

IDOL III

# THE IDOL

*the Literary Quarterly*  
*of*  
UNION COLLEGE

*Dedicated to*  
MRS. JOCELYN HARVEY  
for "little, nameless, unremembered acts  
of kindness and of love."

— WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

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*Editors*  
Paul Andrews  
James Lieb

---

*Editorial Board*  
Peter Feldstein  
Louis Paravate  
William Thurston

---

*Consulting Faculty*  
Frank Gado

---

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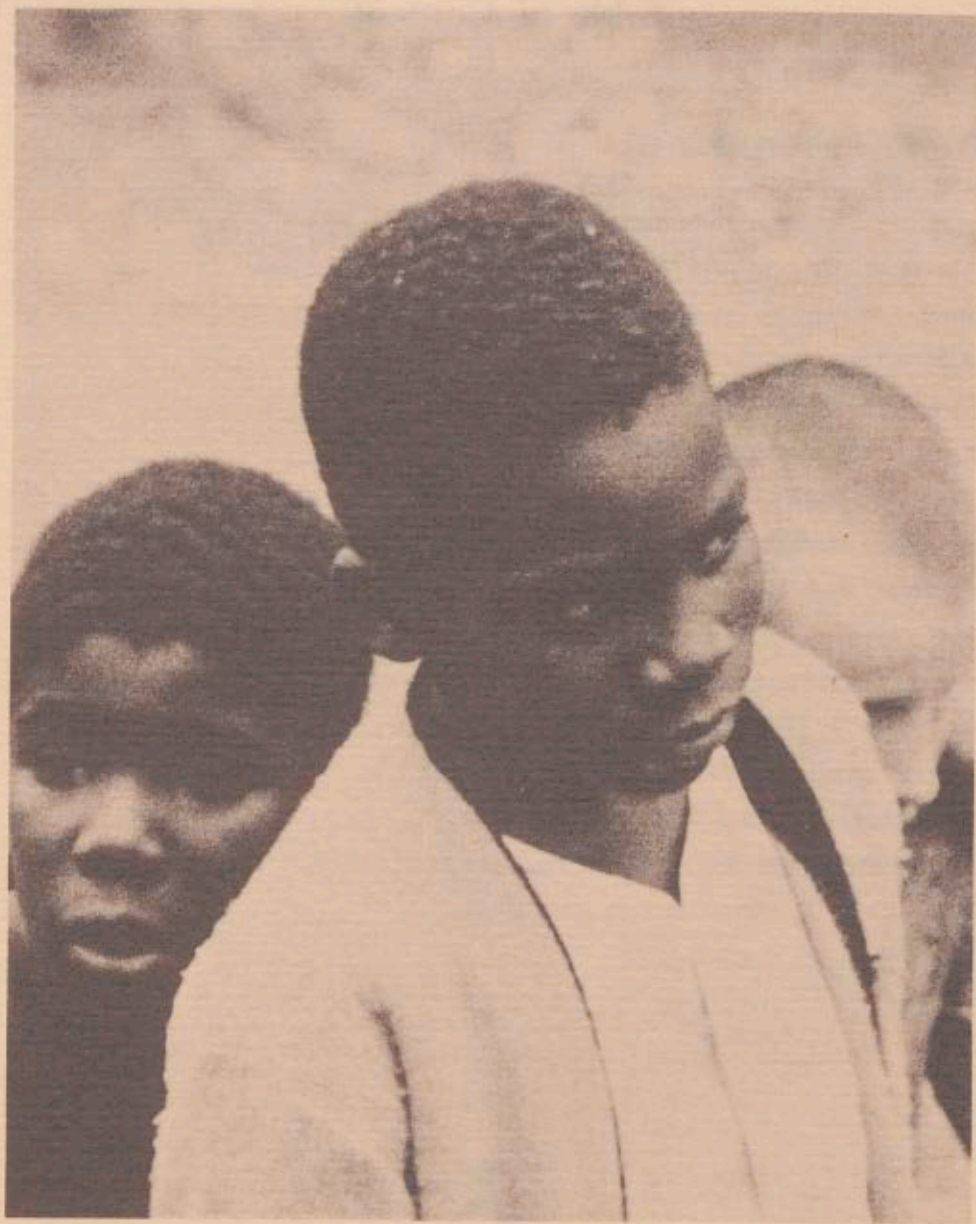
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## A Short Tale About One of Jack the Ripper's Earliest Childhood Memories

*A Short Tale About One of Jack the Ripper's Earliest Childhood Memories* by Ingmar Bergman has never before been published in the United States. Prof. Frank Gado of the English Department translated the piece.

\* \* \*

This tale is an excerpt from a longer story which relates why the Gangster writes poetry. The longer story, in turn, is part of a collection of sketches drawn from the world of the puppet theater. Appearing in these suggestive stories, besides the usual figures of Punch and Judy and the Gangster and his molls, is a man who stands outside the gallery and, mostly by mistake, has landed among the actors. This is Jack the Ripper, not to be confused with his English namesake, although he too is a man with a past. He is a tall dark *asteniker* who gains everyone's confidence and, in addition, has a knack for getting involved in the affairs of others. His intrusion will eventually have a decisive influence on Theobald Gangster's unhappy marital situation. The story which he tells here is one of the turning points in the lives of the puppet theater people, but it can also be read as a story which stands by itself.

\* \* \*

The Gangster got up, went to the closet, and removed a bottle of brandy. He handed it to Jack, who took a good drink, coughed, and grew red in the face, squalled like a cat and said:

— That was fine.

— Tell it now, said Theobald.

The kitchen door squeaked and it looked as though it were opening by itself.

— She's listening! Theobald whispered, rather pleased without knowing why.

And then Jack started his story.

— It was an old clock. She sat against the wall covered with flowery wallpaper and she was brown and over a meter tall. It was also a wallclock. Her roof was decorated with towers and other ornamentation. Her hands were very elegantly wrought, and her chime was deep, and her pendulum strokes were slow and dignified. It was my clock, it sat in my room, at a time when I was rich with lots of money — not like now, when I live under the staircase in an old broken down castle with a view through my big window of a field, a lake, and two factory smokestacks. Well, anyway, that's how it was then and the clock went on, day in and day out, faithfully, without my paying her any particular attention. And I went on living the life I enjoyed in those days — but that's another story. I had — and this is relevant — I had a little girlfriend at that time and that's what this story is about. She was short and red-haired and her name was Marie. She lived in the room where the clock hung on the wall. She had a long white neck — I remember that particularly — and a small well-shaped head but without



much sense in it. In short, I might as well say she was dumb. But she was a good girl and faithful and her body was far from unpleasant. I might almost say that I was unusually fond of her. One night when I was sleeping—it was, by the way, early in spring, I am always very tired then and sleep soundly—moreover, it was a beautiful time, the trees had just gotten that violet tinge, the nights were blue in a melancholy lingering twilight and my heart swelled and my blood was hot. Anyway, I was sleeping so well it was a sin when I suddenly saw Marie standing in the middle of the room. Her eyes were wild with fear, her body quivered all over, and she peeked into the room she lived in. As you know, dear Theobald, I have never been able to live with any woman unless we had a big place with at least two beds. In any case, I awoke in an instant and sat up. I could see outside the window the light of dawn and it rained and it was damn cold and grey.

—There's someone in there, Marie whispered, terribly shaken.

—What the hell are you saying, I said, using what was for me at that time unusually strong language.

—I can't say what it is, she screamed, and fell to the floor, her face having turned completely purple. I hopped out of the bed and ran to the chiffonier—I had such a piece of furniture in those days—it was brown and it stood in the middle of the window. From it I got out my best knife with the quickest blade, the one which cut the nicest and knew everything about men which a little knife needs to know. I took it and it lay well in my hand and I tiptoed into the other room from which Marie had just come.

At first I didn't see anything peculiar. Then I did see something peculiar: I suddenly discovered that the clock had stopped. I hadn't known that the clock was a dwelling for a person not more than three decimeters high, nor had I been aware that we knew each other and had met before in another place. Now the little man greeted me politely and smiled his sunniest smile and was above all officiously courteous. He had opened the clock's door, which was all of glass, and he sat on the edge, dangling his legs, and laughed and nodded all he could. "Do you remember me?", he said. "Remember when you were a little boy and my little boy and I came to visit you?" I remembered it; to make my story complete, I must tell you about this strange episode which occurred in the earliest days of my life.

I wasn't more than three years at the most and because my parents were dead, I lived at that time with my old grandmother, who was a widow and belonged to the upper middle class. I lived in her parlor in a bed which was placed there at night. There were white curtains and blinds in the room, and at night the street light shone in and projected images of the sea and ships and strange trees onto the greyish white ceiling which was like an eternal heaven with constantly changing scenery.

I used to lie there at night in that huge parlor and look at all sorts of things which moved about the room. The huge furniture creaked, the trees outside sighed, and the floors made squeaking and shuffling noises. One night as I lay there, I heard a strange sound from the foot of the bed, a very sad sound, of someone crying out in distress. I crawled down to the foot of the bed and looked down onto the floor. There, with her hands over her head, lay a little girl who wasn't any more than one and a half decimeters tall. She was so fine and so little and looked so unhappy that I stooped down and took her up into my bed very gently. She wore skirts and a little shirt and she had naked legs and no shoes and long hair; she looked at me, and I saw by her face that she was terribly frightened. But I played with her and caressed her with my forefinger and I was so overwhelmed by a feeling of desperate tenderness for this helpless little creature that I got tears in my eyes. I asked her if she had hurt herself, but she hadn't; it was



just that her pappa had left her for a moment. She wanted to go after him, but he had disappeared and she had gotten lost. Then she had become so tired, so tired . . . I felt wild with joy at being able to protect and caress her. I whispered to her that she should try to sleep a little. She smiled at me and shut her eyes and rolled herself up on the pillow and lay there looking as if she were asleep. I was completely still and looked at that little, little person who suddenly had come into my life and made it so rich with new possibilities. I was going to play with her every day. I was going to build a little house for her in my toy box; I was going to give her food; we were going to go out and she was going to sit in the little wagon with the yellow spokes. I felt so soft inside, as if I were going to melt and flow out of myself, as if my very young heart would burst with gratitude and joy. Instinctively I took off my nightshirt and lay there, naked, and stared at the tiny miniature person. I felt a little ashamed about that, but then nobody was going to find out. Be that as it may, I must have fallen asleep, because when I woke up, I saw a little man, it was the man in the clock, and he was making his way across the floor with my new acquaintance. She ran beside him like a wild calf and the nap of the rug reached to her knees. I shouted in terror, but they only turned around and looked frightened at me and then they started to run at high speed to escape from me; they were trying to get in under the china closet which was a gigantic shed for them at the other end of the room. Then I hopped out of bed, crawled under the table, and took a big jump to reach them. The little man had just made it under the china closet, but I got hold of the girl. She kicked and shrieked and bit and tried every way to get loose. The little man crawled out from under the closet and shrieked:

— Please let him go, please let him go, please let him go, please let him go.

— But it's a girl I said, staring at the little creature in my hand.

— No, it's my only son. We were going to go and congratulate an aunt on her fortieth birthday; that's why he dressed up like a girl — we just wanted to have some fun.

The last thing he said came as a desperate little shriek, halfway between a cry and a laugh.

— He is my only son.

Then something happened in my three year old heart, Theobald. Something terrible and horrible and disgusting. I was disgusted with myself, at my nakedness, at my softness, and my recent make believe. Everything came over me like a howling wind and a horrible nauseous smell. I held the little boy in my hand. His long hair tickled my finger and from his eyes ran terrified tears. His expression was wholly one of panic, of mad fear; cruelty hit me in my brain with his black claw and destroyed my tenderness. I clutched my hand harder around the frail little body. My child's hand clutched around the tender breast and with my thumb I felt a heart beating madly beneath the ribs. So I clutched still harder; I felt something crack and a little white fishbone came out through the blouse; around the hole, the cloth was stained dark red. For one moment I was afraid and I opened my hand and let the little boy down on the floor. I heard a scream from the father. The boy got up on his knees and reached one hand over his head, trying, from a terribly distorted position to get up to the china closet. But I was faster. I grabbed him by the leg and started to caress him. He tried to bite me and then I suddenly became furious. I opened the door and took out a sharp fruit knife. He screamed and I cut off his little head. There was a stain on the rug. I gathered everything together and wiped up as much of the stain as I could with some white notebook paper and I stuffed the little body into my pen case. I didn't see a trace of the father. After that, I went to bed and fell asleep exhausted. The next day I buried him in the pencease in the garden without having opened it.



And so, Theobald, I remembered all that had happened when I saw this little man sitting there swinging his legs from the open clock. I was seized with a dull hatred for him and I threw my knife at him. He dodged and the knife fell with a clink to the floor. I rushed up and tried to grab him, but he was quickly climbing up the chimes and he disappeared into the clockworks. In the same instant, both weights fell. One hit my right hand and my knuckle started to bleed. One little gear suddenly hung down, twisting back and forth as though it were on an invisible thread. The clock had stopped at 6 o'clock. I was terribly upset and began to cry. Marie came in and managed to get me to bed. I cried myself asleep in the cleavage between her breasts.

But here comes the worst part, dear Theobald. Every night for a week, in spite of our having taken the clock to the pawnbroker and our moving from hotel to hotel, the little man kept returning to frighten first Marie and then me. Things didn't calm down until I got rid of her.

—How did you do that, said Theobald, who had followed the story with breathless excitement.

—Well, in the usual way, naturally, Jack answered nonchalantly. She lay for quite some time in her own trunk at The Hotel Savoy. Then they discovered her and buried her. I was quite fond of her.

—Now you're lying, Theobald Gangster said. You never killed so much as a fly even once.

—No, maybe not, said Jack and smiled. I myself really don't know. It doesn't mean anything. It's a good story anyway.

Now Elin, who had been quiet the whole time, entered from the kitchen with a plate on which there was a kind of omelet, some dry shrimp, a piece of onion, a little vanilla sauce and some anchovies. They all helped themselves and had some fresh drinks; they ate in silence.

—My father's father, said the gangster after a while, my grandfather was a peculiar man, a man of unusual qualities.

—That's interesting said Jack and swallowed an anchovy dipped in vanilla sauce.

—He was very old when he died. My mother and I lived with him. He was always full of care about everything living and he expressed himself very graciously. I suppose I got my poetic gift from grandfather.

—That's interesting said Jack and he ate the omelet because he was hungry.

He knew Kasper's father very well. And he often used to talk about when he was hanged. Kasper took part in the execution. That's why I feel so sorry for Kasper. He was only a little boy at the time.





## The Seasonal Ascent

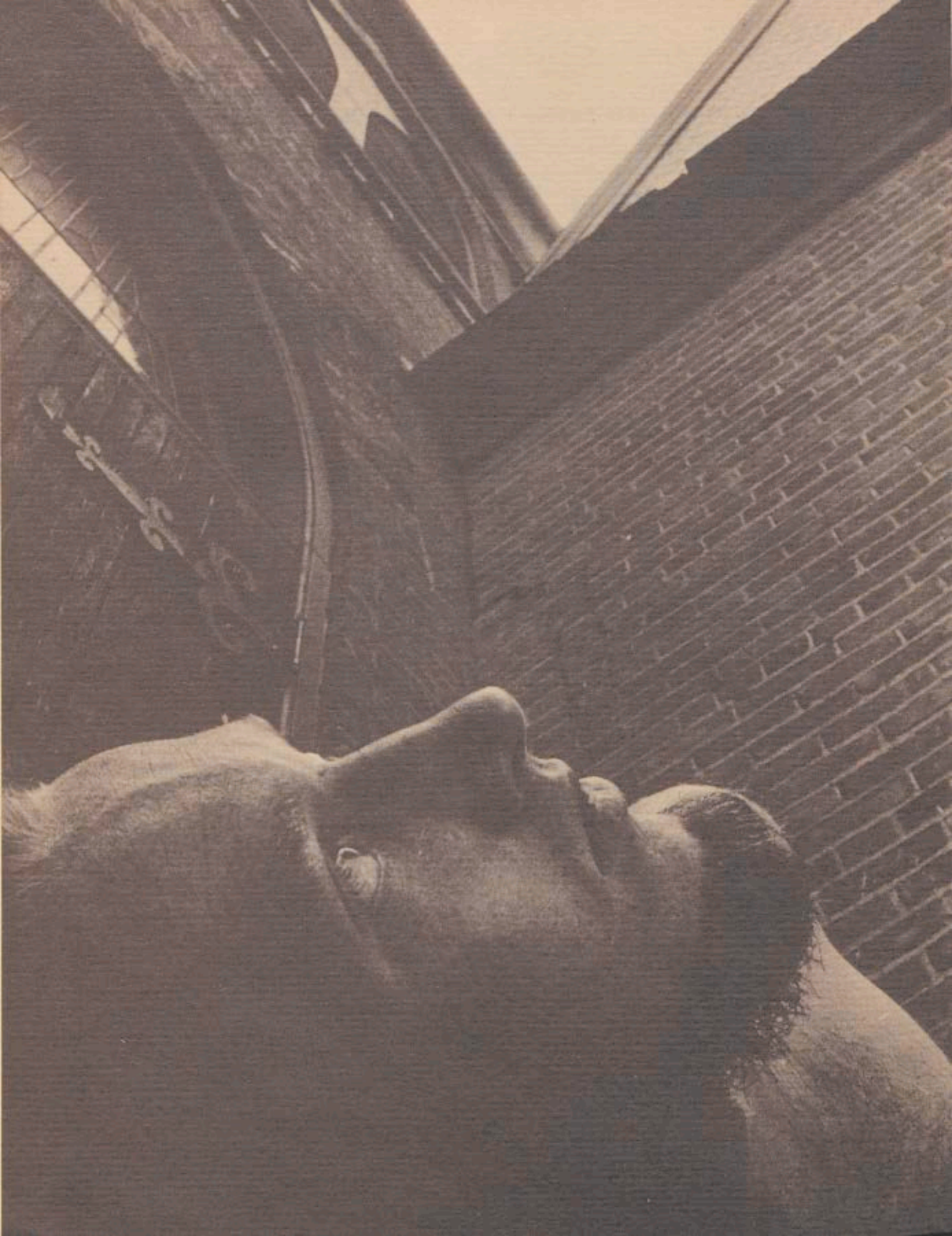
PETER FELDSTEIN

Come spring: the melting snow, a seed.  
A staff of wheat soon born,  
pushing aside the muck,  
breasting spring's cruel selective cold,  
thriving in the softly pregnant earth.  
Living for itself.

Come summer: the ceaseless sun,  
and more than thirsty days:  
groping for moisture.  
Those few drops that must provide  
life for you, and those beside you.  
But you emerge alone—you live.  
And summer conquers all but you.

Come fall: the cold nights that make  
those green staffs golden.  
And there is frost, but you are strong;  
you'll not succumb:  
your strength is proven—sure.  
This frost will only stunt you,  
Never could it kill you

Come winter: the frozen ground, a wind  
that strafes you, frays your back.  
And snow, God's death-white pall,  
surges to crush the brittle frame.  
A staff of wheat lives but a year:  
comes the winter, and you,  
As each in time, must bear the cross.





# A New Lease

GARY ABRAMSON

THE MONTHLY VISITS of the landlord didn't bother Spielman. The man had a right to his rent, and if he didn't want the money sent in the mail, it was his prerogative. Spielman would hand the man a check, invite him to sit down, and then the two men would talk. In recent months, the landlord's stays had grown longer. Spielman, a man of forty with few social obligations, was not displeased to have an occasional guest even if the guest were someone collecting money.

One day, after Spielman had been living at the apartment for eight months, he was given the opportunity to get away for a while. His boss called him into the office. "Spielman," Mr. Ferris said, "you ever been to London?"

"I'm afraid, Mr. Ferris, that I've never been anywhere outside of this country."

"That's a disgrace, a man your age. How would you like to travel to London for us?" Ferris smiled at Spielman and handed him a round trip plane ticket. For fourteen years Spielman had been writing travelogue scripts from information printed by various chambers of commerce. It was hard for him to believe that, at last, he was going on location. His face indicated surprise and enthusiasm. "The people putting up the money for this thing insist that the writer see the city first hand," Ferris explained. "You'll go around with a cameraman part of the time, but mostly you'll be on your own."

"How long will I be staying?"

"Three weeks. You're a lucky man, Spielman." Mr. Ferris rose and somewhat formally extended his hand. Spielman shook it and walked out of the office.

That night the landlord came for his rent. Spielman greeted him wildly. "I'm going to London for free, three weeks. Can you believe that?"

The landlord nodded briefly and asked for his check.

"Of course, here, take it. Imagine, three weeks in London."

"When?"

"The week after next. Honestly, you have no idea how thrilled . . ."

"You won't be here the first of next month?"

"Why no." Spielman was suddenly annoyed at the landlord. The man shared none of Spielman's excitement and seemed only interested in getting his money.

"What about the rent?"

"I'll mail it to you."

"No."

"Why not?"

"You don't have my address."

"Well," Spielman said, forcing a laugh, "you can give me your address."

The landlord shook his head.



"This is ridiculous, Mr. Becker. You can't expect me to pay you in advance. I've always been prompt with the rent."

"True, you have."

"Yet you're going to insist on the money before I leave, is that right?"

"No payment in advance." Becker was still standing in the doorway of Spielman's apartment. His black overcoat, an unusually heavy garment for the southern California climate, was buttoned to the top. Spielman invited the landlord inside. "Surely we can discuss this like two sensible men." He led Becker to the living room and offered to take the man's coat. Becker shook his head and sat down on the arm of the sofa as if to remind Spielman of the apartment's actual owner.

Spielman tried to sound calm. "Look, Mr. Becker, have I been a good tenant?"

"Extremely good."

"Then if you don't want to give me your address, why can't you trust me for the rent or at least take it a month early?"

Again the landlord shook his head. "Payment is on the first of the month every month."

"I don't understand."

"We won't say any more about it for now," Becker said, unbuttoning his coat.

"Might I have a drink?"

"Certainly. What would you like?"

"Some wine, perhaps."

Spielman went into the kitchen and removed an old bottle of wine from the cabinet. Carrying the bottle and two glasses, he returned to the living room to find Becker looking at some books. "Are these yours?" the landlord asked.

"Yes."

"Very interesting in my opinion." He took a glass from Spielman and thanked him. "The wine looks good," Becker said, taking a long sip. "You have fine

taste in wine as well as literature."

"Thanks."

"Tell me, you are a writer, is that correct?"

"Well, I write scripts for travelogue films. Not exactly artistic."

"You like words, though."

"I suppose so."

"You know Hebrew?"

"No."

"You should. It is a beautiful language. The words are all very musical."

"Well, I don't go to synagogue so Hebrew would be rather difficult to learn."

"I attend every Saturday since my wife died, three years ago."

"I'm sorry." Spielman felt very uncomfortable and wished he could settle the rent matter with Becker so that the landlord would leave. Spielman wanted to be happy about his trip, and Becker was adding unwanted gloom to the evening.

"You never go to synagogue?"

"Not since my youth."

"Aah, that's too bad. I find it a warm experience." The landlord paused a moment. "How old would you guess me to be?"

Spielman had never thought about Becker's age. He guessed the landlord was around sixty.

"I'll be seventy in two months." Becker laughed at Spielman's startled expression. "My wife insisted that I watch my health. We used to ride bicycles together. I'm in the habit of taking care of myself."

Not knowing what to say, Spielman mumbled that one's health is very precious.

"I know that," the landlord said a bit curtly. "Look, if it is not too personal, why aren't you married?"

Spielman didn't know whether to feel



affronted or amused. He smiled and said, "It just happened. I got older and there was no one around to marry. So here I am. Single."

"I see. You like women, I trust."

"Yes."

"May I have some more wine?" Spielman poured him another glass. "I didn't think you were homosexual."

"There have been girls at the office and so forth," Spielman said.

"Sure. But no one to marry."

"I'm afraid that's right."

"To your health, Mr. Spielman." The landlord took a gulp of wine and then rose from his chair.

"About my trip, Mr. Becker."

"London, you said. For business or for pleasure?"

"Both."

The landlord shook his head. "No, I am afraid you simply can't go."

Spielman finally lost his temper.

"What the hell do you mean? I'll give you a check for the rent tonight."

"Please don't shout, Remember, despite my health, I'm an old man."

"Then be reasonable."

"I am being reasonable. When you took this nice apartment you promised to pay the rent on the first of the month."

"Today is the first."

"Once a month."

"But next month it's impossible."

"Give up the place then."

"But I like it here." It was true. The walls were painted white and the ceilings were high. There was a happy air to the apartment that Spielman had found missing in previous residences. From the living room window, there was a view of an elementary school playground. Spielman enjoyed watching the children play.

"Then keep your agreement."

"I can't."

"Tell me, Spielman, what are you planning to do in London?"

Spielman paused. He hadn't really thought about it. He was just going. "Well, be a tourist, I suppose. See the sights. Of course, I have to see London from a professional point of view as well."

"In other words, you'll go around the city, maybe see some plays, and spend time with whores with British accents."

Spielman smiled at the old man. In spite of himself he liked him. "I imagine so."

"You'll admit that besides your work there is nothing special that is to happen."

"You never can tell."

"Come now, Spielman, we both know better than that." The landlord buttoned his coat. "I will be here next month. I trust you will give me the rent personally."

"Look, Mr. Becker, why can't I just leave the money with the people in the apartment downstairs? When you come around on the first of the month, they'll give you a check for me."

"Your rent is none of their business. It's an agreement between you and me, tenant and landlord."

By this time, Spielman couldn't decide whether to consider the landlord unreasonably eccentric or mildly insane. He shrugged at the old man as if there were nothing more to say.

"Mr. Spielman, thank you for this month's rent. I will see you thirty days from now."

"Mr. Becker, I wish . . ."

"Thank you again for the wine. It was delicious." And then the landlord was gone.

After a week, Spielman did not know



how to resolve the dilemma. At first, he thought that by visiting the landlord's apartment he might be able to persuade him to look at the matter more reasonably. But when he tried to find Becker's address in the phone book, he found that the man had no listing. He asked the tenants downstairs where the landlord lived or what his phone number was, and received only a shrug from them. Spielman did not want to give up the apartment, and he was positive that if he himself was not around to pay the rent on the first of the month, the old man would evict him. Legally, Spielman supposed, he could. There had been no formal lease, just a verbal agreement and a handshake. There was nothing to do but try to postpone the trip until after the first of the month.

Ferris wouldn't hear of it. "We run a tight production schedule, Spielman. You've been with us fourteen years. You know that."

"But a postponement of some kind. I'll speak to the financial backers myself."

"No. Look, if you can't go, we'll send another writer. I thought you'd like to get away for a while. That's all."

Spielman sighed and asked if he might leave London early.

"Listen, Spielman, don't make my life difficult. The entire unit'll be there three weeks. It's a charter flight—round trip."

"Excuse me, but if you can't postpone the trip or allow me to return home early I must resign from the company." Spielman was angry, but surprised even himself with his words.

"Ferris' mouth dropped open. 'Spielman, are you crazy? Fourteen years and you'll resign just like that over something so ridiculous?'"

"I'm afraid that's right."

"Then resign."

"Fine. I do." And after a dramatically elaborate bow, Spielman walked out of the office.

That afternoon, after cashing some savings bonds, he flew to Europe on his own. There was little doubt that he could get another job upon his return. Perhaps he would try something totally different from writing. It was Spielman thought, time for a change.

In three weeks, Spielman spent all his money and saw seven cities. The trip was thoroughly enjoyable, but not out of the ordinary, and when it was over Spielman was not sorry to be going home.

His return was on the first of the month. The same afternoon, he found a job with another studio. His salary would be less than what he had been receiving at his previous job, but he would be in charge of an entire unit, writing as well as directing productions.

That night, the door bell rang, and Spielman, anxious to speak to his landlord about the new job, hurried to the door. When he opened it, a young woman in her late twenties entered. "Mr. Spielman?"

"Yes."

"I'm Claire Becker." Spielman nodded politely. "You were expecting my father tonight?"

"Yes. The first of the month."

"He passed away two weeks ago."

Spielman's face became pale. "I'm very sorry."

Claire smiled kindly. "It was very sudden. A heart attack. He told me to be certain to come for your rent myself. So," she shrugged, "here I am."

Spielman looked at her. She had very dark eyes and a fine complexion. He gave her a check.



"Thank you. My father liked doing business personally so I imagine I'll be doing the same thing."

"You were his only child?"

"Yes. You know he spoke very highly of you. He very much admired your mind. An intellectual." She laughed good-naturedly and tugged self-consciously at her sweater.

Spielman blushed. "He and I would talk about things. That was all." Then, as an afterthought, "I liked your father very much."

"Well," she said, turning to leave, "thanks for the rent. See you next month."

"Miss Becker, by any chance are you going to say the mourner's prayer for your father?"

"On Saturdays, for a while."

"I'd like to go to the synagogue with you."

"That would be very nice." She smiled and, before Spielman could ask for it, she gave him her address.

## Complements

RICH CLEMENS

Complements

encompass all  
defy all  
create all  
nothing  
at all

and cost

but

Compliments  
are sent

by the Ch(i)ef  
while  
the  
i  
(in parenthesis)

is locked  
in its own kitchen.

## Long Term's Journey

STEVE GLANZROCK

Raise the scepter to the carrion glory  
Of mightied men and long term's journey;  
Who onward led with souls undecked,  
Were carried deep by paths unchecked  
And fully acknowledged, passed deep below  
The shadow of branches bent with woe;  
And on the ground impressed the mark  
Of pointed feet and purpose dark—  
Come by the way of righteous wrath  
And gone by their greed, its only path.

Across from the river and close from the hour  
When grounded they lay, now gone is the power  
That 'scaped by the shadow where little is left  
Save a sign 'neath the branches of they who had slept  
When off, by the narrows in sunlight they strayed,  
Their blood-stained scepters, obedient to shade,  
Revolted and slipped beyond malice to hate  
Of those who employed them and realized too late,  
Outdistanced they were and ambushed indeed;  
Who, killed on their path, fell dismal to seed.



...have  
a political  
alternative



Eugene McCarthy  
for President



## A Careless Mistake

WILLIAM DOUGHERTY

ELLEN AND MICHAEL MORRIS took their son to Europe with them because it would be educational. He was sixteen, and it was about time that he learned that there were things in the world worth knowing about besides girls and cars. John thought that it would be a change from "hacking around" or a possible counselor's job at his summer camp, and did not argue when they told him that he was going.

They left in late June, John fiddling with his bow tie as they boarded the plane at Kennedy Airport. He had his father's camera case over his shoulder, and he carried a plastic shopping bag full of cigarettes and film and liquor. He did not like carrying these because they made him look awkward. He did not want to be the typical American tourist. He wanted to be experienced and eat the food and drink the water and not get sick. And he wanted to stay in cheap hotels, but his parents would not. And so he carried the bags and went on tours and was a little awkward. After the first few weeks, he began to enjoy the trip and forget about himself, and it did not matter anymore.

While they were in Spain, they visited Segovia, where there is a very large aqueduct that the Romans built to bring water from the mountains. All the Segovians are very proud of their aqueduct, and in Spain when Segovia is mentioned, you always think of an aqueduct that rises high over the town and spans the streets.

They spent only one day and a night in Segovia, because there is really very little to see there besides the aqueduct. At least that was what the guide said. Their hotel was on a hill, and the porch overlooked the valley below. At dinner on the porch there was candles and music. John's mother thought that it was all very nice.

On the tour, John had met a girl in her twenties from America. She was a student dental technician at a Catholic nursing school in the Midwest. Her name was Sally Ornberg, and John liked her very much because she treated him as though she were his age and not five years older. After dinner, John and Sally sat in the lobby watching the replays of a bullfight in Pamplona. She thought that the fights were horrible, and John laughed and said that it was no worse than the slaughteryards in Chicago. He liked the fights very much and felt as though he understood them. They made him feel very Spanish.

John went to his room, a single down the hall from his parents. He said goodnight to Sally, and she smiled from the elevator as the door closed. He watched her disappear



and then went to his room and undressed for bed. John lay on his back for a long time, thinking about how nice Sally was, and then he went to sleep.

They had lunch in Avila the next day. It was in an old inn built of stone blocks, and it was cool and shady inside. The tour sat in the bar, drinking Martinis and scotch and sodas. Sally did not drink, and she and John were sitting in the patio, talking and sipping lemon soda.

The tour guide walked out to the patio from the desk of the hotel and asked to speak to John. They went to the lobby. John put on his bow tie as they walked in. The guide took him to a corner and they sat down.

"Would you like a cigarette?" he asked John. The guide was bald, and there were small, shining drops of sweat just above his forehead. He drew out a handkerchief and wiped his forehead, then folded it and put it back in his hip pocket.

"No, thank you," said John.

"Well, I must know something, young man. Did you lose a ring, a gold one, last night?" John looked at his finger and saw that his high school ring was gone.

"Yes, I did. Do you have it?"

"Not exactly. You left it in room 219 last night and the maid picked it up. What you were doing in 219 is not my business, but you must be more careful in the future, señor. Ugly things can happen when one is careless."

"Careless about what? I just left the ring in my room is all. I can write and they'll send it to me."

"Senor, no es una cosa de otro mundo. It is not something so unusual," said the guide. "She is a good-looking girl!"

"Look, I was in 219 and she was on the third floor someplace. Ask her." The guide looked at his reservation sheet for the night before.

"Look," he said, "here you are in 312 and she is in 219."

"Well, I was in 219 last night, alone!" said John. He quieted down because Sally was looking in from the patio. "Thank you, and I'll get the ring back. I'll write to them," said John, and he walked out to the patio. He stopped just inside the lobby and looked at Sally, who was reading a book and drinking lemon soda. She had long, blonde hair that was very pretty in the light, and he wished that he had to be careful.

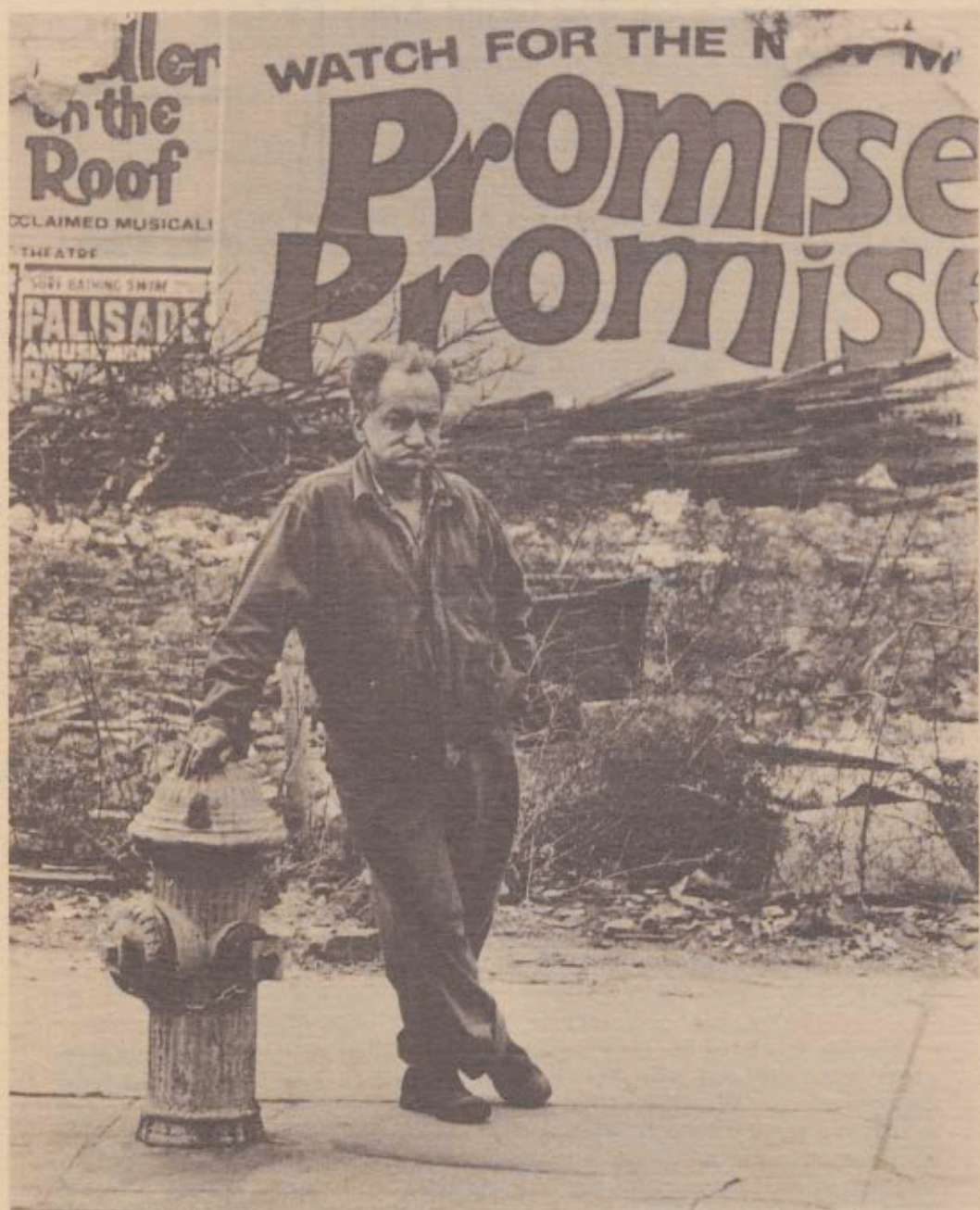


## Stovepipe

SHERMAN BRYANT

It's a sticky summer night  
And I watch the sidewalk that is cracked and broken  
Like the pathway to heaven  
A ragged, grey sliver lit up  
By yellow light from the storefront restaurant  
Where busy, stout, chocolate women serve food  
To tired, working soul folk  
Who may as well wait patiently after their orders.  
Outside on the dirty sidewalk  
Where no one wise walks barefoot  
Over empty, broken bottles that once held wine  
A shadow lurches forward  
And soon becomes a drunken man  
In baggy pants with holes in them and an old man's shirt.  
Close upon me,  
Red coals stare wildly from a coal black face  
That is bristly with blacker beard  
And wet with slobbering  
From a mouth that has no discipline  
And cracked black lips.  
He crashes to the ground with a jarring thud  
And gnarled black hands with yellowed fingernails  
Pull him slowly to his feet  
And the harsh street lights  
Are more virile than Stovepipe.  
He frightened me one summer day  
That my mother laughed about  
With a tree branch bracing his back;  
Stovepipe knows all about symbolism.  
And when all the upright ghetto folk  
Would laugh and joke  
He would sometimes answer back with a manly curse  
Or two  
Or stop to beg for money  
For a little fifth of Gallo wine.





## Speech: On The Grand Army Of Jesus

" 'Por Dios' "

CARL ROSENSTOCK

"Ladies and gentlemen, I would like, if you'll permit me an aside, to tell you about the time I was offered aid by the Salvation Army, that grand army of Jesus."

Upon the daybreak,  
when I could roar up  
from mountain tops,  
like some mystic lava;  
then chains from the sky  
held me upright, and  
I was chained to the ground  
so I'd not fly to the universe.

"The cultivation of sores by beggars is also their means of getting a little money—on which to live—but though they may be led to this out of a certain inertia in their state of poverty the pride required for holding one's head up, above contempt is a manly virtue."<sup>1</sup>

It was an orphaned day.  
My clothes still touched my body,  
but it didn't matter (pulling here,  
loose hanging there).  
The sky was a shredded masterpiece,  
once painted in bold strokes, in thunderous strokes.  
the wind once bellowed forth  
from the caves of gods,  
It was an orphaned day.

"The lice inhabited us. They imparted to our clothes an animation, a presence, which, when they had gone, left our garments lifeless . . . a third person's louse disgusted us . . . We crushed them with our nails, without disgust and without hatred. We did not throw their corpses—or remains—into the garbage; we let them fall, bleeding with our blood, into our untidy underclothes. The lice were the only sign of our prosperity, of the very underside of prosperity, but it was logical that by making our state perform an operation which justified it, we were, by the



same token, justifying the sign of this state . . . as jewels for the knowledge of what is called triumph, the lice were precious."<sup>2</sup>

That night the gods were stoned  
and on my knees, I kissed their wounds,  
drank the pale blackness  
and felt the throated screams  
coming from the coursing planets.  
I could only stand as a husk,  
bound with earth planted feet  
and my wrists were nailed to the stars.  
I could only scream.  
There'll be a time, I'm told.  
and there'll be time, I'm told.  
You'll be saved  
and I railed at their words  
and they beat the binding anchors  
further into the ground.  
I looked up and down,  
in terror of the sky  
and in anger at the land.  
If I look at my feet,  
I can't see my hands and  
if I look at my hands?

"It was snowing. He went out into the freezing street, wearing a torn and tattered jacket—the pockets were ripped and hung down—and a shirt stiff with dirt. His face was poor and unhappy, shifty, pale, and filthy, for we dared not was since it was so cold . . . I would see him a way off beseeching the women. I knew the formula, as I had already begged for others and myself: it mixes Christian religion with charity; it merges poor person with God; it is so humble an emanation from the heart that I think it scents with violet the straight light breath of the beggar who utters it/All over Spain, at the time they were saying:

'Por Dios' "<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jean Genet, *The Thief's Journal*, trans. Bernard Fretchman, (New York, 1965), pg. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Genet, pg. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Genet, pg. 12.

## In It

NED VAN WOERT

Fearing themselves and each other.  
Searching for the artificial conjunction  
of thoughts.  
A parasite wrapped alone in the darkness  
of his mind—despising his existence  
but too afraid to digest the sunshine he  
seeks.  
Eyes of understanding avoid each other  
each pretending the other does not exist.  
Nauseous tears drained by doubt, fear  
and desire.  
In the dark—aching to get outside  
never escaping—never touching  
shuddering and half there—avoiding exposure.  
All for fear of being imprisoned again.



*In Late Spring* is one of two short stories by Leslie Petrovics awarded the 1969 Yudis Prize for creative writing. The second story will be published in a forthcoming issue of *The Idol*.

## In Late Spring

LESLIE PETROVICS

THEY HAD BEEN sitting on the tracks when the train to Debrecen sneaked up on them. It was fifty yards away when he noticed it, but the engine was huge and black and it seemed like fifty feet. Angi had run and he had followed her, falling, scraping his back on the rock embankment. He had shouted to Uncle Sándor—"Run, run! It will hit you." Then the train rumbled by and the steam hit him in the face and he felt sure that the old man had been hit. But after it passed, he saw him waving to them from the other side of the embankment and Angi ran to him, taking hold of his hand and asking to be lifted onto the train.

The peasant had a bottle with a straw jacket. He had bought it in the city as a present for his wife. The ticket collector sat next to him, and beside him sat a soldier. Uncle Sándor invited them all into the compartment.

"And the brown cows. What do they give?" Uncle Sándor was asking.

"Cocoa," he said.

"And the black ones?"

"Coffee."

"And the white ones with the black spots give coffee with cream and the ones that are mostly white give plain milk," Angi added. She was jealous that the attention had been focused on him.

They all laughed loudly and their laughter made them feel important. At Debrecen the peasant did not take his bottle but left it lying on the floor. It was empty and he held onto the sides of the car as he walked.

THE GLASS FACTORY dwarfed the clay houses in Debrecen. Its electric bulbs no longer lighted the village and the dark outline of the factory was hard to distinguish from the evening sky. A scent of kerosene would accompany the faint glow from the cottage windows. Since April, the black, iron gates of the factory had been closed. Most of the men in Debrecen slept till noon.

The war was in Pest and the faint sounds of the shelling did not wake us. School had been out two weeks and we slept late, never thinking to close the curtains before going to bed. At 10:30 every morning the sun rose over the lilacs in the garden and lighted



our room. Angi woke before me, but she fussed and slammed the drawers to her dresser and I awakened also. We had our breakfast with Uncle Sándor. He, too, slept late.

In art class Angi had painted our initials on two white cups. On hers was a big, red A, and on mine was a smaller, blue L which looked like an H because the paint had run. Angi and I had cocoa and toast with jam while Uncle Sándor had black coffee and butter on his toast.

Uncle Sándor had once given me a drink of his coffee and reared back in laughter as my face screwed from the bitter taste. Before he ate the toast, he got the jar for the salt from the cabinet and with small pinches spread the crystals evenly over the buttered surface. He leaned back in his chair and, lighting his pipe, opened the morning paper. Usually he started reading from the fifth page which had the dairy report and the weather. Sometimes he also read from the front page, and later, told us of the war.

"It should be out of Pest in a week," he said. "The sound will get louder then."

In the afternoon Angi and I took the shortcut through the fields to get to the hospital. Uncle Sándor had told us the day before that the soldiers there were lonely. "They enjoy children," he had said. "I want you to visit them tomorrow." Angi and I were bored, and we thought that perhaps the soldiers would give us chocolate.

It was spring and the poppies shone a bright red in the sunlight. Angi chased the frogs which had strayed from the river. As soon as the big green ones had wet in her hand, she would drop them. But the little brown ones, which measured no bigger than the nail of her thumb, she would put in her shirt pocket,

thinking that their wetness was only water. Her pocket grew moist as we walked. At the hospital the geraniums were in bloom. Their petals stuck out irregularly from between the bars which covered every window.

An old nurse met us in the lobby. "They'll be tickled to death," she said and took our hand to lead us to the infirmary. She had a bad limp and my arm jerked with each of her steps. Against the back wall of the lobby was hung a huge flag under which was a copper plaque with the names of all the soldiers who had died in the hospital. A green film had collected in the indentations of the names. The soldiers were glad to see us.

In the infirmary, the nurse took us from bed to bed, starting from the back of the room. The men gave us chocolate and told Angi what a pretty woman she would be some day. One of the soldiers handed me a cigarette, but the nurse slapped it from his hand, knocking it to the floor.

"Private Nagy, he is only a child," she said.

"Yes, mother," the private replied.

The other soldiers laughed and the private seemed pleased with his joke. I crawled under the bed to retrieve the cigarette but the nurse grabbed it from my hand saying that it had been on the floor and was dirty. The private laughed again.

"A month of gangrene and I have to be careful of the goddamned dust." He looked at Angi and felt badly about having sworn. A sharp odor rose from his bandaged leg.

By the time we reached the major our pockets were full of candy bars. Angi's face was brown from the chocolate and she whispered that Uncle Sándor would



be angry if our pockets were to stick together. Some had even gotten into her hair. The major gave me his army hat. It was big and would not balance on my head but fell to one side. I saluted him, snapping my heels. His right hand was missing and he answered my salute with his left hand.

Then the nurse took us through the dimly lighted corridor to the private room. Outside the window at the end of the hall was a white birch and the sunlight shone through the leaves in patches. We walked to the room nearest the window. The wind shook the branches of the birch, sending shadows of leaves into a dance across the linoleum tiles. The man in the room had arrived two days earlier. The nurse said that his leg had been amputated from the knee down and he would need our special attention. She did not come into the room with us but opened the door and told us to enter.

The room had a small window with dark green curtains which had been pulled. They screened the light, tinting the room a green color. The soldier lay on his back, staring at the ceiling, and did not look at us when we approached. He had heard the nurse and felt indignant for receiving special attention. Over his head hung a picture of some red flowers. They were hard to make out in the dark light. The room was stuffy and dark and I knew our chocolate would melt soon. Except for underwear, the soldier was naked. The smell of sweat came from his body and I knew that he was uncomfortable. A leather patch covered the stub of his leg. We were standing at the foot of the bed and from the temperature graph I could make out his name as Corporal Kiraly.

"Do you want to play hearts?" Angi asked him.

The corporal propped himself on an elbow. "Who sent you?" he asked.

"The nurse. She told us you needed our special attention," I said.

"That limping bitch." He looked away.

I felt that he did not like us. The chocolate was melting in my pocket and I wanted to leave but remembered what the nurse had said.

"Do you want to play hearts?" I said. "Angi is real good. She always shoots the moon." He smiled at this. "Do you want some chocolate?" I continued.

Angi went to him and reaching into her pocket pulled out the chocolate. It came out in lumps and stuck to each of her fingers. Corporal Kiraly laughed when he saw this and we laughed also. I knew I had been mistaken about him not liking us.

"No," he said, "let's play hearts."

I pulled the curtains and opened the window and a breeze blew the dust from the sill into my face. Corporal Kiraly was a young man with a neat, red moustache and curly orange hair. The sweat of his body evaporated with the fresh air. He sat against the head of his bed while Angi and I knelt to either side. Angi won the first hand. She shot the moon. I hated to play with her because she always won and afterwards would brag about it.

"If you would have kept the queen of hearts I would have lost," she said this time. She sucked at the chocolate which had stuck to her fingers.

"What is the matter with you?" Angi asked Kiraly.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean what is your sickness?"

The corporal laughed again. "I have the war disease," he said and laughed louder.

The second hand went well. I was void in clubs and threw the bitch to Angi,



but she took the jack of diamonds then stuck her tongue out at me.

"What do you want to be when you grow up?" the soldier asked me after the hand.

"I want to be a soldier," I said.

"I thought so. Well don't be. They move you from place to place and you don't go anywhere. Three times they moved me before deciding I needed an operation. You wouldn't want to lose a leg, would you?"

I had always wanted to be a soldier and the idea of riding in trains or jeeps that could go through mud pleased me. But I was the best wing in my class and I pictured my team going to defeat if I were to lose a leg. No, I wouldn't want that.

A knocking came from the door and a man entered. He had shiny buttons for his coat and brass stars on his shoulder. When he clicked his heels one of the loose buttons shook. Corporal Kiraly saluted lying down.

"I see you have company, corporal." the man said.

"Yes, sir."

"I hate to break things up, but we'll be evacuating soon. The Germans have won at Pest. They'll be here in a day or two."

Kiraly winked at me. "That's all right, sir. I'm used to moving."

"I see you lost a leg. In Pest?"

"In Pest."

"You'll come through, Kiraly. Just wait. I've seen many men come through well."

The sound of motorcars came from outside. The trucks which were to take the men away were just arriving and one of the drivers cursed at a pig which lay in the mud of the road. Light shone

brightly on the brown leather patch covering Kiraly's knee.

"I would rather have my leg," he said.

Even after the man had left, the corporal continued staring at the ceiling. He would not play cards or eat chocolate or talk of soldiers and jeeps.

Angi and I took the long way home and had to go over a small bridge to cross the stream. Angi took the little frogs from her shirt pocket and leaned over the railing. They were dry and limp and had bits of chocolate stuck to their skin. She threw them into the stream and they floated upsidedown, their white bellies breaking the surface of the water.

It rained that night and most of the next morning. It was close to noon before the sun broke through the clouds. We did not wake till then.

**I**T WAS EASTER evening and he could not sleep for his excitement. They had placed all their shoes on the window sill. Besides the leather shoes which he wore to school, he had put out the big rubber pullovers. Angi had cried. She had only two small pairs of loafers. He knew that in the morning his leather shoes would be full of candy. He wasn't sure about the rubber boots, but before going to bed he prayed that they, too, would be filled. In his mind he pictured them bulging with gumdrops and sourballs and colored taffy. He imagined the candy overflowing onto the window sill. Angi had fallen asleep quickly but he was excited and sweaty and tossed in bed. Shortly after midnight he, too, fell asleep.

The next morning he had cried uncontrollably. His rubber boots had been removed from the window and lay on the floor by his bed. In one of his shoes was an apple and in the other an apricot. His mother had cried as well.



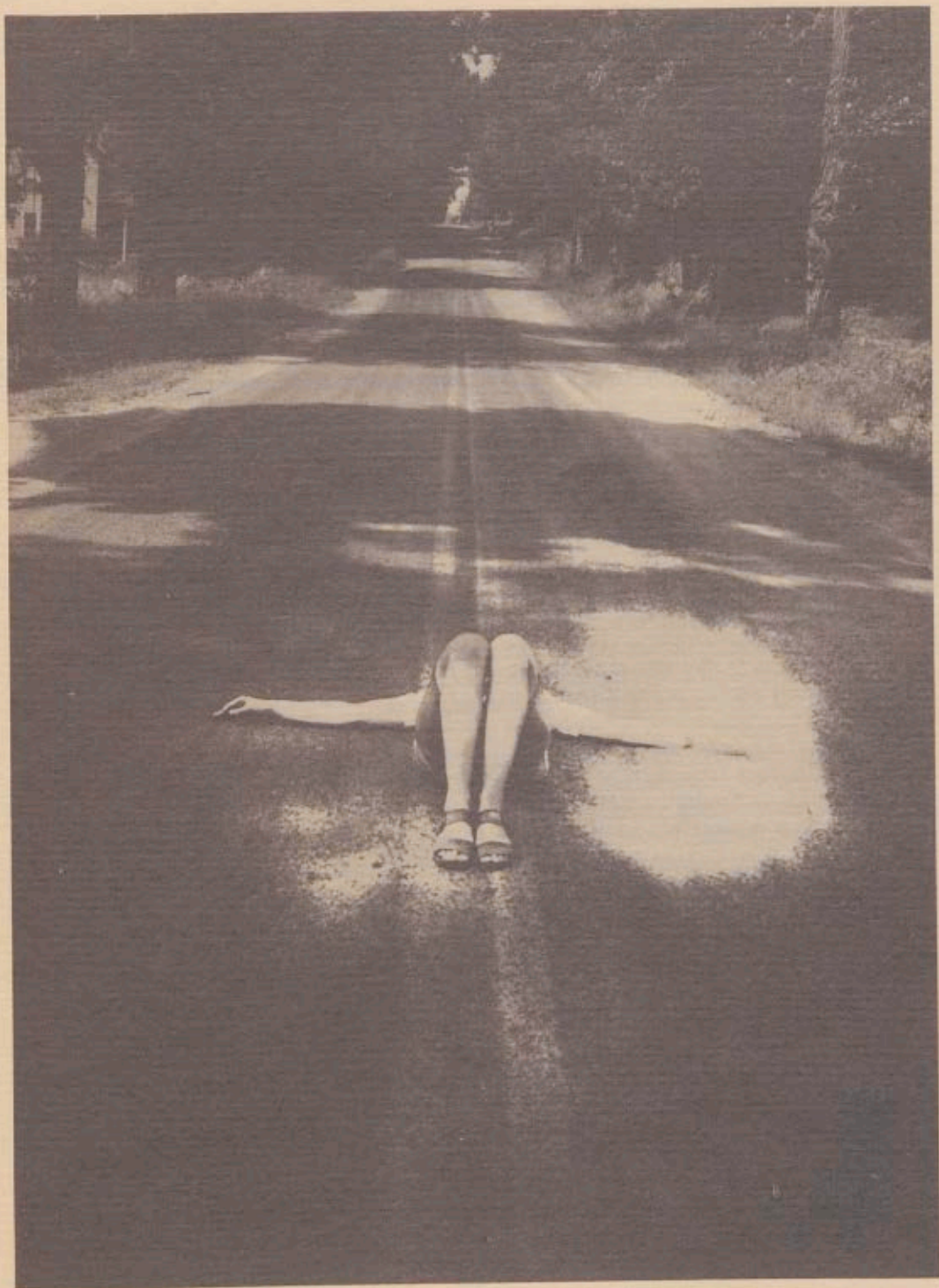
# Down

DIDRIK THEDE

The Man is so sad;  
Baby, he's just down on the rag,  
And he thinks he's so glad  
But his mind just don't know where he's at  
An' when he's got things down pat  
It's like a storm in his head  
'Cuz his best friend says to go to bed  
With the first girl and ditch the other  
And man he's having a hassle from his mother  
'Cuz she's told him he can't have another.  
And he finds out his friends hate his guts  
But they say to his face he's a swell man  
When his girl's just thrown his photo in the can;  
But his friends say he's a great guy,  
Thinkin' and wishin' that he'd just go and die  
Quietly, and he's flat-broke  
And he don't have money for a second toke  
With his pants holier than thou  
Baby he knows the score  
But he just keeps comin' back for more,  
As he tries to bum a dime  
He sees the look in the frank, blank face  
That spits on him for his crimes  
And says he don't belong there in the first place  
'Cuz he's part of the wrong race  
And wears old clothes with white lace  
And can't keep up with the Times  
'Cuz he's got no education  
But wars and demonstration;  
'Cuz he ain't had a chance for a father  
To tell him that it's gonna be harder  
To find an answer and be sure  
About where he's goin' if he's poor.

And what's he supposed to do when he sees  
A rich guy like you  
Walking, talking money  
Temptin' him with milk and honey  
After he's lyin' in the street  
Knocked off his feet  
Staring at all the pretty people  
Running crazy to keep all  
Their secrets hid from themselves  
Running and waiting  
Just so they can put 'em  
Away like books on shelves  
Baby, he looks at all the pretty people  
Laughing and waiting, loving and hating  
Laying, then praying  
Thinking that they got it made,  
'Cuz they are staying  
For ever and ever and ever and ever  
While they could never ever  
Sit on top of the world  
Like the man who's so sad  
And they all say he must be mad  
While he slowly takes another drag  
In stride and leans against the wall  
That they all call  
Right when he's ready to fall  
And his red hair that's always there  
In colors with light and sound  
Tell his friends all around  
That he don't care  
What they think when they think that he don't think  
That he's headed for destruction  
And all he's lookin' for is action  
And some satisfaction  
At doing something that he loves  
'Cuz he loves life more than a wife  
And man, he hates strife  
'Cuz it cuts apart his soul  
Better than his knife.







# Relevancy & Committee: an essay

SCOTT SIEGLER

Pascal once said that "when we wish to correct with advantage and to show another that he errs, we must notice from what side he views the matter, for on that side it is usually true, and admit that truth to him, but reveal to him the side on which it is false." The observation has particular significance in the question of communications between the student and the college administration. The College is in need of, but not ready for, drastic revolutionary change; although many student critics presume to know the former, they refuse to acknowledge the latter.

Perhaps the most frequent demand which is currently made upon administrations is the demand for course material which is relevant to the everyday, the outside world. Students sue for the College to present them with courses which directly relate to the contemporary politico-socio-economic events, and the College, in hesitating to install such courses, must feel a certain ambivalence. After all, the college (and to a greater extent, the university) has been forced to alter its role in modern society. Once the guarded bastion of the cultural and economic elite, this American institution is today the necessary social tattoo which is required of most middle class children, consequently the association between American industry and American higher education has begun to resemble a master-slave relation, with the academy serving as Big Business' steward.

Thus the curriculum of the College, although it appears autonomous, has in fact been subtly dictated by exterior demands — either graduate programs or industrial needs. Today's course offerings are necessarily relevant, if to nothing else than to the masters whom undergraduate institutions serve. So it is perhaps that practical college administrators tend to view these four years not as rewarding in and of themselves, but as vocational means, as so much preparation for each undergraduate to ready himself for becoming some sort of needed specialist who can command his own economic toll gate. The basic premise that every course should have a pragmatic utilitarian rationale behind it underlies a college administration, and it is upon this premise that the student critics of the administration and the administration itself implicitly agree.

The demands then of the college rebel, if we may use that overworked and undefined term, never break out of the accepted educational norm; he remains solidly within the confines of this utilitarian frame, instead of questioning the need for more and more courses which most suitably process the individual for his future assembly line. These demands are not concerned with whether courses are adaptable to personal psyches but whether courses are adaptable to daily newspapers, and such an orientation posits knowledge as always existing for the sake of something else, besides personal gratification and spiritual enlightenment.



That many today feel, for instance, LeRoi Jones is more relevant than Euripides, or Franz Fanon more relevant than Plato, hardly indicates an academic inadequacy — the fault, dear radical, lies not in the academy. That Plato cannot be related to contemporary events is a result of the entire social functionalism which guides our administrators. Students want instant relevancy, a just-add-water-and-serve education; they want to read the manifestations of human consciousness instead of discovering within themselves the very origins of that consciousness. The past is as relevant as the student perceives it, and the emphasis upon usable facts (an outgrowth of today's veneration for the data-gobbling technologist) has helped to snuff out the relevancy of the past for many of us. The academy could fight against such requests for instant relevancy, but it will invariably succumb to them — not because it fears to oppose this student perspective on education, but specifically because it is in fundamental agreement with such an alignment. The great god outside the academy must be fed, and students nourished on newspaper personalities are as worthwhile as those fed on the classics. It really matters very little to Industry if an employee has gained the structural mental frame upon which his heritage rests; all he is required to do is to fill in the correct form.

The underlying question concerns the contemporary vanity about man's increase in knowledge. I believe that knowledge is not an infinite ocean from which we can continually extract more and more without suffering the consequences. Knowledge, like any finite body of water, flows into one area only at the expense of another area. We pile up more scientific data daily and boast that the quantity of human knowledge acquired in the past ten years surpasses the quantity of all previous human knowledge combined, but knowledge is not only quantitative, and data accumulation is not the be-all of human existence. How does one measure the ontological impoverishment which modern man has suffered? Are we to juxtapose the spiritual and the religious to the technological and the empirical, then decide that the latter are more important since they are now emphasized? Who else but the academy has the responsibility to make obvious those vast areas where human knowledge is receding? Is this not the sacred task of the humanist teacher and administrator in these "new dark ages" of which T. S. Eliot spoke?

Astute college administrations, like their governmental counterparts, are cognizant of their vulnerability to both right and left wing extremism and, in an effort to quiet student hostility and to install safety valves within the institution, administrations have found it useful to permit student participation in administrative roles. Students can now be found on nearly every faculty committee, and, after all, what is more tactful than to include one's political opponents in one's government, especially if the opponents' roles are such that it is impossible for them to accomplish anything without first having their decisions reviewed?

Whether the College as a political institution must operate deceitfully is here a moot point, for my question is not political and administrative, it is personal and moral. The College has recently taken it upon itself to include students in positions which are, at least nominally, decision-making; in so doing, the College has introduced a policy which, by its essential nature, is a lie. Committees which lack autonomy lack the power to decide. Such integrated committees are really only glorified

suggestion boxes, which serve to give the illusion of democratic workings. If a college administration is not willing to empower its students legitimately, why must it deceitfully make such an offer? Is it not better to deal honestly with the student and make obvious the limits to which student opinion can extend?

In the same way that the radical has grown to hate the liberal for his vacillating sympathies, the student will grow to hate an administration which insists upon dealing with him in a manner which is purely expedient and insincere. My protest is not against a non-democratic administration; it is against a deceitful one. The radical education which many urge, would create, in its democratic exuberance, an educational system as radical, and as mediocre, as that of the Latin American nations, where students determine courses and requirements and administrations function secondarily. In a world where recognition of, and respect for, the individual is rapidly vanishing, a sensitive, understanding and flexible administration is as welcome a gift as a sensitive, understanding and flexible monarch was in past days. My protest, then, is a protest for honesty, a peculiar honesty which, "in a world too frightened to be honest, is peculiarly terrifying."





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