

A S P E C T



NOVEMBER
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ICARUS

Had someone told him that the sun was fire
Would he have fastened on his waxen wings
Ridden the streams of air higher and higher
To seek the place where his angel sings?

Had someone told him that he would die
Before entering the heavenly minions
Would he still have undertaken to fly
Telling us all where to take our opinions?

Susan Strayer Deal

TRAINS...

Often in the stillness
We would hear the wailing
The awful screech and groaning
Of those mighty wheels.
Some might stop to wonder
Where the trains were bound for
And why the ghost-like moaning
Would echo off the hills.

Some might sleep less soundly
Some might never wonder
As the demon night trains
Carried their freight away.
Yet some might see the vision
Of a band of Indian spirits
Rising from the flat plains
To weep the trains away.

Susan Strayer Deal

THREE SEASONS

I remember the time when we drove down to Burlington, the old man ahead of us, in his truck with the furniture. It was raining, had been raining--and it was a new home.

Settling in, with coffee upstairs, the old man ahead of us--proposals of marriage, the two young girls, hostess and hostess--a cigarette, a pipe. Welcome! Despair.

And then, that Spring, driving back to Greensboro, the curve in the road, the bud on the bough, I knew I was alive, and joy came, in buckets of sunlight, to wake up my mother, the moon.

-Eric Cashen

Waiting Room

The red-haired girl
is busy with schedules

Two women have tea.

A man carries a suitcase everywhere.

The boy with the bad knee
slouches by the door.

A child is asleep
on the window bench.
His mother dozes
on her feet like a draft mare.

The door opens; closes
outside it's damp and dark.

The only feet passing
go somewhere pressing.
It's past the hour
for loitering.

The pages of a magazine
make a paper clock,
turning minutes,
turning time.

A man puts his hat on his face
begins to snore.

The girl with the backpack
looks worried.

The little dog in the carry-case whines.

An empty coffee cup
on the long, deserted counter.

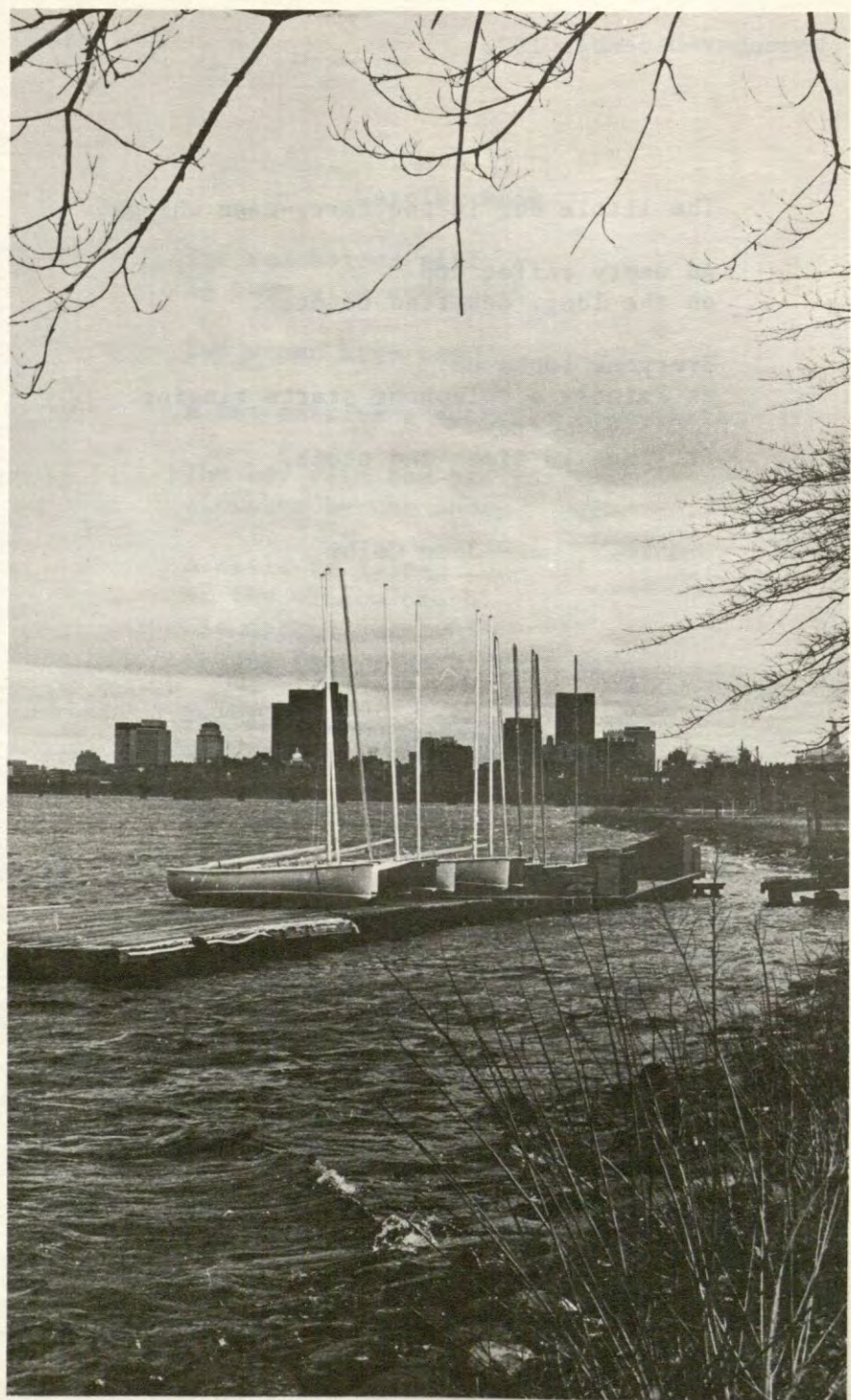
Everyone looks up
as faintly a telephone starts ringing.

It rings 13 times and stops.

--Joan Colby

i'm always afraid
to let go,
afraid if while i am
asleep it'll slip
away from me and
I'll lose my person
to wake up
with.

Richard Latta



RITUAL

by Frederick B. Paine

Rejoice on this truly Christian day,
The birthdate of Christ, Our Savior.

It has become a ritual. Every Christmas eve for fifteen years now my mother has lamented, and my father has comforted her, and through this interaction he has comforted himself. Because of its very nature, one knows that this unhappy ceremony will take place for the rest of their lives. Even Voltaire's Pangloss would be hard put to explain any beneficial aspect of what had happened. Even if he could, all joy would be lost in the inevitable realization that anything he concluded would be irrelevant, at least in Voltaire's mind, to the real world or, more specifically, to my parents' world.

We think alike, Voltaire and I, at least in this respect. For each of my mother's ten brothers and sisters, one theory has sprung up attempting to rationalize God's actions. Each one was cast aside by the simple argument that neither my mother nor my father were in need of any chastising because both had followed His laws. There were no grounds for vengeance since neither had wronged any man that seriously. Perhaps someone at the very roots of our family tree, in some distant and hazy past, had wronged the Lord but, since the tree has acquired many branches, are my parents culpable? Perhaps he would have wronged the world, but wouldn't it have been enough to let the world deal with him? "Vengeance is mine," sayeth the Lord, but it is a harsh claim if He intends no explanation.

Step on a line,
Break your mother's spine.
Step on a crack,
Break your mother's back.

I was mad at my mother. I wanted to bring my new dump truck to grandma's house but she wouldn't let me so, to get revenge, I chanted this poem as I stepped on every line and crack that I could find in the walk leading to their house.

The exterior of the house was green clapboard, the front containing two windows and a porch to the side. On the front lawn was a large, flat stone which covered the cesspool. Every summer I'd watch my grandfather cart out his wheelbarrow and long handled shovel, and I'd stand at his side while he emptied it. He used the human refuse to fertilize his small garden which now contained field mice, who were in turn digested and returned to the soil by one of the dozen-or-so cats living beneath both the porch and the tool shed. One could be seen now, a mother, poking her head from the darkened hole beneath the tool shed, cautiously looking about before darting back inside at my approach. Behind all this was a swamp and at times pheasant could be seen strutting amongst the cat-tails. Rover II would often bound into the pheasants, always ending with the pheasants' escape, while Rover stood belly-deep, watching their flight. A few scraggily chickens, once members of a strong flock, haltingly stepped, poking and scratching, about the yard. All was enclosed by a thin forest.

Keep in your minds,
And in your hearts,
That God had sacrificed
His only Son for us,
To reopen the gates of heaven.

Even our tree is now a synthetic one, stand-

ing in the corner of the living room spewing off a fragrance given it by the manufacturer. Its convenient assemblage and compact storage are its only appealing characteristics as it stands unmoved and oblivious to its surroundings. There is no expectation, as with real trees, as to how it will look (since it was designed), and even as it is brought up from the cellar one knows what it will look like. There is no sense of accomplishment when it is finished. It has become oppressive in that it no longer serves its function and, ten minutes after it is set up, it is in the way.

As I opened the door I was greeted by Rover II, who had been barking since our arrival, and by the smell of the hallway, a peculiar smell all its own, like that of old encyclopedias.

My grandmother followed the dog to the door. She was a fat woman with limpid brown eyes and a head of thick, kinky hair. I was afraid of her. The previous summer I had stayed with them while my mother was recuperating from the birth of my baby brother Robert, who still lay asleep in our car. My mother hadn't wanted to wake him up.

I had stayed for a week, but as soon as I walked in I knocked over one of her prize potted plants. As she swept up the remains, she warned me that if I didn't behave, she'd pin my ears back and hang me on the clothesline. Every night I had a nightmare, in which she chased me with a cat-tail and I couldn't get away because I kept tripping over my ears. She was happy to see us, smiling benignly at me.

"My Lord, how you've grown! You know, dear," she said to my mother, "You never know how much they grow until one day you look, and they've grown a foot! Come here honey, and let gramma

give you a kiss." Her smile faded when I backed away from her outstretched, flabby arms. They fell, hitting her sides like distant claps of thunder. She had once asked my mother why I hated her.

My aunt Alice and uncle Norman and their seven screaming, bratty kids were just leaving. To avoid ridiculous overcrowding of the five room house, my father and my uncle agreed long ago to alternate Christmas dinner with them. This year was our turn. They flowed out of the house and into their car, like a great, turbulent wave, and drove away, the kids still screaming. Brief hellos and good-byes had been exchanged.

We entered the kitchen and passed my almost-gray-haired grandfather, who shook hands with me, turning away my kiss saying, "You're a man now. Pretty soon you'll be as tall as your father." His face wrinkled a little as he smiled, and his blue eyes sparkled through his horn-rimmed glasses. As I turned away, he mussed my hair. I liked him.

"Let me take your coat, dear." I let my grandmother take it, then I walked quickly into the parlor where my uncle Bill was sitting on the couch. I liked him, too. He let me watch him roll cigarettes.

Strewn about the parlor were torn remnants of opened Christmas presents, cracked shells of what once was.

And that Christ,
In order to fulfill
His father's wishes,
Had to sacrifice Himself
To atone for our sins.

Materialism has overshadowed Christ's presence, and the happiness which I felt in looking

on the Babe after Mass has been replaced by an anxiety to return home for their presents. Parent's love, once mirrored in the eyes of their children, has been temporarily displaced by the measure of the presents, and one can see the disappointment in their eyes when their parents have fallen short of their expectations. That love in their eyes for their parents has disappeared, like flakes of snow falling on wet pavement. I no longer set up the manger.

As I sat on the couch watching the fourth cigarette being created, a question popped into my mind that had never occurred to me before. It wasn't until the twelfth cigarette that the noise in the kitchen died down enough so that I could ask my grandfather the question that was now burning in my mind. If I had gone in before then, my father would have cuffed me for interrupting them. As I entered the kitchen, my mother left to get Robert.

"Grandpa, what happened to Rover the First?"

"Rover the First, like the dog we got now, was a black, stiff-haired mongrel. One day, after he was gone a long time, he came home with his stomach ripped open and his guts hanging out. I sewed him up as best I could with a needle and some string, and hoped for the best. Two months later, Rover disappeared again. Then, about a week after that, I went outside to feed the chickens, and there was Rover lying dead on the lawn. I buried him in back of the chicken coop.

"A little while after that I started getting visits from some people. Most of them lived about a mile away. It seems that their dogs had beaten up Rover, and after he got better, he went back, killed ever' blessed dog that beat him, and then came back home to die."

Therefore, God's children,
Recognize this debt,
And prepare to repay Them,
Through sacrifice,
All the rest of your lives.

Every idea I had then, every image of Christ and of Christmas, were as real to me as if I had actually experienced Him. Sometimes I long for that innocence and the ignorance that accompanies it. I am sometimes enraged by the immaturity in my maturity, by the fact that I can rationalize almost everything, but this. Everything that I cannot rationalize, I can cast aside in the knowledge that it will again occupy my thoughts, and maybe then, when my immaturity is lessened, I may be able to deal with it.

"Oh my God, please help me! My baby's dying!"

My grandmother dropped the pan that she had just taken from the stove and rushed to help my mother. My father and grandfather rose numbly, their mouths hanging open.

While my grandmother and my mother carried the baby into the bedroom, my father snapped out of his trance and rushed into the parlor to call the rescue squad. He reasoned that since the hospital was too far away, the rescue squad would be better. When he put the receiver to his ear he heard a woman talking. My grandparents, to save money, had a party line.

"Please get off the phone, I have to make an important call."

"Please, I have to call the hospital," he said frantically, pleading with her.

"My baby's dying!" Tears of frustration and helplessness ran down his cheeks.

My father, sobbing uncontrollably now, dropped the receiver and fell onto the couch. My grandfather took over the battle while I tried to comfort my father, even though I didn't fully understand what was happening. He held onto me so tightly I wanted to cry out, but somehow I knew I shouldn't. "She told me that I was rude and that it was a horrible thing to say just to get her off the phone."

We stayed that way until I saw the ambulance pull into the driveway. Three men ran into the house and my father showed them where to go. They wore white uniforms and one of them carried a large tank.

As I watched them carry Robert into the ambulance, my mother and father following him in, I wondered where he was going. I asked my grandfather and he opened his mouth, but no words came out. He turned and went into the kitchen. I asked my grandmother and she said, "Robert is dead. He's going right to heaven." Shivers of comprehension ran through my body and, for the first time in a year-and-a-half, I let her hold me. In fact, I welcomed it.

Recognize this debt,
All the rest of your lives.

I watch as my sister tries to comfort my mother, and again I open the Christmas card which my Aunt had sent:

Rejoice on this truly Christian day,
The birthdate of Christ, Our Savior.
Keep in your minds,
And in your hearts,
That God had sacrificed

His only Son for us,
To reopen the gates of heaven.
And that Christ,
In order to fulfill
His Father's wishes,
Had to sacrifice Himself
To atone for our sins.
Therefore, God's children,
Recognize this debt,
And prepare to repay Them,
Through sacrifice,
All the rest of your lives.

yellow unassumptions & sundays

it all comes quietly she is so
unassuming sunrise
is like her so
grand she says
in its very large
& understated way
& yellow too

but it only begins there
it continues into cats eyes
& goldenrod & spreads
into her grandmothers whalebone rosary
she counts the beads the passing
of her constant prayers & days
of course there is always yellow
& flowers & certainly
there are always daisies
& dandelions she wants
everything as quiet as yellow flowers

she wants to be buried
in a yellow dress to be remembered
with forsythias she wants
above all to slip into her zion
quietly as into a slick
yellow silk negligee
her zion is a yellow bedroom
& this sunday morning

r d swets

Orleans

Street named after a Socialist politico
In the Ohio of France
Where the sweet Loire
Flows here

Joan of Arc cut up the British
And the Burgundians where
Pastry costs 20¢ and is too sweet where
The bookstore is too large for a small
Town
Boston-style radical went away to Paris
Boston-style nurse studies in a Catholic
School.

A Boston tourist reads the street map.

Robert Pinsley

UP TO GRASMERE

We came up here on the bus
Ribble Coaches Limited
to the sun going

behind a stone wall
walking in the blue
it made by going

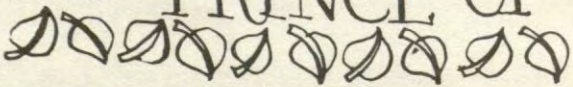
next day we hiked back
to the rhododendron
among root forms

tonight I sit by a fire
reading and eating soup
from a smooth spoon

the dreams I have
the little I know
the sweet chill when I turn my face

MARGARET RABB.

SEPT·EM
BER·OCT 

↑ NOV^{BER}·EM^{BER}·RY DECEM^{BER}·→
UN·DECEM·DUO·DECEM^{BER}·RY DEC
EMBER·TWENTY·FIVE·XP
NIKA·CHRIST'S MASS·and th
ou shalt call his name:
JESUS, for, he shall save his
people from their sins DECEMBE
R 25·25 DECEMBER·[NATUS]
AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED:
WONDERFUL·MARVELOUS·COUNSELLOR:
THE ALMIGHTY GOD·THE EVERLAST-
ING FATHER·THE PRINCE OF
PEACE 

The Passing of Furman's Junk Shop

Eugene L. Meyer

© 1973 the Washington Post

For more years than anyone can remember, Meyer Furman operated his Philadelphia shop on a narrow street filled with stores containing specialities from South African feathers to flags of all nations.

Meyer's shop was no less special. It was filled with old magazines, books, 78 r.p.m. records, songsheets from both world wars, posters and Liberty Loan pins. Most of it rested in precarious piles that were off limits to all hands except Meyer's.

He stood, slightly stooped, perhaps five feet tall, and he wore an old blue coat that was too long, a hat, and, probably for the last fifty years, the same dirty white shirt. At 80, Meyer himself seemed like a relic of the past. Even his low prices were outdated.

Meyer Furman paid \$88. a month rent for the first floor and basement of a two-story turn-of-the century building in the center city. His clientele consisted of collectors, like myself, who would regularly seek out his shop. After I moved from Philadelphia to Washington, I continued to visit his shop on periodic trips north.

On a recent trip, I was a block from his 902 1/2 Filbert Street address when I had a

premonition that Meyer Furman had died. He hadn't, but his shop was closed. The reason, I learned from neighbors and confirmed from officials, was urban renewal.

Meyer Furman and others like him make a city more human, more interesting and more vital, but, as one redevelopment official put it, their businesses are "marginal". They survive precariously, on old buildings. There is no way they can afford the rents in new ones.

The grand designs of architects and planners for cities hold no place for the Meyer Furmans. Meyer's shop will be demolished to make way for a truck tunnel and a new department store, part of the vast Market Street East redevelopment project. On the west side of Philadelphia's massive City Hall, Seymour Moss' Americana shop was torn down for private development, and, before that, Chaffee's second-hand book store around the corner. None have reopened.

Sadly, the same fate awaits many small businesses here in Washington, where 132 establishments will be displaced by urban renewal around two downtown subway stops sometime next year, according to the present timetable.

The businesses include a second-hand book store, a shop that plates copper and sells fire-place fixtures, a tailor and a family-owned store.

Already, in other sections of the city, urban renewal has displaced more than 1,200 businesses.

Of these, 507 simply folded and 103 relocated outside the District. In many instances, they were family businesses, rendering unique personalized service. New businesses have been largely of the chain store variety.

The argument against the small businesses that officials dismiss as "marginal" is compelling -if your major concern is private profit or a bigger tax base. The builders and bureaucrats speak approvingly of "the highest and best use" of land. What they're really talking about is what's most lucrative to a developer or assessor.

It is long past time to discard such exclusive pecuniary notions. The "best use" of land -for those who want a city to be more than daytime steel towers with ground floor banks and airline offices- is not necessarily defined by economics.

Similarly, a business that is economically "marginal" may be an essential part of the city's soul. Much urban renewal money is being spent in cities across the country not to renew but to spiritually and physically decimate them.

In 1970, Downtown Progress, a private Washington group comprised largely of big businesses worried about small businesses battling redevelopment asked the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to subsidize the rents of small business men in the new office buildings. It is a fine idea that has gotten nowhere. That is too bad. The end of Meyer Furman's junk shop is more than the tragedy of one elderly man.

AFTERNOON IN GLOUCESTER

"Something that squeals early
in the morning when daybreak
comes..." I remember hearing,

As my friend
is climbing
in her yellow sweater

Up the large, flat rocks
of Gloucester, where we have come
to watch the water fill and find
the space in this sculpture,

To a place where we can stretch
and hear the sloshing recede
before it rises again, spitting.

Here, nothing compassionate
or loyal, no abstract nouns
can complicate forever,
beating and spilling.

...Robin Becker

THE DESERTED CABIN

Clamor of sparrows under eaves
where bitter bones regret
and loud rain grieves:

A paneless window house is
seek and see;
one pocket palace
built for young (this)
summer season
(winter stored)
is roofed and doored
to space, to flocks feathering
the drab day on
upon
their orthodox tufted haunches,
each vocalizing
its little woe-is-me.

We watch the rain
from our
glass houses,
thinking
birds.

So small hostilities
(like these)
begin;
so watertight our
dreams are
leaking.

--Judy Neeld



CHRISTINE ZAWADIEWSKY.

Clay

screaching into upper yesterday (a jolt as practical as a reasonably-priced gravestone) I run over the professor who's tickling me as a pet---a vessel---with a sponge made from an elephant's ear ("Psychoceramics," you used to say, "A course meant for a crackpot") till the accident is as lucid to me as a barrel of insects in the corner of an igloo in greater Outer Mongolia. Clay. About it I know that God created earth, man, and the son of a critic who once tried to seduce me in an editor's office. Also that your face is damp and craggy as a map of your mountainous mental terrain where thoughts can never have any highways or roads. On foot I stumbled through junior high where Edward crushed a clay hippopotamus, then painted it with yellow and purple spots while I kneaded the gray stuff like celestial bread till a girl with an arm flung over her head was standing before me forthright as any tree limb, almost ready for the ferocious kiln. Here we learn about baking, dull leather, the frying moon, a flipping spatula, abundances and craftsmanship, a clumsy dance based on control, decision, brute force: and now I am older, I come to class having swallowed religion like medicine in a wayward automobile, free as running water, attentive as a vegetable, blushing straight out of the roots in my loin. And as upper yesterday will someday be today, a cemetery to be travelled through with impatience and the utmost possible speed, I see him, the head of the ceramics department, cut inside-out as he bends forward to me, motioning for surgery, brief underwear, mounting pain and a cardboard collection of students' tongues pasted over the lip of a garbage pail ("Clay!", he said, "Go get the clay.").

GONZO JOURNALISM AND LITTLE MAGAZINES

Edward J. Hogan

One night late in October, Hunter S. Thompson was a guest on a late night T.V. discussion program. (It is he who gained notoriety last year for his "Fear and Loathing" series on-the-road with the 1972 McGovern campaign, printed in ROLLING STONE.) He made a comment that sunk in and got me started: he said that the higher a writer goes up the rungs of the media ladder, the more edges get taken off what he or she has to say. You only maintain access to the contacts you need by playing the game. And it is by playing along that you continue to get invited to the parties, and accumulate a stock of off-the-record knowledge (much of which it would be in the public interest to make public) that you can never let go of. You must, he said, be socially acceptable to men of power to be successful in big-time journalism.

It is these people, the ones who treat press briefings by government spokesmen as principal sources of information, who debilitate the truth-seeking role that is supposed to be the core of journalism. Gonzo journalism seeks out the truth with particular gusto and flair. Thompson, who spent a brief stint as a Washington reporter, said that he was invited to two different parties and never invited back. If he was so opposed to Hubert Humphrey that he thought that he was 'a gutless ward-heeler who should be shoved in a goddamned

bottle and sent out in the Japanese current' then that's what he said. And that's why Hunter S. Thompson will never be the White House correspondent for the NEW YORK TIMES.

With very rare exceptions (one of course is ROLLING STONE), power and money, and therefore size and conspicuous success, are found together only in homogenized and pasteurized publications, those tailored to rest easy with most of the people most of the time.

A marginal existence, then, is the return accruing to those who publish work with edges. If a small circulation is the price small mag editors must pay for printing what they like and saying the same, then it is worth it. And when it comes to politics, there must be somewhere where it can be said that Richard Nixon is a "wretched retread", for that seizes the truth in a way only what is blunt can.

"Mr. Agnew preached the old-time virtues, and practiced the old-time vices."

--Eric Sevareid

"The use of solar energy has not been opened up because the oil industry does not own the sun."

--Ralph Nader

Clerk Quirk

Me

Nightclerk at

The Carling Hotel

All

Alone but for

A big 45 on the shelf beneath

The money drawer

And

When some dumb motherfucker come in and

Want the money from that drawer

Or

Want to rape Miss Apple in 337

Or

Cut up Paul the Pusher in 415

Me

I'm gonna take me that big 45 and

I'm gonna shoot that motherfucker down cause

Me

I'm the toughest motherfuckin' nightclerk in

This town

And

Here come One Eye Jim with

His cane and ol' yellow teeth and

He limp up to my desk say

"Gi-gi-gimme a Tribune"

And me

I take my big 45 and
Shoot that crippled little motherfucker right
Through his yellow teeth and
Next time
Ol' One Eye Jim say
Please

--Fritz Hamilton

::: AT THE BEACH ON SAINT PATRICKS DAY

It's so cold and wet
for the both of us to be out here
with our hands inside the ice
turning Saint Patricks Day balloons
into
beehives and
gold plated fish hooks
into
coathangers.

Here are some matches;
go light the sand on fire.

WILLIAM HOUNSHELL.

On the Banks of the River

On the banks of the river the fisherman
is watching the evening stars
A beggar sleeps clutching his empty bottle
a dark beret for a pillow
birds dance and peck at his feet

Sluggish and dirty waters
A fish color of rotting timber
circles among the white blossoms of the poplars
The sky is blue the dogs bark on the bridges
like dawn in the countryside of Cuba
when the milkman goes by on his sorrel horse

Innumerable eyelids have closed in those waters
but now the sun still visible
shivers above the beggar above the water above
your head
The evening is not the same by the side of someone
drowning
where through the branches the world's whiteness
shines forth

Fayad Jamis
translated by Joan Piurek

Winter Beach

The mist is salt and tar - it hangs
like a net over the boardwalk, tastes bitter, and
tightens about the face with icy thongs.
Along the oyster-pale beach
statues of men, impervious to salt-showers,
are braced against the wind
attached to the sea by umbilical fishing lines
that mother the crests of morning.

The children bandaged with mufflers dance
a cobblestone path of shells, hunters of
diamonds and pearls too bright for seeing.
Their guardians view slate horizons
and young with mixed intimidation.
A covey of churchbells wings across the frozen sky
singing of purity to the faded snow, blessing
the cowardice of July's brilliant yellow sands.
The ocean grown darker still with purpose
rips cliffs out of the dunes
and waves forward the on-rushing tide
with a wide indifferent palm.

Renny Hartmann

POND AND LAKE

A pond, a lake, are bodies of water,
Differing but similar, the two,
Much like mother and daughter,
When offered to the view.
A lake has an open, rippling face,
Where swimmers dive and small boats race
And swans move with a regal grace.
A pond is smaller in size,
With arboral clusters, reeds and sedge
Crowding so closely round its edge
It is almost hidden from the skies.
Brown ducks waddle around the rim;
It is dark, mysterious, deep;
Under its waves kelpies might sleep,
While shadows lurk near the brim
That could be paniscus and Pan
Or other beings alien to man.
No doubt the air of every pond
Is haunted by the ghost of Thoreau,
Always trying to beg or borrow
A vision of vaster shores beyond
The terraqueous loam of his small home.

--Lori Petri

NOW, \$\$ FOR FICTION!

**BY EDWARD J. HOGAN

The CAROLINA QUARTERLY announces its 17th Fiction Contest for Young Writers. Here are the requirements: you must be under 30 and not have published a book-length manuscript. Entries must be in standard manuscript form and labelled as contest entries (stamped, self-addressed envelope must be included); they must be original (what else?) and unpublished. Max. length: 6000 words. Winning stories will appear in Spring 1974 CQ. Deadline: February 1, 1974. And now, what you've been waiting for--the prizes: 1st place, \$100; 2nd, \$50; 3d, \$25.

And while we're on the subject, DeWitt Henry of PLOUGHSHARES (see review in our last issue) tells me he's looking for prose submissions for a special exclusively-prose issue, deadline January, 1974. There will be a bias for "realism".

SMALL PRESSES

news, reviews

BOOK REVIEW/POST OFFICE, a novel by Charles Bukowski. Black Sparrow Press, P.O. Box 25603, Los Angeles 90025. 1971. 115pp. \$4, paper.

Here is Bukowski's first novel. As in most of his work, it is intensely autobiographical. If the names are different, the raw edge of experience is taken from his own life.

After reading THE DAYS RUN AWAY... (poems), I was so struck by his work that I immediately embarked on a crash program of buying up all the Bukowski books (prose and poetry) available. POST OFFICE has confirmed my confidence: it's a dynamite book.

It opens with a sort of preface--the official postal employees' "code of ethics" ("All postal personnel must act with unswerving integrity and complete devotion to the public interest"). Then

comes reality. Henry Chinaski learns from a drunk that the Post Office would hire "damned near anybody" for the Christmas season. It seemed easy, but then he ran up against "the Stone"--the supervisor who didn't like him, and put him through the ringer whenever he could, which was every day--by giving him the toughest routes and then writing him up when he finished late--or not assigning him at all. You see, Chinaski was not your average postal employee. He got the job done pretty well (otherwise he would never have stayed for 12 years), but his cylinder wasn't exactly a perfect fit in the P.O.'s hole. But the Stone demanded the impossible of all the substitute carriers.

After awhile, Chinaski filed a report at the Federal Building criticizing the Stone. The official who was directed to deal with this wise guy

waved my papers at me. And screamed:

"MR. JONSTONE IS A FINE MAN!"

"Don't be silly. He's an obvious sadist," I said.

"How long have you been in the Post Office?"

"3 weeks."

"MR. JONSTONE HAS BEEN WITH THE POST OFFICE FOR 30 YEARS!"

"What does that have to do with it?"

"I said, 'MR. JONSTONE IS A FINE MAN!'"

As one absurd encounter followed another in Chinaski's running brush-fire war with the Bureaucracy's low-level underlings, there were the many surprises that awaited him along his carrier-route. Chinaski, who spent almost all his money on booze and women and horseraces, comes up against a housewife who screams at him:

"BILLS! BILLS! BILLS! IS THAT ALL YOU CAN BRING ME? THESE BILLS?"

"Yes, mam, that's all I can bring you."

I turned and walked on.

It wasn't my fault that they used tele-

phones and gas and light and bought all their things on credit. Yet when I brought them their bills they screamed at me--as if I had asked them to have a phone installed, or a \$350 t.v. set sent over with no money down.

Throughout are Chinaski's long and short-term relationships with a succession of women--and it is how he regards women and how he writes about them that most often becomes the focus of why most seem to either love him or hate him. He is flawed like all of us, but perhaps his flaws show more. One of his publishers (City Lights) said of him: "In a sense Bukowski is a legend in his time...a madman, a recluse, a lover...tender, vicious...never the same...you cannot read (him) and ever come away the same again." For him, hyperbole is impossible. Read him and choose your slant.

BOOKS:

HOW TO WALK ON WATER (poems) by Janet Beeler. CSU Poetry Booklet No. 7, Cleveland State University Poetry Center, Cleveland, Ohio.

Here are twenty-three well-crafted poems by a winner of CSU poetry scholarship competition. A sample: "The child on the bus":

gave me a milkwhite look,
a glance without malice,
only curious, and pure.

Only children withhold that much.
You and I charge each touch
with meaning, overlaid,
embroidered, stained with fingerprints.

I search for some one thing
simple between us,
something wholly clear,
uncontrived as clean sheets,
well water, or washed windows.

love, Love, LOVE (poems) by Michael Joseph Philips. Poetry Publishing Corporation, Colony Apartments, 2012A West 76th, Indianapolis, IN 46260. 1973.43pp.

MAGS:

AKWASASNE NOTES, published by members of the Mohawk Nation, c/o Rooseveltown, NY 13683. 50¢ ea., no fixed subscription price--depends on reader financial support. 8/year. 48pp.

Here is a comprehensive tabloid covering Indian cultures and news, much of it news of Indian struggle: against a huge coal strip-mining project in Lame Deer, Montana; to have a real say in the reorganization of the B.I.A.; to obtain the enforcement of some provisions of past treaties.

There are poems, abundant graphics, book reviews, and coverage of the circumstances Indians find themselves in--on both continents of the Western Hemisphere.

THE UNSPEAKABLE VISIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL, edited by Arthur & Glee Knight, P.O. Box 439, California, PA 15419. Triannual, Subscription \$5. Vol.3, Nos. 1 & 2. 75pp.

Featured in this issue is Herbert Huncke, "one of the original members of the Beat Generation." Huncke has, according to Allen Ginsberg, been associated with the first use of the word "hip", some 2 decades ago. He knew, and influenced, Ginsberg, Kerouac, Burroughs, and others. He was at various times a vagabond, a dealer, a prisoner. Contained here are an interview, letters, an appreciation by Ginsberg, and an arresting account by Huncke, "The Law of Retribution".

Elsewhere, there is a quiz ("What's Your Sexual Quotient?") that seemed dispensable to me, and a fine short story called "The Sounds of Sadness" by Kevin Sweeney. On balance, VISIONS is an effort worth attention--it reaches out in some directions that are unlike most small mags--poetry, prose, reviews--poetry, prose, reviews.

ENVOI, edited by J.C. Meredith Scott and others, Lagan nam Bann, Ballachulish, Argyl, Scotland. Tri-annual, \$3/year. No. 47. 24pp.

Prints "traditional to mildly experimental" poetry. There are also various contests; and poems printed in each issue are rated by subscribers by mail. I had some trouble understanding the specifics of these contests, and for the same reason found much of the poetry difficult. There is in these cases a language barrier: Scottish English (?) and American English do not express themselves in the same way. Nevertheless, I found some poems to my liking, including T.M. Stiven's "It Happened", excerpted here.

Our meeting was beyond analysis
It happened
Like sunlight catching a seagull,
two seagulls,
so that they fly in the gleam of it.

We were going the same way,
as it happened,
though we did not stop to ask,
nor did we
think of going separately.

We did not think of love.
If it happens
it will be beyond analysis
like two seagulls
caught in a shaft of the sun.

and LETTERS are WELCOME. If you have done it, and you like it, send it to ASPECT. We try to publish work by beginning writers as well as those more experienced. ASPECT does NOT have an editorial slant for content: all ideas and styles welcome. An exchange of views is encouraged. First issue: March 1969. *US ISSN 0004-4911

Thanks to Ruth Greene, without whose help you would most assuredly not be holding this issue in your hands today!

Member, COSMEP and NESPA.

THE PEOPLE INSIDE

SUSAN STRAYER DEAL, Gothenburg, Nebraska, co-edits CHERNOZEM...ERIC CASHEN (Ritchie Darling) edits two presses: Rat & Mole and Green Knight, and is a co-ordinator of the New England Small Press Association...JOAN COLBY is from Streamwood, Illinois....JEANNETTE HOGAN is an amateur photographer from Somerville, Massachusetts...FREDERICK B. PAINE, No. Attleboro, Mass., has a B.A. in Creative Writing from Roger Williams College, and is now planning to work toward a Master of Fine Arts degree... R.D. SWETS, Wyoming, Michigan...MARGARET RABB is from Cedar Mountain, North Carolina...JOHN MASON is a student at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia...JUDY NEELD edits PATTERNS (a magazine of poetry). She now concentrates "full-time on writing, editing, and spending every possible moment on Martha's Vineyard." The rest of the time, she resides in Madison, New Jersey...HARLAND RISTAU lives and teaches art in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.....CHRISTINE ZAWADIWSKY, also of Milwaukee, has been published in many places, one of the most recent being PANACHE No. 12; she works in sculpture and photography as well, and speaks Ukrainian and German..FRITZ HAMILTON, Chicago, says of his poetry in an August '73 issue of ROLLING STONE, "Life is so complicated and confusing, and so damn fast, that I cease to make sense out of it. All I attempt to do is to record it as I live it and see it....My song should be understood by the gut from which it's ripped...FAYAD JAMIS is a Cuban poet born in 1930..JOAN PIUREK teaches at Inter American University, Hato Rey, Puerto Rico...RENNY HARTMANN, Lake Hiawatha, New Jersey...LORI PETRI, Novato, Calif.

"It appears that certain people think that poetry should be a certain way. For those, there will be nothing but troubled years. More and more people will come along to break their concepts."

--CHARLES BUKOWSKI.