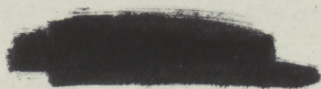
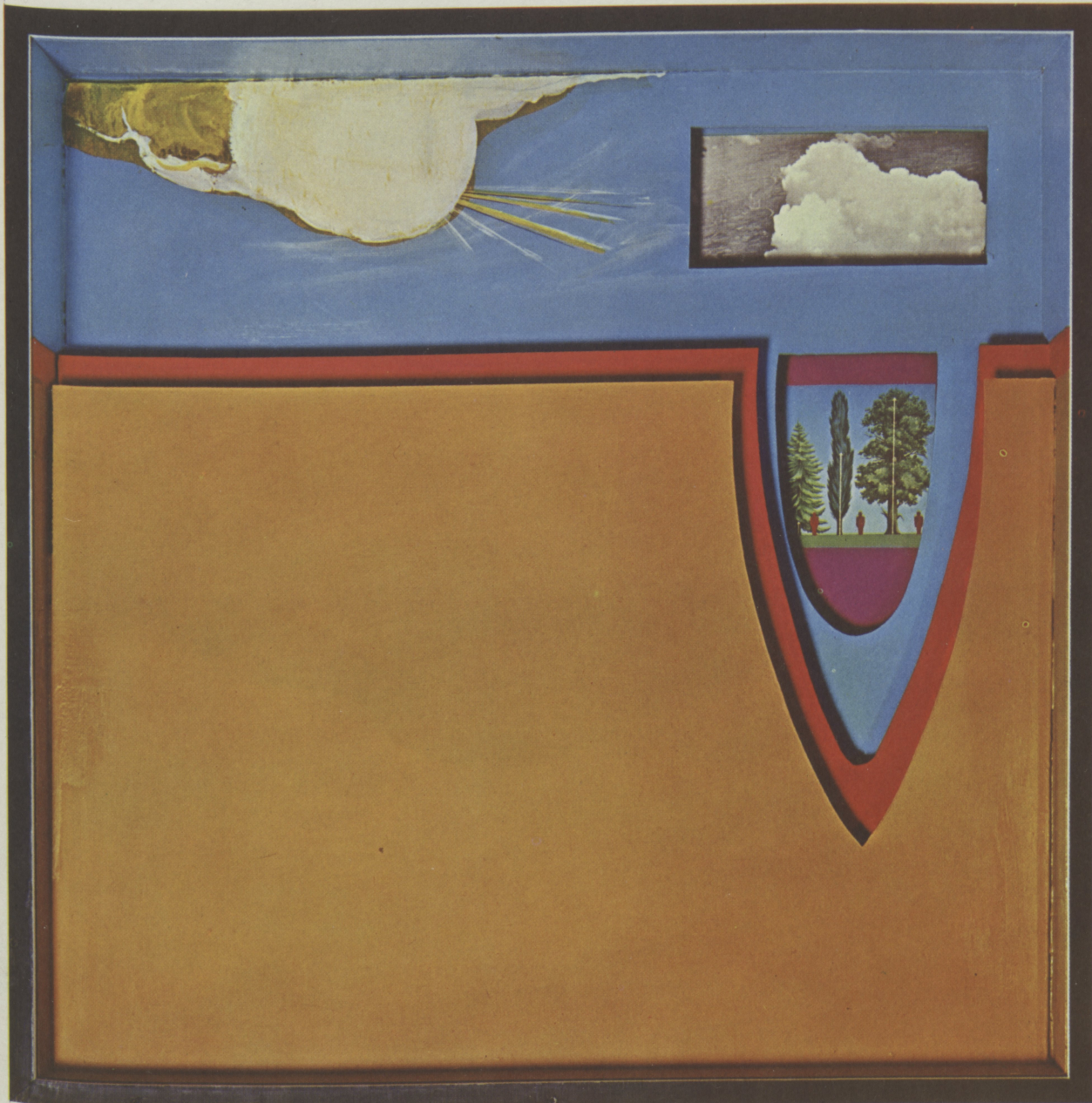


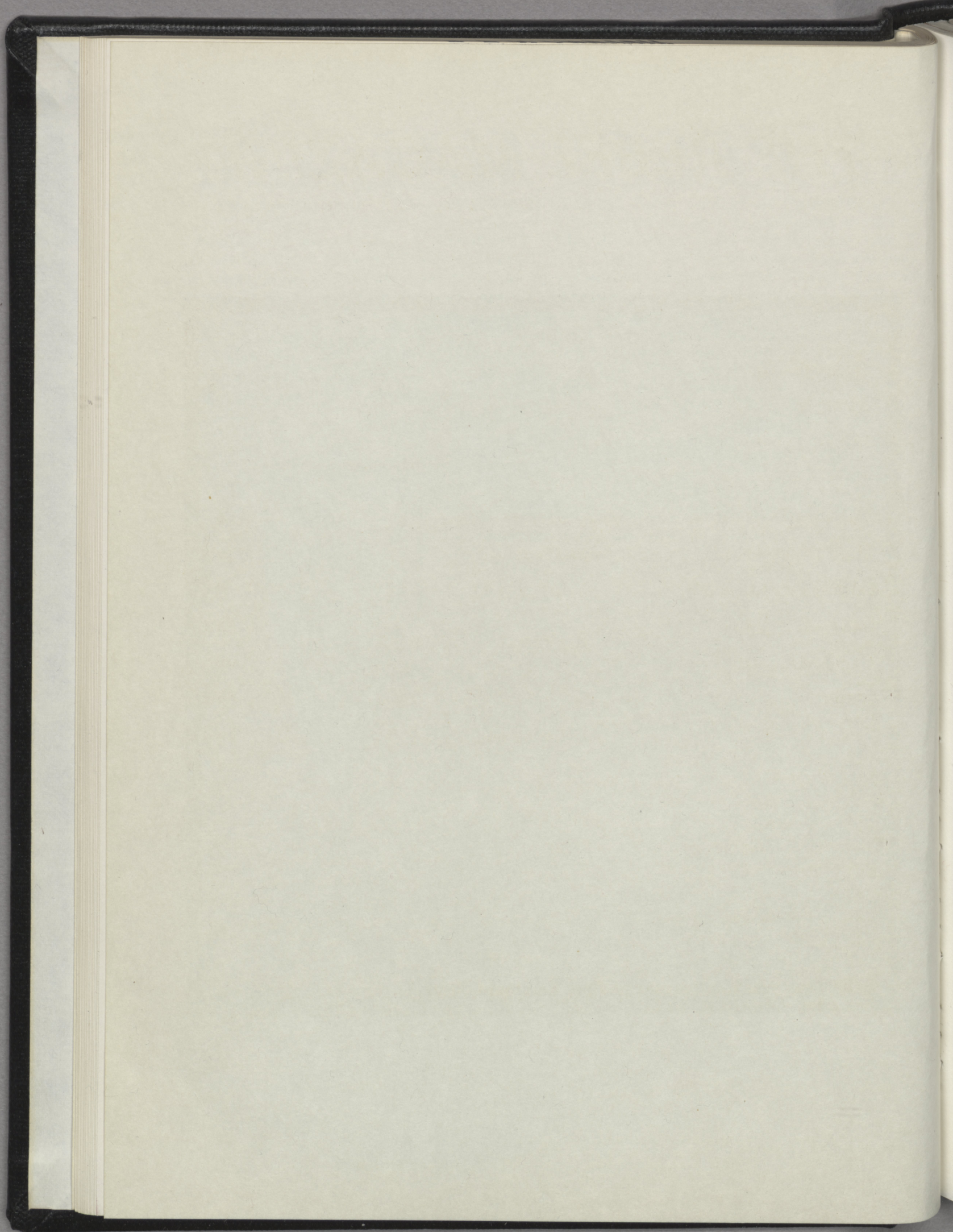
THE REBEL MAGAZINE

VOLUME IX, NUMBER 2

SPRING 1965-1966

EAST CAROLINA COLLEGE





THE REBEL MAGAZINE

VOLUME IX, NUMBER 2

SPRING 1965-1966

EAST CAROLINA COLLEGE

	W. H. AUDEN: a Meeting	3
JERRY TILLOTSON	<i>Sojourn in Asheville</i>	7
ANNE W. NELSON	<i>The Day the Gypsies Passed By</i>	11
FRANK TOLAR	Artist	14
JOHN JUSTICE	<i>At the Inlet</i>	21
WILLIAM R. TROTTER	<i>Excerpt from a novel</i>	25
MARY PASCHAL	<i>Alcohol in Russia</i>	30
DWIGHT W. PEARCE		6
SANFORD PEELE		10
CAROL HALLMAN	Poetry	20
AMON LINER		28
	Contributors and a letter	32

Editor, Thomas Speight

Associate Editor, James Forsyth

Business Manager, Richard Papcun

Cover art by Frank Tolar

Published three times a year at East Carolina College,
Box 2486, Greenville, N. C.

THE REBEL MAGAZINE

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2 SPRING 1966 EAST CAROLINA COLLEGE

W. H. Auden's Meeting

Season in Alaska

W. H. AUDEN

At the Table

Excerpt from a novel

Alcohol in Russia

Poetry

Contributors and a letter

JERRY TULLOSON

ANNE W. HARRIS

FRANK TOLAN

JOHN JUSTICE

WILLIAM R. TROTTER

MARY PASCHAL

DWIGHT W. PEARCE

BARFORD PERRY

CAROL HALLMAN

AMON LINKER

April 3, 1966
St. Marks Place
New York

James Forsyth
Sanford Peele
Thomas Speight



W. H. AUDEN: A MEETING

It was quite pleasant. It was not exactly productive. After we had hastily introduced ourselves, we were shown into his six-months-a-year apartment. He spends half the year in England. "It's a more civilized landscape." Stephen Spender remarked, around 1953, that Auden's rooms had a perpetual-student quality about them. It is that the lights are not bright. The apartment has quiet, dusty windows, marble fireplaces, books, and tables covered with papers. We presently found ourselves seated, and telling him about other people we had met. We lit cigarettes, he lit another. Throughout our visit, Mr. Auden

was polite, listened carefully, and smiled at jokes. He spoke rapidly except when making a special point, and the rapidity, with his accent and vocabulary, made him somewhat difficult to hear. The impression was that he said exactly what he wanted to.

Sanford opened, more or less, by asking him about his translations of the Russian poet Andrei Voznesensky, which had just appeared in *The New York Review*. He replied that the feeling of the words was usually lost, but the internationality of smile and metaphor in these poems made them translatable. Jim asked what he

thought of *The New York Review*. Auden had already told the editors he thought they printed too many unfavorable reviews. Bad books should not be reviewed. They only provide an opportunity for cleverness or the expounding of the critic's personal theories. There are too many critics who find it unfortunate and regrettable that there must be a poem before there can be criticism. A sympathetic reviewer will be much more critical because he is interested in the work. Bad books will die without being attacked; at worst, they will only be replaced by the next generation of bad books. What should be attacked is false information and corruption of the language. Sanford offered that the review in the same periodical of the memoirs by Picasso's ex-mistress was unfair. Auden agreed that the reviewer could hardly have known enough to completely support what he said; he would have had to have been a familiar of the mistress or Picasso. But the book was suspect anyway; it looked as though she had published it for the money. He added that the idea is widespread that there is an essential relation between an artist's life and his work. He was only interested in the work. The relation is either so clear as to be obvious or so complex it would be hopeless to unravel; either way there is just nothing to say, and no point in saying it. Some poets, but not the majority, had led interesting lives, Byron for instance; Byron's life would make no less interesting reading had he never written a line. There are as many interpretations as readers of a poem; completed, a poem is a verbal object, he said; if a reading of a poem is biographically incorrect, it may be still valid for the reader. He wrote, in *The Dyer's Hand*, a group of essays, that the reverse is true for the poet: his poem must be biographically valid, true to himself, "in his own handwriting."

Jim asked him what he was working on now, and apologized for the standardness of the question. Auden said he was very superstitious about work he hadn't completed. He could easily talk it away before it got written. There was a considerable silence. I confessed that we really didn't have any specific questions to ask him. I said he might consider this as sort of a social call. "Well, ask me some social questions." I asked if he answered scholarly questions about his work, since I had noticed the author of a book on his poetry had expressed indebtedness for some interviews. He said he answered questions about local references, metaphors and place names a

general reader might not know, and about points of fact. I asked what was the proper business of literary scholars. He said that what critics could do for him was: (1) Introduce me to authors or works of which I was unaware. (2) Convince me that I have undervalued an author or a work because I had not read them carefully enough. (3) Show me relations between works of different ages and cultures which I could never have seen for myself because I don't know enough and never shall. (4) Give a reading of a work which increases my understanding of it. (5) Throw light upon the process of artistic making. (6) Throw light upon the relation of art to life, to science, economics, ethics, religion, and so forth. While speaking, he counted these six points off on his fingers. He listed them probably verbatim from *The Dyer's Hand*, published in 1948, as we found later.

We sat still. Jim asked if he ever read on any of the poetry circuits. He said he did, but not often; it was slightly dangerous. He thought it best for a writer to support himself in some employment where it was not necessary to manipulate words. Of those jobs which did use language skill, translating, lecturing, and reviewing, translating was the least dangerous. He lectured and reviewed when he needed money. He hoped it came out well; he did as good a job as possible, but he only did it when he needed money. He said that now he was pretty well set up until Spring, 1967.

Noticing an anthology of Blake on the coffee-table, I asked him how he liked Blake. He said that he found the Prophetic Books unreadable, but that Blake had written some very nice things. Jim mentioned that Mr. Auden had said in an essay, "American Poetry," that Blake was not particularly English. Auden explained that Blake's language and ideas were sufficiently general that he could have occurred at almost any place and time.

Jim asked if he had any opinions on Lawrence Durrell. "Yes." When we had absorbed that: "His brother writes very well. He has written some nice books about animals." Sanford smiled, and spread his arms on the back of his chair.

Then Sanford said that he admired "In Memory of W. B. Yeats." Auden replied that he had said what he had wanted to say in that poem, but that he was unsatisfied with the rhetoric. He now thought that there was too much of an elegiac tone, and it tended to overshadow the con-

tent; "It was too loud."

Auden has written allegorical poetry, plays, and combinations of prose and poetry. His essays are as much philosophical as literary in intent. He has collaborated with Benjamin Britten, and he is now collaborating with Stravinsky on an opera. The day after we saw him, he gave a lecture on the role of the poet as lyricist or librettist. His contemporaries remember him as a leader at Oxford in wit and thought. Carlo Izzo could not shake off a sense of puzzlement when he met Auden.

We had gotten around, vaguely for our part, to questions of technique, and the difference in

that sense between British and American poetry, and what was going to happen to poetry in a technical way. Sanford remarked that so many of the younger poets didn't seem to have much knowledge of technical things. Auden said there had been a loss of facility and few people knew exactly what they were doing. He said that we all started in the same way, playing with words. Anyone who doesn't know all about technical devices in poetry, how many there are, and in how many ways they can be manipulated, doesn't know what fun he is missing. "Someone who asks me about dactyls and bacchics is interested in pretty much the same things that I am."

VIGIL

I sat quiet by his bed
not keeping a vigil
for his sickness was not of importance,
not one you could caption
or read
or even say casually in conversation
of the pain immediate to him
who felt the sensation upturned.
I sat quiet by his bed,
filled the room
with small thoughts
of swinging across creeks
(children do this
when time and books
permit or escape them.)
of small boys writing red on themselves
since crows fly swiftly toward
a red bandana.
He would not die, I knew,
and I suspect he had sensed
that time had not lapsed
to macabre this and that,
but urgency was present,
a sense of touch proportioned
out of place so keen
was the sound of sighs
breaking loud the stillness.

DWIGHT W. PEARCE

SOJOURN IN ASHEVILLE

JERRY TILLOTSON

The city crowns the mountain like a tiara of ancient jewels. By day, the jewels turn into gray buildings that become part of the leaden clouds, snows, and winds. In the night, the city becomes a tiara again, glittering with flashes of silver, dashed with slurs of crimson, green, and yellow. The city and mountain are happy; they have joined the sky.

* * * *

I became part of Asheville two months ago. It may have been centuries because my spirit feels withered with living and age. I was a stranger when I came here, but the city wrapped me into a gray coverlet of anonymity which protected me against loneliness. There were other sojourners here with me, before the snow began, who walked the blue-shadowed sidewalks.

Solitary and quiet, we were often seen silhouetted against the huge sweep of cloudy sky that hangs over Pack Square. There is a half-hidden alley along the avenue which ends on a steep hill. You think the sky is an ocean there, and you want to dive straight ahead.

You would have recognized us by the expressions on our faces: quiet and faraway. Our voices in Tingles Cafe or the library were low and rumbled together indistinctly. The intonations of our vocal cacophony reminded one poet of the school of stories told by winter's wind in orchards; or of the apple and pumpkin scents

wafted on autumn twilights. The little green radio shrieks: "... and we repeat, this will be the last evacuation warning. Attention all Asheville residents: you are asked to evacuate immediately. Emergency vehicles are located at Pack Square. The blizzard is expected to grow worse, cutting off all food supplies and heating systems by tomorrow morning. Death-tolls thus far are estimated. . ."

Michael, Cherokee. Perhaps they too came to the mountain unbidden, but they had built their own walls of granite, grown their own roots of blue laurel, long ago.

1

"... Asheboro . . . Black Mountain . . . Asheville . . ." Mr. Bean roared these words out in his most sonorous tone; most of his breath was wasted since I was the only person in the little storage room of his grocery store. I was out the door before he had finished with "... ville."

The bus chugged deliciously as I slithered through the narrow doors and into a seat in the extreme back. While the driver looked rather stupidly at my crumpled ticket, and the two other occupants drifted back into their snooze, I looked through the window to see what the last sight of Blue Rock would be.

A storm was in the air, winds blew remnants

of paper and whirls of gravel against the unpainted structure called "Bean's Produce Gas and Notions." Across its only and broken window was a poster nearly as old as the event it advertised: *Blue Rock Centennial: Sept. 2. Yes the the biggest little town in North Carolina will celebrate its birthday on this date and included will be a greasy pig chase, a cake walk, and a womanless wedding. Everybody come. Sincerely, Crawford Bean, Blue Rock Mayor.* Blue Rock . . . a name lost on the map between Greensboro and Raleigh. For me, a cradle and a grave, a birth and a death.

Salisbury was our only stop. The station felt cool and moist from the heavy rain and winds that followed the bus from Blue Rock. Gold lights were lit in the station, burnishing everything into muted visibility.

"Hey Judy, give me a suggestion for something to eat," the bus driver asked the fat waitress.

Judy leaned against the counter, her plump breasts perilously close to the bus driver's coffee cup.

"Why, Bill, our Heavenly Patties are so good," she cried, her face becoming red from excitement, her coyness disappearing behind the counter.

"Let me tell you how we make them," she began. A tiny spot of saliva glowed at the corner of her mouth.

"First we take tiny pieces of onion and spread them on the meat pattie, which is cooked all the way through," she gasped out. "Then we put mayonaise and mustard and pickle on. Sounds good, huh?"

Her breasts heaved from this recital. She glanced hungrily at the hamburgers simmering on the grill.

The driver said with a note of fright in his voice, "I'll take . . . two."

"You want two Heavenly Patties, don't you," Judy grinned. "We're the only bus station diner that has Heavenly Patties."

The bus was empty when I returned. The two sleeping passengers had drifted away, and now there was a little crowd at the door of the buss. Through an open window I could feel the autumn air become metallic with cold. The driver crept back into his seat with a sigh. He opened the door and the few people stumbled along the aisle. There was a plump woman in a soft, blue wool coat; in the dark — overhead lights — her

coat looked as warm as a gas light in autumn, not cold and stiff like the sky. A thin, crew-cut boy followed her sleepily, and slipped into a front seat. His lips were pursed in an invisible whistle. The woman waddled unhurriedly toward me.

"Honey, you don't mind if I sit with you, do you?" she dazzled a smile. "I hate to sit alone on these long trips up the mountains."

She collapsed into the seat next to me, wafting a collage of juicy-fruit gum and strong perfume along with her. The paper bag she placed in her lap emanated delicious meaty scents.

"Well, let me introduce myself. I'm Katie Shackelford . . . and you must be a college girl."

I told her of getting a scholarship to Buckner Institute in Asheville and how —

"Oh," she interrupted, "you'll simply love Buckner. I had a niece to go there and she just loved it. She's got a good job with the Welfare Department in Kenansville . . . and where will you stay there, honey?" she asked curiously.

"Well, it's at the Mountain Hotel; my father once stayed there years ago and became friends with the owner, and the owner is letting me stay there for a real nice price, twenty dollars a month."

A look of distaste crossed her baby-face when I said "Mountain Hotel."

"How long was it since your father stayed there, honey?" She raised her eyebrows in an effort to tell me something.

"Ten years and they've got my room ready and everything. The Dean of Women says it's a nice, respectable place and several more girls will be living there."

She stared at me incredulously and murmured, "Well, I suppose you'll like it."

She told me of her little cottage in Biltmore; how every morning she would have to fix a big pan of biscuits and a large breakfast for her husband, Roy; and how she loved to catch the Biltmore-Caledonia bus every Thursday morning and go into town.

"Oh, you'll simply love Asheville. I've lived there for ever so long, I got tired of other places, but not Asheville. You have to be careful, honey," she added with a sudden low voice, "Don't ever let it catch you; it can make you never want to leave it, even for a little while. The wind beat against the windows in a way I had never heard before. "That's the winter wind," Katie said in a voice that reminded me of mountains. "It always

starts around September, and it blows all the time."

She opened the delicious-smelling bag on her lap. "Here, honey, I can't possibly eat all of this." She handed her a bundle wrapped in wax paper. "My sister Bessie worked in that Salisbury bus station. She always fixes me with an outrageous supper every time I go to see her." The wailing wind seemed friendlier now that I munched on the chicken and felt warm potato salad inside.

I knew we were reaching the city when I saw speckles of silver light blinking below us on the left. "We'll soon be there, honey," Katie said, between mouthfuls of chicken. We passed through ravines of rock and timber; travelled up sheer drops of asphalt headed toward the stars which shadowed all the mountain world I was entering. The crew-cut boy was asleep, his head lolling faintly as the bus turned the corners. The driver hunched over his wheel, lifeless and black, like a mannequin. As we entered the outskirts of the city, we passed a closed filling station and an all-night hamburger stand, then more and more buildings, houses, bridges; the streamlined clover-leaf intersections, the radio towers, and the peaks of buildings. "We're here, honey," said Katie, her lips glittering from chicken grease in the moonlight.

"Taxi, Miss," a voice called from one of the yellow cabs. The wind was bone-touching, blowing my skirt against my knees, blowing away the sight of Katie as she got into her cab with a wave of her hand. The driver of my cab was scrawny and talked with a voice that sounded like the wind.

"Nah, the Mountain Hotel isn't a bad place, it's had better days," he whined. The cab sped along dark avenues, shapeless stores and buildings. I could see nothing. I was shivering from nerves. "Here we are," the driver said hollowly. Through the darkness I could see a pale doorway.

"Can I help you, Miss?" My nervousness increased as I stood before the counter facing what resembled a living male-ghost. He was slender and fragile, but not delicate. There was nothing effeminate in his figure.

"Yes, we certainly do have your reservation." His voice was hollow, reminding me of the noise I heard in seashells at the beach.

"You look tired. The trip must have worn

you out." His eyes were dead, like two marbles. There was something very attractive and repulsive about him.

"If you'll follow me, I'll show you to your room." When he lifted my suitcase, I forgot the slenderness of his body and thought how much it reminded me of a tree.

"You will be the only one on the fourth floor for some time. The other girls who were to live here changed their minds." His voice was like the telephone recording, yet I could hear a particle of feeling in it, intense to the point of hysteria.

The elevator smelled of mothballs and disinfectant. He stood, not visibly breathing, before the elevator buttons. We stepped into a long, silent hall. The wind could be heard creaking and snapping at things in the rooms.

"If you get frightened here or should want anything, just push the button here by the bed." With the air of having done it many times before, he opened the bathroom door, turned on some more lights and then faced me.

"The janitor lives here on this floor, so you won't be completely alone," he said.

"Oh, what . . . type of man is he?" I asked, feeling ridiculous.

"Don't worry," the young man said with a trembling of his lips, "I won't harm you. I'm the janitor, Michael. Some people call me Mike, but I hate that."

He walked toward the door. Half-way through he stopped. "Oh, your luggage will be here tomorrow morning; it's in Statesville now." I didn't hear him walk away because of the carpeting. Something told me that he stood in front of my door for a long time.

My room looked as though it was what my father must have seen when he passed through ten years before. It had samplings of all the worst in dime-store millinery, furniture, and pictures. Cheap cotton curtains hung stiffly over the windows, not stiff with starch but with dust. The cardboard pictures flanking the mirror were bad, early twentieth century memorabilia. One was of a young flapper sitting on a knoll overlooking the ocean, the other was of Jean Harlow, heavily retouched. The bed looked sound enough, and when I sat on the edge, the other side raised in the air like a swan.

POEM FOR CELEY MOSS, NEGRO

BORN 1891

For her who gave up most utterly
Everything to God, because at sixty
She had had all else worth having,
Praise be — the voices in the Myrtle
Heard her blood's bargain and though one
Yellowed eye observed her burnished cock
Astride a little hen like rippled water,
She could pray whole mouthfulls of prayer
And set the rigid sinews of her black neck
Against a margin of desire worn back —
A time of rodent and October sun
Busy and communal among the fallen corn.

At this heart of darkness, richer than
Black paint she wore, believing color
Hid a color made colorless by love —
Transparent as the vengeance she would
Not revive, though driven like sweet
Water upward and alive singing suffer
For your patch of black — she saw, that
To have been born thus and scratch
Yourself for difference and see beneath
A swirl of gentle hair laid bare
The rose red infinitesimal corridors of grief,
Is home — where pigs root among the sour
Remains of summer — and all small
Satisfaction must be heart's glazed hazelnut,
The green thing pulled toward golding.

SANFORD L. PEELE

SHORT STORY

THE DAY THE GYPSIES PASSED BY

ANNE W. NELSON

The day the gypsies came they were playing in the yard with the silver cardboard swords that had been in the back of the linen closet since Halloween. They had forgotten about them until Minnie had found them that morning and sent them out to play where it was cool in the yard under the trees. The cardboard had begun to shred with the heavy metallic paint flaking off like thick fish scales when Minnie came out on the porch and called them, her gold brown Negro voice shaking deep in her throat until it pierced the shadowy quiet beneath the trees with an urgent, white toned shrillness.

From where she made them stand on the porch, they watched the caravan come nearer and nearer along the road. The wagons seemed not to move in the bright sunlight, but to enlarge through some trick of the sun and heat until they were suddenly near enough that the slow sounds of the wagon wheels turning through the powdery ruts of the road became a part of the swish the breeze made through the trees in the yard.

Minnie tried to get them to go into the house. She tried to pull them with the strength of her dark fear. They knew she silently urged them to go in. Her effort was obvious to them through the violent strain her fright smote the air with. But her horror they could ignore; their excitement rendered them immune. They clung to the mystery of the bleak caravan until their imaginations pulsed with a spectacle-saving colour that

endowed the meager stumbling parade with the circus-like majesty of brilliant pace. And finally they swooped with the thrill of having seen the unknown. They stood on the porch and screamed a unanimous salute of joyous welcome to the brief vision that passed in careless splendor along the dusty road past the house.

There they all stood next to the white woven gingerbread of the porch railing until Minnie enviously crumbled into quivering shards of thrill and darted mumbling with relief back into the safety of the house from which they heard her in a loud, skittering voice boast of the dangerous witness she had made. Knowingly, they flowed back into the yard, made into a docile oneness by their bold confrontation.

It was more fun to play pirate now with the gypsies just gone by, far better than it had been earlier. Their daring took on new force. And Mathew learned that he could quite easily sail over the porch railing, over the hydrangea and azalea bushes, into the yard. He had never been able to jump that far before. But Harvey insisted that he try. And Vernon approached the suggestion with a new dignity. And Mathew was not one to stand back in the face of new feats.

They were wildly practicing jumping from the porch in a pell-mell unison of limber abandon when Aunt Lucy came out to say that they must help catch all the chickens and get them into coops in case the gypsies came back to steal them

The Day the Gypsies Passed By

that night. So they took the limp swords and went to the back yard to round up the elusive chickens. It was hard to catch the chickens, especially the old speckled rooster who had knife-sharp talons and kept getting in a corner by the doorstep and then lunging out when they were at him with his mean beak stabbing at their legs and his hateful claws spurring the air when they reached toward him.

They got very hot running so much and Vernon became sick. Aunt Lucy would not believe him until he vomited in great choking sobs into the verberna bed where the rooster was making a desperate last stand; then she sent him into the house where Mama made him lie down with a cool cloth on his head. Mama smelled good. She smelled like starch and she smelled like rose water and glycerine. It was very quiet in the house and very still. But his body kept drifting and dropping and rising as if he had been swimming for a very long time and the water adhered to him like a ghost.

He could hear Aunt Lucy giving directions as to how the chicken coops should be shut up. And he could hear Minnie rattling pans in the kitchen. He could hear Mama rocking in her gooseneck rocker in the front parlour. He knew that she was making the button-holes on a new shirt for Mathew.

Aunt Lucy had been there as long as he could remember. She had Mammyed him and Harvey and Mathew. She had Mammyed Mama too. Aunt Lucy was very old. She wore white string wrapped in a tight spiral around the little plaits she kept her hair in. He had seen her do it many times. But he did not understand how she did it. She began with a string about a yard long and when she finished it looked as if she had used many strings. None of the young Negroes wore their hair like that. Minnie didn't. She just wore hers in plaits. Someday he would ask Aunt Lucy. He could ask her because she was old. He hoped he would not forget.

He was still thinking about Aunt Lucy's intricate coiffure when there was a noise at the window and Mathew pulled himself up into a precarious crouched position on the window sill. Mama had told Mathew and Harvey to stay in the yard and play while Vernon was sick. Mama thought he would feel better sooner if he stayed very still and did not exert himself in the other boys' wild activity. Vernon was glad to see Mathew. He wished he did not feel so tired. He

would have liked to have been friendly to Mathew. His feeling bad made him need to be nice to somebody. And it was sometimes quite easy to be nice to Mathew because he was so little and wonderful with eagerness. But Mama would not like Mathew's being on the window sill; she would put them both in trouble.

"You better get out of that window before Mama catches you," Vernon said. "You better go on before she comes in here, Mathew."

"I tell you what," Mathew said, "just get out of the bed and come on out the window. She ain't going to come in here no time soon. She is on the front porch behind the Kate Jazmin tree looking at everybody go in the store."

"Well, I don't feel good."

"Then you might as well come on out here with us."

"I don't feel too hot. I feel bad. I don't want to put on my clothes. Those stockings itch my legs horrible."

"Come on," Mathew said. "Just come on out the window. She ain't going to know."

"She might," Vernon said. "And you are going to fall if you stay on that window sill like that. Why don't you come on and get in the room?"

"No, I'm going back out there in a minute. We've got something out there."

"You've got on another pair of new stockings," Vernon said.

"Papa didn't see me get them. I went around the counter and hid until there were a lot of people in the store. Then I got them."

"Mama is going to find out about this after a while," Vernon said. "She is going to find out."

"I ain't scared of her. She'll just beat me."

"That wall is going to be full after a while if you keep cramming them in that hole. That whole wall is going to be full of stockings."

"Well, I am not going to wear them after they have been sewed up. It hurts my feet to wear them when they have been sewed up," Mathew said. "I'm going to keep getting me some new ones out of the store. There are a whole lot of stockings over there."

"They hurt my feet, too," Vernon said. "But I am afraid something will happen and Mama will find out that that wall is crammed full of stockings she has darned."

"Nothing ain't going to happen. That wall will be just like that a hundred years from now. Right full of stockings that have been sewed with rough places in them," Mathew said.

"Get out of that window and come on in here," Vernon said. "Come on in here and stay with me."

"I got to go back out there with everybody else," Mathew said. "We got something out there. We got Harvey's gun. And Lester is out there and Bud and Al."

"That gun won't shoot," Vernon said. "The thing that pumps air is broke on that gun."

"Yes, it will too," Mathew said. "It will shoot. It will shoot a nail. Big Boy fixed it so it will shoot a nail."

"Mama told us not to play with the niggers anymore. Don't you know Mama will beat you if she catches you with Big Boy?"

"Big Boy ain't out there," Mathew said. "He's down in the thicket waiting for us."

"Mama said that Pappa is going to beat us hisself if he catches us with that air rifle, again," Vernon said. "You all have not been shooting at that mule have you?"

"We ain't been shooting that mule today," Mathew said. "We just got that gun fixed. Just while ago."

"You go on," Vernon said. "I think I am going to be sick. I think I am going to vomit again. Why don't you come through the room and go out like that?"

"All I got to do is jump," Mathew said. He edged around on his heels and dropped to the ground. He stood on his tip toes and rested his chin on the window sill. "Are you sure you don't want to go to the thicket with us, Vernon?"

Vernon did not answer. A fly was buzzing against the screen on the inside. He wished Mathew had not kept the screen open so long. He wished the fly would see the little crack at the bottom and go back out.

"I tell you what," Mathew said. "If you change your mind, come on down there where we're going to be at. You do that."

The counterpane. The peacocks in the counterpane. The big birds with the purple and green feathers. Mama's Mama made the counterpane. Vernon wondered what Mama would do when she found out that Mathew and Harvey had cut the fringe off that side of the counterpane last night. The side of the counterpane next to the wall; he was glad. The purple fringe. Like in the barber shop. Except it was fringe. Mathew was the one

who had thought of it. But Harvey cut it off because he was older. Harvey was oldest of them all.

Vernon wished he felt like going to the thicket with everybody. He wished he did. He liked the thicket. He liked the Chinaberry trees with the purple blossoms. And the old bottles and cans Mama told old Sim to throw in there. He thought about the dark blue bottles and the broken cups and the rusty cans. He wondered if goats really ate tin cans.

The thicket reminded him of the counterpane. He thought about the peacocks in the Chinaberry trees. Mama's duster made out of peacock feathers was hanging by a string inside the closet door. The door was open and he could see the feathers stirring in the heat. He wished he were in the thicket with the counterpane and the peacocks and Mathew and everybody. The counterpane. And the thicket. He was holding a handle broken from a cup in his hand. A white cup handle and a little gold mark. He threw it up through the branches of the Chinaberry trees. The peacocks began to hum. It was a tune he did not know.

"Mathew," the peacocks chorused, "shot that salesman who just drove up. He shot him with a nail he had in that air rifle. But he was aiming at the horse. They made him do it because he was the littlest. They made him shoot at the horse and the nail hit the salesman who always has that free candy in his buggy. Papa is going to beat Mathew. He is going to beat the others too. He is going to beat Big Boy." The other peacocks nodded.

The thicket felt soft and green. The peacocks hid in the purple blossoms. Mathew was crying. A cup handle fell out of one of the Chinaberry trees. It landed on Mathew's chest. He lay there crying and his tears were soft in the green thicket. The peacocks were whispering quietly. Mama peered through the Kate Jazmin bush. She waved and the air was like smoke with the smell of Kate Jazmins. The wall crumbled like rain running down a window and Mathew's black stockings quietly slid in an unending surge into the room and around the bed. Finally the fly went out of the little crack at the bottom of the window. The black stockings ignited and the room burst into a million flames.



Frank Tolar studied with Joe Cox and George Bireline at the N. C. State School of Design from 1958 to 1962, with Russell Arnold at Atlantic Christian College in 1962-63, and received a Master's degree from East Carolina College in 1963-64. In 1965, he won the Harrelson Purchase prize at the North Carolina Museum of Art. He teaches at A&T College in Greensboro.



FRANK TOLAR

This is a very close commentary. Close to Tolar and close in meaning. -ed.

TOLAR: What am I talking about? I'm against all art, in all seriousness against all art. And I'm trying to be serious about it, too. In a world full of fools and artists, which is my world, I'm trying to destroy the principles, the elements, the aesthetics, and the disciplines and the mores.— I'm trying to destroy all that and develop a new art form which is not based on any of the old ones, and I fully believe it can be done. There are too many panty-waists involved in it for my taste. What I'm saying it that a new art form is

in need of being developed, and I mean an art form which is completely negative to all the established, accepted principles of beauty, love, sweetness, hate, devotion, etcetera. I'm saying an art has got to be developed that destroys all these concepts and yet remains art. And since, of course, the only means right now I have of judging art are by the things I've just been putting down — ah — I'm having a bit of a time. However, I see progress — progress. It is rough, I'll agree. It's one of those problems which I've

got to face, as an artist, whatever that is, you see; the very essence of what I want to do will destroy my being an artist. Yes, I know it sounds funny, but to me it's a very valid thing. To me it's the problem I've set; it's not one of space, time, form, function, or anything else, but simply my own problem.

INTERVIEWER: Well, it just contradicts itself, there's no solution.

TOLAR: Oh no, no. The very essence of the contradiction you spoke of is the solution, that there is an art form someplace — and I don't know where yet — but there's an art form which I plan to find which will destroy even the essence of contradiction. It will be an art form which is neither yes or no, but simply *is*, for a moment in time, and it doesn't have to exist forever like the classical art forms do. It's the kind of art which you can plug in or turn on and off, or you can get it in a box and mix with water and it'll dissolve. Sort of like Tingleuy's sculpture that blew itself up in the Museum of Modern Art garden and —

INTERVIEWER: Actually, the trouble was that the thing didn't completely destroy itself.

TOLAR: Yes, I know. There was metal left.

INTERVIEWER: No, it wasn't that; it didn't really work.

TOLAR: That's not the artist's fault, it's the engineer's fault.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, but the New York Fire Department had to come around and put it out.

TOLAR: Well, this is good; it was a happening, then. Want me to tell you about happenings? I think happenings are the next form of art, after Top. We've had Op, Pop. Top Art — topographical art. Quit laughing.

INTERVIEWER: That's a one-piece bikini.

TOLAR: There you go — a topless art. Form with no art. All right Larry, all right. It think it's more fun to shoot a game of pool anyway.

INTERVIEWER: The most obvious question is, are these assemblages any step in the direction you were just talking about?

TOLAR: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: All right, how? Any casual observer looking at it would see elements of painting and sculpture.

TOLAR: I'll say this much: I have discovered for my own personal ends, now mind you, not for anybody else's, artists or otherwise, that to do a good painting or a good sculpture is an art comparable to craftsmanship — now they'll bomb my

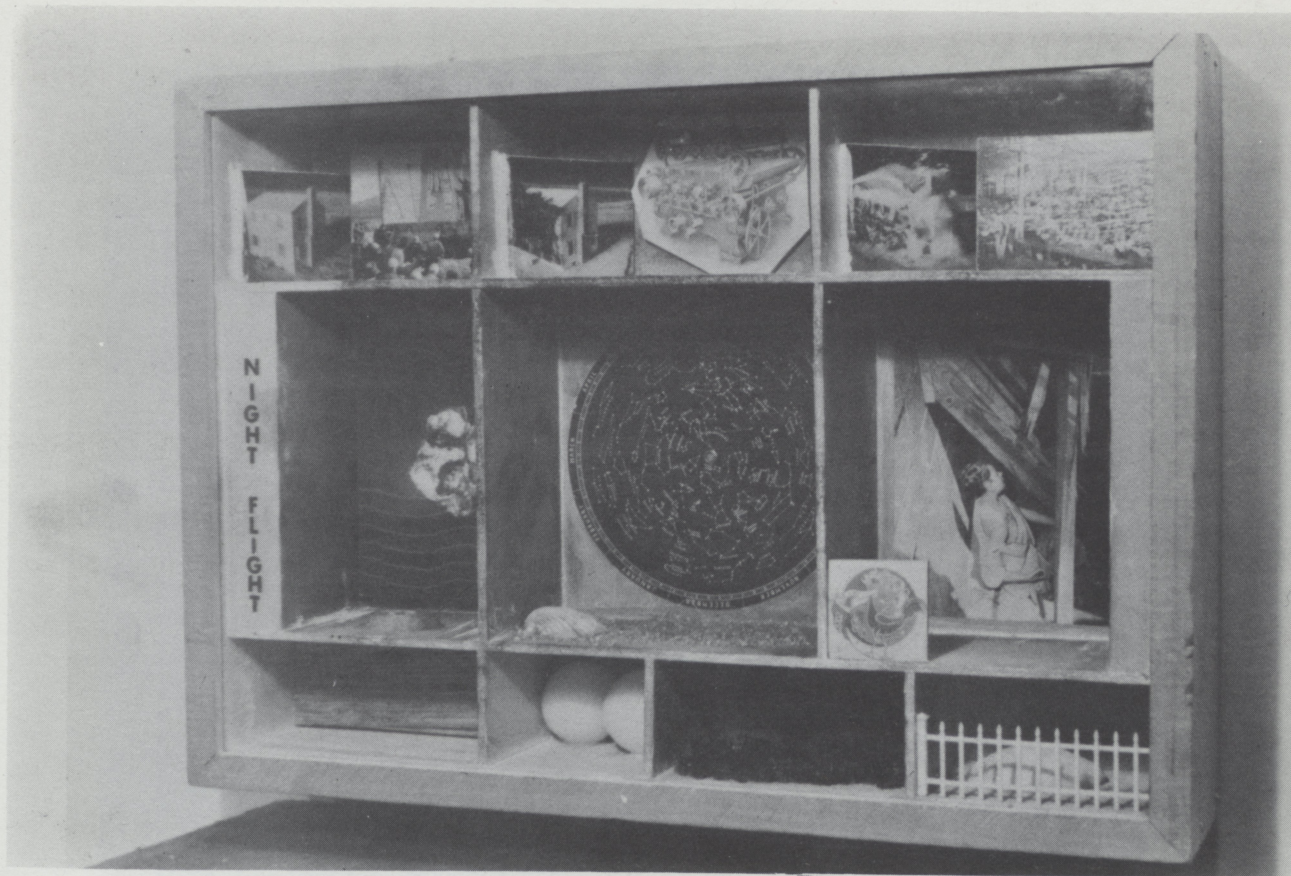
house, with eggs. But I'm far enough along that I can knock out a good painting or a good piece of sculpture without any effort. It's a craft, it's like playing Bach. I mean it's already been said, all I'm doing is just mouthing the words. But what I'm searching for, as I said before, is a non-art, and these assemblages, as you can probably tell, while they certainly work painterly and they work spatially, have something else in them, and this something else is what I'm going to control pretty soon. I'm going to get to the place where this something else will be so strong that you won't even be able to see the elements of painting and sculpture. It's a long road, but this is the problem.

I've got a classic thing, by the way, when I start a beginning painting class. Beginning students have this fear of a canvas, you know, it's sort of natural-born. Always I'll wait until they start, and they just stand there wondering what to do, and I'll walk up and get a large — a number 20 or so — Grumbacher flat bristle, load it up with paint, and I mean real greasy black, and I'll say, 'Now look at the beautiful virgin canvas here, so pure, so unadulterated — look how boring and plain and sterile it is!' Then I'll just crucify it with black paint and say, 'I just raped it, but now it's interesting because it has a story to tell.' And their eyes get big because they hear the word 'rape.' I'm also very much against art teachers — including myself.

INTERVIEWER: Here we go again.

TOLAR: As I said, the ideal student-teacher relationship would be completely negative. We wouldn't even be there. However, we live in a competitive society and we have to have degrees, and a great deal can be learned from artists by working with them, listening to them.

The important thing has been for me to find a means of capturing time. That sounds so facetious — it's not really. But it's what I've been trying to do I guess for the past two years. And I don't mean to freeze it in space as much as I mean to establish it; to say: this happened, is happening, will happen.—and I don't want to record it for posterity. I just want to freeze it right where it happened. Now the boxes — it's partly psychological, it's like peeping through a keyhole, you know, and seeing something — it isolates the viewer. In fact, I imagine that I will evolve very soon to a peep-hole sort of box where only one person can see at a time, and what they see will be their own. It won't be the kind of



Night Flight

thing where you can go “ooh-ahh, how great!” and share it with some little mink-coated friend, which is about all that happens at these art openings anyway. But I feel as though I’m on the verge of a very big thing, something which is going to be tremendously innovative and very meaningful to me. Now whether it is to the world or not, I don’t give a

INTERVIEWER: I don’t mean to get technical about this, but in the sense of an impressionist technique — you do certain things to get certain effects.

TOLAR: Well, to a degree. I use the shadow-box effect to get this key-hole thing I was talking about, and with the four sides I compress space, and there’s a certain crispness —

INTERVIEWER: I was wondering if there were any technical gimmicks which were directly related to time.

TOLAR: This is essentially what you’re asking — what does red represent, what does space represent, what do I use to represent time? The fact that as you look at it, you were just looking at it.

INTERVIEWER: If you’ll untangle that . . .

TOLAR: That’s what makes the boxes interesting.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, but what about time? Sure, objects exist in space, but still I don’t see any way of —

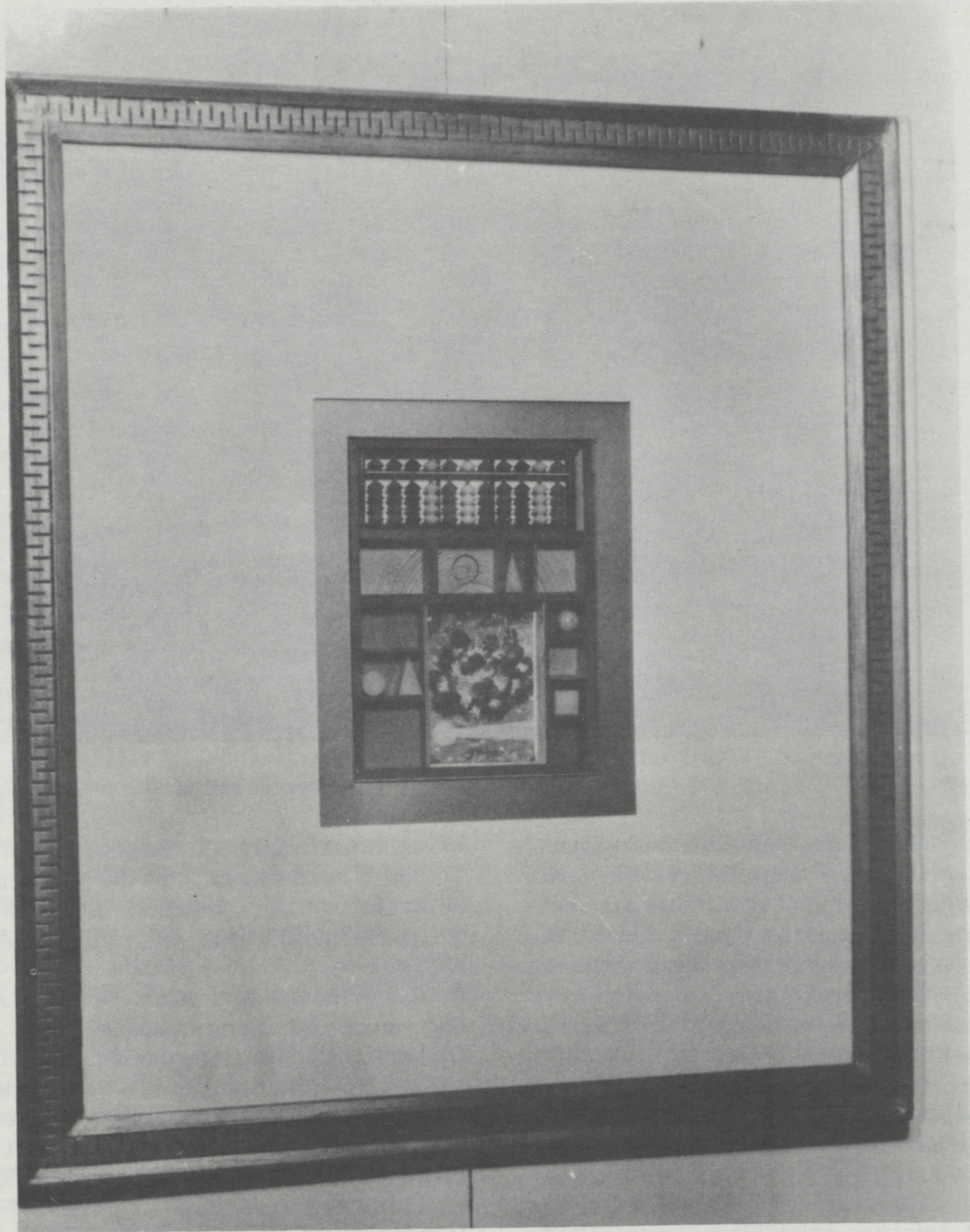
TOLAR: What do you mean, “exist in space?” I find emotions existing in space.

INTERVIEWER: Have you been taking LSD lately?

TOLAR: No, the time thing I’m talking about — I’m after something so real that it just happened. I mean I’m after something you just saw, you just lived, you just felt. And ‘just,’ I don’t know. A minute ago, a year ago — it doesn’t matter.

INTERVIEWER: OK.

TOLAR: Have you heard of *deja vu*? This is the sensation of having done something before. And it doesn’t have to be something you personally did before, but it has to make you feel that way. You want a damn technical gimmick — *deja vu*. That’s my boxes, *deja vu*. OK, there you have the secret. I’m the only artist in the world right now, alive, doing something called *deja vu*. Yes, this is worth your time.



Kepler's Revenge



The Voyage

THE GLACIAL AIR OF WINTER

The glacial air of winter
Knifes my brain and like a thief
Steals my breath while I skim the
Sea of leaves below the sky,
Whose flaming candle at once
Bursts into a last brave glow
Before it melts into night.

Then tongues of hoary winter
Air encrust the fragrant pines,
And the frozen, dappled sky
Above shrouds her sleeping child.
The knife of air sharper still,
I turn to face the wind and
Blend in with the churning leaves.

CAROL HALLMAN

SHORT STORY

AT THE INLET

JOHN JUSTICE

The live oak is the only tree which isn't killed, choked by it moss — the great gnarled trees with their grey filigreed trimmings are the most permanent fixtures in the low-country landscape. The low-country is lonely, and sweet as an eternal sigh. Extensive stands of sky-reaching pines are fixed in the grey sandsoil, and dark, flat rivers trace slow paths toward the ocean. Black marshes are scattered like sins deep in the forests. The oaks are tired and ancient as time is measured in this silent land. They are over three hundred years old, and dimly dream of the mailed Spaniards who burst upon them like a summer storm, long ago. The soil is porous, unfertile, and unprofitably tilled.

Time . . . the word has meaning where the dull, unrough rush of the sea toward the shore continues through untold days and nights. Murrell's Inlet people live mostly outside: fishing boats and small farms of soybeans, corn, tomatoes, so that their senses are formed by and attuned to the sharp, outrageously clean sea breezes and the sun-dazzled creeks and ocean, and the waving green fields of marsh grasses. And time . . . most will stay in the village until they die. They will live between the sea and the forests, and in death they will be taken across highway 17 two miles down a rutted, splotched, woods road and there be given to the sand, their graves gently littered with pine cones and needles, their mortal remains guarded by the straggling iron

fence around the Methodist Church Cemetery. The names are pebbled memories: Alston, Flagg, Lachicotte, Murell, Pawley, and Turbeville — a little foreign and evocative of times past, before Roosevelt, before Wilson, and even back to the now unimaginable days before 1861, when the country's undeniable tendency toward — that grim and ludicrous word — schizophrenia was as yet unmanifested.

A warm, colorful land far from the by-God-damned-eternal steel and stone of more progressive locales. At times hurricanes smash mindlessly past the dunes and trembling creeks, but these are infrequent times. Mostly the land sleeps.

James remembered as he caught sight of the trees before the house. Lillah had told him.

"Do you remember telling me how the live oaks got their moss?"

"No, I sure don't." She smiled a little vacantly and lit a cigarette as they stopped. "In fact, I don't remember myself how they got it."

"When the Spaniards first came," they got out and walked over the imbedded oyster shells, "one of the soldiers fell in love with the daughter of an Indian chief, the tribe up the Waccamaw. But the chief didn't think the Spaniards worthy enough to mingle their blood with the Waxapahaws — sounds familiar, doesn't it?"

The smoke of her cigarette was even bluer than the sky.

"So the soldier hanged himself on a tall oak, and the moss we see now is a reminder of his lost love." James grasped a tangle of the soft grey moss, and with a slight bow presented it to her. Their fingertips grazed through the intricate strands.

With a sweet smile she said, "How old were you then?"

"I don't know. About ten, I guess."

"I was twenty-two then . . . it must have impressed you."

"Oh, I was very much impressed. I made a drawing of the soldier hanging by his beard in the moonlight."

"I remember."

"You remember how *old* I made him look? Because I thought only old persons had beards."

"Yes, yes, you made him with wrinkles on his forehead, James." She laughed happily.

Stale, cool air rushed out against them when Lillah opened the door. She moved at once to open the windows. The house was chill with desertion.

"Do you think we need a little fire?"

"It might help, anyway."

"Do you know how to work the heater?"

Her blue skirt flared like a flame in the dim room as she stooped to pick up a long-dead flower.

James struck a match, and waited for the sibilant voice of the gas. He turned the brass knob down to a whisper, and joined the gas and match with a puff. The little rows of blue fires danced in their sockets. Outside, the irregular throb of a motorboat reached them, and they went to the window, the white curtains softly rising and falling. The boat, far out in the channel, was a red dot driven before a white froth.

"Can you tell whose it is?" he asked, looking at her as she watched the boat.

"I think it's old man Nemiah's, the one who takes fishing parties out."

"Isn't he the one who got in trouble a few years ago for not paying taxes?"

Her profile was sundrenched, and gave him a picture of her face he would remember — a new point of departure: the smooth, gently curving brow beneath the burnished, generous, dark hair, her fine nose and firm chin, the rushing clean line of her slender neck, the well-sculpted lips always promising . . .

"Yes, that's him. If they got him for everything he's done, he'd never see a free day again." She was still looking out past the wide green

marshes and blue slices of creek to the white dunes miles off.

"You have a smudge on your face," he pointed out, but they were standing so close that the gesture was ridiculous, his elbows touching his stomach and his wrists curved like a fairy's, and his finger inches away in the gentle morning light. She raised a hand to her forehead.

"No, here." One slim finger spanned their lives and touched the browned cheek. She turned her serene face to him and moved her hands down. She wiped absently at the place and walked away, leaving him trembling and weak with lust, as the sea-breeze blew cool and mocking over his skin . . .

The key to James, the fact without knowledge of which no one could know him, was that he once sat in a closet all night waiting for his stepfather to kill him.

James' mother married Garland Hart when James was twelve. They moved into a small, well-built house in the country, five miles from the nearest town. Pastures stretched greenly out from the front and both sides, and woods loomed behind. When they first came, the grass had not yet come up, and the front yard was a sea of red mud. The leaden, wintry sky imposed a vast silence on the place — the mud-brown creek below, the long, red-ochre fields, the stark, black trees with occasional wild flights of black birds. James despised the lonely and cheerless new life, and vented his anger by reading alone in his room for long hours. He answered curtly any of his stepfather's remarks. His stepfather was a huge farmer, tall and strong, with tough, dry skin. He looked like a cruel and stupid Lincoln.

One night as the three of them sat at dinner around the long, lacquered pine table, Hart broke a perfect silence with: "Gawd dammit! I've taken as much as I can stand." James and his mother looked up at him — he had on only his undershorts; he often appeared this way, showing his huge, darkhaired chest and flat, pale stomach. He pointed a rock-like fist at James: "You -----, you think you're too good to live on a farm. You think your ----- is better? Well, God-damn-you . . ."

James mumbled an indistinct denial.

"Let me tell you, if you're going to live in this house, my house," he breathed great chunks of air; both arms tightened into columns of muscle, "there'll be no more of your back-talk and

slamming doors, you little ----- You may think you're better than me . . ."

"Garland," James' mother crooned, reaching out a short, plump arm.

"... but you're not, by God. You ain't worth Gene Price or any of his niggers, do you hear?"

"Garland!"

James stared down at his plate, feeling he would rather die than take this. Yet he sat still in the warm, coffee-scented room.

"I may not have an education or be as smart as you, but I pay my way — with these," Hart snarled.

Silence.

"Which is more than you do, you no-good -----"

Silence.

"And if you don't like it, by God, I'll beat the ----- out of you."

James was twelve. The night passed, and when morning came, they sat down at the same shining pine-board table and had breakfast — not convivially, but polite and constrained, with everyone passing dishes without being asked.

By the time James was in high school, Hart had changed his theme; with the exquisite sensitivity of a Southerner, he had discovered that James did not hate Negroes. "God-damned nigger-lover," he would say, "I'll go to hell before I'll feed and clothe a ----- nigger-lover." But he did pay some expenses, and James came home at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and in the summers, as though there was something in both of them that loved self-hurt.

James was always powerless, though by his first year at the State University he was six feet tall. Hart would always stand when he began his tirades, always catching James when he was sitting. He would stand in the doorway of James' room. "I'd be willing to go to prison just to touch you with these," he would intone, raising his massive hands. James took the words and vilifications and thrust them into his nethermost mind so that he would not be plagued with the mocking demon's faces.

The first nightmare came when he was in his second year at the University. Late on an autumn evening he awoke to find himself standing before the shattered window, the curtains flapping wildly in the night wind, and the overhead light blazing.

"For Christ's sake," his room-mate breathed. He was a quiet mountain boy. "For sweet Jesus'

sake," from the doorway where he stood with his hand on the light-switch.

James looked and saw himself holding his arms outward as if in supplication, bright rings of red gleaming on each hand, and blood dripping gently to the worn, wooden floor. All he could ever remember was a terrible loneliness, alive in a black, endless plain, followed by a choking sensation that something was coming to kill him in an unspeakable horrible way, all transposed from his mind to his stomach and nerves.

He lost three roommates and fifteen pounds. He began staying up until dawn reading, drinking coffee, and smoking tasteless cigarettes without end. He would only fall into bed in the first soft light of morning, when he was certain he would have no time to think or remember before sleep overtook him.

The night when he sat in the closet, waiting, came between his sophomore and junior years, when he was nineteen years old. Nineteen years old — it galled him. He could never understand the forces which compelled Hart to spew his hatred. Considering those dramas as a series, they were ridiculous and really pointless — the aging and still potent cursing Hart and slim, blond, docile James. And James could never learn to anticipate the attacks. They might be talking amiably in one of their long truces when something in Hart's slow-working, hypersensitive brain would trigger a flood of abuse.

The summer James was nineteen, Hart's face was eight years older, he was slipping past the edge of middle age into his old years. His face was tinged with purple blotches, and the thick veins on his rock-hard arms, which had always given James a twinge, stood out dangerously. One night his parting words were: "Your mother's always stood between you and me, but by God . . ."

James stood a moment watching the fleeting silver and grey patterns thrown on the bedspread by the moon and racing clouds. Something particularly furious in Hart's eyes suggested to James that this night would be the culmination of the years of rage. He went to his bureau and felt his way through papers, books, golf-balls, old pens and mirrors, and found an ancient scout knife, long, with a leather thonged handle. He eased himself into the closet and down onto the floor among the rugs and old clothes, and he waited. His heart made sickening leaps trying to free itself. If Hart came in, James would

At The Inlet

be hidden for an extra instant behind the bureau to the right of the closet door. He could spring up from the clothes and plunge the knife into the pale stomach. He had no doubt that something would happen this night; he only doubted whether he could get to the point where the knife touched the flesh, so he could consider himself having no choice, and ram it as far as it would go. Naturally, Hart would not have thought of James like this, and would be unprepared.

James was an avid newspaper reader, and was aware that hardly a week passes without a farmer somewhere in the country shooting, knifing, axing, or poisoning his family. Possibly Hart would kill himself after James and his mother — some consolation. He visualized Hart's perverted Lincolnesque feature above the headline: "N. C. FARMER SLAYS WIFE, SON. PLEADS TEMPORARY INSANITY." Through the thin closet wall behind him, James could hear angry muttering from the bedroom. The knife handle grew damp in his grasp.

Gradually resignation replaced the acidic fear. He began to look forward to Hart's coming — it was all ordained and planned long ago that he should die or kill in this room in the house that he hated. He cursed and wept silently, passing into near madness, ready to take the initiative and kill Hart, watch his stupid, brown eyes fill with death. He held the knife as if it were a grail. Leaning back into a musty pile of old rugs, he slept. And waking later to the raucous cries of the chickens and the aristocratic snorting of the pigs, he saw the delicate blue morning sky behind the elms out back. He crawled into bed without thinking much of how ridiculous he felt.

To James from that time, his loves, his friends, his dreams, all his life had to be placed beside that night, fitted to the touchstone. The memory was a dark beacon, hideous, but no less cherished for a malign face. The nightmares continued.

EXCERPT FROM A NOVEL BY

WILLIAM R. TROTTER

Speaking again, the web began to draw tighter around him, the facts and dreams, inseparable, began to thicken; and she spoke about the future and she saw it, the future which he knew was the outgrowth of the past which he could not see: he himself stood right in the middle, right in the smack center of it, to hear her speak — he would color what came from now on, but not to any altering of the physical aspects of it, which he knew and reassured her was as it should have been and could be no other way. She spoke a little in spattered fragments of the dreams of the past, connecting words and phrases — here came the bulky shadow of South America drifting through their minds like an unthinkable vast exotic bird's shape flashing by over water, seen only by the shadow and never by the actual sight, the continent supine and humid with fertile dream, steamed hopes rising from the earthy pit of her brain, skeletal statements fleshed out now for the first time: they talked, they talked, outpoured synthesis of their love, words edged with all times reckoned by men, depthed with touch and thought, they talked in the essential intimate way they had to talk, synthesis of love in words, the free exchange where past and future swirled around present. The continent again, the simple uttering of the two words that made up its name was enough to wash away many trivial thoughts and leave something primal there, flat and wide and receptive, with images falling on

it and splattering thickly like big soft rocks, warm, magmous, words like falling snowballs, listening to the words flow coolly up from her throat, visions: the throat a long, dark, cool tunnel with the words lurking there, all of them, now-and-future, hanging like bats inside her skull, hanging by sharp talons, hoary fears left unuttered, eyes of bestial glowing yellow, the yellow a lone night-walker fears to see suddenly looking at him from some dark place; listening to her speak was liquid time pouring through the brain, a flow uncharted, perhaps circular, or perhaps meandering in a course more intricate and twisting than the mind itself could follow, a course which reason was unable to determine, but which instinct might have dimly sniffed, and shuddered: Future.

There would be the continent stretching out like a lover, quivering at the hot touch of her spoken dreams, the jungles turning fragrant as she passed, the mountains, the Andes, the mountains like great vertical loaves of bread filed to points with mysterious dream blocks of cenotaphic stones clinging to their sheer sides by invisible ancient roots, dark temples of the mind, mythos and mouldy ruins inscribed to forgotten gods, in the mist lost llamas wandered bearing robed, masked priests accompanied by disembodied flutes streaming in the rare atmosphere like thin silver jets of mercury, threads of bright silver lost in the black mists: puma-eyed dreams,

Inca drums, wailing cliffs, hardly navigable terraces leading to something unguessable; her words touching and stroking and raising vibrations in the chords stretched by the sounding drum of the unconscious, — the images of her words would gradually thicken like solidifying nebluae and assume shape: Somewhere — Inca fortress — she had seen it, and there she seemed to have touched the face of serpent gods and breathed the sweat from conquistador helmets, scraped and imbedded forever beneath her fingernails the blood of shattered condors, sacrificed granite Andean virgins, her soul having mounted the condor skies and soared across to the other mountains, the far ones, the ones which you could not learn to know in ten lifetimes; descending from the side of the mountains to the valley where the mist never melted and where the rivers were there one hour and gone the next and traceless, sourcesless; the Indian: — the ones with tarnished gold lurking in the depths of their eyes, the ones with shawls the color of the autumn's flute music, the ones whose eyes saw not only through the air around them, and through the mist, but through the mountains themselves into whatever lost caverns there were inside them, whatever unguessed entrails hid the fabled long-sought treasures, whatever intestinal darkneses moved slowly, slithering — the Indian eyes that not only looked through the pillars of the low lead sky, but saw through time and could see at any given instant, the ancestors of their race in their dazzling, dyed condor feather plumage, dancing steps taught to them by dreams, by moonlight dazzling on broken jewels and dripping blood, diamond daggers in hot bronze hearts, steaming vessels like poured gold, beaten into sunbursts over subterranean temples where gods still brooded on their onyx thrones rooted to the walls of rock; Indian eyes seeing to the places where the gods must still live, Indian eyes that always seemed to be hiding some incredible secret, eyes the white man could never look into, but eyes which SHE had looked into and seen within the mute touch of grandeur and the endless coiled serpent of suffering; she did not know their secret, but she would someday be able to make a guess: he saw a vast mountain split to reveal a monstrous scaly worm coiled there for uncounted centuries; the Indians whose rare and singular smile was worth innumerable civilized expressions, the people among whom she would someday go . . . someday . . .

Why, why as a veterinarian? The only reason she could give him had been given when they had first met, and she had revealed to him that which she would become, what she had already been working on with her summers in a laboratory up north, with her studies in the advanced biology course, and now, yes, when she mentioned it he remembered the times he had taken her home during the afternoon and there had been waiting there some mysterious package in which would be neat data cards and little cotton-swaddled bottles which contained specimens and results from something or other, some project which she had left unfinished in the care of one of her numerous unnamed intimate friends whom she always seemed to leave behind her in her wanderings like a trail of lost garments — the single small rat foetus which resided in special significance on the top shelf of her closet, lost and sorrowing remarks about a dog which, he gathered, had been used for something that past summer in that same laboratory, on which she was running tests with small tools and droppers bottles smelling of pale lavender chemicals which seemed somehow unhealthy to him . . . the way she would sit there and make little comments to him about the dog: "Why, why didn't they go ahead and kill her — now the stuff's spreading through the system according to these latest samples. I'm going to write back and demand that she be put to sleep. It would have been so much simpler if they had done it in the beginning when they injected her with it . . ." The veterinarian, horse doctor, the woman with the medicine — to the Indians, because she would not have been comfortable as a human being in the white man's world and because she loved animals so much and because there was not anyone down there, not anyone, to look into those Indian eyes and try to comprehend centuries of subjugation, try to tell which flashing spark in those slant orifices might be the gene of some ancient prince gleaming like a dagger in the moist darkness; She would help them, she would doctor, he supposed, their flocks and their llamas and she would of course doctor *them* when there was something she could do — and he knew, the way she had spoken of subjects touching it, that she had at times and in places as yet unrevealed, learned how to doctor people in initial stages of treatment — better, it was implied in her very motions, better than a graduate of the red cross courses; tricks she had learned during what

plague and what conflict? Mexico. Perhaps Peru itself.

Peru . . . the dark green mossy sound of the word in her mouth like a monolith overgrown on some barren moor. The dream which found itself in mystic fullness and yet had the porous

flexibility of dreams, bending in his own thoughts like soft iron, electric to his mind's touch: that would mean medical school when she got out of high school, after two years of college at least, let us say, he thought, six years before we can get married

The invisible lover sits
on the gate lover's bench waiting
for love or Romantic music
to settle the bench waits
for another season, for the chance
to settle into rich textures
the early season of a young woman
mountains the milk-bottle air of this
early Spring reduces the bench
to fatness. Barren, slick
branches and strawball grass
with the concrete
come-hither, the bellbird

lover settles for invisible
poetries at shocking pink
egg-golden, and gunmetal blue
negligeees flashing on
the clefts - Swollen in
playful winds like seductive
philosophies, the vivid sheets
convert the bellbird lover

No longer the obsolete lyric
let the fat bird with the
dirty orange front
make his own song as he
struggles for worms and dirty straw
The invisible lover waits
on the gate bench, to settle
into seethrough textures
dresses with the colors of bathroom
and synaptic blood.

ANON LINEA

ANOTHER SPRING FOR THE LOVER'S BENCH

The invisible lover sits
on the pale lovers' bench, waiting
for love, or Romantic music.
Greyflaked, the bench waits
for another season, for the chance
to settle into rich texture.

Empty, milk-bottle air of this
early Spring reduces the bench
to flatness. Barren, slick
branches and strawdull grass
with the concrete
come-hither. The pellucid

lover settles for invisible
peerings at shocking pink,
egg-golden, and gunmetal blue
negligees flashing on
the clothesline. Swollen in
playful winds, like seductive
philosophies, the vivid sheers
convert the pellucid lover.

No longer the obsolete lyric!
Let the fat bird with the
dingy orange front
make his own song as he
scrabbles for worms and dirty straw.
The invisible lover waits
on the pale bench, to settle
into seethrough textures,
dense with the colors of bathroom
and synthetic blood.

AMON LINER

“See, the vase is empty,” said the Monk

1.

I slide my hand over
its cold flank; the white
porcelain does not
respond; the vase
knows its use, somehow
by that formal knowledge
artifacts have built
into them. Wiser than God,
or even a wife, this vase
is joy, a silence
equal to, but more music than,
this barren web of stone and light,
watching me with bloody eyes
and a hunger for garish noises.

2.

brittle as language
and as streaked
with marks of fire, the vase
agrees with my idea
of Vision, a silence
more human than God's,
more music than rage. I slide
my hand over the porcelain; the vase,
of course, does not respond; it knows
the uses of silence,
and flowers would be
a formal declaration of war.

AMON LINER

ALCOHOL IN RUSSIA

MARY PASCHAL

“Plus ca change, plus c'est la même chose.”

In his recent book, *Conversations with Stalin*,¹ Milovan Djilas points to the truth of the above saying, particularly in regard to the drinking habits of the Russians. Jehan Sauvage, a 16th century French traveler to Russia,² and Djilas had similar experiences in accepting Russian hospitality.

Jehan Sauvage of Dieppe went on a trading mission to Russia in 1586. He sailed from Dieppe to Vologda on the Dwina during the summer months, carrying tallow, leather, flax, beeswax, and tanned hides. He was stopped on two occasions by the Russians. The first was at Vardehousse where it was necessary to obtain permission to proceed to Archangel, and the second at Archangel where the merchandise was sold. The ships, however, proceeded to Vologda.

When Sauvage arrived at Vardehousse, the officer in charge delayed his voyage for three days because he had no commission to allow Frenchmen to pass, for no Frenchman had been there before. Sauvage paid a tribute of 250 *dalles* which was followed by a welcome to Sauvage and his men. Sauvage gives the following

account:

. . . the servants of the lord brought to M. Colas a large pot of red wood which held more than twelve pots, which was completely full of heavy black beer and stronger than wine, and it was necessary to drink it all. And believe that the lords Colas and du Renel were angrier at drinking so much than at the money they had just spent; for it was necessary to empty this jug or else to act like a drunkard in order to leave, for such is their custom.³

After leaving Vardehousse, Sauvage was allowed to continue his way to Archangel. There again he had to pay tribute and customs. The official at Archangel was much pleased to have merchants from France and caused alcoholic beverages to be served in their honor.

He took a large silver cup and had it filled, and it was necessary to empty it; and then another, and still to re-empty it; then still the 3rd that it was necessary to finish; and having made these three drinks, one thinks to be through; but the worst is the last, for it is neces-

¹Milovan Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1962).

²Jehan Sauvage, *Mémoire du voyage en Russie* (Paris: Auguste Aubry, 1855). The references are to this edition, published by Louis Lacour according to Manuscript 71403 of the Bibliothèque Impériale.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

sary to drink a cup of brandy which is so strong that it sets one's stomach and throat on fire. When one has drunk a cup, it is still not all, and having spoken a word with you, it is necessary still to drink to the health of your king, for you would not dare refuse it, and it is the custom of the country to drink well.⁴

In 1948, Milovan Djilas has a similar experience in the consumption of prodigious quantities of alcohol when he was visiting in Moscow. Djilas was a guest at a six-hour dinner at Stalin's villa. The dinner began with a proposal, probably from Stalin, "that everyone guess how many degrees below zero it was, and that everyone be made to drink as many glasses of vodka as the number of degrees he guessed wrong."⁵ Djilas had checked the temperature earlier, and by calculating the

probable drop during the night succeeded in missing by only one degree. Beria missed by three degrees, saying that it was an intentional miss so that he might drink more vodka. This "parlor game" caused Djilas to recall that Peter the Great of Russia held similar suppers with his lieutenants "at which they gorged and drank themselves into a stupor while ordaining the fate of Russia and the Russian people."⁶ Before the evening was over, Djilas was forced to drink a glass of *peretsovka*, a strong vodka with pepper.⁷ Stalin ended the dinner by proposing a toast to the memory of Lenin. Djilas recalls that: "We all stood and drank in mute solemnity, which in our drunkenness we soon forgot."⁸

The forced drinking on social occasions in Russia is that which changes, yet stays the same.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁵Djilas, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 158.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 161.

A NOTE FROM ALLEN TATE

Minneapolis, Minnesota

March 18, 1966

To the Editor:

Sir:

Mr. Aiken informs me that I was wrong in what I said about the revival of Trumbull Stickey's poetry. It was Mr. Aiken himself to whom we are indebted for getting Stickey back into the anthologies. Mr. Aiken "discovered" Stickey at Harvard in 1909, and later put him in his *Twentieth Century American Poets*, which antedated by some twenty-five or thirty years the rediscovery by Matthiessen and myself.

ALLEN TATE

CONTRIBUTORS

Jerry Tillotson is a graduate of ECC writing for the Wilmington Star News. "Sojourn in Asheville" is the beginning of a novel.

Anne W. Nelson teaches high school in Wilson.

John Justice works for the North Carolina Fund in Durham.

William R. Trotter is a senior at Davidson. The excerpt is from his third novel. He is having "The Winter War, Russia against Finland," a diplomatic and military history, published by North Michigan University this summer. He is now working on a biography of Stravinsky.

Mary Paschal teaches in the foreign language department at ECC.

Dwight W. Pearce is a graduate of ECC teaching at Fork Union Military Academy in Virginia.

Sanford Peele taught English at ECC last year. He is now an assistant editor in the language arts division of Silver Burdette Publishing Company.

Carol Hallman is a freshman at ECC.

Amon Liner is a graduate of Davidson and UNC. He has been published in many "little magazines."

