are formed in our minds, whether they are true [and real] or imaginary [and fantastic]. Of this class of entities is corporeal nature in general and its extension, including the shape of extended things, their quantity, or size and number, and also the place where they are, the time that measures their duration, and so forth. That is why we will perhaps not be reasoning badly if we conclude that physics, astronomy, medicine, and all the other sciences which follow from the consideration of composite entities are very dubious [and uncertain]; whereas arithmetic, geometry, and the other sciences of this nature, which treat only of very simple and general things without concerning themselves as to whether they occur in nature or not, contain some element of certainty and sureness. For whether I am awake or whether I am asleep, two and three together will always make the number five, and the square will never have more than four sides; and it does not seem possible that truths [so clear and] so apparent can ever be suspected of any falsity [or uncertainty]. Nevertheless, I have long held the belief that there is a God who can do anything, by whom I have been created and made what I am. But how can I be sure but that he has brought it to pass that there is no earth, no sky, no extended bodies, no shape, no size, no place, and that nevertheless I have the impressions of all these things [and cannot imagine that things might be other than] as I now see them? And furthermore, just as I sometimes judge that others are mistaken about those things which they think they know best, how can I be sure but that [God has brought it about that] I am always mistaken when I add two and three or count the sides of a square, or when I judge of something else even easier, if I can imagine anything easier than that? But perhaps God did not wish me to be deceived in that fashion, since he is said to be supremely good. But if it was repugnant to his goodness to have made me so that I was always mistaken, it would seem also to be inconsistent for him to permit me to be sometimes mistaken, and nevertheless I cannot doubt that he does permit it. At this point there will perhaps be some persons who would prefer to deny the existence of so powerful a God, rather than to believe that everything else is uncertain. Let us not oppose them for the moment, and let us concede [according to their point of view] that everything which I have stated here about God is fictitious. Then in whatever way they suppose that I have reached the state of being that I now have, whether they attribute it to some destiny or fate or refer it to chance, or whether they wish to explain it as the result of a continual interplay of events (or in any other manner); nevertheless, since to err and be mistaken is a kind of imperfection, to whatever degree less powerful they consider the author to whom they attribute my origin, in that degree it will be more probable that I am so imperfect that I am always mistaken. To this reasoning, certainly, I have nothing to reply; and I am at last constrained to admit that there is nothing in what I formerly believed to be true which I cannot somehow doubt, and this not for lack of thought and attention, but for weighty and well-considered reasons. Thus I find that, in the future, I should [withhold and suspend my judgment about these matters, and] guard myself no less carefully from believing them than I should from believing what is manifestly false if I wish to find any certain and assured knowledge [in the sciences]. It is not enough to have made these observations; it is also necessary that I should take care to bear them in mind. For these customary and long-standing errors, which frequently recur in my thoughts, my long and familiar acquaintance with them giving them the risk of being accepted as true, I will [and almost to make themselves masters of my beliefs], I will never free myself from them and having faith in them as long as I consider that they are what I have just shown to be doubtful, as I have just shown, even if highly probable—so that there is no need to deny them. That is why I think that I would not do badly if I deliberately pretend for some time that all these opinions are entirely true, and that I have never had any doubts about them. I have so balanced my former and my new prejudices that they cannot be overcome by any other, and my judgment will not be [mastered and] turned away from the truth, but will remain [and the] straight road leading to the knowledge of the truth. Since it is not now a question of acting, but only of [meditating on] the truth, I will not be deceived by the [true] God, (who is very good and) who is the supreme source of all truth, and who is not so deceitful than powerful, has bent all his efforts to deceive me, by showing me colors, shapes, sounds, and all other objective things [that I have just shown to be doubtful], which he has used to trick my credulity. I will consider myself as having been deceived, and yet falsely believing that I have all these things. I will recognize that I cannot attain the knowledge of any truth by this method, and that I am in no way



Xerox Piece 2.6



Jeffery Erskine

Answer

In bed,
Propped like a weed
Through snow,

The patient checks his nameband
Like a watch—
'Koppler, Daniel, M.'—

Half throws his hand
Onto the overstarched sheets
And considers the ceiling-squares:

Six times three— the telephone
Rings— minus the bathroom—
The telephone rings.

The telephone rings: "Hello."
"No, no 'Couples' or 'Kopplers'
Here, sorry."

One, two—
The telephone rings—
The telephone rings.

Glenn Pearl

obsessions 1
itsnearly midnight
andi wantacigarette
andihearvoicesinthelounge
(andicant smokeinmyroom)
andidontsmokemosttimesanyway

obsessions 2
therearelotsofm&mwrappersonmydesk
ten i think
theyremindmeofthetime
youatethirtyminihersheysandleft
thewrappersalloveryourtrunk

Irene Basterl



Raymond A. Masse

Daggett Street



Sarah McMahon

Blemish

Academy of American Poets Prize Winner

Touching Cloves

for Eleanor

Walking,
Brisk, brisk but
the morning is hot
and the air
too

The air is all
sweet sunlight on haystacks
Sluggish summer light,
lavender,
falls

Lavender
Like the sachets I hated
Such sweetness
smelling up the drawers

I wanted cloves
Spice of cold mornings
Autumn
when leaves rot

spice, and
brisk
Like the humor I loved,
Brisk,
Hard like
cloves,
hard
Not soft like flowers

Cloves in fingers
In hair
The spice of morning
Not this morning
too sweet with
flowers

Not this morning
so hot,
Tomorrow
walk faster
Brisk,

Walk brisk into Autumn
Smell cloves

Mary M. Richardson

Black Curtains

Thick black curtains covered the small sheltered window from the sight on the other side.

Curious, are you my dear reader, as to exactly what it is that lies on the other side of those thick black curtains? It could be a most horrid sight. But then again, it could be a most divine vision. A lot depends on yourself and how well you will receive it.

James, oh James. James is our butler here at Rigby Mansion. Aaaaaah. There's James. Look at him: tall, trim, handsome, idyllic deportment, and an impeccable character. He truly looks most delightful in black and white, don't you think? James, would you be so kind as to draw back the curtains and show us the view. The thick black curtains James.

Why of course Sir. Right away.

James strides smoothly over to the curtained window and reaches for the chord. His hand meets the chord and an electric-blue flash of energy fries poor James into a smoking pile of ashes.

Poor James you say? My my, don't worry about that, we have plenty more where he came from. James, Oh James.

Much to our relief, another James exactly like the first arrives smiling the same pleasing smile, carrying the same perfect deportment, and waiting to serve his master, The Lord of Rigby Mansion, with his total devotion.

Please James, bring the maid and have her clean up this untidy mess here by the curtains. Yes Sir. I'll be back momentarily.

True to his word and character, James returns with a very proper maid. He firmly and efficiently directs the pile of dust's removal. The maid curtsies and leaves.

James, would you now be so kind as to open the thick black curtains and reveal what is on the other side to our dear reader.

Why of course Sir. Right away.

James strides smoothly over to the curtained window and reaches for the chord. His hand meets the chord and an electric-blue flash of energy fries James into a smoking pile of ashes.

My, My. We do seem to be having a time trying to get this opened up for You. I'll just have to do it myself.

Sir Rigby, Lord of Rigby Mansion, elegantly and with as much pomp and circumstance as is fitting for one of his stature, strides toward the window. Stopping at the window, he turns gently, military style, towards us and speaks.

I would like to say something to you before I reveal what lies on the other side. On the other side lies something that we all know. Some people object to its presence and some people require it to feel comfortable with their lives. It is with us all so I suggest we must honor it with great respect. Now, if you will pay close attention, you shall see it revealed.

Sir Rigby, The Lord of Rigby Mansion,

also dressed in black and white for the
occasion, puts his hand around the draw chord
and dissipates into electric-blue, leaving yet
another pile of smoking ashes for the maid.

David Burnside

Junk Art

Brakes reclined
Birds flock science
Arrested in tin foil
Tomato

Sale away
Snow flies hidden
Netted by clowns
Soup

Pea-gene marbles
Wet lemon peel canopy
Never plans
Cans

Edward P. Sinkora

1/29/82 Trying to write V____'s
birthday present
and then this instead

When I hugged him
his skin was like rose touch.
The pressure was a hot room of thoughts
turned solid as flesh.
He was ready for bed.
He got up early everyday since she left
and was very productive
waiting for her return.
His life was in order.
He was only wearing sweatpants
and after all the recent thinking out,
all the trashing up bad the past of paper rooms,
giving him up and burning visions
to let him wait
elsewhere
his skin was a hot bed of roses pressing down.

I didn't let go.
He didn't let go.
I sorta bent my knees
to put my lips in the curve of his neck
like the swollen curves of big, taut peppers,
like the warm blankets of earth
laying over an open burial
in a flower garden,
and I just couldn't stop
just standing there.

I got a little wetness
on his shoulder and was embarassed.
I started to get big
and I wondered, maybe, if he did too.
But I didn't do anything to know.
Because action would kill it.
Would tear it up like a butcher's hook.
Would turn that brief flesh
back into memory.
I didn't want to let go.
His muscles were vines.

And then
when I was walking home through the snow,
I thought of small boys
running through fields,
and splitting open
warm tomatoes underfoot.
His skin was like rose touch.

G. Jones



Paul Nickelsburg

The Italian Artist

He draws
her portrait
magnificent colours

"It looks just like you, si?"

Raising a hand

He draws
my portrait
only black
lonely black

"It looks just like you, si?"

Margaret Shue



Sarah McMahon



Shawne T. McCord

Contributors

Mary M. Richardson wandered into poetry in the 6th grade, after years of loathing the art. Since that rather unexpected discovery that poetry can be fun, she has had work published in the *Cold Mountain Review*, *Ashville Arts Journal*, *Emerging Voices of N.C.*, *Appalachian Arts Journal*, *Idol*, and others. She hopes to continue wandering for a while at least.

Amy Zimmerman — Analytical Youthful Zealous Industrious Mature Mellow Expressive Realistic Mediator Achiever Natural.

Beth B. Propper, sister of Johnny B. Goode, recently has had both "Vernal" and "Deliverance Sought" purchased by the Rolling Stones for inclusion on their upcoming album *SATISNE SANUS EST?* All Proceeds to the Rebuild Washburn Hall Fund. Beth is currently attempting to receive a rejection notice from the *New Yorker*. It would look divine on the wall behind the peach moire divan.

Thomas Karoff is an English major with an interest in literature and creative writing.

Shawne T. McCord: Female 5'5", blonde hair, blue eyes, curved back, curved mind; enjoys writing, globe-trotting, artsy-fartsy snaz, swimming, nature, people, smiles, love, and the sun.

Glenn Pearl has been around.

Beverly Graham is a Junior Sociology/Political Science major from Colonie, New York. She hopes to become a lawyer and to pursue her newly acquired interest in creative writing.

Irene Basterl is a Political Science/History major from Pelham, New York. She plans to transfer to SUNY-Albany next fall to continue her education in Chinese studies. She is interested in poetry, classical music, and dance.

James Heinegg is from Delhi, New York. Serves him right.

Sarah McMahon survived the Cuban missile crisis, puberty on Long Island, and two years as a Mechanical Engineer major. Sarah hopes to make a film someday.

David Burnside was born in 1959 on a small farm near Preoria, was active in pulling legs in 1981, and currently is on his way to the Chip and Dale Art Colony in his ever-present quest for euphoria.

Marcy Wilder started her writing career in kindergarten where she learned to write her full name. Since that time she has been working on her autobiography entitled *Sweeping Generalizations*. Marcy writes both prose and poetry and her work has been published in *The Idol* and *Union Views*. She has recently received an Honorable Mention in the Yudis Prize Competition for Creative Writing.

Margaret Shue¹ (mar'grat shoo) n., pl, Mags. 1. One who pursues a career in journalism. 2. One who pursues a career as an English teacher. 3. One who pursues many careers. 4. One who often doesn't pursue.

Edward Sinkora is happy to have grown up in the Schenectady area, where he actually played marbles as a child! He lives for music, sunny

days, and those rare moments when an experience stops time completely. He still believes in Elvis, Santa Claus, and a free market economy.

Andy Sobel is a Senior Comparative Communist Studies major, and a native of Plandome Manor, New York, on Long Island's exclusive North Shore. He is admired by his friends as an amalgam of Wood, Allen, John Rockefeller, and Ron Duguay. Sobel's goal is to be a Chief Executive Officer and majority stockholder, probably on Madison Avenue. Ultimately Sobel's favorite color is plaid.

Jane Engel is from a suburb in New Jersey. After a four year interlude in Schenectady, she will be returning to the Garden state to use her Environmental Studies degree.

Dan Ryan is a Senior English major headed for law school somewhere in the Midwest. His collected works will be available in about 60 years.

Raymond A. Masse — 1710-1802.

Mandy Abrams — "Mon metier et mon art, c'est vivre." Moliere.

Paul Nickelsberg is a Senior Electrical Engineer major. One print appearing in this *Idol* also hangs in the Capital District Psychiatric Center as an Honorable Mention in the 4th annual photo regional.

Bruce Rasmusen comments on his work appearing in this *Idol*: "Self-Portrait and AΔΦ Halloween were both made in photo 1. I really didn't have the hang of making a good photo so I took a couple of images into the dark room and modified the hell out of them. The idea

being to create a photograph so far removed from reality that no one would notice the quality of the originals."

Bruce is looking forward to doing a lot of shooting next year in Europe.

Thomas Demarco is a Senior Economics major.

Karl Bahr deLeone is a Senior Arts major.

Jeffrey Erskine's photographic career began at the age of eleven when he first exposed himself to a group of unsuspecting friends. After much experimentation with box cameras and contact prints, he received his first enlarger two years later as a birthday present. Basically self-taught in the technical aspects of photography, Jeff has more recently honed his artistic bent during a year of study under the guidance of Marty Benjamin. As an aspiring businessman, Jeff has a finished-print-for-any-size budget.

Greg Jones

The following interview by Steve Monosson was conducted on May 17, 1982 in Mr. Jones' apartment and was not recorded on Maxell Tape or any other brand for that matter.

SM: Greg, what would you like your reading public to know about you?

GJ: Nothing.

SM: O.K.

Greg Jones appears courtesy of WEDGEWAY©.

Katy Briber describes drawing as "an attempt to explore (something) and understand it."

Katy recently transferred to Yale University to study art.

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