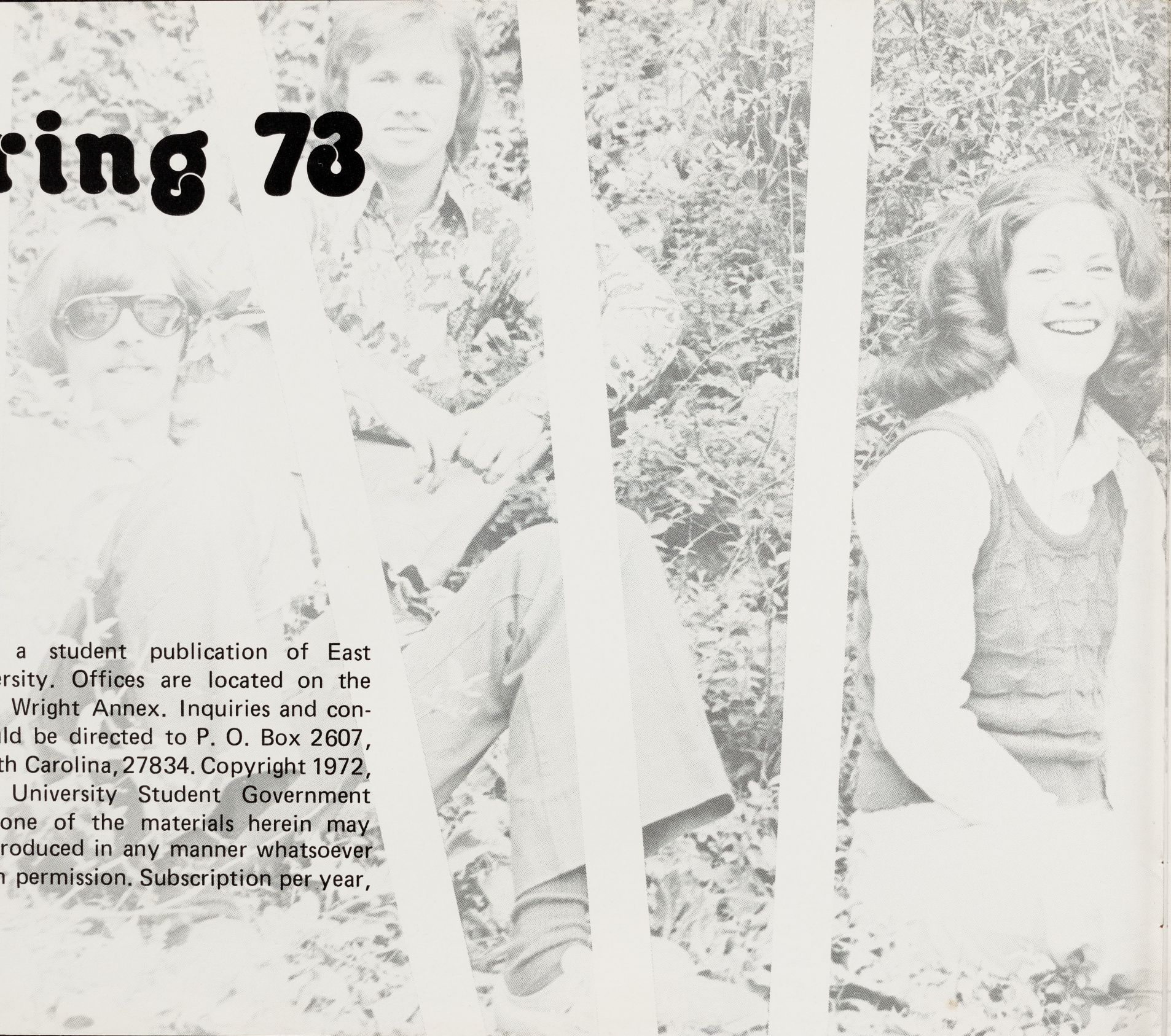
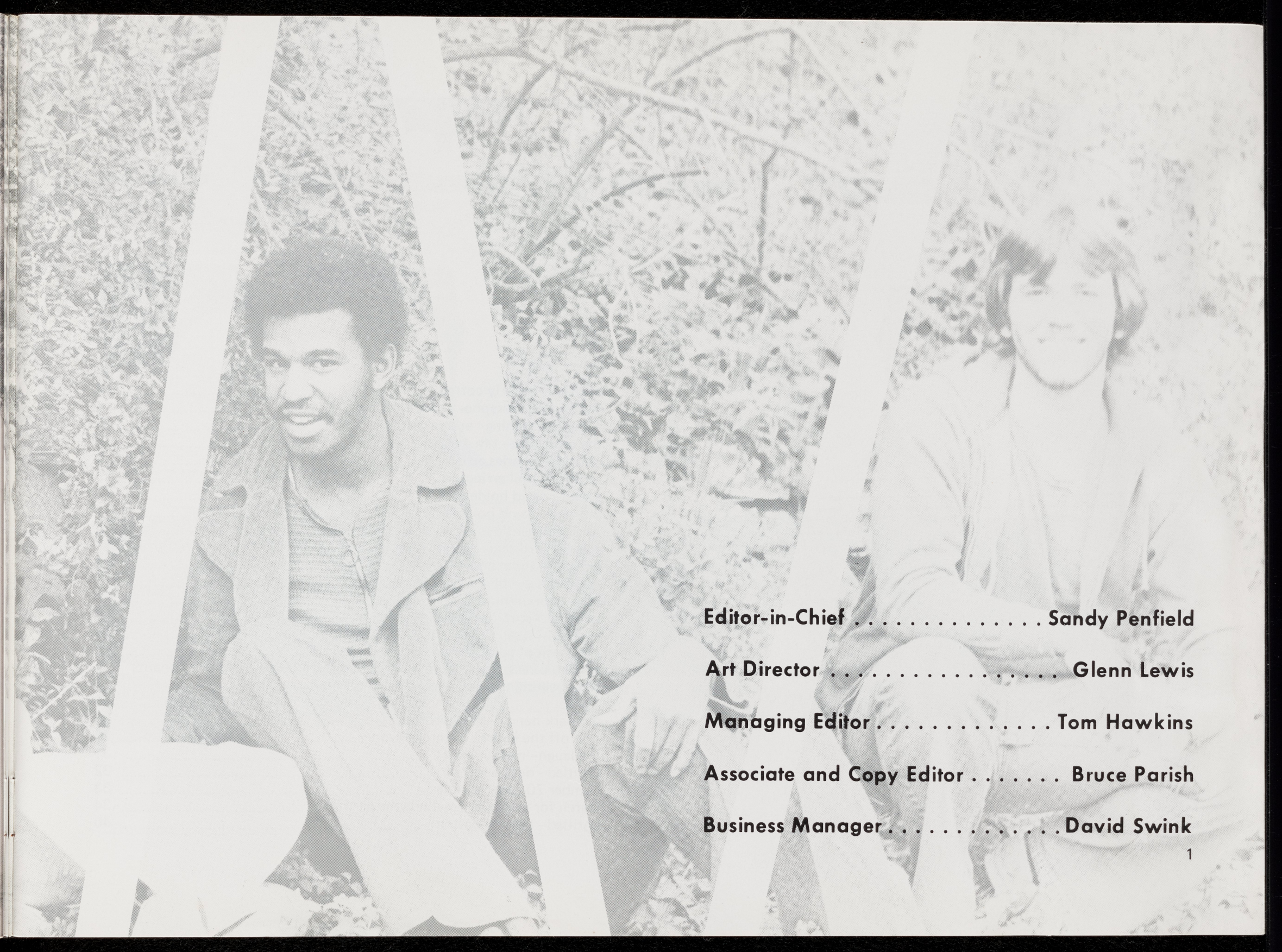




Spring 73

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Editor-in-Chief Sandy Penfield

Art Director Glenn Lewis

Managing Editor Tom Hawkins

Associate and Copy Editor Bruce Parish

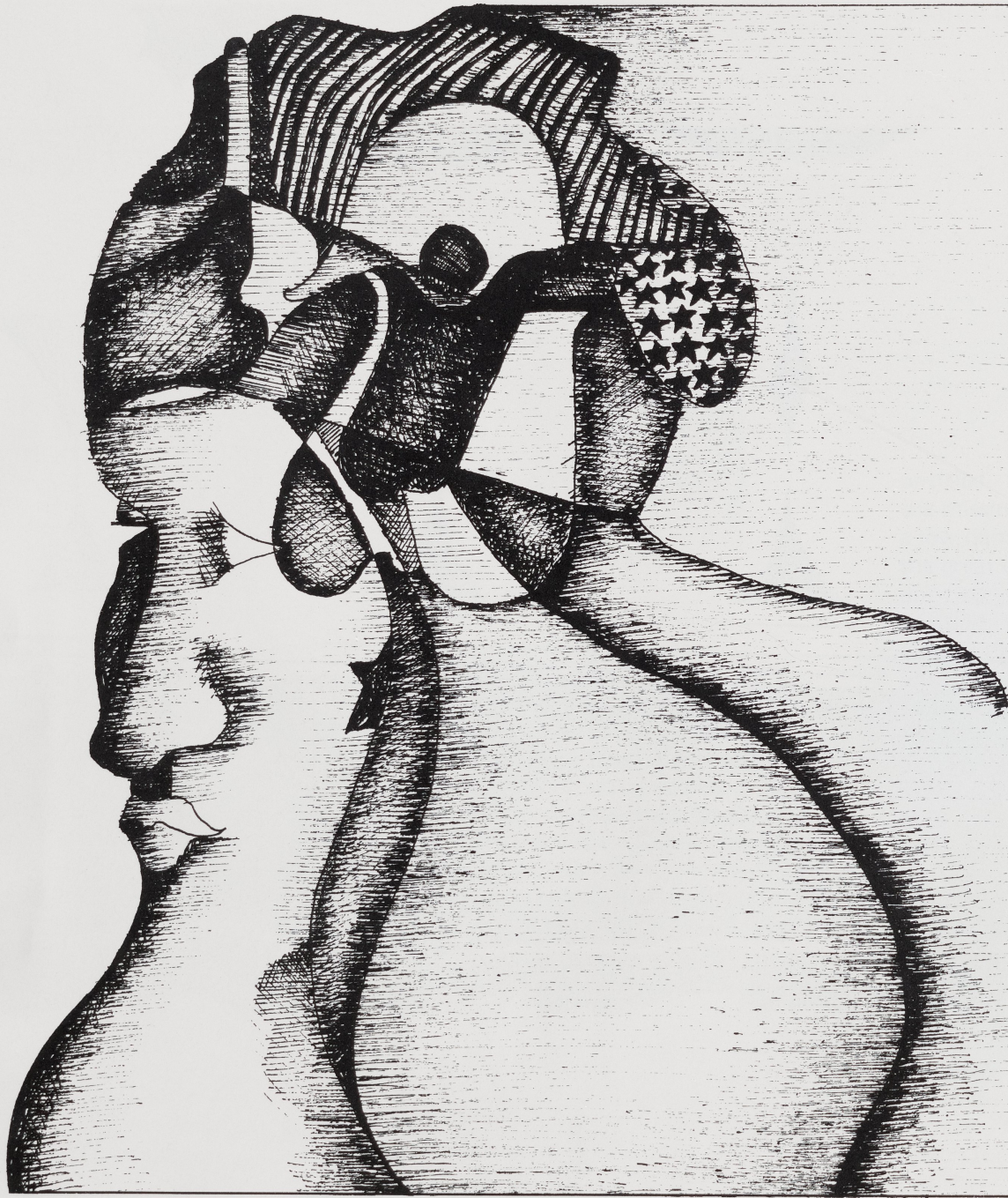
Business Manager David Swink

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Frisbees blown from
Double-Bubbles--
A lost television station
Long gone from the tube,
Tunes in to the channel of my mind--
It's a Sky King Saturday. . .



The Missing Metaphor

Nor for your eyes should I
Look in Orion's belt to find,
Nor feel in Shelly's poetry
The children of your choices.

There were metaphors used in language
To undress da Vinci's marble, or
Made to sculpt unfinished stone
Into some breathing face alone.

Not in syllables will I have
The option of conversion,
Nor in image your form,
But in thinking, I'll make
Smoke look like Popo Clouds,
And dangle the North Star from my ear.

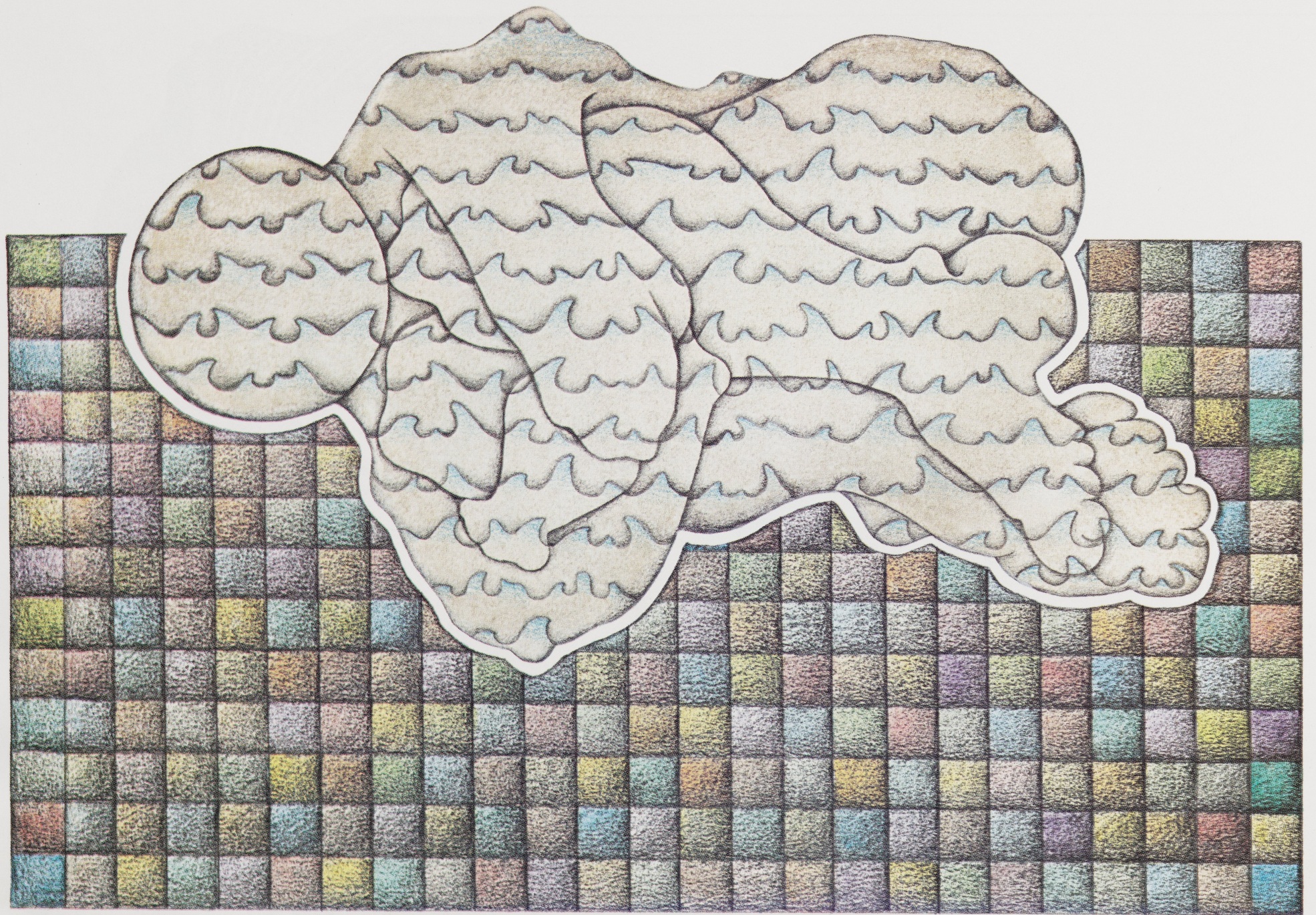
There are constellations in verse now
And forms called poetry
Have been tossed into stellar systems.
Even the methodical pause of verse
Is found in rivers,
And not in rhymes.



A LOW DAMN THING

Loneliness is such a silly thing;
a droopy brown-eyed girl
waiting for a soldier,
a subject for the Nashville cowboys
to sell their wax thrills.

Alone is a low damn thing;
the way Jesus must have felt
when he looked up
and saw no helicopters
coming to save him.



Though all he could see was the vague skyline of Munich, Johnny Drew could feel the hundreds of eyes and a half-dozen spotlights trained on his every move. It had taken a long time, in fact fifteen of Johnny's twenty-nine years had gone into the training for the Olympic Games. Now as he stood above the crowd Johnny recalled the distressing events of the past twelve years that had kept him from competing at an earlier age.

With his toes hanging over the platform, Johnny bent his knees, stretched his arms as if reaching for the stars, and sprang upward and out with the beginning of his performance. His mind now racing, Johnny recalled the first setback in his diving career. At seventeen, Johnny's father had entered the hospital just three days before the statewide diving championship and Johnny had to work through the summer to keep the family on its feet. That year the United States diving team was without Johnny Drew.

As he brought his knees up to his chest and tucked them under his chin, Johnny jerked backward into the makings of a precisioned flip. Recounting the events of eight years ago when Johnny was in collegiate competition, a dismal memory of several crushed vertebrae during NCAA Diving Championships ran chills throughout his body. Again Johnny's claim to fame had been halted by misfortune.

Smoothly straightening his legs and beginning the full twist, a flash of light hit Johnny's face and the memories of a tour of duty in Viet Nam four years ago replaced what might have been the headline story for the Olympic Games in Mexico. If only he had been stationed at some Marine base in the States instead of Khe Sanh; what a name Johnny Drew would be today.

Reaching as far as possible, his body in a relaxed yet rigid state, Johnny numbly recalled missing the bronze metal by a mere three-tenths of a point earlier this evening.

Now, as he prepared for his entry as usual, Johnny saw the lights flash by and thought to himself, Johnny Drew will make the headlines with this perfect dive. Johnny Drew will make the Olympic news at last.

The faces passed rapidly, then the shoes, then black silence.

The next morning in a small town in Maryland Johnny Drew's name and picture were on the front page. Elsewhere in the United States his name was not a headline, but his story was. OLYMPIAN DIES IN SPECTACULAR SUICIDAL DIVE FROM HIS SIXTH FLOOR SUITE.

Laughing she enters the room

redheaded as ever

growing more beautiful

with each passing year

all that time has brought to her

are a few lines

of terror at the edges of her eyes

and a carefree manner that covers

over the crust of lost love

futile lust

the fear of growing old alone

Laughing she enters the room

bright of eye

and sharp of nail



A SEED

"Do you mean silence?"

"No, not exactly."

"Do you mean stillness?"



"No, movement is needed to become still..."

"You must mean emptiness."

"This is close, but only points; for it is also full..."

"Then you mean just 'it'."

"No, but now you are only an 'it' away..."





Silent, undisturbed;

More and it would overflow...

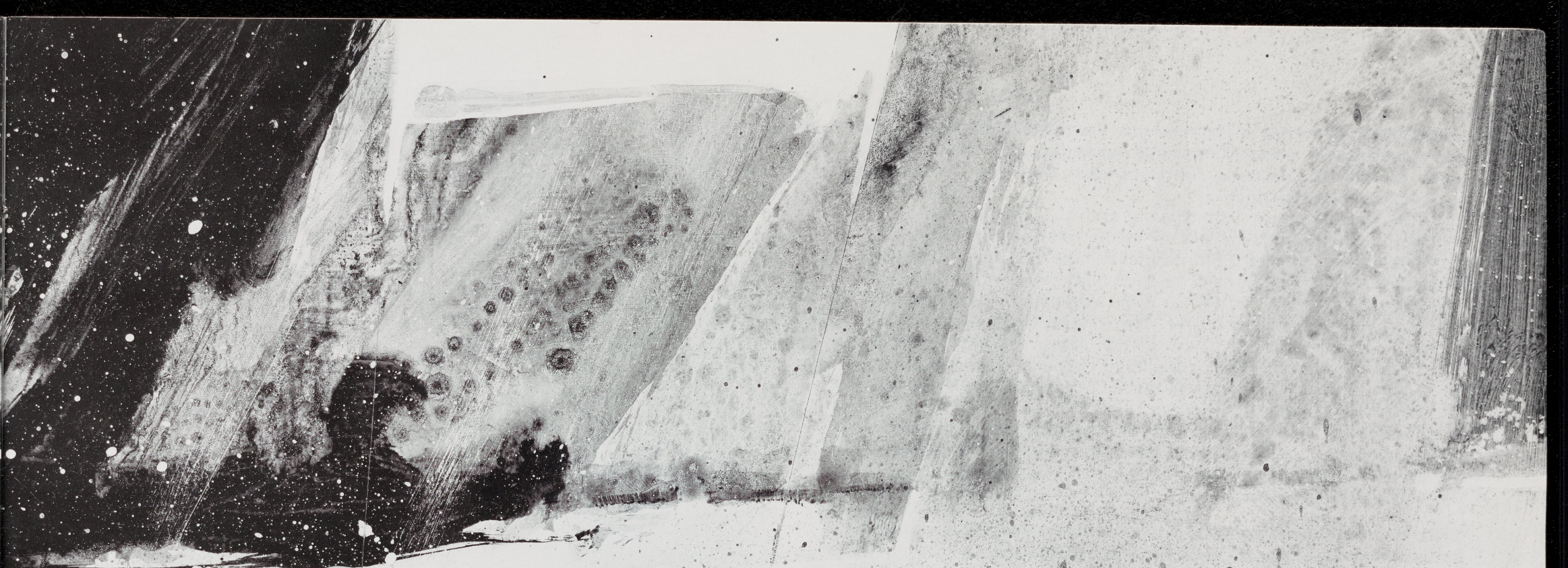


WHEN THE GENTLE MUST RAGE

Unrelentlessly this winter army charges eastward, kamikazee brigades hurtling themselves suicidally upon the windshield, upon the hood upon the long black strip of highway. Tumbling furiously, they come. Swirling white legions pounding, piling, crushing one another as the first crust forms—a thin, white fleece blankets the living and then the dark, dark road and *I know they have won...*

The gas gauge recessed in the darkened dash still leans limply on E, leans absurdly on E, leans where it has absurdly leaned since six o'clock. This is insane. No. Worse. This is ridiculous. A soft green nine-thirty glows from my watch. Three and one-half hours. Three sixty one eighty plus thirty-two men. Two hundred and ten minutes. Suddenly the soft whirring of the heater breathes promises of precious warmth, but only for ten minutes, and I must reluctantly flip it back to Dormancy, although my fingers are still numb, although there is no feeling in my toes at all, although the cold gnaws ravenously at my face and legs. For soon, I know, very soon the battery will be dead and the heat will be dead and the cold, cold night will grip like the clenched fist on an angry God...

Even in the winter darkness I can follow the road as it stretches into the night; narrow, velvety white ribbon, unblemished by trees or brush.



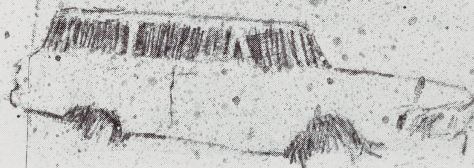
Where it melts into inky night at the edge of my vision is the horizon of existence now. Nothing else counts. Nothing else exists. Perhaps not even cold...

One must have a mind of winter...

The chugachug of the five cars that have passed resonates in my head, buzzing memory-passed without slowing, *Zip zip zip zip zip* past the dancing, waving, pleading frozen me--speeding through existence into nothingness, warm curling hazy nothingness...

I again inventory the universe: four matches, a broken cigarette lighter, a map of Wyoming, a pocket knife, one battered station wagon, SANS fuel, a coat, no blanket, no gloves...a can of lighter fluid. I unfold the pocket knife, the gleaming silver erection rapes the seat upholstery with a tearing, ripping, biting sound. I suspect a similar sound awaiting release in the soft spongy padding of human flesh and the thought warms me with terror as I plunge the upholstery again and again, lifting out spongy squishy handfuls of fibrous stuffing with which to build a fire. But it is the black sky that bleeds and bleeds and bleeds. White blood...

Then suddenly the cold blade pauses its plunging and the only movement in all the cosmos is the heavy, rhythmic pluming out of my frosty breath and the now omnipresent teeth chattering as I sense the



red flashing before I see it. From behind. From out of the mountains. The throbbing red police light like a quickened pulse surges closer, closer, eclipsing the darkness. Heart pounding, throbbing to the same quick glowing blood cadence--

oh God oh God please. I stumble out onto the white highway arms flailing wildly. Snow pelts my face my mouth half-blinding my eyes and the white glare of the headlights eclipses still the flashing red careening wildly through the snow through the thick black night--

he'll stop he's coming for me he's come with warmth pumping warm red blood into the darkness for me. The grinding chunking chugachug sound of tire chains chewing snow as the glaring red and the glaring white thrash against me closer, closer until they are thrashing *down* on me, but the squealing tires lurch to the right banking off the other lane as I lunge vainly to grab to smash to--

stop screaming bellowing stop you filthy bastards stop. But the red throbbing recedes, dimmer and dimmer until it winks out of existence as I sprawl face down in the snow on the cruel, cruel highway, weeping like a little boy lost in the woods...

And now, of course, the battery is dying, the heater faintly moans in its death throes. *But no quarter* I hiss to the treacherous machine. I listen to the final wheezing with fingers and face jammed up against the dashboard vents sucking greedily at the last faint wisps of heat until all is frozen silence, except for the ragged, howling wind ripping like a dagger through the darkness. Harsh gusts slap against the car, rocking it and the horrible screeching of the frozen joints echoes like demonic laughter in the night...

If there was somewhere to walk--somewhere to crawl instead of sitting. I have never conceived of cold this intense. My fingers are numb and stiff even when sheathed under my arms. All sensation has fled from my feet. I alternate between curling into a tight ball and sitting erect thrashing my arms against my chest. Scooping up the excavated seat stuffing, I squirm slowly and stiffly over both seats and into the rear of the station wagon. After shredding the thumb-worn map for kindling and cracking the rear windows for ventilation, I flare a match and ignite a small fire with which to save my life...

for it is my life now. I know it and cannot banish thoughts of freezing to death of freezing to death...

and miles to walk before I sleep--where would the bard have walked his stinking valiant miles in this fix...

I continually feed bits of stuffing into the small pile of smoldering ash, and it is not long before the whole car is filled with gray smoke. The icy blasts howling through the ventilation cracks churn violently

with the choking smoke and I am blind as the gray thickens and wraps around my head like a horrible glove and suddenly I realize, oh yes, I realize that it is hell. So simple--

I am in hell...

The smoldering stuffing generates much more smoke than heat, but any warmth is life now so I chink the windows a bit more and quarry the remaining fibre from both seats until the upholstery sags limply like two butchered carcasses. For what seems like years I squat curled as tightly as possible in the rear of the wagon coaxing bits of stuffing into the growing mound of ash, eyes squinched shut and watering from the smoke. I notice with dull surprise that the tears soon freeze and crust upon my lashes if I do not blot them with a sleeve. My ears feel as though they will snap off at a touch--and then suddenly and simply the stuffing is all gone with nothing left but a precipitate of gray ash. A hollow gnawing cramps at my stomach...

I am afraid oh God yes you'd better believe I'm afraid. It is almost as though I can feel my blood thicken to a cool red syrup within my veins. Oozing--as I sit and sit and sit...

Sleep launches its first assaults; heavy-lidded and drowsy, my head nods, and jerks up, and nods again and of course I know what this means, but it would be so nice to sleep, to drift floating away in the darkness. The agonizing cold is gradually slipping out of me and all I feel is a slow, thick throbbing somewhere, dimly somewhere. Lifting my arm slowly I try to touch my ear, gingerly like a baboon seeking lice--and then it comes to me, the dim understanding that only my eyes can tell me when contact is made, for touch is completely dead in my hands and face. The wires are down. Down. Slowly and stiffly, as in a dream, I shift myself around and rub a heavy sleeve across a smoke and frost scarred window. The world is white, dipped, drenched, drowning, shrouded in white. I glance down and a soft green three a.m. radiates from my wrist and it is as though a voice other than my own announces in my head: *By three a.m. roads in the rural wyoming mountains had become completely impassable.* Snow drifts to a foot along the highway and I suspect that the temperature continues to plunge. *How far below zero I have no idea how far I don't care I can't feel it anyway.* I press closer against the window to peer at the sky, but my milky breath clouds the pane and I would rather stare at the patterns of frost than wipe them away again--and suddenly I know that it is time...

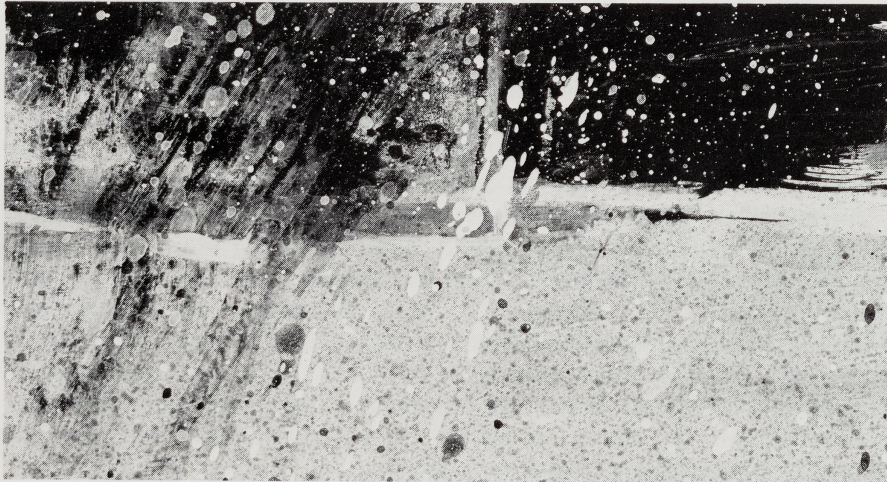
For the listener, who listens in the snow, and, nothing himself, beholds nothing that is not there and the nothing that is them I whisper between blue lips trying to be bitter. I would like to be bitter. But I just don't care, I just don't care. *Does it matter...*

But it does.

Louvered lids slide heavily over eyeballs growing slick as ice. Heavy, so very, very heavy. It would be deliciously easy to slide. Painless, gentle sliding. But for some reason they cannot take me that easily. I can't allow it. I suppose it is man's duty to feign rage at his condition, regardless. Quasi-dignity. Capitulate--surrender to them--to that sublime infinite forever whiteness, and there is only nothingness, and your body rots to silent dust, and your spirit was always silent dust and worse than never being *you never counted*. So quasi-dignity, lad, and make a clenched fist spectacle of defiance. For the gods. Wherever they hide. But no. No. I don't believe any of it. I don't believe anything. But then why--why am I doing this? I don't know. I don't care. Does *this* matter?

No.

From inside my shirt where I have secured it against freezing, I pull out the can of lighter fluid. Chugachug roaring again in my head as I squat cross-legged in the heap of ashes and charred shreds of stuffing fibre. I press the can between my violently trembling palms. The smelly stuff ejaculates heartily as a long thin stream of fluid arches from the nozzle dousing my feet, my legs, my chest, arms and my hair. It trickles in a dozen rivulets down my face into my mouth until I am saturated, stinking of the stuff. Stinking and crying again... *quickly quickly now before it freezes--stiffly methodically laboring to strike the one match saved hoarded against this whiteness--flaring now whiteblueyellow through the tears a last wild glimpse at the intestines of my coffin. The final torch. The great flaming out. I will be warm. But oh God oh dear God. I hate it.*



and the lord said

and the lord said

let the angels be born

and they were born

and given to the earth as hot toys

we played with them

till our tongues became as thick as muscle

and murder came into sight

still morning flowers of the field wept

and in yellow

the angels sacked with us hot for the night

god stalks the road

silent and cold at night

----in the morning he will murder

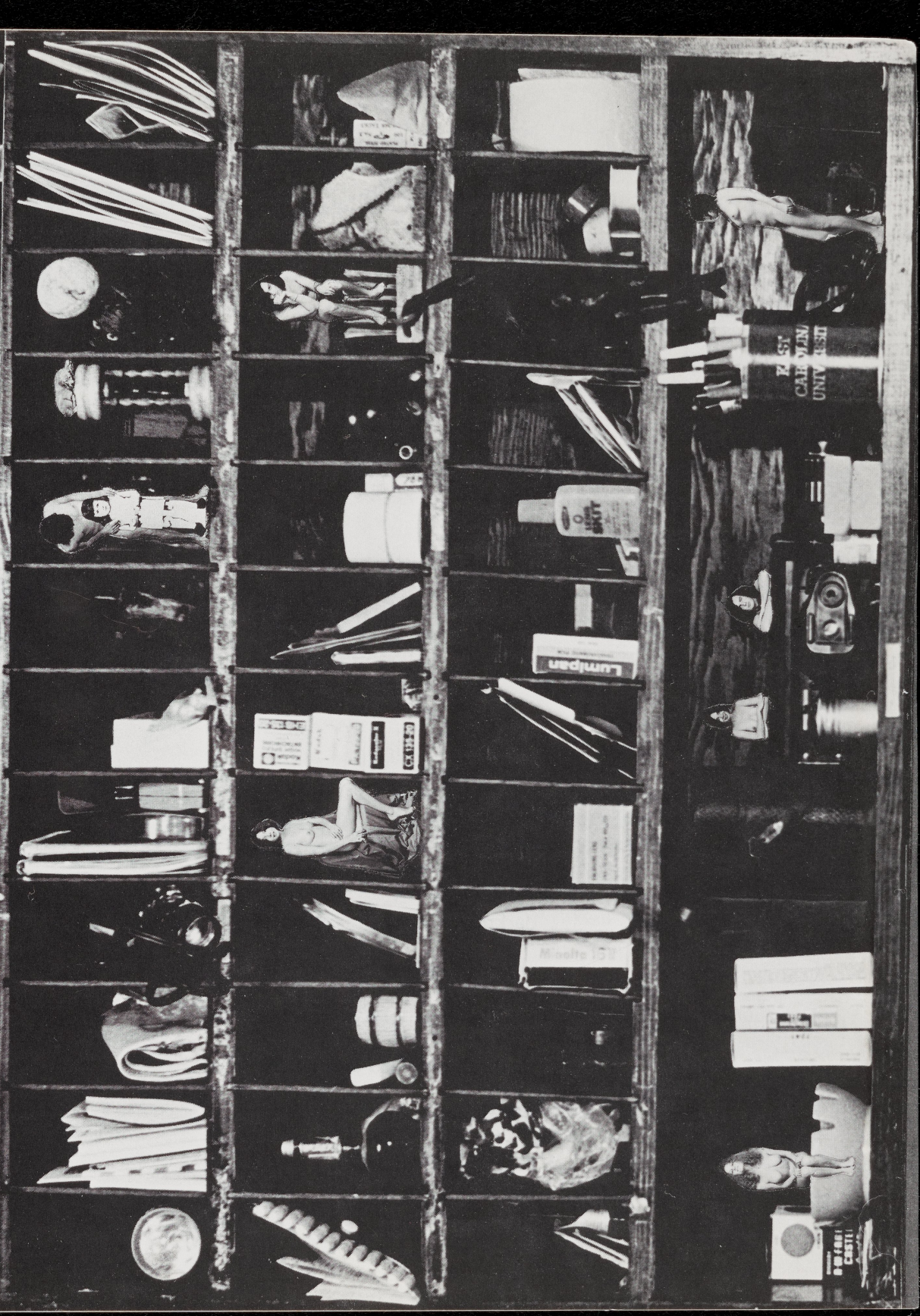


My father was the county's deputy.
Every week, for sixty dollars(less tax),
He manacled men's hands behind their backs
And tossed them to the hungry waiting sea.

Once, too young to fully understand
The need for peace and order in our town
Where older houses tore the new ones down,
I asked him why he wore the silver hand
And kept it cleaned and oiled and at his side.
He smiled in his most now-I've-got-you-way
And said what-if-some-night-nigger-tried-
To-kill-me....There was nothing I could say.

So on we go, my father's ghost and I,
Not knowing by whose silver hand we die.





/acey-zeus-y/

darkness gleams the sacred slue

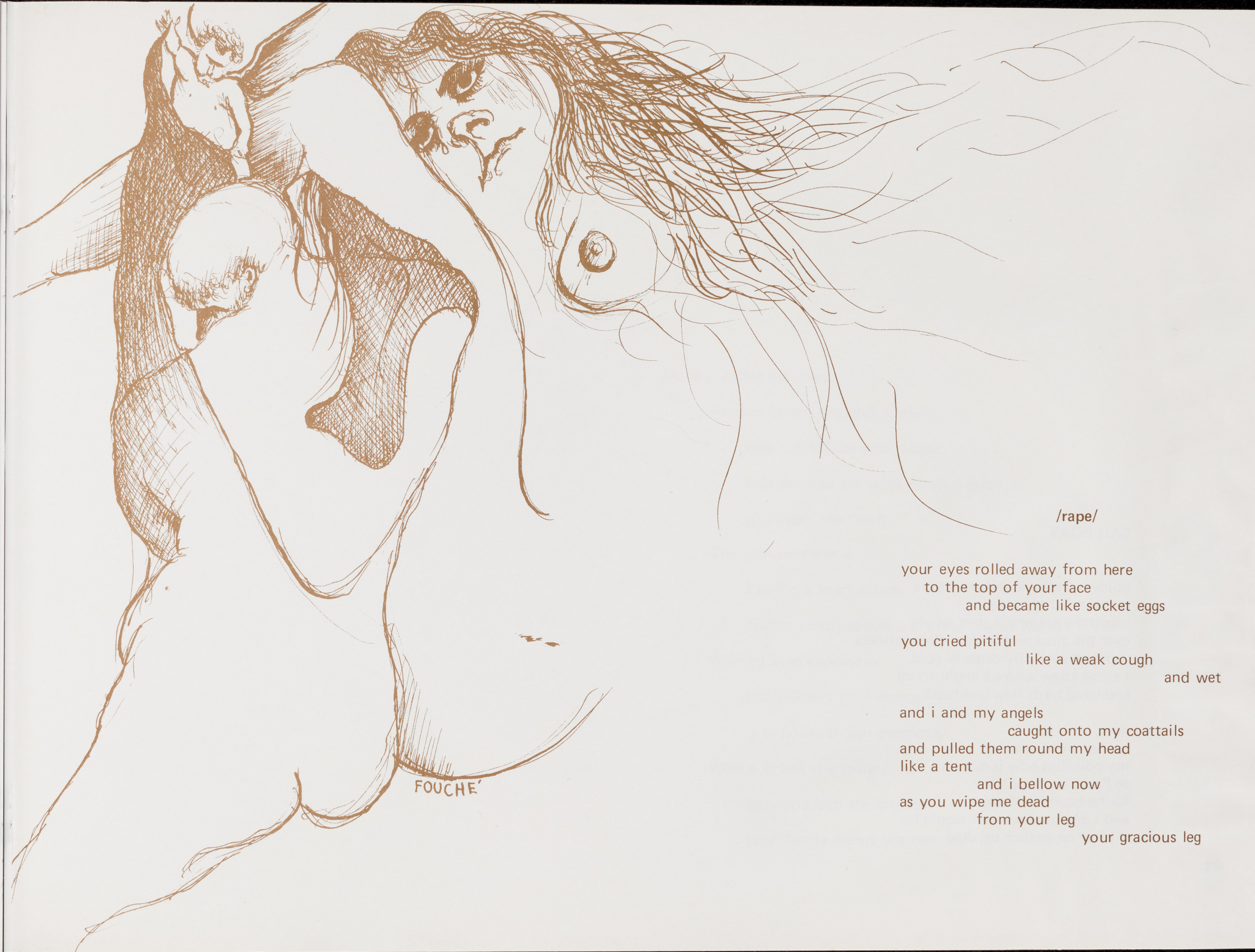
ambrosia sweat

the glistening brown down of thrusting thighs

earthrobes spilled against the sand

the golden gods

balling in the bushes



/rape/

your eyes rolled away from here
to the top of your face
and became like socket eggs

you cried pitiful
like a weak cough
and wet

and i and my angels
caught onto my coattails
and pulled them round my head
like a tent

and i bellow now
as you wipe me dead
from your leg
your gracious leg

SAILBOAT

billow-winds and pillowed skys
surrounded my sea-sails,
breathing me where they would
over the glistening broken-glass vastness.
watched solely by celestial gold,
I alone knew where I might travel
and what birds flew overhead.

now,
beaten and barnacled,
my pointless bow is directed
to Poseidon's applause,
for he bears me despite.
and I dream of where I would be
if I had no anchor to drag . . .

Money, eating our lives

Rushed lunch, dog and drink—

eats out 50c of your wages

eats through the acids of your body,

gives you heartburn

The pain immense—

Fearing a heart attack—

doctor simply chews a big bite out of wages

Worried over expenses—

tranquilizers your dinner

however you overdose.

What's left of the money

spits you into the ground—

your family chews the rest.

The death of Guidolander

the year of wrinkled wars
hadean hound's hungry slime
pigurine yellow of redslain swamps
eyllian rivers rushing
washing the footprints of the soldiers
tumbling in the trembling sea of shadows
the old women brought the young ones
clinging to their withered teats
out of dust's deity
swirling up oceans of smoke
graying the landsflowered walls
where they bring the young ones
in the years of death
the old women breathe their blood
and the lamb is slit sweetly oozing
the death of guidolander
sees no unbled altar
the old ones remember the age of empty fields
the old ones remember the age of eyllian rivers
the death of guidolander
sees no maidenheads
hadean hound's howling slue
the year of wars and waste



*A POEM OF ECSTASY WRITTEN UPON SEEING THE MOON
EAT THREE ASTRONAUTS AFTER BEATING THEM
SEVERELY WITH EMPTY COKE BOTTLES*

How can I hail thee, pale waning virgin moon
With a face as voluptuous and creamy
As the smooth luscious thighs
Of a milky white chocolate Easter Bunny



OLD PARK BENCH

old park bench...

antique thoughts, seldom used but for

conversation little left but

contemplation

on the coming darkness...

but he looks at his watch

Step off the highway
and discover the Side Show
dark and wet fog
surrounding drab tents
the sign says
it costs a dime
to watch the
out of the ordinary
but i think it's all very common
and it costs much more
to watch the Side Show
freaks - with tears in their minds
performing for penny ante rewards
continuing to live
at the sound of a dime
most lives worship
the sound of the dime
most minds = tear laden
are willing to perform

and it costs much more
to watch the Side Show



the laugh

the two sat within the wood
their hands pulled up tight
around honey-ripe sweet mead
the one slowly slung his head
up and back
his wet red mouth jacked open
and white teeth dripping brew
in candle fire
and roared with laughter

it fell back again to a red shirt
as a seige of thought returned.
came home
blistering his wild head
with sadness

Between leaves i'll make a sandwich
with me
and sleep and sleep
like leaves on ice
like wrapped cocoons on ice hung trees.

NUMBER 70

crush me as i ferment
(though i call it aging)
seal the aluminum
around me
you've forgotten me
but i'm not rusting in the grass

Search for Anything

SCENE: The story opens in Emily Dickinson's small sitting room. It is dark. What light there is, is coming from a small lamp beside a wing back chair stage right. Reverend Charles Wadsworth is sitting on a small Victorian couch stage left, staring straight ahead of him. There is only the ticking of a grandfather clock.

After a few minutes Emily floats in. She petite, plain, around thirty. Her reddish brown hair is pulled tightly away from her face. Her eyes lack any kind of color. She is dressed in a ghostly white gown with plain lines. She sits in the highback chair next to the bay window stage right.

(organ music is playing a tune of great drama)

CHARLES: A strange restless spirit brought me. (sharp notes from organ) I fail to understand this force that draws me to you. My world does not permit this, yet here I am. (he stands abruptly and strides to the bay window)

EMILY: (rising to meet him, with much sympathy in her voice) Charles, it is the power of nature that has magnetized us. We have no choice but to be drawn to each other. Realize this, for it will be no other way.

CHARLES: (he turns to her) But do you not understand, Emily? It is morally wrong for us to communicate. I am a minister that never even visits a parishioner much less correspond with another woman. I am married, that can not be changed. All things considered, I am a fool for being here.

EMILY: (Emily crosses the room and throws her arms to the ceiling) Morally right? What are morals? What purpose do they serve? Have no concern for morals, Charles, live by your heart. Life is over on this earth, and goes on forever in heaven. What good are morals here on earth when they dissolve themselves in death. Our purpose, as you yourself have told me is to achieve immortality. That can truly be, once nature has run its course. In that immortality our love will transcend. As long as we love each other now and believe that we shall meet again in the hereafter, it does not matter what morals are. They will carry no consequence. So you are dealing with trivia, something that does not even have merit.

CHARLES: (Resumes his original position at the window) How easy you say those words. I honestly believe what you tell me for my ideas are the same, but Emily, it is not so simple for me. I live outside a little sitting room. (organ music rises) I face the world day after day. (music continues to build) It is up to me to live by the standards of society. You, you can speak with ease... sitting in this room day in and out. Oh, if you only knew that the world does not live off ideas and theories. They do not care for your ideas. (music at climax) You must accept that. (fades out)



EMILY: (organ plays a soothing love song) Ah yes, but we are not like the rest of the world. We are special people. Why must we live by their ideas? That we love each other is enough. (slight sound of the sexton singing in the background and stops)

CHARLES: Emily, you are so blind. How can I make you understand the way life on the outside really is? There is only one solution to our affair. (organ music with a hint of foreshadowing) I cannot continue in this manner. I have decided to give up my parish in Philadelphia and move out west. That way of life will be simpler for us both. We may correspond by letter from time to time, but there will be no way for me to return to you here at Amherst. (blast from the organ. Emily turns and stares at him in utter disbelief as smoke pours out of her ears)

WHAT WILL EMILY SAY? HOW WILL SHE REACT TO THE NEWS FROM WADSWORTH? WILL SHE FALL ON THE FLOOR AND THROW A TANTRUM, OR WILL SHE OPEN THE DOOR FOR HIM AND LET HIM GO?

EMILY: Charles you can't mean...(organ music hits melodramatic chord)

CHARLES: Yes, Emily, I'm afraid I do.

EMILY: No, I refuse to believe that you are giving up our affair, the only thing in life I have to cling to. How can you be so cruel? (she breaks into sobbing state)

CHARLES: This is the only way I can be fair to you. You must believe that, Emily, you must.

EMILY: You heartless male chauvinist pig! All of you are alike... You toy with my affections and then walk out the door, leaving me to nothing but my pen and pencil set, three broken crayolas, and a bird that can't even sing. "Morning Dove." Oh, how can you do this to me?

CHARLES: Emily, (very serious manner) when you behave like a child, it's all too easy to walk out on you. I must leave now.

EMILY: (helpless and disgusted manner) Oh, how could I ever think of you as a man I love? You're so masculine! Go now and leave me to my loneliness...

MUSIC IS AT AN ALL TIME HIGH, PLAYING COMPELLING STRANDS OF SUSPENSEFUL MUSIC. CHARLES OPENS THE DOOR, STEPS THROUGH THE THRESHOLD, TURNS TO SEE EMILY AGAIN. SEEING HER AS A CHILDLIKE FIGURE, HE SHAKES HIS HEAD, TURNS, AND STORMS AWAY. EMILY RUNS TO THE DOOR AFTER HIM, STAMPS HER FOOT, AND MUTTERS UNDER HER BREATH IN TONES DENOTING ONE GOING MAD.

EMILY: (Crying to herself) I knew things would never work out between us. It was too much to hope for. All my dreams are shattered in this world. But maybe...just maybe...yes...things will be different in the hereafter. Charles, you are doomed to be mine. You shall see. (She stands at the window gazing wildly after him as he rides off into the sunset. The music is playing a stormy song.)

ALL OF A SUDDEN THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN, ORGAN BLAST. EMILY TURNS TO FIND HER SISTER, VINNIE, RUNNING MADLY AT HER.

VINNIE: Emily, why was he here? You know I can't stand it when he comes. Do you not care for my feelings? I refuse to believe that you could be so inconsiderate.
EMILY: But Vinnie, it isn't as it seems.
VINNIE: But the fact is that he was here, and that you did see him. Admit it!
EMILY: All right, Vinnie, he was here and I did talk to him. But you don't know what...
VINNIE: Enough! Enough said! You have worn my patience thin! I will not stand for your treatment any longer! I am leaving you to be stuck in your room forever! (organ music portrays Emily's shock)

VINNIE LEAVES THE ROOM IN A HUFF IT IS QUITE EVIDENT THAT HER FEELINGS HAVE BEEN HURT. EMILY STANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF HER ROOM WITH A DUMFOUNDED LOOK ON HER FACE. WHAT WILL SHE DO NOW?

EMILY: What will I do now? My lover and tutor has betrayed me, and even my sister has left me to decay in my sitting room. How hateful the world is. How I wish I could hurt the world as much as it has hurt me. Someday I will have the things that I can never have on this world. I'll show them all!

EMILY IS BEGINNING TO GET WILDER AND WILDER. ORGAN MUSIC PROCEEDS IN THE SAME MANNER. FIRE IS RAGING FROM HER EYES. SHE CAN HARDLY CONTROL HERSELF' IT IS QUITE EVIDENT THAT EMILY HAS THOUGHTS OF SOME DEVILISH PLOT TO SEEK REVENGE ON CHARLES AND VINNIE. SHE IS THINKING PENSIVELY. THE SEXTON SINGS INNOCENTLY AND DRAWS HER ATTENTION.

EMILY: Sing on you innocent creature. You too are against me. I can tell it in your song. I'll not stand for it! (Emily sits down) I know what I should do...you will be a present for my devoted sister. I shall make a sexton pie! How delightful! (hideous laugh)

AS ORGAN MUSIC PLAYS, EMILY OPENS THE BIRD CAGE, REACHES IN, CHOKES THE BIRD TO DEATH. THE SEXTON SHRIEKED A BIT AND THEN ITS SWEET VOICE FADES OUT COMPLETELY. SHE PULLS OUT FEATHERS ONE BY ONE. SHE THROWS THE REMAINS IN A COOKING POT. SHE HAS A KITCHENETTE IN HER SITTING ROOM. ORGAN MUSIC FADES.

EMILY: Ah, but this will not suffice. There must be more that I can do. (paces across the room) I must prepare for the next life. Charles, you shall be mine – our marriage shall come to be! You may not believe it now, but you will love me...you will! How shall I prepare?

EMILY THINKS FOR A MOMENT. ORGAN MUSIC IS BUILDING. SHE STRIKES UPON AN IDEA. MUSIC CRESCENDOS AND THEN STOPS.

EMILY: I know; I'll plan our "heavenly" wedding. (hatred burning in her eyes) Oh Charles, I wish it did not have to be this way. How cruel you are to me. Our relationship will never be the same.

EMILY LOOKS OUT THE WINDOW AND SEES CHILDREN RUNNING IN THE YARD' RUSHING TO HER CABINET, SHE PULLS OUT A BATCH OF COOKIES WITH POISON IN THEM.

EMILY: (a wild look comes to her eyes) I've been waiting to use these cookies for a long time on those little brats!

LEANING OUT THE WINDOW SHE SHOUTS.

EMILY: Children, children... are you hungry? Would you like some cookies?

VOICES: Oh yes, yes!!

EMILY: I'll give you this fresh batch of cookies if you'll run to Bertha's Bakery and buy me a wedding cake. Listen carefully now...I want the figures of a bride, groom and minister on the top of the cake. Do not forget the minister --- on pain of death! (organ music, quick fade)

VOICES: We won't forget, we promise!

EMILY LOWERS THE TRAY OF POISONED COOKIES TO THE CHILDREN. THEY GRAB FOR THEM AND RUN MERRILY TO THE BAKERY. MEANWHILE. BACK IN THE SITTING ROOM, EMILY IS RUMMAGING THROUGH HER CLOSET.

EMILY: I know it's in here somewhere. I know that dress from my bolder days is in this closet. Ah yes, here it is. I knew it would come in handy again!

EMILY PULLS OUT A SLEEK LOOKING BLOOD RED DRESS WITH SEQUINS PLASTERED ON IT. ORGAN PLAYS A RATHER SUGGESTIVE TUNE. SHE RIPS OFF THE PLAIN WHITE GOWN AND STUFFS IT DOWN THE SINK. MUSIC FADES.

EMILY: (with liberated feeling) How good to be out of that drab color! Freedom at last! Perhaps this dress can foreshadow a different "tint" to my future relationship with Charles.

SHE LOOSENS HER HAIR AND LETS IT DRAPE OVER HER SHOULDERS. SHE IS NOT SO PLAIN AS BEFORE. BUT IS FAR FROM BEING THE "BELLE OF THE BALL" FIGURE. SHE SEES THE CHILDREN APPROACHING VERY SLOWLY. SOME ARE COUGHING, SOME ARE DOUBLED OVER, A FEW DROP TO THE GROUND.

CHILD: (coughing, strained voice) Hey White Nun, here's the cake. (places it on the tray to raise it) Thanks for the cookies. They were...(he coughs profusely and then falls dead.)

ORGAN MUSIC PORTRAYING GREAT SHOCK.

EMILY: Oh, he seems ill. What a shame. (evil chuckle)

SHE PLACES THE CAKE ON THE TABLE AND STARES HUNGRILY AT THE FIGURES ON TOP OF IT.

EMILY: Oh life, if you only knew how cruel you have been! I hope there is more to look forward to in death. (She throws the groom figure out the window.) As for you, Charles— (organ music is at its highest point as she bites off the head of the minister figure.) I'll meet you in Hell!

SHE STRETCHES HER ARMS UP TO THE SKY. WITH THE STRANGE APPEARANCE OF VICTORY ON HER FACE, OUR EPISODE IS LEFT WITH THESE QUESTIONS:

WILL WADSWORTH EVER RETURN?
WILL THE CHILDREN MAKE IT TO THE HOSPITAL ON TIME?
WILL VINNIE EVER FIND HAPPINESS WITH ANOTHER WOMAN, OR WILL
SHE TAKE REVENGE ON EMILY BY PUBLISHING HER POETRY?

STAY TUNED FOR THE NEXT EXCITING EPISODE OF "SEARCH FOR ANYTHING"

ORGAN MUSIC FADES OUT.



Cold steel bodies
stifly standing in identical rows
staring blankly.
Always taking and never giving
but that which is
not theirs to give;
Molded in the image of their makers.

CREDITS

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|-------------------|-----------------|
| Cover | Glenn Lewis |
| Staff Photo | Glenn Lewis |
| page 3 | Jeff McGinnis |
| page 4 | Dale Verzaal |
| page 6 | Dale Verzaal |
| page 10 | David Holdefer |
| page 11 | David Holdefer |
| page 12 | Paul Harcharik |
| page 18 | Wallace Fouche' |
| Centerfold | Tom Haines |
| page 23 | Wallace Fouche' |
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| page 31 | Charles Griffin |
| page 35 | Glenn Lewis |
| Back Cover | Glenn Lewis |

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