



**The REBEL**



NUMBER 1

JAN 1937

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Send for subscription  
North Carolina or write  
to the publisher

Manuscripts  
Box 2486  
The REBEL  
306 N. 1st St.  
Raleigh, N.C.



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The REBEL magazine is published by the Student Government Association of East Carolina College. It is printed three times a year in November, February and May by Owen G. Dunn Co., New Bern, North Carolina.

Manuscripts are always welcomed, warmly. Send for consideration to the REBEL magazine, Box 2486, Greenville, North Carolina, or walk up to 306½ Austin Building, East Carolina College.



## PURSLANE: REVISITING

by

SANFORD PEELE

I came upon Bernice Kelly Harris' *Purslane* at the age of thirteen in a search for a reading pleasure alternative to the apathy produced by the grim little selections to be found in state-approved texts, though at that time I had no knowledge and less concern for the profound reasons as to why the eighth grade should read something called eighth grade material. At thirteen, philosophic despair for the reading matter put forth by public educators was happily confined to my discovering that if what was read in school was reading and what I dragged home from the library on weekends was likewise reading, then there were two types of reading, and I would do well to make a distinction. Interest was the final and absolute judge; thus were sheep and goats imperiously divided, the former being those books you had to have because being thirteen demanded adventures got up in all the mystical regalia of distant and improbable geographies of imagination made immediate. The latter were those books you must read to expand vocabulary in a particular way, to improve logic of a particular kind, and to prepare for the next grade.

I hasten to add; I did not then, and I do not, now despair for the reading matter and the manner of its being taught in the public schools. It is a miracle that anyone should come to read at all, much less live with words long enough and intimately enough to add reading to his canon of pleasure equal to a good sunrise, or spring, or any other occasion that brings being alive to keenest awareness. I have arranged with myself, in the light of prophecies fulfilled, to absolve my educators and their books from the charge "but it doesn't apply to me." It all too obviously does. Perhaps there might have been room for the math and sciences if I had not made such neat distinctions between what was good and what good for me.

What has this bit of biography to do with Mrs. Harris' *Purslane*? Nothing. But it might go some little way toward illuminating a personal discovery

of a particular experience—in this case literary, *Purslane*—that can be encountered again and again over a period of many years; and enjoyed, upon each new encounter, for the growing discoveries the reader is ready to make. And to be ready in the most private, physiological, emotional and intellectual sense of ready—a readiness not calculable by school or teacher or even self until self is so far into the experience that there can be no turning back—is to lay a trap for learning that no teacher may take responsibility for. It may begin in the classroom, or in the woods; and might just as well end in either place without the responsibility to and for the thing incurred ever shifting from the individual. It is this individual responsibility for experience, seen as it works itself out in the complicated pattern of communal life lived among people whose entwined destinies constitute a spiritual as well as physical sense of community, that occasions this response to having read *Purslane* again.

The title fascinated me. *Purslane*. I liked strong nouns for book names, and Purslane had to be the name of something. Before turning page one, I had experienced two sensations that would return, in all the freshness of first encounter, on each subsequent reading of the book. First were the words, *Neuse River*. They came out of the opening sentence with an overwhelming impact; this Neuse River couldn't be *my* Neuse River. My Neuse River was private; you didn't write books about it. You lived there. And not since Peter Pan was locked out of his home and into my imagination had I been so seduced as when Bernice Kelly Harris gave me her Nanny Lou, that superb little Protestant, and my second and deepest impression on first reading *Purslane*.

There were many names, family names, references to aunts and uncles and people who were dead and could only be remembered by the very few. All of this made me faintly uneasy. It was like being with my grandmother and her friends, where you might know some of the people brought



up in conversation but by no means all. And those you didn't know were spoken of with such intimacy and precise remembrance of detail that you somehow forgot you had not been there, at the picnic on a given Sunday in a given year. *Purslane* hardly counted at all that first reading. It was a chronicle of my family and community life to be relished as the conversations overheard from the adult world and the observations I personally made about the town in which I lived. Only one time in my reading of the book did Bernice Kelly Harris, in the role of author, intrude upon the flow of narrative. Nanny Lou had bargained with God for a safe passage back to the mainland, after a storm had sprung up and severely compromised the pleasure of her first trip to the beach. One by one she sacrificed her little horde of shells in hope of appeasement, finally offering God the supreme gift of her paper dolls in exchange for firm earth beneath her feet. When the moment came to offer, separately and finally, in fistfuls her dolls to the open fire, I rebelled against an injustice the author must alone be held accountable for. Oh to have popped Mrs. Harris into the oven in heartfelt exchange for every one of the humble effigies! There was something unlovely and unnatural about that sacrifice; and while I now consider it among Mrs. Harris' finest insights into the pivotal moment of a child's receding into adulthood, I still cannot encounter it without a sense of unsponsored desolation too grim and final to offer satisfaction beyond the artistry of its presentation.

Now thirteen years and a number of readings later, I have discovered in *Purslane* an insight into the pained and imperfect attempts of the individual to find meaning and richness in his search for a balance between the dictates of a personal psychology and the demands of human society. A turn of the century rural setting gives Mrs. Harris the advantage of having a closed society to deal with; closed in the sense that any disturbance, whether from within the framework or without, occasions such reverberations as can be felt by nearly every member of that society. A new teacher comes to take over the school, and immediately the entire community is involved. The first white tenant family to farm in the township arrives on the Fuller farm, and their arrival is the concern of the whole community. Nothing is entirely closed, however, and the errant and ungovernable mysteries of human nature insinuate themselves beneath the ritual of habit and circumstance to force the individual to reassert his responsibility as a thinking, feeling, separate and whole agent, before he lends his voice to public pronouncement and action.

The primary authority in *Purslane* is the church, Protestant and puritanical. The puritanism is ameliorated by the earthy nature of a farming community and the healthy Protestant habit of dealing with God on the grounds of acknowledged mutual respect. Community life, spiritual and cultural without distinction between the two, centers around the church. Members are chastised and rewarded before the church body when they,

acting out of some grievance or good, involve other members in a situation that disturbs the smooth course of social order. The feud between Aunt Airy and Aunt Sugar over an accumulation of slights, real and imagined, is finally brought into the church proper to be handled as an affair of communal significance, threatening the stability of a happy norm. There is no questioning of society's right to bring the women to a public facing of their private grievance. It had ceased to be private with the taking of sides by friends and relatives.

As *Purslane* moves toward its close, a series of beautifully detailed occasions of public celebration serve to illuminate the early accumulation of solitary character vignettes. A host of figures, heretofore confined for the main part to revealing relationships between individuals, emerge in an orchestration of specific community spirit, and beyond that, an indication of what draws man into society. Scenes of life lived in the school room, in the winter chill of hog killing, at quilting parties and on coon hunts give way to the greater rituals of marriage, birth and the laying away of the dead.

The aberrations and grand eccentricities of human nature are found in Pate's Siding tolerated and, on occasion, indulged because they belong and are a part of what a society knows as its own. Uncle Sim of the stocks and bonds, empty pockets and too delicate condition for work, is shifted from household to household; the women appreciating his rare complements on their cooking and the men, his good talk about financial affairs up North. Discrepancies between the Christian life on this earth and the sometimes ungoverned demands of the flesh are met with good humor and occasionally unabashed grace when revival times call the fallen forward on a final stanza of supreme good faith that all can be forgiven. Too much liquor and a view of the churchgoer as hypocrite are perpetual and favorite stumbling blocks to be removed with perennial group enthusiasm.

But it is for the fact of death that Mrs. Harris appropriately gives her greatest compassion for living. In two instances, she brings the final act of living into such sharp and unsentimental relief that terror for the fact of one's own inevitable end is annihilated at the spectacle of what we can do for each other in a fraternity of spirit when the power of profoundest individualism passes. The dying of the old woman, Charity, ensconced in a pantheon of husband, children, friends and a life of good will lived well, moves toward its close with a rare beauty and a precision of certainty among the survivors that "God doeth all things well." At her last, the lifetime of shared suffering between husband and wife asserts itself in a bond that will not let Charity tell her man to leave their bed, that she might die in peace. Hers is the sacrifice of not suffering profanely, of keeping to the end a charity for the beloved. It is the ritual—the eating of the funeral meats, the sitting up with the dead while talking of crops to come and the life old Charity lived, that shatters the purest sense of loss; and allows the living a little peace until they can make a memory of the dead.



The death of Calvin Fuller closes the novel. Charity's death had been the deepest sounding of the community's ability to consolidate its richness of cultural and spiritual experience in the face of its loss of a member. There is victory over death in the long continuum of shared experience canonized in memory that she passes on to her friends. Calvin's death offers no consolation. Young and unhappy in a doomed romance, he dies by his own hand, married to a bride he nor the community knew or loved; and when the community comes to witness his being walked from one end of the bare porch to the other, his legs rhythmically switched to keep him from falling into the poisoned sleep he desires above all else, they know the panic of having their comfortable

answers swept away in the great overwhelming question, Why?

Miss Harris has been responsible to her reader and to her material. Though the book is pervaded with nostalgia, there is no retreat from the complexity of living into easy answers. If the symmetry of personal experience merging with society produces a unity that occasionally has the faded quality of a 19th century print, a look that is human but posed, that is her prerogative as an artist, her way of telling the story. As an artist, she knows the degree to which a human being may find solace, in the social order, for what Yeats called "the pain and uncertainty of his setting forth."

## SHE WAS OF HERONS

by

CHARLOTTE McMICHAEL

She was of herons  
cocking their feather throats  
above circles of water minutes  
about to waver breast-deep in.

She was of crows  
sitting solitary on branches  
with no noise to focus the day with  
or to whistle green seeds for growing  
not too much past black where all is dark.

She was of brown wrens  
no October wind could scurry  
brush-tailed back under directional timing  
no back tracking seasons could delay.

She was of counterpoint bird  
piping on ocean sands  
leaving marks for crabs to disfigure  
and gone the memory  
twice kept for shells and salt.

She was of lace  
long marked to broken ash  
when cinders hold up a new flame of bird,  
but the feathers twist underground  
leaving only the melody mark of song.



# THE BARGAIN

by

GUY BEINING

It was Friday when I passed him; Saturday night I was knocking on his door. He was bent like the fish in the pail and stood right under the light bulb which hung from the middle of the ceiling. It was uncovered, washing the room, making it more naked and bare than it was. The planks were full of dirt and rusty nails; everything was revealed right at once. Cigar boxes full of wrappers, and coffee cans full of nails and ashes from the cigars. His belt hung open, and he was fingering a bottle, bay-colored. When I handed him the money I could smell the cane liquor from his breath. He had a muddy mouth, and the broad expanse of his lips was contorted into a scowl. Bertha Lee was in the other room; I heard her, and whenever I got drunk I swore I smelt her. Every time I came I was drunk.

"I ain't leading you to her," Abe cried out, "She's my daughter I know that for the truth." The wooden floors were far apart and you could smell the ground. Like the room, Abe's whole appearance was revealed almost at once. He had already kicked off his shoes, and I could see the wrinkles on his stomach through the holes in his shirt. His face looked crumpled in his half sleep.

"Aren't you planting this year?" I asked. He drew up his legs and his bony knees shot up.

"What? Beans, peanuts or beans, maybe cotton. No, I'll fish instead."

"Fishing don't make you money."

"My hands are through being hired. Those watermelons were the last of my planting. You can tell your daddy."

His cigar was wet and shiny, resting on the orange crate by his chair. He lit it again with a wooden match on the floor planks, mixing sulphur with the ground smell and that of Bertha Lee. Perfume seems to putrify the strong substantial smell of the earth. Her odor made Abe nervous. "That smell kills the substance meant for our lungs," he said once.

I would take her outside; I always did in the beginning, but then that changed the night it began to rain.

I remember that the rain came down hard on the tin roof, like pebbles thrown into a pot. And I knew that I'd have to stay if it didn't let up, and I felt it wouldn't. It was a steady downpour that

could last all night. Abe swore at the rain and squeezed the money I had given him. Squeezing hard as if he thought it would become liquid like the rain. His forehead was damp. I heard the bed creak in the other room where Bertha Lee was. It was a humiliating sound, but I was full of liquor, and could only laugh at the rain making a thousand little silver threads on the windows. Abe had emptied his bottle of cane liquor, and I wondered how he never got drunk.

"Why did you come tonight?" he asked. "You saw it would rain."

I couldn't stop the rain or myself. I said it to myself as if to him. I could almost see his skull when he lit a match, cupping it close to his mouth. I slept with her there that night, and from then on if it rained or not.

Another night. It was eight o'clock and the Savannah train came rushing by. It wasn't quite dark yet and the light looked strange lighting up the ties between the tracks that didn't quite need lighting up. The tracks were no more than three hundred feet away, making the roar of the train deafening for a steady minute. The shack trembled humbly. The train was what made me nervous like Bertha Lee's perfume made Abe nervous. I knew where I was when I heard the ground stammer and seem to break up. The train always shook a little sense, and then regret, into me. I came too damn early; I'll have to wait for the dark to come.

"I came early."

"I know what you done. I saw you walking down Grove Lane yesterday and I wondered when's he coming, but I didn't look your way, and we passed, but I knew you'd be coming."

"You were carrying a pail of fish," I said laughing.

"I feel good when I fish. Right out in the hot sun for hours; right into the chill of evening; I still feel good."

"The water's your salvation."

"I don't get to plant no more, but I get by. The water's always got something."

"Your salvation."

His eyes got darker, and they seemed harder. There are raisins in his eyes, I thought. He looked the same as the time when the rain came. The



eyes becoming small like raisins, then liquidy. His grizzly hair looked setaceous. When I was little I thought such hair would prick.

A solemnity came about, a secrecy of sound. And I stood in the quietness as if everything I'd ever thought was being used up to make the dark. It was cinerious outside; not dark yet. It was like looking at a clock, waiting for the dark to come.

Abe got up from his chair, making no noise at all, as if he didn't want to disturb the silence. He got down another bottle of cane liquor from the cabinets above the sink. He sat down again and with his eyes half open he began to drink. He rinsed his mouth with the first gulp, and then rested the bottle on the floor and got back to his cigar, wet and shining where his muddy mouth had been.

"Your daddy's letting you run loose now, huh? I see you all about," he said in a dead tone.

"On my own good time. I put in my work with him, then I'm through, and he knows it."

"You can't drive a car now, huh?"

"I done busted everyone he's let me use and then some, but still he won't take me off the tractor. He knows I drive hard but I get things done. I don't mind breaking in the land, especially in the spring, when the earth is down hard. It's a satisfaction, plowing in those even furrows. They always come out even."

"I done through with farming; just going to fish now."

I was trying to listen for Bertha Lee, but I couldn't hear her. I knew she'd be wearing her red skirt. A nigger will always wear something bright. I always said to myself she was half white, knowing she was a quadroon at best, yet I heard my father say she looks like a mulatto, so I kept telling myself she was, but when I was drunk I forgot about the whole thing and didn't try to divide her up. She was good for what she was.

I now sat down on a little stool off in the corner; I sat looking out at the half light trying to figure out Abe. Hating him now for making me wait; wondering why he still had pride in his old age, and why he held on to his last child so.

My father said that Abe had been a good farmer. He'd first moved into the region eleven years ago. I was just nine at the time, and I didn't pay no attention to Bertha Lee then. She was just six and looked like any other little nigger girl.

I heard him that first time talking to Father about how dedicated he would be in his work, since he had nothing but a little child to take care of.

"My wife done left me, and my sons the same after her. I got me a hoe and I got me a sickle and I done worked in the fields since I was ten."

My father would pick him up every day, and he'd sit in the back of the truck with Bertha Lee who he took with him everywhere he went. And his hounds would jump in after him. And they'd bark and carry on in the wind from the truck's motion, and Bertha Lee would just look straight at Abe, trusting in him. He'd work a good twelve

hours out in the fields and he did that for ten years, and then last year he began to drop off coming to work in his little Ford coupe. He said that he was getting old and felt the weather more, but he was out fishing and he would trap some. I knew this because he taught me how to set a trap the right way.

Then one day in the autumn I was passing his shack. It was early in the morning. The ground looked dusty from the frost which covered everything. I had my 30/30 rifle with me and was going up the dirt road toward Grove Lane and beyond Widows Creek. His shack looked so calm and dispassionate covered with frost. The sun was just beginning to reach over one side of the roof. One of the hounds started barking, then they all ran up to me and began to dance about my feet, kicking up the frosted ground. They were begging to go with me. I was pushing them away with my legs when Abe stepped out. He walked up to where I was and told the dogs to move on. He finally shouted so loud that they cringed back to the shack and hid under the steps. Abe was wrapped up in several shirts and a jacket with a hood that rested loosely on his head. He was chewing something in his muddy mouth and looking at the ground where the dogs had scratched it up. He looked bent like the fish in the pail.

"You're up early boy."

"Hunting calls for that," I said, putting my fingers over my lips which felt stiff and dry from the cold.

Smoke was beginning to whirl up from the chimney. Bertha Lee was fixing the fire. I had come upon her the other evening and eyed her longer than usual. That was shortly after Father had said she looked like a mulatto.

"I got a problem, boy," he said, wiping his muddy mouth.

"I ain't surprised, you not working and all." He bent his head a little more, ignoring what I'd said.

"I want to kill one of my dogs. She's going to have puppies I reckon and I can't keep no more. I got to shoot her, but I can't." He glanced at my rifle.

"No shells?"

"No, I'm scared to kill her. God might strike me down."

"Want me to kill her?"

"I'll pay you. I'll give you fifty cents a dog. You can kill them all."

I began to laugh inside, but looked hard at him. "That's wholesale murder!"

"I got to get rid of them but I can't."

Bertha Lee stepped out and threw some scraps to the dogs. She had on a white robe, but she still didn't look black.

"Do you want me to kill them dogs?" I asked her.

"They're not mine," she said indifferently, and then closed the door behind her.

"How old is she now?" I asked looking at the door where she had appeared.

"Seventeen. Yes seventeen this past October."

"She'll be going off soon won't she?"



"Someday I guess. Someday."

"She ain't bad," I said; he looked kind of strangely at me.

"Them dogs ain't no good to me, but I done sat right before them and tried to shoot them but I couldn't. Tied them up to a tree, but I couldn't." He spat on the ground. Abe hardly had any teeth and had no force behind his spitting. Part of it trickled down his sharp, unkempt chin. His lips fell back together. He'd been chewing a cigar tip. The little pieces of tobacco slid from his muddy mouth every so often.

"You don't think God can strike me?"

"I'll pay you, I says I'll pay you."

"This rifle's too powerful. It'll splatter your whole yard with their blood."

"I got the .22 I was going to use all loaded up."

"God ain't going to bother with me," I said under my breath. "Tie them to a tree. I'll get the .22."

He ran toward the house calling the dogs, but they sensed something and wouldn't come out from under the steps.

Inside the shack Bertha Lee was standing over the wood stove; she turned around with her hands on her hips. Then she waved her right hand in front of her eyes as if she couldn't see too well, or as if there was a fly buzzing around her. I grabbed the hand as if it were a weapon. It was soft. I didn't think it would be. It was soft like a girl's hand should be soft. I turned it over; the palms were pink; her fingertips were smoky buds. I noticed when I glanced up that her eyes were large with wonderment; jet-black, glassy fixities.

"No fellow ever touched your hand before?" I asked slyly.

She said nothing; just stared steadfastly at me.

"I'm going to kill them dogs. Kill them all, just for you. Look at your pa trying to round them up." I led her to the window. "See him on his knees a-calling them, pleading with them. But they ain't to be deceived so quickly."

She didn't say nothing, just stared blankly out the window. Her hand felt like it had turned to wood.

"You're like the Petrified Forest," I said laughing.

"Like the Petrified Forest?" She spoke in a spirited way.

"That's right."

"Where are they at?"

"Someday I might show you."

Abe was shouting fiercely at the dogs. Finally he got a rope from his car and began pulling them out one at a time.

"There's a resolute man," I said letting go of her hand, which had made mine warm and wet. Her hand was just as dry and cool as ever. "Where's the .22?"

She went into the bedroom with me right behind her. Her body seemed to sway like the tops of cane stalks. It was lithe, a figure in my mind of early summer. She pointed to the wall over a small bed. The .22 lay on top of two nails. I went to the other bed. "This here's yours, ain't

it?" I began to pat it with my hand. She nodded her head very slowly, as if she should be cautious at the question. "You got the big bed and he's got the small one."

"He don't sleep well. He mostly sits up all night."

"Do you like to sleep in the dark all alone?"

"No. Why?"

"Well I'll tell you . . ."

Abe shouted from outside, "They're tied up, boy. I got them all tied up."

I grabbed the .22 and then turned to Bertha Lee and sounded the words at her softly, as if they were adhesive, a joining declaration, a submission and a contiguity of all past quests, yet the words sounded hollow and foreign to my ears, as if they were being forced from a dream.

"This time, this recognition, I can't let by. You wait here tonight and if my mind sees you as I see you now, I'll be calling."

Then breaking that voice embedded in desperation, I cracked with a burn of mortification, "Remember, I'm killing them dogs for you. You don't just clutter up space, making other people act, you act too."

She didn't say anything, but stood there like some goddess of light. But she was black. I left burning with the neglect of my warm words.

Abe was looking mournfully at the tree. "I had them like that yesterday. All bunched up like that." He turned his head away when I took aim.

"You thinking God might make you an accessory?" He didn't reply, just kept his head turned. "I'm killing them dogs for her, and she knows it."

With each shot I said it. It seemed I could hear the thud of the shot wedge into the dog's body, and with each shot it felt like I could hear more. Finally with the last one, I sensed the bullet spinning its way, then the thud, and the spattering of blood around the wound. The dog making one quick yelp (that was real) and the copper bullet entering, and then submerged, in the pulsing, then quaking and finally roiling, blood.

A kind of madness went through my mind. He started to hand me the two dollars, which had been crumpled in his dirty jeans, but I pushed it away.

"I said I done it for her and she knows it and now you know it." I felt like a commander, an embattled commander, after killing them dogs. "And God won't spare you less you fall clear of this KILLING!"

He fell back a bit, moving toward the shack, feeling his way with his hands as if it were dark; with his eyes, upturned white arcs, staring at me. White liquid, white hot with incomprehension. He dangled in front of me like a broken twig. He was shaking and trying to say what he felt, but he just kept shaking and I knew he understood.

And that's how it happened. I've been giving him the same amount as he offered for the dogs, every time I come. I've done it every time but the very first, for that's when he paid me for killing the dogs. That's how he paid.



# A CHAPTER FROM THE NOVEL *VIRTUE IN FOUR POSITIONS*

by

ANTONI GRONOWICZ

## THE GOLDHEAD

Supreme Court: Franklin Kapistrot, plaintiff, against The Coast to Coast Railroad Company, William S. De Jager and Bartholomew A. Leach, defendants.

Examination by the defendant, The Coast to Coast Railroad Company, of the plaintiff before trial took place at the offices of Rollon, Casevant, Small & Abdoller pursuant to oral stipulation. Gilbert L. Lasher appeared as attorney for plaintiff. Rollon, Casevant, Small & Abdoller were attorneys for defendant The Coast to Coast Railroad Company, represented by Carroll A. Layton, Esq. and Augustine S. Neely, Esq. of counsel.

The participants confirmed: "It is hereby stipulated and agreed by and between the attorneys for the respective parties hereto that filing of the within examination before trial be and the same is hereby waived, and the attorney for the plaintiff shall be furnished with a copy thereof without charge; it is further stipulated and agreed that the witness may be sworn at the taking of his examination before trial by any Notary Public of the State; and that the witness may read, sign and swear to this testimony when the same is transcribed before any Notary Public of the State; it is further stipulated and agreed that all objections, except as to the form of questions, be and the same are hereby reserved to the trial of the action.

Franklin Kapistrot, the plaintiff, after having first been duly sworn, was asked by Mr. Layton:

"May we have your full name, please."

"Franklin Kapistrot."

"Where do you live, Mr. Kapistrot?"

"13 Ulmus Street, New Pecunia."

"What is your occupation, sir?"

"Researcher."

"Do you know the defendant, William S. De Jager?"

"Yes, I do."

"Could you tell us when you first met him?"

"On his train."

"Where did you first meet Bartholomew A. Leach?"

"In his office."

"In Oldtown?"

"Yes."

"As I understand it, Mr. De Jager and Mr. Leach said to you that the railroad was interested in engaging you to write a book about Mr. De Jager and the CCRR?"

"Yes; also in financing the book and me."

"Did you make a promise to them at that time that you would write the book?"

"Yes; I agreed to write the book, because Mr. De Jager, Mrs. De Jager and Mr. Leach solemnly promised me that if I would write a book acceptable to them, they would not only buy one hundred thousand copies, but also would put me on a salary for two years at two thousand dollars per month, grant me a white railroad pass plus all expenses, and make me a wealthy man."

"Mr. Layton," interrupted Gilbert Lasher, the short pleasant-mannered attorney for the plaintiff, "I do not want to object to anything, but the contract, of course, speaks for itself."



"Naturally, but I thought we might identify it. Do you have the original contract, Mr. Lasher?"

"Yes, I have the original."

"You do not want to identify it today?"

"Do you wish it?"

"If you have it with you, why don't we?"

"All right." He passed the papers to Layton's well-manicured hands.

"Mr. Kapistrot, is this the contract that you and Mr. Leach and Mr. De Jager executed?"

"Yes, Mr. Layton."

"Mr. Kapistrot, did you deliver the outline and two chapters of the book *Willie the Whistle* personally to Mr. and Mrs. De Jager and to Mr. Leach?"

"Yes, I did."

"Can you tell what then transpired?"

"Mr. Leach, as a vice president of the CRRR Public Relations Department, sent this memo to Mr. De Jager and to the directors of the railroad, 'Today Mr. Kapistrot submitted two chapters and an outline for the book *Willie the Whistle*. This is a most magnificent piece of writing, and I think it will be a great book.'"

"When did you next submit any material of the book to the railroad, Mr. Kapistrot?"

"I think it was in December or January, because Mr. and Mrs. De Jager and Bart Leach gave me a few other assignments besides the writing of *Willie the Whistle*."

"What other assignments did they give you?"

"A number of social assignments—entertaining Mrs. De Jager and her daughter Tessa; mixing with important people and reporting to Mr. De Jager what they said about him; evaluating a novel, *Brothers in Stalingrad*, written by William Wattson, the fiance of Tessa De Jager; and preparing stories and articles about Mr. De Jager for the American and Canadian press. Here is a note from Bart Leach: 'Dear Mr. Kapistrot, thank you very much for the piece about *Willie the Whistle* for the Detroit Free Press. Great! I have sent it along today.'"

Mr. Lasher held a cigar in his left hand and the paper in his right. "Do you want to see it?"

"Yes, if you please." Lasher handed the paper to Mr. Layton, who asked Kapistrot, "Did Mr. or Mrs. De Jager ever express dissatisfaction to you with any of your work?"

"No. As a matter of fact, they praised me all the . . ."

"He did not ask you that," said Gilb Lasher. "Will you please, Franklin, answer the questions."

"All right."

"Answer the questions, Frank. I want to get out before seven o'clock tonight; no stories, please," Lasher repeated.

"Did you thereafter finish the book *Willie the Whistle*, Mr. Kapistrot?"

"Yes."

"Do you have the completed book with you?"

"The original is with De Jager, the two copies are with the publisher. I have only my handwritten draft."

"Mr. Kapistrot, can you tell us the role that

Mrs. De Jager was going to play in this book?"

"The book was supposed to be about both Mr. and Mrs. De Jager and about the railroad."

"Was she to play a major role or a minor role in the book?"

"She played the role of the president's wife, plus some extras . . . and she asked me to dedicate the book to her daughter Tessa."

"Did you ever discuss with the publisher the price at which your book was to be sold to the public?"

"Yes; six dollars per copy."

"Did anyone besides Mr. De Jager, Mrs. De Jager, and Mr. Leach on behalf of the railroad speak to you about purchasing copies of your book?"

"Yes, many people. Roach, Berryman, Colegrove, Mellon, Puppett, even Amelia Leach and four directors. They promised to buy about two hundred and fifty thousand copies more; and Mrs. De Jager said, 'We'll do everything possible to satisfy you.'"

"I do not think," interrupted Gilbert Lasher, "you ought to go into these personal things."

"What did these others say to you?" asked Carroll Layton, with shrewdness in his black eyes.

"They clearly intimated that if I wrote plenty of pages about them, they too would help to see that I was well off."

"Am I correct, Mr. Kapistrot, that all the promises you have stated were merely to buy copies of your book?"

"Two hundred and fifty thousand copies, augmented by a hundred thousand, would mean a tidy bundle of cash for me."

"I will object to the form of the question," said the attorney for the plaintiff, playing with a fresh cigar.

"Mr. Lasher, all objections are reserved for the trial."

"All right."

"Mr. Kapistrot, how much money did you earn last year?"

"It is not your business, Mr. Layton."

"All right, I will not pursue it."

Mr. Layton conferred with his colleague Augustine Neely and asked a new question, "Mr. Leach agreed that the CRRR was going to buy one hundred thousand copies of *Willie the Whistle* for his Public Relations Department; is that what you want us to understand?"

"Can't you read?"

"Yes."

"Here's a letter from Mr. Leach."

"I see. Is it not true that in your publishing agreement your manuscript had to be satisfactory to the railroad, too, as well?"

"Yes. It was satisfactory to the railroad and to the publisher. Here are two more letters."

"Ah. I see."

At that moment Augustine Neely, a fleshy man of about fifty-five, stepped into the questioning. "By the way, I do not think this contract between yourself and your publisher undertakes to specify the amount of your royalty. Am I correct in that?"



"Yes, the first page, Mr. Neely."  
 "Oh, yes."  
 "This has nothing to do with the CCRR and the De Jager's commitments. This is extra."  
 "I see; I will withdraw that question. I think you told us when you first met with Mr. Leach and he discussed the arrangements he would make with you, he told you that you would have to get a publisher, did he not?"  
 "Yes."  
 "You knew that the CCRR was not in the publishing business."  
 "Yes, the CCRR is connected with everything—banks, oil, steel, glass, and social work—but not the publishing business."  
 "Was it your understanding that there was an agreement between the CCRR and the publisher?"  
 "Yes."  
 "With respect to this book, *Willie the Whistle*?"  
 "Yes."  
 "All right, I do not think I have anything more."  
 "All right," said his partner Carroll Layton.  
 "Do you have anything, Mr. Lasher?"  
 "No."  
 "Mr. Kapistrot," said roly-poly Augustine, lifting his two hundred pounds. "May I have a few words with you in private, off the record?"  
 "Yes, why not?"  
 "We can't have two books on the same subject, Mr. Kapistrot."  
 "What do you mean?"  
 "It is only fair, I think, to tell you that Mr. and Mrs. De Jager have given the assignment to Jack Small, Junior—as to why, I don't know that myself."

"Oh, that's the reason?"  
 "And you'll lose the case."  
 "Why?"  
 "Simple: they have money, plenty of money, over four billion dollars. They have power, tremendous power here in the city, in the capital, in the whole country."  
 "Mr. Neely, help me."  
 "I? What can I do? Nothing."  
 "But they cheated me!"  
 "Sir, they cheated you; they cheat their friends; they cheat the whole nation; they cheat their wives and husbands; they cheat even themselves."  
 "What can be done?"  
 "Nothing."  
 "Nothing?"  
 "They can afford to cheat."  
 "Why?"  
 "Because they're fifty rich. They're builders of America, they say."  
 "Why don't you tell the country, the world, about their fraud?"  
 "Me?"  
 "Yes, you, you! You're an important member of their society and you have all the facts and figures about them."  
 "But, I also have eight children. They'll put me and my children on the blacklist for life. We'd get no jobs above a clerk's position, and even that is questionable."  
 "Perhaps it's better to be a clerk."  
 "They'll assassinate me."  
 "Where's the police, the law of the country?"  
 "Sir, the police and the law are on the right side, on their side."

## BLACKBERRIES AND CREDIT

by

DWIGHT PEARCE

We can live on blackberries and credit  
 while social memories crowd backwards  
 through peoples who were joined as one  
 before the altar of monnaie.  
 There comes a time and times  
 when blackberries are gone  
 and credit becomes old stuff  
 and we choose briars.  
 What we can and will do escapes the stain  
 and we grow down, slowly down  
 before nada and nada vines.  
 Play the sweet sounds  
 loud and louder  
 until the juke stops  
 and blackberries brown and fade  
 and the watered credit laughs.



# ON SARTRE'S LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS

by

JOHN CLEMENT

The original "man of a thousand faces" is Jean-Paul Sartre, and nowhere is this fact more obvious than in this rich collection of essays. The thousand unsuspected facets of the writer who has become the prototype of the modern philosopher-existentialist are all exposed to the light: Sartre as novelist, critic and philosopher; Sartre, as a writer, on other writers; Sartre as tourist and philosopher, exploring the values (to him) of foreign lands, and Sartre as logician and semantacist, probing the depths of the Hegelian-Marxist ethic. But always and principally it is Sartre the existentialist, exploring the significance of actions and words, studying the lives of his fellow men and looking for the meaning of existence with insight and erudition.

One may at first be surprised at the thought of Sartre as an essayist, but the novelist-playwright seems to be at his best here. Whether this is due to his considerable skill as a writer, which makes him seem to belong to whatever style he writes in, or because, as William Barrett says of him, he is "... an idea man, an intellectual first..." who makes his writings burn and crackle by mixing in just the right amounts of philosophy and literature, is left for the reader to decide. In any case, however, one point is clear: Sartre the essayist writes powerfully and appealingly, and it is with some incredulity that the reader will find that the essays were all written *circa* 1950. Even the writer's choice of subjects is in the main amazingly modern: there are essays on conformity in America, on the conflict of Marxism and prosperity in modern Europe, on the morals of writers—an entire universe of those topics which one will hear today and tomorrow being discussed in literary circles.

For the dilettante not wishing to embroil himself in the complexities of Marxist methodology or the novels of Dos Passos or Faulkner, the most interesting sections are the three essays on America, and of these the most penetrating by far is the one on conformity and individualism. In the land of free enterprise and rugged nonconformity, says Sartre, individualism "... implies conformism. It represents, however, a new direction, both in height and depth, within conformism." The people of America show to an outsider

a fascinating array of types, the individuals standing out in terms of an already abandoned but still used Puritan ethic, the masses outstanding in their uniformity. Much like the skyline of New York, the many skyscrapers of individuality only point up their similarity.

Sartre's point of view is not always critical; the sharpness of his writing is mellowed by admiration for the feeling of raw power in most of the great cities and constructions of the U. S. Indeed, in some sections of these three essays he becomes almost whimsical in his fond contemplation of American energy, while perhaps sitting back a little and chuckling under his breath.

But elsewhere Sartre is back as of old, and the acid is at its full strength. In an incisive critique of Brice Parain's *Investigations into the Nature and Function of Language*, for example, one can fairly feel the paper crackle. Parain is one who has touched the extremes of surrealism, and as one semantacist to another, Sartre condemns him both for having gone too far out and for not having gone far enough. Harking back to Descartes, Sartre uses the *cogito* as a powerful weapon to support the priority of self-understanding over language, and from here to base all language on self-understanding. Where Parain sees only the confusion of a medley of different individuals using a tool they cannot comprehend to convey meanings that are not theirs, Sartre sees a striving toward order as each individual accumulates knowledge and proceeds toward a better understanding of his fellow man, a process which makes communication easier and leads to more knowledge and more understanding, the whole culminating in that realization of one's true position, which constitutes existential freedom.

There are other riches in the book, also: a discussion on the semantics of surrealistic writing, a redefinition of freedom from a Cartesian point of view, an existentialist's view of Aristotle, and more. Atop it all is the pure joy of matching wits with a mind of the first order, of leading, and being led by, a master in the subtle art of living and seeing. Death can remove the mind that wrote, but it cannot touch the immortal joy of living that may be sampled in these few pages.



# COMA

by

CHARLOTTE McMICHAEL

## I

The ceiling rides  
with engravings.  
I cannot sleep.  
I am rushed paper-weight up  
with the moon taking its share  
of reflections  
from off white glass  
near my bed.  
The moon sighs  
taller and taller  
with metallic threads  
ribbing outlines  
spared and fine over me.

## II

I find up there  
a star and tree design,  
one encased ship,  
a bead and wool wreath  
all formed opaque  
from off the gilded reflector.  
I ride still taller.  
A dolphin rides;  
and still taller,  
a powdering tub  
spilling over me  
ground cedar bark.

## III

I see my mother  
carrying a bread tray,  
for my sickness was then a fever,  
and her cool hand,  
churned by yeast,  
takes my burden away;  
but wooden spoons turn me  
back when I remember her gone.  
I cannot sleep.

## IV

Her death left no mahogany  
list of woods or wooden ware  
and with her gone,  
I turn in bed  
and find her pained with plan  
the time we fed the winter birds  
outside our kitchen window;  
snow flaked our paned dimension  
till we touched another time.  
My mother wrapped her aproned  
arms secure around that young day  
and me and rocked my laughter  
past a faceted knob  
that opens no door.

## V

And still taller and taller  
I fall.  
Moonlight blows out  
my flown motif  
and my slender pea  
plays a woman's profile on a plate,  
etched honored and sad;  
my mother made a mood,  
a silksurfaced dream,  
and made a moonstone  
lie heavy on my sleep.













Horace Farlowe: Born, Robbins, N. C., 1933. Studied, North Carolina State College, 1957-1960, with George Bireline, Joe Cox, and Roy Gussow; Atlantic Christian College, 1960-1962, with Russell Arnold, B.S.; East Carolina College, 1963-1964, M.A. N. C. Museum of Art, 1963 Purchase Award. Recent one-man show, Garden Gallery, Raleigh.



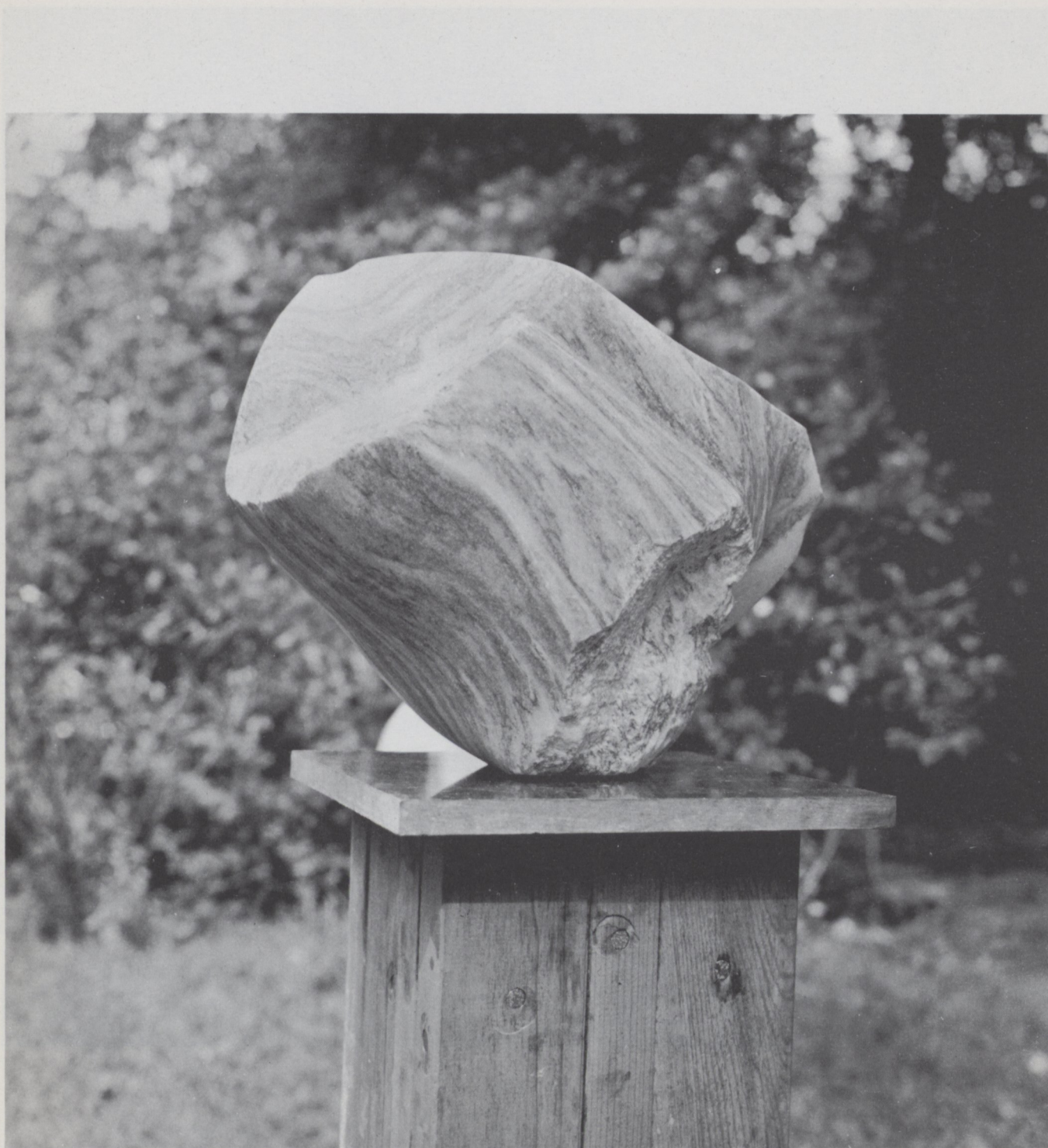


Figure 1. A large, angular, light-colored stone sculpture resting on a wooden pedestal. The sculpture has a rough, textured surface and a complex, multi-faceted shape. The pedestal is made of vertical wooden planks. The background is a blurred, dark, leafy area, suggesting an outdoor setting.

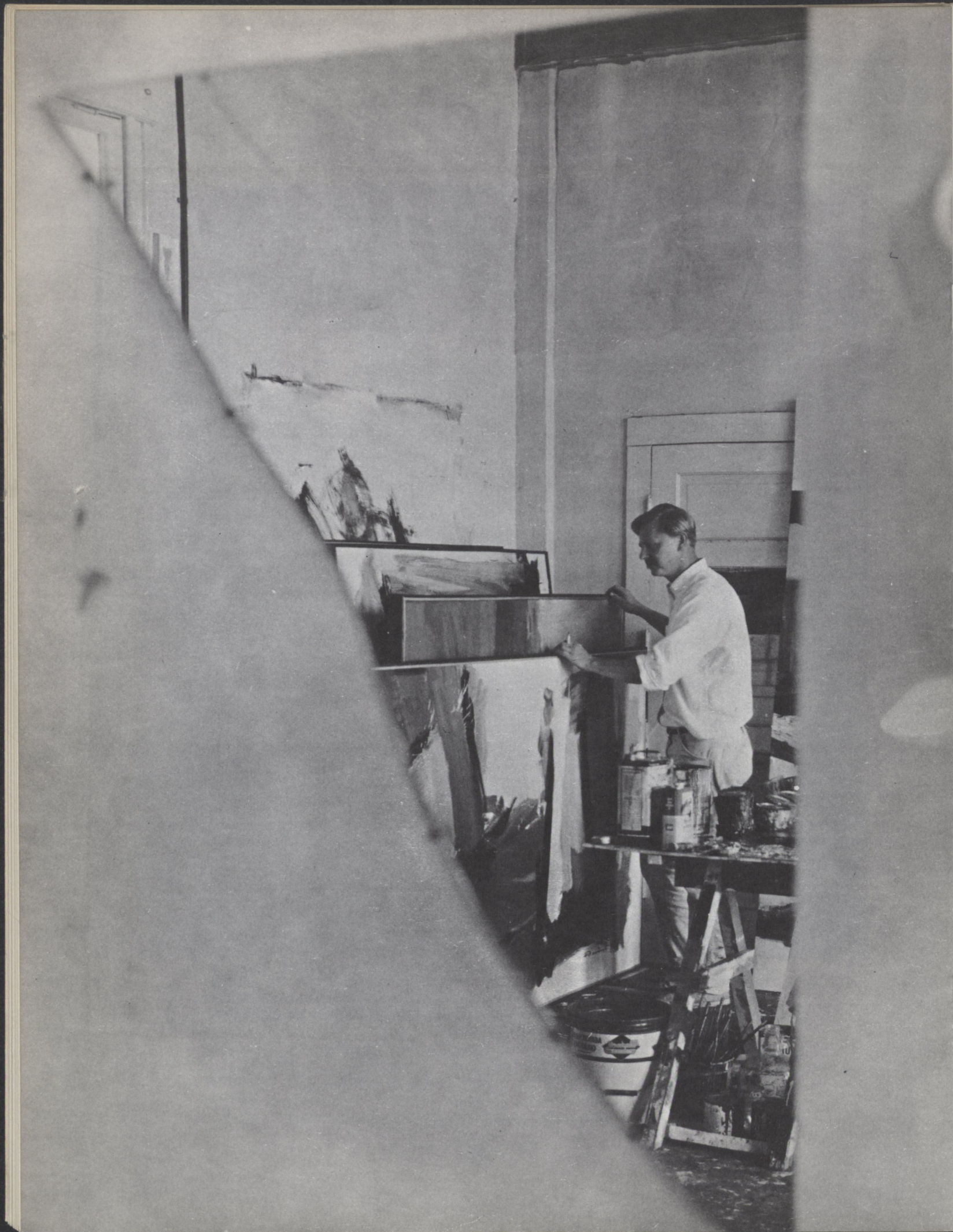




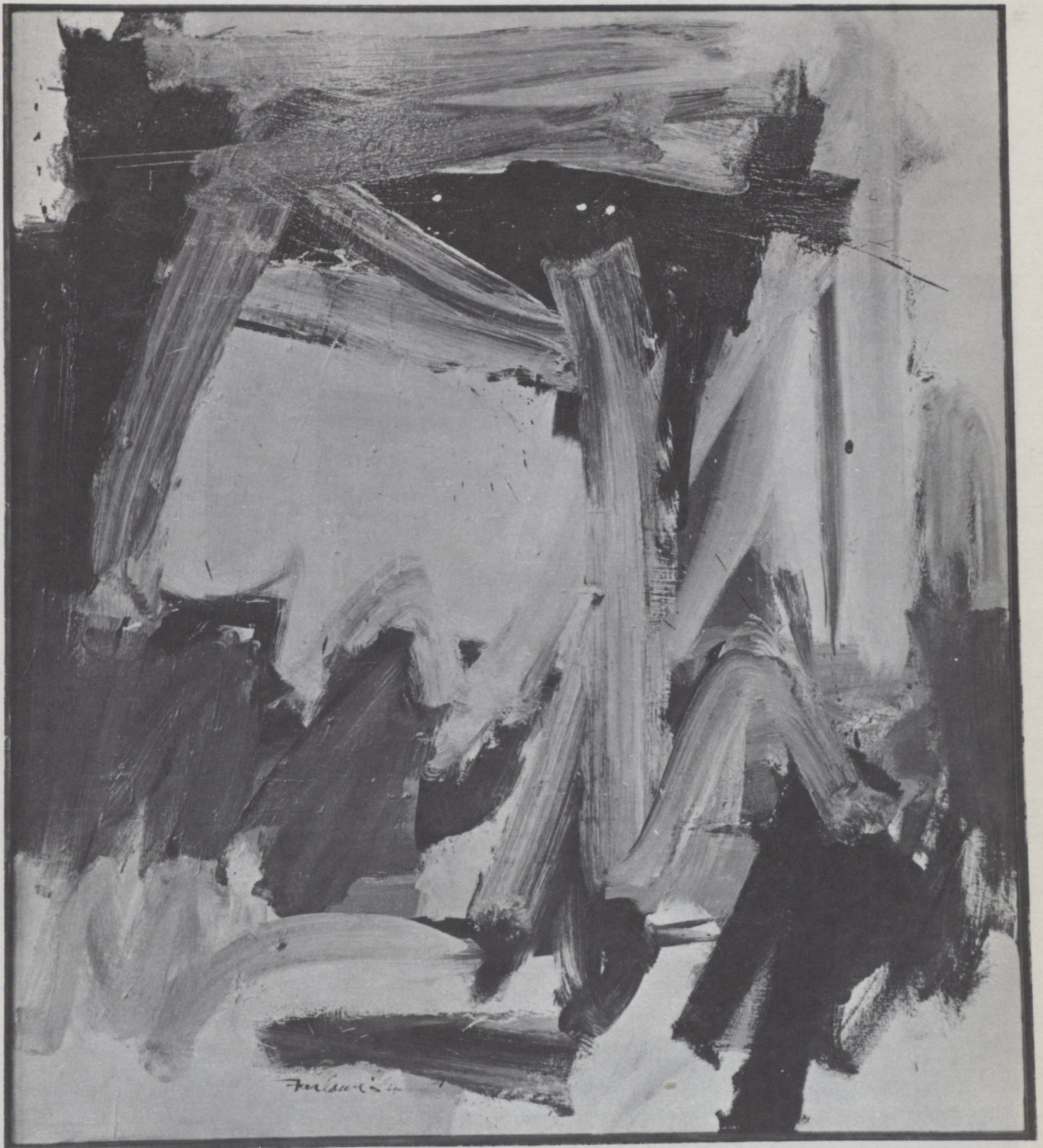
Horace Farlowe's studio at Raleigh is only a knight's move from the North Carolina Museum of Art (looking out the doorway, Knight to King Bishop three).

Loitering around the King Bishop three square, around the eminently rectangular factory building on it, of brick, with the tall, arched windows which date it before the turn of the century, one notices that the general tone of the place — second hand washing machines in the adjacent lot, boarded up cellar windows — is something seen before associated with young artists. One has made an appointment with Horace, of course, and presently he arrives and unlocks a side door labeled 200½. Turn right, up old gray stairs lit at the top by window light diagonally suspended in dust; turn left at the top and look down a long high corridor into a rich dark, occasionally relieved by various warm reflections of daylight. Follow Horace down the corridor; half-way, he unlocks his studio door; turn left into a large whitewashed room and southern light, admitted under a twenty foot ceiling by four of the tall, arched windows. From the ceiling hangs a piece of living room sculpture which Horace says he made when he once ran out of paint. On the wall adjacent to the light is an eight foot square wall easel. Then the paintings.











Life is an experience of man in search of himself. And the life of the artist should not be of only giving through his creations but should really be one of receiving or better understanding himself through the act of creating. For art is not a profession that can be put aside with the blowing of the 3 o'clock whistle, but it is a way of living centered around truth, or rather, truth to one's self. And so if the artist is to compromise, let it be on matters extraneous to art; for to compromise in art is to lie with the hope that you will not find yourself out.

—HORACE FARLOWE





# THREE O'CLOCK

by

ALBERT PERTALION

*"In the dimly lit regions of the soul,  
it's always three o'clock in the morning."*

I think Fitzgerald said that. I don't know for sure; or if he did say it that those are his exact words. I do know that I like three o'clocks in the morning, and I miss them sorely since moving to Baton Rouge. You see, some towns have no three A.M.'s; that is, no place, assuming you have the right attitude yourself, where you can count on finding the sometimes sad, oftentimes talky and drowsily numb aura that is three o'clock before daybreak. Baton Rouge is such a town. Oh, there are cafes and eateries that stay open all night, and even two Krispy-Kreme doughnut stands, but these places never *approach* the feeling. Not the feeling I'm thinking of now. Not the one I associate with Foster McTaggart.

For all I know, the *real* three o'clock in the morning might not stay at any place permanently. Maybe it slips into an unsuspecting beanery like Sandburg's cat-footed fog, and just as quietly slips away. I don't know. I just know I like it, or its offsprings: good talk, stories that would die if exposed to ultra-violet rays, the sad hillbilly juke-box music that the just-jilted waitresses always play, and a drippy compassionate feeling for mankind that you can sometimes acquire. But especially the stories.

Before I came to Baton Rouge and the University, I lived in Hammond, and took classes at the small college located there. Hammond is a little town situated somewhere below the instep in the boot that is Louisiana; and, in a better time than when I'm writing, was known as the strawberry capital of the world. During the picking and shipping season (beginning late in March and lasting through mid-May), hundreds of big company berry buyers with their straw hats and long Havanna cigars would step off the Illinois Central's crack Panama Limited and move into Hammond's Casa de Fresa Hotel.

When buying strawberries didn't keep these fun-loving, money-spending men up half the night, the local poker games did; and the need arose for a place to drink coffee, eat breakfast, sober up, and exchange lies about the day's bidding—for strawberries, cards, and the robust,

comfortably phlegmatic daughters of the Italian berry farmers. The Casa de Fresa didn't have a restaurant then, so the Hammond Cafe, one of those cavernous old restaurants that populate small southern towns, started the practice of staying open all night during the berry season.

The berry season was a grand time of the year. The bunting-hanging, queen-picking, street-parading season. For the Casa de Fresa—the house of berries—Hotel, and the Hammond Cafe, and every other commercial establishment in town, March, April, and May were as much a banner season to Hammond as the winter months are to the hostleries and restaurants of Miami Beach. In those good times, there were probably no dimly lit three o'clock regions in Hammond, but the potential was present.

Then the depression and the thirties came to Hammond as surely as they came to the rest of the country; few people in Podunk, Kansas, could afford strawberry ice cream, and molasses was cheaper for biscuits than strawberry preserves. The farmers formed syndicates and co-operatives and the big companies ordered—if at all—berries by wire. And if a yellow telegram was less colorful than a bandana-bearing, brow-wiping berry buyer, it was also less expensive, and cutting costs was an essence of the thirties. Sometimes the buyers would come to Hammond anyway, but when they stepped off the tracks they had hitchhiked in on, they found that WPA checks didn't cut as wide a swath as big-company expense accounts. The House of Berries didn't realize any business from these infrequent visitations, but the Hammond Cafe saw them all. The middle-of-the-night eggs with steak breakfasts of the past gave way to half cups of coffee, ordered with grimy-shirted sophistication and accompanied by the blase confession that the drinker had just lost a thousand dollars in a poker game that had lasted for two days. Thus was the foundation laid for an edifice that could almost be depended on to exude—for at least three months of the year—the atmosphere that, wanting the proper eloquence, I call the three o'clock in the morning feeling.



The Hammond Cafe that I haunted in 1958 wasn't the one that knew the elation of the twenties and the depression of the thirties; it was never even partially full during the late hours when the cafe stayed open all night. The management must have lost money in March, April, and May; but tradition dies slowly in Hammond, and the place still remained open all night during the picking season as if expecting a hoard of long lost berry buyers to walk in any minute. The big empty cafe made a good place to study, and I used to sit in back at a table from about two till five A.M., when I'd go back to the dorm to shower for breakfast and classes. I usually slept in the afternoon. If I didn't feel like studying, there was usually one or two truck drivers who were good for stories, or some students would come into the cafe and start a conversation. There must have been some congenital malignancy handed down from the lies and stories of the old berry buyers, because the talks that that lonesome hour and old restaurant spawned seemed (like all malignancies) more interesting than ordinary conversations at the college coffee shop.

One night I was just sitting—trying to get into some Latin I had to translate—and listening to the juke box, when Foster McTaggart came in. Foster was something of a hypersensitive misfit from my home town. Well, not exactly a misfit, but he was usually bothered by any particular status quo. We had been friends for years; not really close friends, but we could always sit down and talk to each other. I hadn't seen too much of Foster since the Christmas holidays when we had gone duck hunting together. The trip had become involved, and wasn't too successful.

Before the hunt, I had to take Foster over to the local skeet club so I could explain the twelve-gauge pump that I was lending him. He knew nothing about shotguns, although he had been in the service for three years. To my embarrassment and the delight of the other club members, he did most of the things that I told him were wrong and still managed to beat my score the last three sets we fired. Maybe he was something of a natural shot if he hadn't picked it up in the Marine Corps; who knows. I knew matters would be different with live ducks. They were.

Our first morning out—after what seemed like the longest and gaudiest Louisiana sunrise I've ever had to sit through in a duck blind—we didn't see a single duck; we didn't see a feather. I couldn't have been more disappointed; Foster couldn't have been more elated. He said he hadn't any idea that sunup in the marshes could be so beautiful. I hadn't any such idea either, and still don't. We moved the blind the second day, and things started looking up. A pair of baldpates passed over the decoys, circled, set their wings, and glided in to a spot about thirty feet in front of us. I modestly noted that the blind was in perfect position. Foster was mesmerized. He had that sunup watching look in his eyes. I snapped my fingers to spook the birds up and knocked down the hen when she was about ten feet off the water.

"Why didn't you get the drake, Foster? It was an easy shot."

Foster didn't say anything. He was watching the male baldpate. The startled duck had flown in a long circle and was about to come back—for the hen I suppose. A mallard would have flown straight away, but this pattern was not unusual for baldpates. I knew the drake would never land again, and when he made a low pass over the decoys and his mate floating belly up in the water, I cut him down with the remaining barrel of my over and under. The one-ounce load of shot my twenty-gauge carried was too light to kill the bird at that distance, and after he fell, he started swimming away through the marsh.

"Dammit, Foster, I'm empty; will you kill that duck?"

He just looked at me. For a brief second, I do believe Foster considered shooting me instead of the duck.

"You can't just let him suffer." Somehow this statement didn't seem appropriate, but I knew it would get some action. "At least put him out of his misery."

Foster finally brought the gun to his shoulder and fired. The shot knocked the swimming duck over, but he righted himself and kept swimming. One of his wings was broken and it caused him to move in a circle, but he fought desperately to widen the arc and still escape. Foster had to pump the mechanism of the shotgun twice and fire three times before the duck lay still. By the third shot, Foster was crying like a baby.

He handed me the pump and crawled out of the blind to where the pirogue was hidden. He left me in the middle of the marsh with my two dead trophies.

One of the men we shared our camp with had to paddle out to get me.

"That other fellow left for town. He told me you were out here without a boat," the man said. "Say, what are you doing with two shotguns?"

Actually, I suppose I hadn't seen Foster at all since the duck hunt, so I was glad to see him come into the cafe. Foster looked as if he hadn't slept in days and when he sat down at the table, he smelled like he had been drinking cheap wine for just about as long.

"What's happening, Foster?"

He didn't say anything; he just leaned back in his chair and shut his eyes. When I was sure he had gone to sleep, he sat up and whistled for the waitress to bring him some coffee. He looked at me and began laughing in the kind of laugh that seems to propagate itself in weariness. Foster kept giggling in that numb, limp way until I thought he was hysterical. He laid his head down on his hands, and finally running down he said with mock gravity: "Don't you think that in this day and age of modern, scientific technology, architects could design shit-house walls so people couldn't write on them?"

It was usually impossible to guess what was on Foster's mind, but I was almost certain that—although they irritated him—the bathroom scribblers were not what was worrying Foster.



"You know the brand new library?"

"Yes."

"Well, the commode stall walls are a nice neutral grey, just like a gesso ground for an oil painting, and the poets just can't resist writing on them. It seems to me the designers could have thought of **something**. The building cost over a million dollars." He was talking about the new library the college had just dedicated, and although it was the latest thing in libraries, Foster wasn't satisfied with the bathrooms.

"If I could only change my habit of going out in the middle of the day, I could use the bathroom back at the dorm. I wonder what I could do about it?"

The question was rhetorical; he didn't wait for my answer.

"Thursday I was in the one on the bottom floor before I went to linguistics class, and d'you know what was staring me right in the eye?"

"What Foster?"

He fished a note out of a pocket and passed it over for me to read. The scrawling said: "Civilization is a blessing to the unfit and the degenerate—others it breaks and demoralizes."

"Doesn't that just kill your ass?" Foster said. "I wonder if the bastard who wrote it realized he was capable of such irony?"

"Maybe he copied it from Bartlett."

"Probably, but can't you just picture the poor, demoralized bastard putting up his message to the world right under the toilet paper?"

Foster started his limp, fanatical laughing again and I was sure that he wasn't so upset just over the philosopher.

"What's really bugging you, Foster?"

"What's bugging me? What's bugging me? Why, man, civilization. I'm broken and demoralized. Can't you see?" He kept laughing.

I just sat and looked at him. After awhile, his gurgling trailed off and he sat there with his head down. Eventually, Foster would tell me what was bothering him, but I would have to wait.

"Al," Foster started off hesitantly. "I can't go back to my room."

"What d'you mean, didn't you pay the rent?"

"Yes, yes." The two affirmations slipped out as patient sighs to my corny question. "I paid the rent—it's my roommate. I can't . . . I'm not going back to the room while that bastard is living there. I'm not going to stay in the same room with him."

Foster's roommate was a graduating senior who was studying business, Willie Maynor. About all I knew about Willie was that he drove Foster crazy. Foster was constantly arguing with Willie about his attitude toward people and business. Foster was sure that his roommate was a born charlatan and would become rich and write a book about his life.

"Can't you just see some scout master using Willie as an example of what 'good hard work' and starting at the top will get you?" Foster said after one of their harangues. Foster claimed that Willie knew—or cared—nothing about ethics and he was afraid his roommate was a true represen-

tation of the business man.

Such naivete from anyone else but Foster, I would have sloughed off as being phoney, but not Foster. He could brood for days, missing classes and doing little more than just moping around town wondering about people and what they sometimes did to each other. He was fascinated with Arthur Miller's Willie Loman. Foster couldn't have identified himself with Willie, but he thought they were both guilty of the same thing—'ringing up zero.' When Foster doodles on his notebook, the scratchings usually took the form of some synonym of zero. I used to kid him about his negative attitude; one time I checked Norman Vincent Peale's book out of the library and left it on his bed. I thought it was funny, but Foster only reacted seriously to the content and asked me if I really thought Peale believed that stuff.

"I hope he does since he wrote it," Foster had said. "Sometimes I wish I could."

"Well anyway, Willie's grandmother died about four days ago. He came back yesterday—that is, day before yesterday; I keep thinking it's still yesterday, but it's a little after three isn't it? Anyway, he told me about his grandmother dying. You know about Willie and his new job don't you?"

"What about it?" I leaned back and gave the coffee sign to the waitress. Foster's conversation would never win any prize for continuity, but he gave you all the details, no matter how disjointedly.

"Well—you know Willie—look ahead, be prepared, get there first and all. He started talking to some pharmaceutical company at the beginning of the spring semester about a job when he graduates. Well, they hired him over a month ago, but he doesn't start working until after graduation. They pay him about half salary, and all he does is study up on the drugs he's going to be selling. He calls it 'detailing to physicians,' but it's selling. I don't see why you don't know all this; Willie's been bragging his ass off."

Actually, I heard of Willie's new job from one of his friends, but I was sure Foster's version would be more interesting.

"So Willie's grandmother had all sons, four of them, and . . ."

The story was circuitous even for Foster.

"... He's always bragging about how his grandfather only took time off from his business long enough to get sons with his wife. Can you imagine anyone but Willie bragging about such a thing? She not only had sons, but leaders in the business world. **Leaders**. And they all—at least three of them, one didn't get married—had sons. When Willie's grandfather died about three years ago, all his benevolent boys managed the business for their mother. They bought her a little house in the suburbs and hired the best nurses to stay on the place. She wasn't even sick; that shows how generous they were; they wanted the very best for their mother. I asked Willie why they didn't just let her live with them, and he said, 'Aw, she'd rather have a place of her own and be independent.' Independent, hell, they gave her a spending allowance every month, because 'she was senile



and would just give money to anyone who asked for it, not even checking to see if it was a recognized charity for income tax deductions, if she had control of Grandfather's estate.'

"About two months ago, they all found out that Grandmother Maynor had an incurable disease. I don't know what, but she must have had it for some time before the nurses took her to the hospital, because after she went in, she didn't last very long. Those premium nurses they rented must not have paid much attention to her. Then they all got really concerned because the doctor told them that 'Mrs. Maynor might live a little longer, but she was in such a state of mental depression that it would surely have the effect of speeding up her death.'

"You know what I think, Al? She wanted to die unhappy. The men who surrounded her had never let her do anything she wanted to, and I think she at least wanted to die registering her feelings about her life. Unhappy, that's what her life was. Even if they were her own flesh and blood, I think the idea that her body had been the matrix for such a tribe of pharisees was too much for her, and dying in a depressed state of mind was her only way of expressing herself.

"But you know they wouldn't even give her the right to die the way she wanted to. Can you believe that? They wouldn't let her die that way."

While he was telling the story, Foster's normally pleasant voice had lost its quiet resonance and had turned flat and hollow sounding with the volume level rising in a slow crescendo. I was about to quieten him a little when he paused in his speaking and just stared down into his cold coffee. When he continued talking, his voice was soft and deliberate, starting the bolero from the beginning again.

"But my roommate fixed his grandmother. He had been studying about a new drug that his company was introducing. It seems that certain types of gloom induce physical conditions in the brain. Some cavities fill up with fluid or something. This perpetuates the feeling of depression. So this pharmaceutical company developed this drug that physically drains these cavities. No matter what

the patient is thinking about or wants to think about, the goddam drug drains the cavity and their gloom disappears. Willie told Mrs. Maynor's doctor about it and since it 'could do her no harm,' he agreed to giving her the drug. That was about three weeks ago. When Willie came back from the funeral, he told me the story and, in that sanctimonious canting that he can fall into, said that 'he would always be proud that he had helped his grandmother die happy.' Can you believe that? Can you believe it? Poor little shriveled-up woman. Pushed around all her life by those bastards and then stripped of her dignity in death. You'd think a person could at least die like he wants to. Oh, no, Grandmother! You have to make your exit from this farce with a shit-eating grin on your face."

Foster was almost screaming by this time; I got up and pulled him out of the cafe with me and into an empty street that echoed his shouts.

"I'm not going back to the dorm, Al. I'm not staying in the same room with him. I'm not."

"O.K., Foster, you don't have to."

Foster had a sort of fragile sensitivity; I wondered if it would ever let him be happy. No sleep and telling the story he had walked around with for two days had left him limp. He was exhausted. I leaned him against the facade of the cafe and said: "Wait here just a second." I ran back inside to pay for the coffee.

"You could have waited and paid tomorrow night," the painted cashier said.

I started to ask her how'd she know I'd be back tomorrow, but I just picked up my change and started out to Foster. We were in the middle of April, with a month and a half of three A.M.'s left before the cafe started closing at night again. I knew, and the cashier knew, that I would be back.

Foster was where I had left him, and we walked slowly down the oak-arched street that led to the college, passing on our way a large barn-red building that loomed darkly above the branches. A bright neon light on the roof blinked out its story for all the sleeping world of Hammond to see—first in green: *The Casa de Fresa Hotel*; and then in red: *House of Berries*.



# REVIEWS

## Visions and Revisions

by

B. TOLSON WILLIS

*Julian.* Gore Vidal. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, \$6.95.

Julian Augustus, Julian the Apostate, A.D. 361: last of the Flavians, last successful Caesar of Gaul, last of the Hellenistic emperors of Rome.

Julian, the man: his struggles with the enterprising and highly organized Christian church; the intrigues of the court eunuchs coupled with the bloody suspicions of his immediate predecessor, Constantius; the rebellious Germanic tribes and the proud Persians on the borders of a Rome lacking the polar magnetism of a leader or world view.

His mission: a return to the old gods, the overseers of high Greece and Rome.

The catalyst: a watered down version of Plato's philosopher-king.

His answer: a leader of military brilliance who read and expounded the old way.

The unfolding of the life of this man and his times is the chosen task of Gore Vidal in his first novel in ten years, *Julian*. Vidal presents a man of staid conviction in an age of frustration and change. The novel develops out of the interaction of these two forces; and in a consideration of the overview of this situation, one is struck favorably by the author's ability to capture the spirit of the age embodied in the innerly tormented and outwardly attacked man of the 4th century (following the Nazerine) whose world and actions give a clear indication of some of the causal factors resulting in the centuries of other-worldliness which were to come. The generalized mortal fear of the uncertainties of this temporal world fill the pages of *Julian*. The sense of decay is to be felt everywhere. This insecure world needs some answers, fast; Julian and his Christian bishops offer two possible ones. The dramatization of these possible choices is where Vidal does his finest work.

The novelist presents these primal forces through character as well as recreated circumstances. No doubt, Julian does see himself resurrecting the Ozymandiased remains of Alexander the Great as a blueprint for recapturing past greatness. But all about him, his Christianized generals and advisors conspire against their emperor whom they consider a scatter-brained antique. His military successes they cannot question; but the motive behind them, a re-establish-

ment of the old Hellenistic borders, and his extensive plans for further campaigns, in spite of short supply and popular unrest, seem to them ample reason for revolt.

That Julian was, in truth, a Manfred-on-the-mountain is further pointed out through the actions and attitudes of his two squeamish teachers, Libanius and Priscus, who wring their hands on the outskirts of conflict and just hope that their illustrious names will not be soiled by implication in one of Julian's overzealous schemes; otherwise, they are content with their own sense of reputation and a few worldly comforts.

The 4th century struggle between figures and social forces throughout the Empire may be approximated in terms a little more immediate than the implications of Julian's allegiance to a pagan past against an ardently Christian present. To simplify, it is as if one were able to peep into a contemporary university hangout and eavesdrop on two select tables. At one, a group of students consume beer furnished by a long-winded visionary at the head, who insists that much of this new physics offers more problems than satisfactory answers to the already existing ones hampering our quest for the stars; and that we would do better just to modify and perfect what *Von* this or that had done in the forties when we took over where the Germans left off. But those enjoying the free beer insist, through the suds, that on the contrary, anyone up-to-date and fully oriented should be able to realize that the post-Einsteinian way is already too well established as the only way to get to the moon, and beyond, in our time.

Meanwhile at the second table, the two old university professors, both on edge from listening to the echoes of sophomore lectures, deliberate as to whether they should, or should not, have another cup of Espresso, particularly since both have experienced some insomnia as of late. But they decide, after much discussion, to have another round. They are confident that a review of tomorrow's lectures on the existence of God and Truth, respectively, will provide more than adequate somnolence to counteract any excess of caffeine they may choose to imbibe.

And to round out the presentation of our captain of the board, we must carry him from the table and his beer drinking friends, forward with his ideas, from the Harvard Club to the White House. Such were Julian and his associates.

Unfortunately, Gore Vidal chose to use one of the oldest and most cumbersome machines in the history of prose fiction as a means of revealing his *Julian*; the diary—letter exposition. He allows us to see the characters and incidents of Julian's life and times almost exclusively through recapitulations found by his two old teachers in the *Memoirs of the dead emperor*. I say exclusively, for the only other indicators are the marginal notes and casual correspondence of Priscus and Libanius who tell us nothing of consequence. The twosome, however, do provide some comic relief from Julian's harangue, occasionally interchanging news about the one's amazing virility beyond his years as opposed to the other's complaints of



the necessity of reducing his intake of culinary delights because of his unaesthetic predisposition to gout.

But the dramatically conceived and immediately envisioned lives unfolded in such narratives as *I, Claudius* and *Claudius, the God* by Robert Graves are sadly absent here. The characters and incidents in Gore Vidal's *Julian* seem to be desperately trying to break through the wall of time that separates them from Julian-of-the-Memoirs' ability to recreate. The effect of this rendering upon the reader is a damaging one.

For example, the parting assurances of Richardson's Pamela of her being 'still virtuous' kept the reader alive in the early novel; here unfortunately, they find no counterpart. We have been assured far too many times of the emperor's pristine

mold to count on a juicy reversal at some painfully late date. Julian's death at the hands of his discontented army, however, does add symmetry to his old teacher's concluding remarks, for then Julian too has become history.

The variety and swiftness of change, as well as diversity of character, available to the novelist who wishes to explore such an age as the 4th century A.D. in themselves stimulate the reader. But Mr. Vidal has not been able to provide the essential ingredient—immediacy; immediacy that spurs on recounted man and years, and in the process, irrevocably thrusts the reader into the thick of things. In retrospect, the author's statement in his prefatory remarks "The Emperor Julian's life is remarkably well documented" makes for a rather drab irony.

## ALWAYS NEVER—EVER

by

PAT SCOTT

Always wailing nightingales chanting alleluias of  
yesterday's messiahs  
in never-ever enchantment of a beckoned sigh.  
Endless tides rise skyless and splash against the  
moon

yet beyond the sand, the tides tease endlessly  
Motionless in a dirge of devotion cast aside  
with spoiled fruit in a garden of idol gods  
Infinitely patient as a spider meandering across  
his woven rainbow

The doll is caught freely in the steaming Inferno  
———thrown into a hallowed holocaust  
Carelessly the slave drives waves of uninformed  
ragdolls

always accepting the being of one as of the other,  
never rising always contented as vultures to  
pick the flesh of the unforgiven

Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus, the unforgiven rise in the  
beckoned sighs

Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus, never-ever as the  
sand replies

Virgins rejoice at the judgment of a savior.



## The Story of Michelangelo's Pietà

*The Story of Michelangelo's Pietà.* By Irving Stone. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964. 60 pp.

The Pietà, which means in English the Pity or the Sorrow, is regarded by many as Michelangelo's masterpiece in sculpture. Since having been brought from Rome to be displayed in the Vatican Pavilion of the New York World's Fair last summer, it is of special interest to Americans. This representation in white Carrara marble of the crucified Christ resting in the right arm and on the draped knees of the sorrowing Mother Mary is beautifully pictured against a black background on both the front and back hardboard covers of the present edition of Irving's Stone's *The Story of Michelangelo's Pietà*.

Those wishing a full account of Michelangelo's life should refer to Stone's biographical novel *The Agony and the Ecstasy*, for though the present volume tells about all that is known regarding the creation of the Pietà, it tells only enough more to provide sufficient context for comprehension; it focuses rather sharply on its subject.

The brief prologue observes that Columbus was discovering America while Michelangelo was doing his earliest carving leading up to his sculpture of the Pietà in 1498-1499. Then a biographical sketch fills in the artist's early life, training, and sculpture until he was commissioned by Jacopo Galli, a Roman banker, to carve a Bacchus. Among Galli's friends was the French Cardinal Grosloye, a Benedictine, who visited Michelangelo's workroom to see the unfinished Bacchus and was moved to say, "I can feel the blood and muscle under your marble skin." So impressed was the Cardinal that he commissioned Michelangelo to carve a lifesized sculpture for a niche in the Chapel of the Kings of France in St. Peter's. Thus Michelangelo turned from the profane to the sacred and the result was the Pietà.

But not until after the sculptor and his teenage apprentice Argiento had experienced privations and sacrifices comparable to those experienced by M. and Mme. Curie in turning tons of pitchblende to find a bit of radium, was the Pietà completed. Indeed, the human-interest aspects of the struggle through cold, hunger, and disease in a leaking and crumbling studio to produce the immortal Pietà must engross any reader; the reciprocal loyalty between Michelangelo and Argiento is as impressive as the Pietà itself.

Meanwhile Cardinal Grosloye died, and the Pietà had to be smuggled into its intended niche in St. Peter's; Michelangelo could not call attention to his own work. He could not forever bear, however, standing by as a spectator hearing the Pietà attributed to rival sculptors; so one night by candlelight he carved upon his work "Michelangelo Buonarroti of Florence made this."

An epilogue traces the history of the Pietà through several moves to its present location.

One could hardly expect a sixty-page book so full of struggle and human concern as this is and centered around a subject so important to religion and art as the Pietà to be boring, and it is not.

—VERNON WARD

## The Lost City

*The Lost City.* By John Gunther. New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1964. pp. x-594. \$5.95.

For the reader who has become familiar with Gunther's "inside" books (*Inside U. S. A.*, *Inside Africa*, *Inside Asia*, etc.), *The Lost City* provides an "inside" look at the journalistic world of old Vienna during the years immediately prior to the rise of Hitler. The book is a novel and, consequently, contains much fiction; however, the atmosphere and flavor of Vienna during the early 1930's is real—at times, almost too real.

The novel is centered upon the lives of Mason Jarrett, chief correspondent in Vienna for a Chicago newspaper, and his wife Paula. The plot enmeshes both, but principally Mason, in the economic decay of Austria and in the conditions that made possible the formation and success of the Nazis. The chief conflict is the complete fall of the A. G. O. (Allgemeine Österreichische Gesellschaft), the chief bank of Austria, and Mason Jarrett's own involvement with the A. G. O. In a most credible manner it is shown that Mason was partly responsible for the fall of this bank. Mason, also Paula sometimes, keeps fast company with journalistic colleagues and their friends, both male and female, and the details (often sordid) of the personal lives of friends of the Jarretts are interwoven skillfully with events in the lives of Mason and Paula and history.

Parallel to the insecurity of the time is the sense of non-permanence in the marriage of Mason and Paula. Mason's intense love affair with the Austrian artist Erika makes clear his feelings of incompleteness and non-fulfillment; Paula's temporary sterility, complete practicality, and her all-pervading love for her husband add to his problem. Mason becomes involved with other women, even after Paula has presented him with a son. She, out of loneliness, has affairs of her own. Life to both, however, proves kind, and there evolves eventually a closeness between the two which is complete.

Gunther writes in a racy, journalistic style. The book reads fast because the life and events depicted move quickly. He has successfully brought to life his fictitious hero and heroine; their problems are extricably human and universal. Suspense and interest are maintained, and the conclusion comes naturally. It will be worth your time to take a look inside old Vienna, "*The Lost City*."

—JOHN D. EBBS



## The Modern Short Story in the Making

*The Modern Short Story in the Making.* By Whit and Hallie Burnett (eds.). New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc. 1964. 405 pages. \$6.95.

*The Modern Short Story in the Making* is a collection of previously printed short stories edited by Whit and Hallie Burnett, editors of *Story* magazine, whatever that is. For the most part, the stories are early works of people who have become some of our leading contemporary writers. Like many anthologists, the Burnetts could not resist putting some of their own work in the book. More on that later. Most of the stories, fortunately, are ones which are seldom seen in anthologies; that is one of the best points of the book.

The book is divided into seven parts, each with an introduction of its own. We needn't go into that because it is a customary thing to do and, in this case particularly, is important for only taking up space. Following each of the stories is a short biography of the author, and, if possible, an interview of about ten questions which, for the most part, also do nothing more than take up space. One of the questions is: "What are the qualities necessary for a good short-story writer?" The writers tried to answer that as best as possible without outright mentioning talent. Erskine Caldwell, for example, answered: "An extraordinary familiarity with words and their usage." Which is a big help to all of us.

Leading the book is Norman Mailer's "The Greatest Thing in the World," an undergraduate attempt at writing while still at Harvard. That is fortunate because you don't have to read *Advertisements for Myself* to understand the thing. It is not a very good story and Mailer is honest enough to admit it and even compares his work at eighteen to the work of Truman Capote at the same age, which is much better. This upset the editors who "consider Mailer unduly harsh in retrospective judgment. He permitted his story's inclusion in this workshop book with the provision it be noted that it was written when he was eighteen and that as a short story writer he has done relatively few since . . ." I really can't blame Mailer for wanting to make that clear because his first published work should not be interpreted by anyone to have been written about the same time as his better works. Perhaps he realized that William Styron would probably make fun of the story, so he wanted to set the record straight in print.

"Clothes Make the Man" by Jesse Stuart is the second story. It is about a lumberjack who gets tired of the quiet life and decides to cause an uproar. He takes off his clothes and stands on the side of a mountain next to the road and yells like a wild man. The results are hilarious. Unless standards are changed, this story will never be considered any great literary piece, but it is very funny, and that is what Stuart was after.

James T. Farrell has a very tightly constructed little story called "A Casual Incident." Like many writers, Farrell chooses not to use quotation marks to indicate dialogue. The editors were kind enough to give the reader a footnote explaining that in this story and in another. Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Burnett. The story is a conversation between a young man and an older man who is homosexual. They met near a religious meeting and the homosexual is trying to talk the young man into visiting his apartment. The conversation, of course, is very awkward, but it reads very well and does a good job of illustrating the characters. This story shows more of the making of a good writer than any of the introductions or interviews in the book because it shows the training a writer must go through.

Mary O'Hara's contribution is her famous short story "My Friend Flicka," which has been made into a novel and a movie, and in the process made a fortune for the author. When it was first published as a short story, it brought \$25. In a way, it is sort of a typical story about a boy who fights to get a horse and then has to fight keep it, but it is more than that. The talent lies in how she can get into the actual feelings of a child. That is the magic, something that most authors shouldn't even try.

Whit Burnett's "Sherrel" is an unusual little story which shows a lot of promise, but that is all. The story is told by a boy, eighteen, who believes that he is responsible for his younger brother's death nine years ago. His brother, who was five, died of scarlet fever. He insists that he killed his brother "not by giving him sickness, but by meanness." This could have been an excellent story had Burnett pursued it a bit further. Had he taken more time, and gone into the mind of the older boy to a greater extent, it could have made a very good novella. What there is of the story is marred by the inclusion of a very long, paragraph by paragraph, analysis by Edward J. O'Brien. Naturally, it is quite a favourable analysis, if you like that sort of thing. An editor should never include his own creative work. If for no other reasons, just out of some sort of ethical standards. That goes for Oscar Williams and Louis Untermeyer.

Erskine Caldwell's "The Windfall" is a funny story about a woman and her husband who inherits some money. The husband refuses to let his wife so much as touch the money. That night she tries to sneak over to where he has hung his pants and get a look at the money. He sees her just as she reaches for the pants. She lies there all night and just as morning comes she crawls over to the chair where the pants are draped. He catches her again. It goes on and on like that until the husband decides that he isn't wise enough to handle that much money and turns it over to his wife. She, in turn, gives it to the maid so she can get married. I don't think that makes much of a point, but it is very amusing.

"Rest Cure" by Kay Boyle is the story of an



old author who is visited by a young publisher. The old man is an invalid and knows he is about to die. The young publisher is very patronizing and very careful to say that he is sure the old man will still turn out a lot of material and he hopes that he can publish all of it. The old man, based on D. H. Lawrence, tries to put the publisher out of his mind by examining a lobster. The black eyes of the lobster remind him of the eyes of his coal-miner father and dew-like substance on the lobster's lip reminds him of his father's mustache after drinking beer. It is a rather weird account of an old man's mind and its play with the past and the morbid certainty of the future.

Modern literature deals a lot with society's persecution of the individual and how one should strive to keep his identity even if he is in the minority. "Seventy Thousand Assyrians" by William Saroyan is about a proud Armenian and an Assyrian who wants to "get over it" because the greatness of his people is washed up. This is an experimental short story which is as much essay as it is fiction. Saroyan explains that a man should not be so bitter about the course of history but try to make the best of his heritage. The Assyrian who spiritually destroys himself is as guilty of the downfall of his people as the Arabs who massacre them.

George Sumner Albee's "The Top" is one of those symbolic things which is supposed to summarize all America in one sweep, but doesn't do a very good job of it. The main character, Jonathan Gerber, works for an organization which is housed in a building shaped like a pyramid. If you haven't figured that out, it stands for the Great Seal of the United States. Clever. Gerber works on the eighth floor and the object is to get to the top, the American ideal, so to speak. After working there for over twenty years, Gerber is promoted and given an elevator pass which will allow him entrance to floors above his own. When he goes up to the top floor, the 15th, which must be reached by stairs from the 14th, he finds nothing but rubble. There we have the top of the ladder as seen by someone who never made it. If Ray Bradbury had thought of this story first he probably would have been able to do something with it.

Another story which was expanded into a movie is Kressmann Taylor's "Address Unknown." Normally, when an author uses a letter in a story, it is just a cheap trick to explain something he hasn't got the talent to portray. Miss Taylor's story is an unusual thing which is composed of nothing but letters and does not fall into the category of cheap trick. She presents the letters as being written in the early 1930's between two native Germans, one living in Germany and the other, a Jew, living in the United States. We are shown how a man during the rise of Hitler slowly turns against his once close Jewish friend and learns to hate him. Another story about the persecution of the minority, but done in a very unique and forceful way. The Jew continues to write the man in Germany despite

their differences and the fact that he has been asked not to write because government suspicion has been aroused concerning their correspondence. The last letter from the Jew is returned "Addressat Unbekannt," address unknown. It's an odd twist and leaves you with a rather funny feeling.

The longest, and, in my opinion, the best story in the anthology is Katherine Ann Porter's "Noon Wine." Miss Porter has an annoying tendency to turn out flawless stories. She does it slowly, but they are perfect, and it is somehow disgusting to see someone do it right all the time. Everything she does is put together just the way it should be, never too much or too little of anything. There are so few good women writers around these days, Miss Porter probably feels she has to do what she can to make up for the others. In "Noon Wine," Olaf Helton, a Swede, gets a job on Royal Earle Thompson's farm. The farm had never been real productive, and was somewhat run down, but through Helton's hard work it is turned into a rather productive place. Helton seldom ever speaks, he just works quietly and lives by himself in a shack behind the house. He doesn't drink, and seldom goes into town. After he has been there for nine years, a man named Homer T. Hatch comes by the farm to tell Thompson that Helton is crazy. He says that Helton killed a man, was declared insane, and later escaped from the asylum. This is the force in Miss Porter's work. A man practically works himself to death to redeem himself and is destroyed by a force which should have been buried by the act of his redemption.

There are many other stories in the book, twenty-two of them in all, most of them good, but the explanatory material is not, which shows how a person can botch up a good thing. When they are put together along with the notes, it comes out looking like a bad textbook. In the notes on Norman Mailer, the editors seem almost vindictive. Some of the notes seem picked just to glorify the editors. They are just too obviously biased. The least they could do was be subtle about it. However, despite the efforts of the Burnetts, the book is not ruined. It is saved by the calibre of the fiction in it, and it should be read only for the stories.

—JAMES FORSYTH



# TO MARIWIN (To Shake Such A Time)

by

GALE F. MORGAN

Mariwin,  
had we known a privater affair  
in some primal Then,  
ere man created God—created man—  
and asked, and gratefully received  
of his own creation  
the gift of guilt—  
We might have gotten better odds on love.

Even though  
laboured love lost;

even now,  
I feel the sweet-remembered devil-touch  
of pale, trembling hands on Baptist flesh,  
and in the afterglow  
the spirit bears again the blow  
of a jealous Frankenstein's chastening rod.

Even though  
the Image-monster, grown rawly real,  
is condor-eyed;  
new-promethean fire I bring  
to warm a guilt-cold culture's unrequited love.

Even so,  
if this be treason,  
make a boast of it  
and down the icy fear the Monster feeds on.

Pray,  
will you come again to me and lay the odds on love.



# I WILL NOT MOURN

by

CHARLOTTE McMICHAEL

I will not mourn  
  night riding  
    black asters  
      decking the slide  
      that otters use  
      for tag and touch-me-not.  
Or Eurydice ladies  
  letting fly  
    their saris  
      to catch dry wind  
      in their  
      designs.  
Or jugs drinking  
  water cups of sun  
    that resign to  
    evening dips  
    and come  
      with me.  
We picked lemons by the roadside;  
our shadows not close, not far away  
and after our gathering, we drank  
tea together on straw in moonshade,  
watched red berries shift into morning  
on a bed of otter down  
                    and yet  
I will not mourn  
  yesterdays, even the  
    ankling  
      of clams  
      round your barefeet  
      in past walking away.  
      I wait an ownership  
      of otter cries;  
      salient black aster  
      lost  
      and you.  
I will not mourn.



## CONTRIBUTORS

Contributors: Sanford Peele, poet, English instructor, a director of the Poetry Forum; Guy Beining, New York writer; Antoni Gronowicz, New York writer, has published several biographies and a novel; John Clement, student; Albert Pertalion, instructor in the Drama and Speech Department; B. Tolson Willis, poet, a director of the Poetry Forum; Vernon Ward, English instructor, poet; John D. Ebbs, Professor of English; James Forsyth, student.

This issue of the REBEL features selected poems by members of the East Carolina College Poetry Forum. Charlotte McMichael, Dwight Pearce and Pat Scott are student members; Gale F. Morgan is a corresponding member from Raleigh.

Joe Brannon made and developed the pictures for the article on Horace Farlowe.

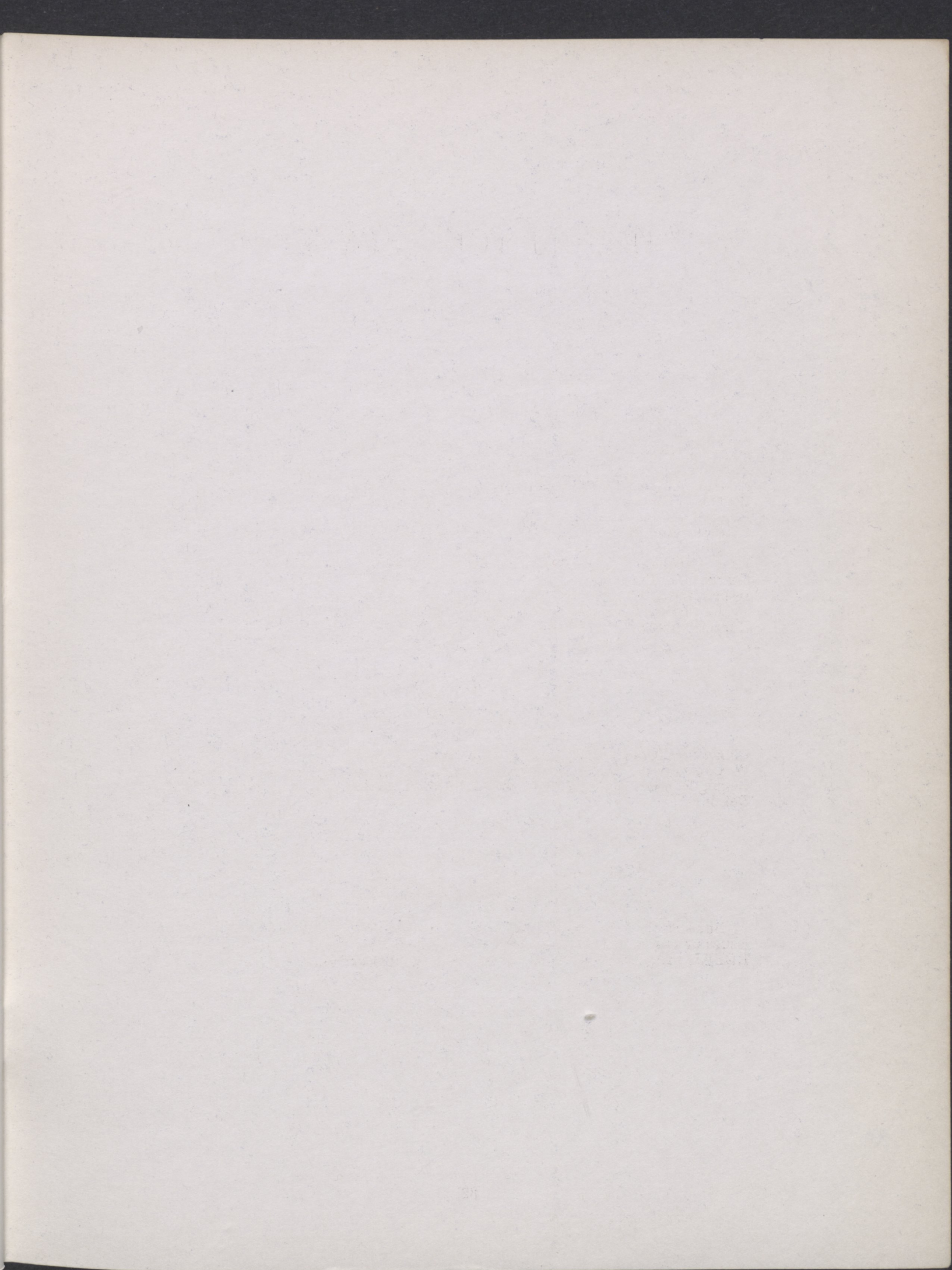
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