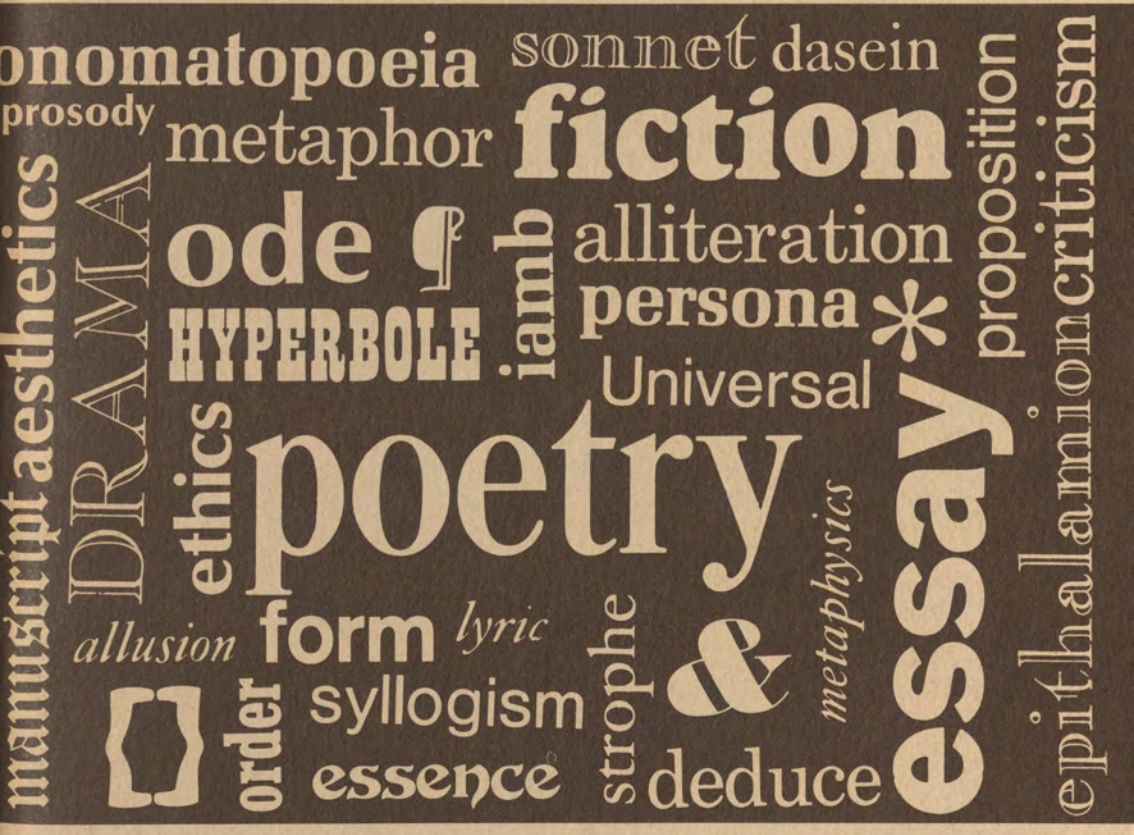
genesis spring '76



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Bicentennial Essay

Fiction

Poetry

 GENESIS is published in the spring and fall of each year by the English Club-Sigma Tau Delta and the Philosophy Club-Phi Sigma Tau, Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis. Content is devoted to creative writing in the areas of fiction, essay, and poetry. Correspondence pertaining to business or editorial matters should be addressed to GENESIS, Student Services Office, Cavanaugh Hall, 925 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46202. Publication of GENESIS is made possible through a grant from the School of Liberal Arts. A grant from Mr. Chris F. Nix has made possible additional pages for this issue.

Dedication
to
Professor Rebecca E. Pitts

A teacher who promotes creativity in her students;
who not only encourages excellence but also champions its
recognition and reward.

It was her belief that IUPUI should have a publication in which beginning writers could see their own creative works in print. Through her inspiration and active assistance, GENESIS came into being and has thrived—a student journal—edited and produced by students, publishing the writings of students, that the students of IUPUI can read and enjoy.

The English Club began as an association of enthusiastic literature students from one of Miss Pitts' seminars. Miss Pitts was the primary agent in establishing at IUPUI a chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, National English Honor Society. She also assembled a group of women students who excelled in scholarship and activities to found Accolade, Senior Women's Honorary. All of these organizations have continued with her support as sponsor to the present day.

For her inestimable contributions to us, her students, on the occasion of her retirement from the university, the editorial staff dedicates this issue of GENESIS to our mentor, Rebecca E. Pitts, with affection and gratitude.

Indiana National Bank Prize
GENESIS Bicentennial Essay Competition

The Maculate Nation: Walker Percy and the Fiction of America

Ted Michael McQuade

Ted Michael McQuade, 21, is a senior with a double major in English and Religious Studies. He is planning to attend graduate school in Religion and Literature. His prize-winning essay was written for a course in Religious Studies taught by Dr. Rowland A. Sherrill. It is his first published work.

In this year of America's bicentennial, when the nation is celebrating its origins and attempting to revitalize the vision held by its founders, it is appropriate, I think, that we turn our attention to Walker Percy's novel, *Love in the Ruins,* for in this book Percy deals with the major problem America now faces: after such disasters as Watergate and Viet Nam, rising inflation and joblessness, and continuing discrimination of all types, how should the nation conceive of itself? The events of the sixties and early seventies called radically into question America's longstanding myths of special providence and manifest destiny, and we are now casting about for a new fiction. The currently widespread mood of political and cultural conservatism, typified by Gerald Ford's "new realism," is one way to reimagine our purposes, but it concedes only that we have gone in the wrong direction in our efforts to achieve the goals set up by the myths—those of leading the world along new paths to moral and material prosperity; in short, it is not the myth but our approach to it that is faulty. Percy, on the other hand, feels that the myths completely fail to make sense of our world. We now need, or have needed all along, a fiction which does away with America's sense of inhabiting a special place in history, because, as the repeated frustration of our "errand into the wilderness" should have shown us by now, the original fiction has a flaw in it. Percy's concern in this novel is to present a non-schismatic way of thinking about time which discredits America's imagination of itself as transcending, or at least leading, the course of ordinary history and which, instead, places America firmly in the realm of quotidian experience.

This paper, then, is primarily concerned with fictions, with the stories people create in order to make sense of their world. One of the paradigmatic ways men attempt this sense-making task is to imagine themselves in relation to the end of the world, for a sure knowledge of the end, together with a firm location of the genesis, gives the present new meaning and direction. As Frank Kermode says,

> men, like poets, rush 'into the middest,' *in medias res,* when they are born; they also die *in mediis rebus*, and to make sense of their span they need fictive concords with origins and ends, such as give meaning to lives and to poems. [1]

The protagonist of Percy's novel, Dr. Thomas More, is motivated by the conviction that the end of the world will take place in a matter of hours. He assumes, as I think will become evident, an intermediate role similar to America's, insofar as both want to imagine themselves as the one agent which can redeem the world. The critical difference is that when the crisis passes and leaves the world essentially unchanged, More has the capacity to reimagine his role in history. It will be my effort here to detail this change in More's fiction and to show that Percy's purpose in creating this change is, first, to advance the notion that history, despite the attempts of men to conceive of it as epochal or to structure it around crises, is continually and uniformly supported by God and, second, that only with the consequent realization that the end is not really imminent or dependent upon human action can man become human enough to live properly in this world. These ideas have, as I think Percy intended, severe but nevertheless instructive repercussions for America as it moves toward the twenty-first century.

* * * * *

As I have already indicated, Thomas More holds the belief that a violent apocalypse is imminent. He has seen that "our beloved old U.S.A. is in a bad way" [2] and has concluded that it failed in its mission to establish, in the words of John Winthrop, a city upon a hill and a model of Christian charity and that the rest of the world is doomed with the fall of this savior nation. His diagnosis of the problem, as a psychiatrist more concerned with matters of the soul than of the mind, is that

> the world is broken, sundered, busted down the middle, self ripped from self and man pasted back together as mythical monster, half angel, half beast, but no man. Even now I can diagnose and shall one day cure: cure the new plague, the modern Black Death, the current hermaphroditism of the spirit, namely: More's syndrome, or: chronic angelism-bestialism that rives soul from body and sets it orbiting the great world as the spirit of abstraction...(360)

A condition of modern life, "hermaphroditism of the spirit" poses, on July 4, 1983, a particular danger for America, because, as More believes, an unprecedented fallout of "Heavy Sodium" is about to take place, the effect of which will be "psychic rather than physical"; that is, the "evil particles" will "inflame and worsen the secret ills of the spirit," so that any condition to which a man tends will be violently exaggerated(5). Thus, the tensions and dualisms which already exist will be intensified, and Americans will "turn upon themselves like scorpions in a bottle"(54).

More sees it as his task to prevent this from happening; he thinks he can

> save the terrible God-blessed Americans from themselves! With my invention! Listen to me. Don't give up. It is not too late. You are still the last hope. There is no one else. Bad as we are, there is no one else.(55)

He senses the coming catastrophe, and he wants to avert it by first diagnosing and then curing, with the proper dosage of Heavy Sodium from his "lapsometer," the separation of an individual's self:

> Suppose—! Suppose I could hit on the right dosage and weld the broken self whole! What if man could reenter paradise, so to speak, and live there both as man and spirit, whole and intact man-spirit, as solid flesh as a speckled trout, a dabbled thing, yet aware of itself as a self!(35)

If he can make men whole again, the catastrophe will not materialize and Christendom will be saved.

More's diagnosis of the problem and his as yet unachieved cure rely upon an anthropology in which man, ideally, is not "half human, half beast" but *fully* human or spiritual at the same time that he is *fully* bestial or fleshly. In other words, the two natures which are now but imperfectly "pasted back together" in something less than their full proportions should coexist, in their entireties, distinct but united in one being. It is a notion of man analogous to the Chalcedonian christology of Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria, insofar as both More and the Creed of Chalcedon, arrived at in 451, profess a belief in a *communicatio idiomatum* in which

> there are two natures and yet a unity. The one is not changed into the other, nor are the two confused with each other....Each nature preserves its attributes. 3

Although the Creed of Chalcedon and the ensuing Catholic orthodoxy attribute this mysterious union only to the Christ, of

course, and although I use this comparison only for illustration, More, himself Catholic, thinks that man, too, should ideally be the uncompromising union of the wholly flesh and the wholly spirit, the "whole and intact man-spirit."

With this imagination of the end and its cause informing More's role in the "middest," he begins to look saintly, even Christ-like, not in the sense that he in fact possesses the divine-human nature of Christ, but in the sense that his assumed role is soteriological. More wants to reconcile the old dualisms, to heal the wound which sunders body and soul, to put empirical science and metaphysics into a relationship which works for man, to sooth the split between "Knothead" and "Left," black and white. Yet he does not pretend to be a flawless reconciler, for the times demand that the new Christ be subject to the infirmities of postlapsarian man in order to have any effectiveness. The old Christ and his immaculate disciples, like More's own ancestor, Sir Thomas More, failed, and now the time is ripe for the redeemer who is sinful but aware of his sinfulness and who, by that very awareness, is truly human. More's numerous attempts, either with his lapsometer or by therapy, to enable men to live with themselves evidence this desperate role, and at one point he even explicitly imagines himself as the new Christ. He is drinking with a black and a white who have only distrust and hate for each other, and he is developing the hives he always gets when drinking:

> In the dark mirror there is a dim hollow-eyed Spanish Christ. The pox is spreading on his face. Vacuoles are opening in his chest. It is the new Christ, the spotted Christ, the maculate Christ, the sinful Christ. The old Christ died for our sins and it didn't work, we were not reconciled. The new Christ shall reconcile man with his sins. The new Christ lies drunk in a ditch. Victor Charles and Leroy Ledbetter pass by and see him. "Victor, do you love me?" "Sho, Doc." "Leroy, do you love me?" "Cut it out, Tom, you know better than to ask that." "Then y'all help me." "O.K., Doc." They laugh and pick up the new Christ, making a fireman's carry, joining four hands. They love the new Christ and so they love each other.(145)

I have briefly mentioned Sir Thomas More as Dr. Thomas More's ancestor, but aside from that rather casual biological relationship there is an antithesis of spirit which shows the differing imaginations of what will suffice to make sense of an epoch. To the persecuted Englishman, sanctity was all, for it was his faith which his historical situation called into question. The modern Thomas More, however, wants only to be human, because the riven contemporary world challenges his very humanity. More recognizes his kinship with the family saint and

fixes his own sense of origin upon him, but he also recognizes that the demands of his world force him to become the polar opposite of Sir Thomas More:

> Why can't I follow More's example, love myself less, God and my fellowman more, and leave whiskey and women alone?...My life is a longing, longings for women, for the Nobel Prize, for the hot bosky bite of bourbon whiskey, and other great heart-wrenching longings that have no name. Sir Thomas was right, of course, and I am wrong. But on the other hand these are peculiar times.... (22-3)

The point is, I think, that although these longings are, for the most part, decadent, they are nevertheless a part of the "maculate Christ" which More sees as necessary to the age, for only when man accepts his fleshly infirmities and places them alongside his spiritual strengths can he be fully human. The most pressing need of the modern world is not to transcend the human condition, as Sir Thomas More did, but first to *become* human.

To recount what I have said about More's response to his world, he sees the manifold dualisms around him peaking in an imminent catastrophe which can only be averted by the reclamation of man's true nature, the *communicatio idiomatum* of flesh and spirit. This fiction of the end gives direction to More's life by creating in him, the physician-metaphysician, a sense of his role as the new reconciler, the new Christ whose purpose is not to reconcile man with God but to reunite man with himself.

Armed with this imagination of the world and his own role in it, More is prepared to face and, if not to divert, at least to survive the end of the world; but his expectations go unrealized when the apocalypse fails to take place. The crisis which gave meaning to his life passes almost unnoticed; in fact, More sleeps through it. When he wakes, the "Bantus" have "faded away"(345), and his secretary, Ellen Oglethorpe, tells him that

> there was no real trouble. All the trouble was caused by a few outsiders and some hopped-up swamp rats. Most people here, white and black, like things the way they are.(346)

The end of the world turns out to be only a minor disturbance in Paradise, Louisiana, and with the fading of the crisis the meaning of More's life fades, too.

However, in the epilogue to More's narrative, written five years later, he appears to lead anything but a meaningless or unsatisfactory life. On the contrary, he feels that he has been graced; he can now say, "I feel like God's spoiled child" (361). What has happened to cause this change is that More confronts,

after the frustration of his apocalyptic visions, unexpected events which point to a new imagination of time and his role in it, so that he does, finally, create a fiction which gives meaning to his life, but one which necessarily takes a different form than that of the original. I will now examine this change in More, because it is here in the *peripeteia,* or the "falsification of expectation, so that the end comes as expected but not in the manner expected," [4] that Percy most forcefully shows us what he thinks is necessary to make sense of our world.

Between the time that Ellen tells him of the disappointing nature of his "catastrophe" and the immense sense of well-being that he has in the epilogue, there is a period of transition in which More must decide, in light of the fact that he neither died nor saved the world, what his new life will look like. The thought of returning to his "useless" old life repulses him, but neither can he accept the dropouts' offer and go with them to Bayou Pontchatalawa to practice their peculiar form of innocence. The blacks, too, want to separate, to "take what we need, destroy what we don't, and live in peace and brotherhood"(352), and the whites have never stopped labelling and battling amongst themselves. In other words, the world has not changed; arbitrary coalitions of men still war against others while ignoring the central problem of man's riven self. And then, at the moment in which he most despairs of life in this kind of a world, two things happen which orient his vision not, as before, toward the end but toward his origins in Sir Thomas More and the Catholic sanctity he represents. First, he remembers his dying daughter's question, "Papa, have you lost your faith?" (352). Although he replied, at the time, that he had not, he now doubts his answer, because he recalls his reasons for not taking Samantha to Lourdes for a chance to be healed. He was reluctant to ask God for such a miracle, because suppose "God says yes, very well. How do you live the rest of your life?" (354). If, after a miracle, he had not dedicated his life to God, he would have committed, as Samantha told him,

> the sin against grace. If God gives you the grace to believe in him and love him and you refuse, the sin will not be forgiven you.(353)

Immediately after the memory of Samantha causes him to ponder his faith, he finds himself in a situation which similarly tests it. Art Immelman, who has remained a mysterious figure throughout the novel and whom More later accuses of "diabolical abuse"(367), comes, in Mephistophelian fashion, to take Ellen and More to "Copenhagen" by appealing to their "musical-erotic" senses. As Kierkegaard taught us in *Either/Or,* music and sex are largely means of simple aesthetic or sensual pleasure and, as such, work at odds with what he calls the "religious" mode of being, which seeks only a reconciliation with God.[5] It is just this conflict between the aesthetic and the religious which Immelman and More enact, and Immelman, attempting to capitalize on the love of the

sensual which More has long displayed, is defeated by More's sudden and rather unprecedented resort to piety:

> "Don't touch her!" I cry, but I can't seem to move. I close my eyes. *Sir Thomas More, Kinsman, saint, best dearest merriest of Englishmen, pray for us and drive this son of a bitch hence.*
>
> I open my eyes. Art is turning slowly away, wheeling as if in slow motion, a dazed hurt look through his eyes as if he had been struck across the face.(355)

With this almost involuntary response to evil, More finally succeeds, I submit, in giving a definitive significance to his life, for he dared to ask God—through Sir Thomas—for a miracle, and God gave it. He has been given "the grace to believe in him and love him," and, as the epilogue bears out, he does not deny that gift.

Five years after the "fiasco" of July 4, 1983, More is a changed man. Because he was rescued from the devil by God and Sir Thomas More and was given his life when all else pointed to the end of the world, he no longer lives anxiously and desperately under the shadow of apocalypse; he realizes, instead, that "in every age there is the temptation to see signs of the end"(365) and, consequently, that the ordering of time and the salvation of the world are not his proper tasks. Rather than structuring his life toward an imagined end, he now builds it upon the assurance that God warrants the human enterprise, even in its present fallen state, and upon the newly gained conviction that his own efforts are not critical to the maintenance of the world. He no longer needs the *kairotic* moment before apocalypse to make sense of his life but, rather, can live and find meaning in *chronos*, in ordinary history, because God gave him a second chance to believe. Grace does not dictate to More the otherwordly orientation of his saintly ancestor; instead, it gives him a sense of the fulness of history and the richness of this world. In other words, More's faith, his belief in a supportive God, frees him from any crucial role in history and turns his energies toward himself and the cultivation of his humanity. He is now, by the grace of God, the "whole and intact man-spirit" he advocated for the rest of the world. As a sign of this, he once again attends Mass, because, as in the days before his first wife died, it makes him fully human; he knew then, as now,

> that it took religion to save me from the spirit world, from orbiting the earth like Lucifer and the angels, that it took nothing less than...eating Christ himself to make me mortal man again and let me inhabit my own flesh and love her in the morning.(241-2)

For More, then, grace, or the second chance, causes an holistic imagination of time which enables him to live in the postlapsarian world as mortal man. His own feelings about what has happened to him lie in these sentences:

> Strange: I am older, yet there seems to be more time, time for watching and waiting and thinking and working. All any man needs is time and desire and the sense of his own sovereignty.(360)

* * * * *

This novel indicates many things--catastrophe as central to becoming human, the shift in the Catholic novel to the "insider God," [6] a Kierkegaardian transition from the aesthetic to the religious mode of being— but central to these and other interpretations is Percy's belief that history is Christianly comic, that there is always the possibility of a second chance, of a redemptive experience which transforms life into something rich with meaning and joy. This is the burden of the *peripeteia*, for at the moment Thomas More most despairs of finding the significance which has for so long eluded him it comes to him unexpectedly and in a form which proves, ultimately, more satisfying than anything he had imagined. Percy, by reversing our expectations for More in just this way, wants to impress upon us not just the fact that More has been graced but the notion of history implied in his unexpected salvation. When we see that More has been given his life, we realize, along with him, that his sense of living on the verge of annihilation was a misinterpretation of history. We can recall countless other instances in which a man's fiction of an imminent apocalypse has had to be recalculated when the prescribed date passed uneventfully, and these instances go to minimize the ultimacy which More attributes to his own fiction. But more important to the undercutting of this sense of ultimacy than our own knowledge of history is Percy's authorial control over More, for he places him in a world in which a second chance is not only possible but the paradigmatic human experience. The fact that More is rescued from his own faulty imagination of the end and given a second chance indicates how little Percy values such fictions as appropriate interpretations of one's moment in time. What is finally necessary is the recognition that history has repeatedly denied the reality of apocalypse simply by its continuation, by the fact that we study, today, fictions of apocalypse which were once excruciatingly urgent. From this recognition, one must conclude, as Thomas More does, that history is of a whole, that God's perduring, sustaining presence in it discounts all attempts to view one's own moment as special.

If the thrust of *Love in the Ruins* is to shock us into realizing that there is a long perspective in which our own sense of historical importance diminishes, as I think it is, then it seems to be calling for America to return to normalcy, to cast off its

failed mission and come "back into history with its ordinary catastrophes"(3). The time when Americans could properly imagine themselves as the people chosen by God to redeem the world, if it ever existed, has long since passed. The events of the past decade, if nothing else, should convince us that we are not in some way above history or immune to the kinds of failures other nations experience. Yet, despite the witness of history to the contrary, the fiction that America is the crucial element in the organization and salvation of the world persists, as when President Ford, in his recent bicentennial State of the Union address, evoked an image reminiscent of John Winthrop's "city upon a hill":

> One peak stands highest in the ranges of human history. One example shines forth of a people uniting to produce abundance and to share the good life fairly and in freedom. One union holds out the promise of justice and opportunity for every citizen.
>
> That Union is the United States of America.

The "new realism" which Ford and many Americans now feel necessary is simply a new way of constructing the old fiction, in that it wants only to redefine the ways in which America can still serve as "the last best hope on earth." This seems to me a singularly inadequate response to our historical experience, for Viet Nam and Watergate have driven home the untenability of this lordly conceit of ourselves. The old fiction does not account for events such as these, and so what is needed is a story which *will* account for them, a story which corresponds more nearly to the stuff of history. As we move forward into new experience, we cannot rely upon a fiction which no longer has that correspondence to make sense of our lives. Instead of attempting to reify the old fiction in a bicentennial celebration of our national origins, we must now assume that long perspective; we must examine our own maculate and altogether human history and then ask ourselves the question Walker Percy asks:

> Is it that God has at last removed his blessing from the U.S.A. and what we feel now is just the clank of the old historical machinery, the sudden jerking ahead of the roller-coaster cars as the chain catches hold and carries us back into history with its ordinary catastrophes, carries us out and up toward the brink from that felicitous and privileged siding where even unbelievers admitted that if it was not God who blessed the U.S.A., then at least some great good luck had befallen us, and that now the blessing or the luck is over, the machinery clanks, the chain catches hold, and the cars jerk forward? (3-4)

NOTES

[1] Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 7.

[2] Walker Percy, *Love in the Ruins* (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1971), p. 17. All subsequent citations from this book will be placed in parentheses following the quotation.

[3] Otto W. Heick, *A History of Christian Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), I, 182-183.

[4] Kermode, p. 53.

[5] Percy acknowledges his indebtedness to Kierkegaard in Bradly R. Dewey's interview with him in *The Journal of Religion*, 54:3 (July 1974), pp. 273-298; see p. 289 for his use of Kierkegaard's theory of the musical-erotic and for his labeling of Immelman as the devil.

[6] See Robert E. Lander, "The Catholic Novel and the 'Insider God,' " *Commonweal* 101 (October 25, 1974), pp. 78-81.

The GENESIS Editorial Board wishes to thank the Indiana National Bank for sponsoring the $500 prize awarded this essay.

We also wish to express our gratitude to the faculty board, chaired by Professors Paul Nagy and Rufus Reiberg, who judged the manuscripts.

In addition, we wish to give credit to David Richardson, past senior editor of GENESIS, for proposing the competition and promoting it in its early stages.

Pedophilosophistry

The blushing boys said, "Socrates,
We are hungry for wisdom."
Sage Socrates said, "I am pleased!"
Then he hugged and kissed them.

"Charmides"

Kentucky

Kentucky, land of blood-red soil, who gave
Me life and voice, hear this, my song for you:

As sure hands shape coarse clay upon a wheel
And clay is fired in a kiln, just so am I
Thrown down, shaped, raised, and turned in my masters' hands.
The flames of my self-serving search for knowledge—
How little light they make, and how much heat!—
Have left me brittle, hard; I'll not return
To you till I'm broken and ground to dust.
Yet, colored deeply with your angry shade,
I cannot join those ranks of pale dark men.

(I sing for your children who'll never leave you;
I weep as your grown son who can't come home.)

William D. Nolan

If

If the bones of the dead could pirouette out of their tombs
In a ghastly Tarantella, I could cause
My wax lips to move and form the words
Sufficient to convey my sad relief
At being able, finally, to say
"I was wrong."

If the round sun
Could roar down out of the sky
And boil the oceans to a pale green broth,
The heat would, I am certain, be enough
To thaw the frozen river
That waits motionless and turbid
In the sunless unseen cavern of the land beneath my heart.

If the vapors of flowers
Or the death-unfettered souls they represent
Could resubstantiate and walk among
The hollow, undead husks,
I could untie this knot of flesh,
Crack like a whip, push off the sphere,
And, unencumbered, spread sails in the wind—
Spawned in your east and blowing toward my west—
And have it always at my back throughout my Odyssey.

Wax lips tremble; thoughts race.
You give the testimony of your love. I move to speak
But am disturbed
By clattering, rattling bones, the roaring sun,
The mystic scent of violets in the street.

William D. Nolan

Problems of Philosophy

(for S.D.P.)

On the margin of sleep,
Numbed reason scrawls symbols:
Functions, connectives,
Affirmations, negations,
Paradoxical implications—
From self-contradictory premisses, anything follows.

All men are mortal. Socrates is a man.
My argument, admittedly equivocal, goes thus:
If Socrates, hence, is mortal, how is it
That the bandy-legged gad-fly's laughter still mocks us?

The denial of negation,
Phoenix-like, begets an affirmation.
(The dream's logic dances, to music of its own choosing)
I give up life, and find it in the losing.

On the dog-eared page of thought
Logic inscribes a thin blue line,
Which purports to divide the "is" from the "is not."
The attempt is futile.
Dream knowledge can not be dissected on a truth-table.
On the uneven legs of psyche, self, seeming, and sense,
Tables wobble.

William D. Nolan

William D. Nolan is a junior in English both at IUPUI and at Butler University. He expects to become a professional in the field of Literature. His poetry has been published previously in GENESIS.

Whiteblossom Burial

J. C. Starker

J. C. Starker, 29, is a freshman majoring in English. She is the mother of two, a reporter on the **Sagamore** staff, and is planning to be a professional writer. Two of her short stories appearing in this issue of GENESIS were written for a class in Creative Writing taught by Professor Mary V. Blasingham. She won the GENESIS prize for Fiction for the Fall '75 issue and has also won the prize for Fiction for this issue.

"There was a burying in Whiteblossom this morning, Doc. Old man Barger's young grandbaby was finally lowered to rest after being laid out fer two days in his momma's front room. Mabel Hignight said fer the whole time there was clouds rolling down near enough to touch the trees at the top of the mountains, and fog was hanging low down in the camp. The way she told it made me mournful.

"Mabel runs the drygoods place down in Whiteblossom and knows near everything that goes on from the birthing to the burying. She's carried the news over to me ever since I've been laid up here in the hospital.

"So she says them clouds and fog got to mixing and the air was wet enough it could have been raining all the time, only she weren't sure, seeing as she was helping out with the people coming fer the sitting-in and was too busy to take notice. More 'an likely it did rain knowing this time of year when the sun comes out only long enough to take a bit of the chill away, then hides behind some black cloud until you're cold again. Seems like these days there ain't no relying on a full day of sunshine in Whiteblossom.

"Sometimes I git to thinking back when the mines was coughing out coal like there weren't going to be no tomorrow. Well, seems like folks thought more of each other. I was young. I started in the mines when I was fifteen. Before then I helped my pappy haul small loads down to Vicco to sell fer a nickel a tub. My pappy signed me up full-time when I was fifteen. Had to sign. Law said he had to sign a permit of some kind saying I was eighteen. We was digging coal at a dollar a day, and I used to take out fifty cents a week and give the rest to my Ma.

"Good times then. That movie house was still standing down in Vicco showing cowboy serials ever Saturday night. Me and Paul Hignight, my good buddy, walked down the railroad tracks come Saturday afternoons. We'd walk a couple of miles and cross down to the road just before them tracks went winding off to the east. We'd pick up loose spikes and stick them in our pockets so our nickels would chingle against them.

Me and Paul felt mighty rich with fifty cents chingling against them spikes, and my pockets always felt heavy so's I had the feeling I was sure enough well-off even when there weren't no change to chingle. We was youngens together . . . me and Paul. I remember there was sunshine then in Whiteblossom. It seemed to bust you all to pieces in the summer times when you walked out of them mines. Course in the winter we had to go down in the hole 'fore daylight and didn't get out till after dark. It made me feel good, you know, back inside that mountain, knowing that the sun was shining on Whiteblossom. Course all the houses in the camp was full then . . . not like it is now, all empty and falling apart. Guess it ain't going to be the same in this part of Kentucky again. Well, times change . . . .

"Old Man Barger used to live up the hill just past the church. Had him a fine house he'd built. Dug a hole back in that hill and just kept hammering in the wood till he could stand out on his porch sucking on that funny-looking pipe he'd whittled. He could look out over all of Whiteblossom from that porch.

"When I was a youngen I used to walk up past his place to get to the top. Fine hunting back in them woods. Course by the time you'd climbed up there you was ready to catch your breath.

"Like I was saying . . . Old Man Barger would be standing on that porch of his sucking that pipe, his hands hooked in his back pockets. He looked mighty satisfied, all peaceful and content like, standing looking out over Whiteblossom. I'd say, 'How you all, Mr. Barger,' and he'd 'How you all' me right back, and then say, 'Catch a fat one fer me.' It made me feel real good to hear him say that, knowing he was wishing me good hunting. That was important . . . seeing as how the only meat we 'et was brought home from the hunting. Hell, them was hard times, but I don't remember hearing no complaints from my pappy and ma. They wanted us youngens—all nine of us—to know we was loved. We was poor, but so was everybody else, and it didn't seem to make no difference. I guess these young folks leaving the camps today ain't got no use for being poor. Who's to blame them. No, it ain't easy, but evertime I see somebody packing up his things and heading out, it almost makes me want to cry watching the dirt from their tires being flung back on Whiteblossom. It's mighty disheartening. Well, we was poor and Paul's folks was poor.

He looked mighty satisfied

"Me and Paul worked hard, and we was 'bout as foolish as two boys can be. We was seventeen when we took two girls to the picture show down in Vicco. I'd saved fer a couple of weeks to have the change fer the show and a soda after. It was big time dating Vicco girls. Usually me and Paul just stood around on the church porch up in Whiteblossom and walked girls home. Well, me and Paul walked into that movie house like we was rich men stepping out with queens. After we walked by the popcorn machine Paul's girl says, 'Hmmm that popcorn sure did smell good.' So Paul does a turn-around and says just as polite as you please, 'It sure did, honey, let's go back and git ourselves

another smell.' Well, he was a funny one and I laughed at him till I cried. Folks these days don't think it's no fun being poor . . . maybe they're right . . . but I 'member it weren't all so sad and downhearted.

"Well, that happened a while before Old Man Barger moved off the mountain, but I 'member it like yesterday. When you stood up there next to that old man it seemed like you could touch the clouds they hung so low, and everything smelt sweeter from up there. You could see most everything going on in Whiteblossom. In them days that road running by the foot of the mountain was busy, and the houses was newer. Well, they weren't much, but they was full and you could see people moving around down in Whiteblossom. In them days the coal was hauled out by trains. I guess you'd never even see them old tracks right back of the drygoods store if'n you didn't know they was there. Now-a-days they just carry out the loads on trucks. I guess the mines are giving out like they say. Most of them got big slabs of lumber nailed across the front anyways. Sometimes when I'm out hunting, I come across some old mine I clean forgot about. It's kind of scary looking at it all nailed up, like maybe it was a tomb. I worked a sight of them old mines and sometimes I feel like most of me is shut away too. Now ain't that the darnest thing you ever heard! Well, my finger's laying in one of them mines, so maybe it ain't so silly.

maybe it ain't so silly

"I recollect Old Man Barger moved off the mountain when he got hurt in the mines twenty years ago. Seems like he never could make it back up the hill too good after that, but I do recollect seeing him standing up there on that porch onct in a while a long time after he moved down to the bottom. That old house just fell away seeing as how he wouldn't sell it to nobody. His boy, the youngest one, Davey, growed up and built him a house right next to his daddy down at the bottom of that mountain. Davey always put me to mind of Paul for some reason. I guess it were them both being dark and wild. Well, Davey was wild till he got married. Mabel said it was the saddest thing, watching Davey, him a big, grown man, leaning on the side of that mountain out back of his house crying while his little boy was laid out in the front room.

"Davey works in the mines now and again when they send out a call, but mostly he works across the road in front of his house on a couple of junk cars. I walked by many times and see'd his youngens squatting out there beside him fooling with his wiping rags all covered with oil. Them youngens always seemed 'bout half-naked and Mabel said they went next door to Granny Barger's to eat. Their momma ain't but nineteen or twenty now—her being married at fourteen—and don't cook too good, but them youngens is loved. That I know. They was always polite little things and said, 'How you all,' just like big folks when I walked by. Ever last one of them would be covered in coal dust and car oil. There was four of them and one in the oven.

"Mabel said she was walking up toward my place the day she see'd that oldest boy git burned up. Said she was standing on that hump in the road just before it levels out past the Bargers. Said there was a screaming and that boy of Davey's come running out to the middle of the road. Said he was on fire. Said he didn't look or sound like no human. Said she took off running toward him but his Granny Barger reached him first. Said his granny kept beating out those flames and pushed the youngen to the ground and kept beating out those flames with her hands. Said that youngen's momma stood on the porch screaming and holding her swollen belly and screaming. Said Mrs. Barger kept calling for the Lord and kept beating out those flames till there weren't no more fire or no more sound on the black road. Said it weren't something she'd ever be able to forget.

"Well, Davey had finally got one of them old cars working and was running it up and down the road when his boy catched fire. The Lord provides, that he does, and Davey carried that youngen and Mrs. Barger down here in his old junk car, blowing the horn for two hours on the way. Mabel said she held that youngen's head in her lap and what she 'members most is hearing that horn blow all the way to Hazard while Mrs. Barger prayed. Said that baby stayed awake most of the time even though his body was all black up to his neck. Said he kept opening his eyes and holding up his hand and showing it to her. She said his little finger was nothing but bone. Said that little youngen kept looking at that finger like it was the strangest thing he'd ever saw and he wanted her to see it too.

"Well, I recollect back twenty years ago when we finally got out of that mine cave-in down at Number 7, we pulled Old Man Barger and Paul Hignight loose and Paul's body was all black, 'cept around his eyes. Recollect that was the way it was. Recollect he opened his eyes onct, but he couldn't lift no arm. Recollect he smiled and said he reckoned he done busted all the funny bones in his body. Recollect I couldn't say anything. I reckon I told you Paul was like my brother . . . Mabel was his wife . . . .

he kept opening his eyes

"Well, that youngen of Davey's kept looking at his little finger. Mabel said they got to Hazard and brought him in here, but one of them other doctors had him hauled off to Louisville in an ambulance. Mabel stayed on with Mrs. Barger. That nurse who bandaged Mrs. Barger's hands was so mixed-up after looking at the youngen, she done the bandaging all . . . Mabel said that nurse just wrapped Mrs. Barger's hands all together. Said Mrs. Barger didn't utter one sound 'bout the hurting. Said they had to cut her fingers apart yesterday and bandage them again. Said they'd growed together that fast.

"Davey went on down to Louisville and never left his youngen's side more than a minute for three days. Mabel heard he wouldn't touch a bite. That youngen's momma just took to her bed and ain't moved since. They brung the boy back home two days ago, but he weren't knowing about it. They put him in

one of them fancy pine boxes down in Louisville and sent him back to Whiteblossom. Mabel got things going in the camp and people come for miles around bringing in cooking. Mabel said she ain't seen so many folks in the camp for twenty years . . . not since Paul passed on. The Barger youngens come back home from as far away as Dayton, Ohio. Said that house of Davey's was just busting with people the whole two days that boy laid in his momma's front room. Said them folks would sit around crying and talking real low, then they'd mosey out to the kitchen to eat a bite and laugh a bit together over something that was going on down in Vicco. Said it eased the pain a little to mosey out there and eat a bite. That oldest girl of Davey's would run out to the porch evertime somebody else come and say, 'How you all,' and tell them her brother had burned up and they's all was welcome to the food in the kitchen. Well, she's just five. Mabel said somebody told her that little girl had set fire to her brother and Mabel shushed them up right fast. Well, those youngens was playing and I don't reckon what happened can be blamed on anybody.

"Mabel said there was that child laying in that fancy pine box. Said they done a fine job down in Louisville and weren't nothing you could tell 'ceptin' maybe he was a little dark under his chin. Said he looked real natural laying there. Said Mrs. Barger kept going over to his box and patting that sweet face with her white-bandaged hands. Mrs. Barger kept saying, 'Thank you Jesus,' seeing as how that youngen was burned clean through and would have been in misery if he'd lived. Mabel said his little man thing was burned off. Said he wouldn't ever been no man had he lived. Well, the Lord sees all these things . . . it was merciful he took the youngen on to Heaven.

"Mabel said when she see'd Davey out back hitting that mountain she just broke down herself. Somebody said Davey's youngen told his daddy to make those two black boogie-men git away from his bed down there in Louisville. Said Davey told him, 'Honey, there ain't no boogie-men,' but the youngen kept saying there was. That baby kept waking up saying that for three whole days. Well, it ain't easy to figure something like that out, or forget it. Maybe it was all that medicine them doctors kept giving him.

he looked real natural

"Mabel said Old Man Barger got a preacher from Vicco to come say the words since our preacher moved on three years ago. Well, there ain't many people left to save in Whiteblossom anymore. Said that preacher spoke some mighty inspiring words. Said it made a body feel good looking forward to the time when we'll all see Jesus. Said they took Davey's youngen up on the mountain and buried him in the woods back of the old Barger place next to where we buried Paul. Mabel said she looked down in the camp and it was a misery to see Whiteblossom all empty and hollow like those eyes of Paul's when he was laying there in my arms at the end.

"Well, Doc, I'm carrying on, but Mabel just left and I got to thinking. This black lung has me way down and I couldn't seem to get up the strength to pay my respects at the burying. Mabel

paid them for me and begged pardon I couldn't come. She said the burying was right proper, and if ever a youngen looked like an angel on its way to see Jesus, it was that one of Davey's. Well, it made me mournful, and I laid here bawling like somebody touched in the head. Mabel said was you going to let me come home soon. I said I wouldn't be knowing it when you did, and I reckoned I wouldn't be missing the next burying in Whiteblossom. Then Mabel started in bawling and said, 'Oh Cass, I hate to see you go.' "

ATLANTIS

Surfaced madness strikes heart
  with pounding fury
  that breaks on rounded Shore
Capped by jagged ledge.

Silence. echo. Silence.
Wind calms to whispers.

Lapping on empty Beach:
  intellect sifts
  through loose Sand
  to find one Grain
that is touched by Water.

Christopher A. Crockett

Unchained Chronology

Untapped root flows
from Tigris and Euphrates
  to spread Plague
  to wind-swept Slaves
While High Priest burns
grain on Temple altars.

Streams rise and ebb
in time with Measured Breath.

Self screams from Ninth Circle
  as tuneless lyre applauds
  in three/four time.

Tribunals of sanity plot
  to unseat Inquisitor
  who knocks at door
without glass.

Shadowless sundial whispers
relief to toiling serf.

Galley'd oars churn
and tattered sails strain
  in search of placid Cove
  as suspended guillotine
Quivers to complete Sentence.

Monolith without direction
Leans into Gale
  that spews despair
  into empty Room
That has not been opened.

GENESIS

Hordes from North
March in blind rage
  as crimson Cross bleeds
  name of Child
On blistered sand.

To look inside
  and
To see no one.

Christopher A. Crockett

reframe Contemplation

Welcome back to single Cell life:
    the Voice of the Age.
Feel it bound away from back Edge
and scitter across dusty-turned-pristine
    Expanse
to tap on sunlit Eastern window.

Run to the Backyard and tell me
if Light is there, too.

Christopher A. Crockett

Christopher A. Crockett, 23, has an A.B. in History from Indiana University and is working toward a second degree in English at IUPUI. He was last year's recipient of the Thelander Memorial Prize, History Department award for excellence. The works of Plato inspired the three poems appearing here. They are the first poems he has had published.

Pearl's Sale

Joan Everett

Joan Everett, 22, is a senior with a double major in English and Religious Studies. She wrote her story for a class in Creative Writing taught by Professor Mary V. Blasingham. This is her first published work.

I heard Mama's voice calling from the kitchen for me to wake up. It wasn't a school day, I wondered why I had to get up early, then I remembered—today was Pearl's sale. When Pearl died and the city-niece inherited the farm, Pearl's neighbors figured that the niece would sell out and we were right. I'd overheard, while I was waiting on Mama at Sim's store yesterday, Old Man Hackett telling his nephew Frank that the niece got a pretty penny for the farm—some fancy city lawyer had bought it and planned to tear down the house and outbuildings and build horse stables. Old Man Hackett said that Pearl would turn over in her grave if she knew that her homeplace was going to be turned into a Circle "C" Ranch. Frank said something about these city people being horse's ... but Old Man Hackett spied me standing by the coke machine and hacked so that I couldn't hear what Frank had said.

Both sides of the road in front of Pearl's house were already lined with cars—I didn't recognise any of them except Old Man Hackett's red pick-up truck. Daddy let Mama and me out of the car in front of Pearl's house while he went to park. I hated going into the yard—there were strange people swarming around. I decided I'd swing on the iron-fence gate till I saw some familiar faces. I swung in and out of the yard on the creaking gate looking the people over. I spotted Old Man Hackett and Frank standing together talking—Old Man Hackett was digging into his chewing pouch. I saw Shirley T.—she had hold of her Mom's arm, pulling her in the direction of a table where the ladies' aid church group was serving food—but I didn't let on that I saw Shirley T.

Shirley T. and me were in fourth grade at Union and had been best friends, but right now we weren't speaking. Everytime we were together I always ended up getting a raw deal—like this summer before Pearl died—Shirley T. and me were racing our bikes past Pearl's house to see who could go the fastest. I was ahead when Shirley T. ran right into me. I tried to steer clear, but she knocked me off my bike and rode off. Between sobbing and watching red blood ooze down my leg, I

hobbled to Pearl's porch. Apparently Pearl had seen what happened because she met me at the door. She set me down on a wooden kitchen chair and tried to soothe me just like Mama. Her crippled hip made it hard for her to get on her knees, but she managed to kneel in front of me to wash my skinned knees. Her hands were red and chapped like Mama's were from hard work. The skin was thin and wrinkled, revealing blue veins.

"Trouble with Shirley T. is that she's spoiled rotten," Pearl had said shaking her head. "Don't make no sense givin a child everythin she wants—she's to be pitied—won't come to no good end."

Pearl's silver braided hair was tucked under a striped blue and white railroadman's cap. The brim was turned up, revealing clear blue eyes. Her pursed, firm mouth hid rows of pearly teeth like kernels of white sweet corn. A piece of her apple pie stopped my crying completely.

"I reckon Shirley T.'s parents moved out from the city hopin to get that devilness out of her," Pearl had said.

I was still swinging on the gate to beat the band when I saw a stranger walking toward me. She wore a suede hat with a feather in it.

"Little boy, please be so kind as to stop swinging—incessant squeaking gets on people's nerves," she said. "Well?"

"I ain't a boy."

"Well, how dare you, you little snip!"

She turned on her heels and walked away. I followed. Her gray high-heel shoes, which matched her gray dress and jacket, clicked on the cement walk. None of the folks around here dressed like that except to go to church or a funeral. She suddenly turned on me.

"You impertinent brat—go away!" she told me.

I walked over to where Frank and Old Man Hackett were standing.

"Who was that?" I asked. "You never heard such fancy talkin."

there were strange people swarming around

"Pearl's niece," Frank said.

"Ya don't say."

I mozied over and sat down under an old apple tree; bees buzzed around the half-rotten apples that had fallen to the ground. The tree was right next to the house so that the limbs almost reached into the second-story window. I decided I might as well climb up the tree to get away from the bees. I wondered if Pearl used to climb out on this limb when she was my age and slip away into the night. I wondered if she had run through the wet grass to the pasture where she could fling herself to the ground on a soft bed of green grass and purple clover with a quilt of yellow-white stars. I bet she had. Didn't every country child?

One of the tree limbs was shaped like a "Y," providing me with a seat. My feet dangled in mid-air. I almost expected to see Pearl hobbling below me, but the crowd swarming below

reminded me that Pearl was dead. But wasn't it only a few weeks ago that Pearl was alive? I leaned against one limb and shut my eyes—the October sun was getting warmer and warmer and warmer.

I thought back to the spring. I was helping Daddy farm Pearl's ground. Well, not actually helping, but riding on the tractor while he turned the ground under for planting. The rich, black earth being turned up filled the air with a clean, wet smell. Black birds, flying in the white billowy clouded blue sky, circled overhead waiting to swoop down and pluck a wriggling worm for dinner. The steady hum of the tractor engine drowned out all other sounds. I had looked at Daddy and we had smiled at each other in contentment. Pearl stood at the edge of the field watching us. I nudged Daddy and pointed in Pearl's direction. He nodded. When we came around to where Pearl was standing, Daddy had stopped and let me jump off. My bare feet sunk into the black dirt as if trying to take root. I walked slowly over to Pearl.

Two baby lambs were playing

"You like helpin your Daddy?" Pearl had asked.

I nodded.

"Why, I was a regular tomboy too when I was your age. used to help milk the cows." Pearl pointed to the lane that led back to the woods. "Used to drive the cows up that lane; it'd be pitch-black out 'cept for stars, but I weren't 'fraid; no need to be—Papa was always waitin on me and Mama would have supper ready for us after milkin."

Pearl and me had walked toward the house, stopping at the barn where the sheep were grazing. Two baby lambs were playing—jumping and butting each other. The mothers looked at Pearl and me—their black eyes watching every move we made. I climbed over the gate aiming to play with the lambs. The mothers moved forward an inch, pawing the ground with their front legs.

"Tryin to warn you," Pearl had said. "Only way they have of protectin their young-uns. Sheep are funny critters, can't even protect themselves. If a pack of dogs would attack, and I seen it happen, one sheep would be singled out and the dogs would bite at it till it fell while the rest of the sheep would huddle nearby and silently watch."

We walked on up to the house. Pearl sat down on the back-porch step. She took her faded apron and wiped her face.

"Sure is gettin hot."

"Farm experts are predictin a record crop," I said.

"Hog-wash, those city farmers don't know what they're talkin 'bout," Pearl had said. "Whenever the east wind is blowing, the crops are bad. It takes a west wind to produce a good harvest."

Pearl had been right. Daddy had to plant and replant. The first week after we planted it rained every day. Daddy and me walked through muddy fields. We got on our knees and dug with our hands trying to find seed. We found it—rotten. After Daddy replanted we waited for rain, but rain didn't come. This

time we walked over hard, dusty ground. Daddy had to use his knife to dig. What seed we could find was dried up.

Pearl had been waiting by the gate when Daddy and me came in from the field.

"Find anythin?"

"Not much," Daddy had said. "Farmer might as well quit tryin—can't raise nothin."

Pearl had taken of her striped cap and shook it at Daddy. "Why, I seen times worse than these—I seen better too," Pearl had said. "Don't make good sense talkin 'bout quittin—there's the promise of next year."

"Who'll give me ten, ten and a quarter . . . ." The auctioneer's voice woke me out of my day-dream. I looked down from the tree and watched people bidding on Pearl's belongings. Two fat women, dressed fancily, walked under the tree.

"Harriet, can you believe I got these adorable cut-glass shakers for only twelve dollars," one fat woman said.

I giggled. Those shakers came with every purchase of a six-ounce can of Watkins black pepper. Charlie West, our Watkins man, would have sold the shakers for two dollars and a quarter. Mama and me used to go over to Charlie's house once every two weeks. His front room was filled with shelves of pepper, vanilla extract, spices and methol-camphor ointment. I liked to walk slowly past each shelf while my nose breathed in. I reckoned these women didn't have a Watkin's man. I recognized Pearl's niece walking toward the two fat women.

"Harriet, Margaret—how wonderful to see you both," the niece said. "Have you bought anything? Oh, what priceless shakers. You know, I found gorgeous antiques—cherry-wood beds—I never knew Ant Pearl had so many valuable possessions. Of course you both knew that Antie was getting—how should I put it—senile? Can you imagine living in a house that has a pump right in the kitchen and no bathroom! She must have been well-off, but I can't imagine why she lived like this. How could anyone be so quaint? Of course I sold this farm. Can you imagine me living on a farm? How dull!"

"Don't make good sense talkin 'bout quittin"

Whether the apple fell of its own choosing or had some help doesn't matter. Ku-plunk it fell right on the niece's suede hat knocking it sideways on her head. Madder than an old wet hen, the niece commenced making a commotion.

"It's you," she said looking up at me. "Somebody, quick, make that child come down out of that tree! Come down, right now!"

Old Man Hackett and Frank stood there smiling.

"Well, what are you two old goats standing there for?" the niece said. "You, go get a ladder!"

Boy, was that the wrong thing to say, especially to Frank and Old Man Hackett. They weren't exactly work-brittle and didn't like being ordered around by any women. What they liked best was pulling someone's leg. Old Man Hackett spit a stream of brown juice which landed near the toes of the gray high-heel shoes.

"T'aint no ladder," Frank said.

"Do something—there—go through that," the niece said, pointing to the second-story window.

I saw Frank wink at Old Man Hackett.

"Can't do. Heart," Old Man Hackett said, rubbing his chest.

"I'll do it myself," the niece said.

By now, everybody was crowded beneath the tree. I waved at Mama and Daddy—Mama shook her finger at me, smiling. I almost stuck my tongue out at Shirley T. I hoped that Pearl was watching; she'd enjoy this. Two men pulled a table over to the tree. Old Man Hackett and Frank got up on the table and up into the tree. I moved over, making room for them. All three of us sat on the limb, dangling our feet. I looked over at Frank. His laughing eyes winked at me. The window creaked and I saw the niece, her face red by now, lean out of the window. When she saw Frank and Old Man Hackett, her face got even redder.

"You . . ."

I didn't get to hear what she said—Old Man Hackett let out a big hack. The niece slammed the window down, almost breaking the glass. By now, tears were running down Frank's cheek.

Mama shook her finger at me

"That'll teach that bee that she's not queen 'round this hive," Frank said.

The niece disappeared again. Old Man Hackett laughed and said that she'd probably high-tail it back to the city with her tail tucked between her legs. We climbed down out of the tree. The two fat women were still standing there with their mouths hanging open. The suede hat with a feather in it was on the ground. I leaned down and picked the hat up and tried it on. The brim completely covered my eyes. I took off the hat and left it on the ground where I found it. It sure was a fancy hat, but it wasn't for me.

The crowd by now had moved to another table. I made my way to the center. On the corner of the table was Pearl's blue and white cap. On the way home that evening I told Mama and Daddy that it didn't seem right—those people buying Pearl's belongings. Most of the people didn't know Pearl. If only they had . . . .

"They come from the city hopin to buy a priceless antique that they can take back to the city," Daddy said. "I doubt if they found what they were looking for."

If only they had a memory of Pearl—a memory of the farm—but memories can't be bought at a sale. They returned to the city empty-handed. But I hadn't—I left the sale with Pearl's blue and white striped railroadman's cap.

The Marsh King's Daughter

Pale moon ascending, tallow white
Mother of cruelty; cold distant light
Staining the stars gleaming stark
And cold in the shadows—frozen and dark.
(Upon the adventure of dread I embark.)
The West crimson fades. Skeleton trees
Shudder and grasp at the gelid breeze.
Silence and ice grip my soul, in despair,
I enter the grove of the Marsh King's lair.
(And the frozen breeze whispers, "Beware, beware!")
I pass by the Oak, gnarled, enraged,
Stunted by hatred, deformed and aged.
Its black limb embellished with rotten rope
That swung in the face of murderer's hope.
(And the wind made its hideous fingers to grope.)
There a thousand men hung for unnamed crimes.
A thousand necks snapped, and a thousand times
The echo mock laughter of Hell was heard ring;
The laughter of Death in the Night—the Marsh King!
(And a chorus of murderous voices would sing:)
"Hail to Thee, North wind, sterile and dead
"Within your bosom a mortal must wed
"Thee or the Moon; eternal death rest
"Or be doomed with a daily death low in the West
("With the cold pallid Moon, to be damned with her Quest!")
I traversed the "Hill of Corpse" as it's known.
A hill made of bodies that were mangled and thrown
In a pile to decay, decompose, and forget
Their vile life's eternal damnation and debt.
(A frozen hell-palace for their eternal regret.)
I walked then for miles as the sterile bitch climbed.
My body grew numb, my actions grew mimed.
I stopped by a pool of stagnant and brace
Ice water reflecting the colorless face
(Of the moon as she tracted coldly in space.)
As I sat in exhaustion by the rippleless lake
I was gripped by a terror and seized in the wake
Of a flood of full horror and gazed at a sight
That would startle the soul in the midst of the night.
(I was paralyzed breathlessly in frozen fright!)

Before me there danced a parade of death
With hideous shapes and putred breath.
They danced wildly and blindly in the form of a ring
And fell dumbly silent. In the midst—the Marsh King!
(And God how his icey askant glare did sting!)
The gruesome grins of his imps were gone
And the stars grew dim and then were drawn
Within his eyes that gleamed with rage
And upon his brow was the crown of age.
(His glance of Iced Death unassuaged!)
His breath, the chill of winter's morn
Blew crystal cold through his signal horn.
And the note was solemn and single and shrill
And echoed far reaching in valley and hill.
(The Marsh King's summons—the sound that could kill!)
I stood before his awesome form
In the maddening silence and reposing storm.
He spoke to me finally in a thunderous voice
And told me to choose, for I had a choice.
(Between death and destruction or eternal rejoice!)
He smiled a freeze breeze and laughingly spoke,
"If thou choosest correctly I will remove the yoke
"Of eternal damnation, death, and despair.
"That's the choice of the Marsh King, choose if you dare!"
(And the frozen breeze whispers, "Beware, beware!")
"You may die of the chill through numbness insane
"Or marry my Daughter, the Light of Inane.
"Which will it be, damnation or bliss?"
The choice was too simple, how could I miss?
(The winter's cold womb to a Princess's kiss!)
"I will wed with your Daughter, whoever she be!
"I choose this to death. Now please tell me
"Why such an obvious dilema to choose?"
"Your choice was your own and your life is to lose!"
(And the wind whipped my soul and my body was bruised.)
"You have chosen my Daughter, the Light of Inane
"And in Her cruel bosom you'll eternally reign.
"You will join Her cold soul forever and soon
"You shall die in the West with your bride, the Moon!"
(To be born and die daily in eternity swoon!)

Pale moon descending, tallow white
Mother of cruelty; cold distant light
Staining the stars gleaming stark
And cold in the shadows—frozen and dark.
(Upon the adventure of death I embark!)

Dennis Sweet

Dennis Sweet, 22, is a freshman in Psychology and the father of two children. He has taught and directed seminars in comparative philosophy at his bookstore in Bloomington. His poetry has appeared previously in GENESIS.

Linguesthesia

I must have more
of languages.
Sensual collections
created and creating
Experiences
Visions
Conceptual matter
splotch and splatter
my fibrous porous
sucking surface—
Hungrily I Think
and want to taste
and will not eat...
It makes me tired.

Stephen Stouder

The Periodic Table

The Source,
  Imagined
    as creative intelligence
could Well–
  no doubt Would–
upon scanning the table,
      the table of the elements—
admire it.

Might well,
Not having had access to such a scheme-
so Well thought out,
so Tabular
and so convenient–
Architectural
  and sensible
    Memorable, deductible—
Might well admire this reconstruction
of the creative genius.

As for me—
All Geometrical logographics
leave me nowhere
but the Music of Molybdenum
      Plutonium and Helium
      Uranium
      Selenium
Even Xenon draws me back
to purest poetry.
Molecular mysteries
    elemental muse.

Stephen Stouder

Heraclitus, Democritus, Heisenberg

Now Analysis
Becomes but fragmentation.
Chaos to Order to Chaos.
Endless subdivision
of logical fantasy.
Curiously stirred
to tenser hopes:
Hopes to know we might be free
as Electrons might be free.
Rejoicing with restraint,
appropriately ambivalent
in the mindless victory of particles
over particularizing mind
and imperfect Instrumentation.

Ultimate Phantoms
former foes
now Careless champions.

We falter now
in our fixated drift
to tremble at
The ambition of Toolmakers.

Stephen Stouder

Stephen Stouder is a graduate student in English. He is married and is the father of three children. He has a background and interest in science and philosophy and plans to be a professional writer of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction.

Early Spring

J. C. Starker

Spring had come early to the mountains that year, raking back the last bits of snow and loading the trees with green shoots which gave promise to a summer filled with shade. The smell of wet, rotting wood mingled with the crisp tartness of new life breaking through the ground.

Cloye felt she could never understand so well why creatures get born into the world to die as she understood when the spring came and the knowledge came with it. The flowers grew and the bees dug into their nectar, and honey was made for Mam to gather. Life was sweeter with the honey, and the coming and going of life was part of it all. Behind her, the smoke curled from the chimney of the one-room cabin that Pa had built for Mam when they were first married. Cloye watched as a slight breeze hooked itself into the curl of smoke, tossing it down upon the roof to slide off scaly logs on the cabin's sides.

"Cloye," her mother's voice called from below, "git that bucket on here. I ain't got time for you to moon around while there's work waiting."

Cloye grabbed her bucket and her daydreams, the heavy pail bumping against her skinny legs as she shifted its weight in hurrying to obey Mam. She could see her mother in the distance, round hips swinging in rhythm to the singing birds gathering materials for nests they would build high in the trees running along the mountain trail. Cloye looked down the trail, noticing how it curved among those tall trees, skirting around hickory and walnut, intruding through a bed of Sweet Williams, and on, until it paused at the point where the nearby stream fell into a pool of clear water. She saw that her six-year-old brother Sid had plopped down on the trail ahead and knew he whined because he needed her. Stumbling downward she hurried to help him before Mam turned.

"Oh, Sid," she muttered when she saw the drinking pitcher broken and scattered on the rocks around him. Sid glanced up, his blue eyes beginning to flow like the stream until they fell into his open mouth.

"It's alright, baby, Cloye fix it," she soothed as she began to pick up the broken pieces and put them in her pocket.

"Cloye," Mam yelled from the pool, "leave that big baby sit up there till the bears come and eat him up. You git down here."

"Hush, Sid. Hold my hand. Ssh, I'm going to help you," Cloye whispered. She took his thin, white hand into her small tanned one and juggled the pail the best she could.

Mam was on her knees bending over into the pool when Cloye arrived dragging Sid, still whining, with her.

"He went and broke another pitcher, didn't he?" Mam asked out of the guggling water.

Cloye shook her head and then remembered to say "yes" to her mother's back.

"He didn't mean no harm," she said cautiously.

"He don't never mean no harm," the voice above the water answered quietly. "He's like your Pa, always doing harm and never meaning bad by it."

Cloye sighed, satisfied that for the moment Sid had been saved from the switch. She picked him up and stood watching as her mother dipped the water into the rusted tin bucket. Cloye thought Mam the most beautiful woman she had ever seen. Sometimes when the evening fire was banked high with logs, her mother's face would grow pink and her lips would become cherry red. She would sit before the flames combing out her mass of red hair and Cloye would sigh in the wonder of the colors while brushing back a few strands of her own brown curls, wondering why Sid had been born with her mother's beauty. She never begrudged Sid that beauty, but loved him all the more for it.

Mam finished filling her bucket and wiped her forehead against her feedsack apron. She sat down on a rock jutting over the water and stared further down the trail. Cloye watched as the early morning sun caressed the curve of her mother's profile.

"That boy's too big fer you to baby now," Mam said into the air. "He ain't going to let loose of your skirt if'n you don't pull away soon."

"I don't mind," Cloye answered, rubbing her face against Sid's face.

her mother's face would grow pink

Mam turned with fury in her voice.

"When you going to learn that most times it don't make no difference whether you mind or don't mind about things. That youngen is almost as big as you are."

Sid began to whine again and dug his fists into his eyes. Mam sucked her lips together, making the little whistling noise that meant she was tired to death of talking about it. Cloye knew she did that a lot with Pa, but she didn't know why, she only knew it made Pa afraid.

"Cloye, honey, there ain't no good of making a baby into a half-man," Mam whispered, turning away to look down the trail again. "Git your bucket filled."

Cloye gently set Sid on the ground and told him to look for bear prints on the bank of the stream. She smiled at him as he trotted off, and hoped that maybe a fat possum or crafty fox had left a print along the bank for him to find. Sometimes, when

they arrived at the pool early enough, small furry animals would scurry back into the thickness of the woods. Cloye was glad that life always held out something, if not bear tracks then a possum would do. Satisfied that Sid was happy, she lifted her dress and bent over to dip up the water.

Mam stood up restlessly and kicked at loose rock.

"Cloye," she said turning large blue eyes in her direction, "you're going to have to kill the hen today."

Cloye stopped dipping and watched the reflection of her face bobbing up and down in the water.

"it just don't seem right"

"Don't stare off, girl, your daddy deserves a good meal onct in a while, besides it's time you git on with growing up. You'll be twelve years old next week and I don't see no sense putting off growing up."

Cloye pushed away the reflection of her face in the water, her long straight nose fluttered into her square chin.

"I don't like seeing the chicken flopping around," she said to Mam. "I don't like it flopping and dying like that."

"Oh honey, it don't feel no pain."

"When it's jumping like that . . . it just don't seem right . . . everything in the whole world . . . the spring come early and I don't like it."

"You ain't making no sense," Mam said harshly. "We got to eat. When are you going to learn, youngen, that life don't always make do for you."

"Cloye," Sid squealed from up the stream.

Cloye dropped the dipper and scrambled along the bank. Mam followed behind, careful not to step on a sharp rock with her bare feet.

"What's the matter, baby," Cloye asked as she reached Sid and quickly began the search over his body with her eyes.

"I see'd a man's print," Sid said excitedly, "as big as a bear's."

"Mam, there's some man's print up here," Cloye called back as her mother ambled slowly up the stream. Mam looked up and hurried toward the print. She pushed Cloye aside and stood looking down.

"Some hunter, I reckon," she said too quickly. "You youngens come away from here and help me git the water home."

"But I ain't heard no shooting," Cloye said. " 'Sides that, it ain't no boot print."

"I said git," Mam shouted jerking Sid away. He began to cry again.

"No need of doing that, Clea," a man's voice spoke out of the woods.

Cloye and Mam jumped with the sound and looked across the water. Cloye noticed first the way he leaned against the tree as though all day was waiting while he leaned there, and he smiled as if that too, he could do all day, only not a happy smile, she thought. He was tall, lanky like a young birch, and his dark hair framed a handsome, childish face. He looked at Mam as

though she belonged to him. Cloye drew close to her mother as if to protect her.

"What are you doing here, Shafter?" Mam asked quietly, her breath coming in rapid and fluttery.

"I come to get you, Clea," he answered, taking a step toward the stream.

"You leave my Mam alone," Sid shouted picking up a stone from the bank.

"Put it down," Cloye said softly. Somehow she knew Mam wasn't afraid.

"I got my youngens," Mam said, lifting her hands so that they turned empty toward him. "I can't just leave them."

"I ain't got time for youngens, his youngens, Clea," the man answered, shrugging his shoulders as if he really didn't have time for anything.

"Shafter, you ain't asking me to leave my youngens standing on this creek bank, are you?"

"I ain't coming back here no more to git you," the man muttered, turning toward the trail. "Them youngens know their way home."

Cloye and Mam watched him start to walk away. Mam's feet curled into the mud.

"Wait," she cried, lifting her skirts and splashing through the water.

Cloye put her arms around Sid's shoulders as she felt a tightness pulling behind her eyes. There was a quietness in the spring trees, like before the wind came in a summer's storm to tear away branches.

Mam stopped on the other side of the water and turned to face Cloye.

"Take care of your brother, Cloye, but don't baby him no more. Tell your Pa ain't no use coming to look for me, he'll understand, and take that water on to the house."

The man continued to walk down the trail and out of sight. Mam's eyes darted to Cloye and down into the woods.

"I ain't got no choice. Your daddy's a lot older than me . . . sometimes you just gotta make life do for you," she shouted as she ran after him.

"Wait," she cried

"I want my Mam," Sid screamed.

Cloye patted his head as her eyes weaved in and out of the trees trying to imagine how her mother's blue skirt and red hair would be billowing on the trail below. She watched until there was nothing left to imagine.

"No more use of crying, baby," she told Sid. She wiped the wetness from his face and looked back up the trail, trying to find the curl of smoke which would let her know everything was as it should be there. The cabin seemed so far away, lost among the budding spring trees and careless breezes. "Mam said to git the water home."

Cloye had to make two trips to the pool for the water and forgot to look for new nests along the trail. She took the hen, fat from winter feeding and wrung its neck. Then she sat down and turned her face until she knew the flopping had stopped.

When her father came home from the mines, the chicken was bubbling in a gravy of flour dumplings. He lifted the heavy mining cap from his head and Cloye could smell the bitter stench of the carbide.

"Where's your ma?" he asked while washing the blackness from his face and hands in the pan of water Cloye had ready for him.

"I don't reckon she'll be coming home," Cloye said as she flipped a hot piece of cornbread onto his plate.

"She off visiting again?" he asked, sitting down heavily. The dust from his clothes settled below his chair. He began to stuff the bread into his mouth.

"I guess she's gone off with some man," Cloye whispered.

"She went off with a man in the woods," Sid shouted, grabbing a piece of chicken with both hands.

"What's the boy saying, Cloye?" Pa asked, crumbs of cornbread falling loose from his open mouth.

"Pa, she ain't coming back. Said ain't no use you come looking for her. Said you'd know."

Her father's eyes groped awkwardly, jerking about the cabin with its drafts and cracks, its wooden floor and squat walls. Cloye's eyes travelled with his, wanting so desperately to see the slender neck with its wisps of red hair bent over the cooking stove or turning restlessly in sleep on the lumpy mattress. Their eyes could find no brightness so they settled into dull globes of misery and met again in understanding.

"I don't reckon I'm too hungry, Cloye," Pa murmured, hiding those eyes, hands covering blackness with blackness.

Cloye looked at her father's back hunched over the table. She stared at the gray in his hair which even the coal dust could not hide. The backs of his hands were gnarled and his face, she knew, was creased with deep wrinkles. She was surprised that she had never noticed he was old until that moment.

Sid looked up at Cloye and began to cry, dumplings dropping unnoticed down his chin onto his shirt.

"I want my Mam," he screamed.

Her father's eyes groped awkwardly

Pa pushed himself loose from his chair and slowly walked outside, but not before Cloye had seen the sickness swallowing his eyes. Her hands trembled as she spooned a bite of dumplings into Sid's waiting mouth.

"Eat your chicken, Sid," she crooned. "I'm going to be your Mam from now on."

"Then I got's me a Mam?" Sid asked, sobbing through a mouthful of food.

"I reckon you have," Cloye sighed.

"Who's your Mam, Cloye?"

"I reckon I ain't got me a Mam," she answered softly while wiping up the food at her father's place. "We just gotta make do," she insisted, "ain't gonna work if we don't make do with just what we got on hand."

Cloye felt an aching pain in her chest as the words echoed around the room. It was something Mam had said so often.

"I ain't planning on ever leaving you, Sid," she whispered to the small boy. "I ain't planning on ever leaving you."

Recollections from A Child's Garden

Some little men took walks
with their dung buckets

Others hurried to the nearest shrine

The poorer ones repaired
their paper houses
with Buddha and Typhoon in mind

And from a window I'd wait to see
the big winds and cinder streets combine:
A white sky with black stars
mimicked night in the daytime.

Shannon Smith

Shannon Smith, 27, is a senior in Geology. She expects that geology will be her profession and poetry her avocation. She was raised in Japan. Her poem is the first that she has had published.

MESTIZA

¡Ay! The hound is at my door.
Chinga.
I am compelled to listen
to the howls of your demands.

My door stands fast, and I,
—y yo también—
I will not let you in,
though I know—Jesucristo—that I must.

I stand erect and wait,
listening to la locura,
the mad dog's raving.
Duty calls: but must I answer it?

I pace, tormented in my rage,
that sangre de mi madre
se calienta contra ti,
and my blood flashes hot against you.

I know you well enough
and what you want with me.
I will not yield! Mi alma no te doy,
and so I beat the wall, to scream
"Enough!" —¡Ya! ¡Basta!—

To no avail. Your cries grow louder now,
and drown my own:
ahogan mis pensamientos,
so I can not think.

Oh God! I fling open my door
to reality—the dog!
"What do I owe you now?
How many dollars?
How much time?
What do you want with me?"

The master snarls;
the dog has disappeared
and I confront my other self:
la gringa.

Ruth Redstone

Ruth Redstone, 29, is a junior with a triple major in English, Psychology, and Spanish. She is the mother of two, Chicana, and translator for the Associated Migrant Opportunities Services. Her poetry has appeared previously in GENESIS.

scimarec	ceramics
dnats nem	men stand
ecaf ot ecaf	face to face
dehcuotnu dna gnihcuotnu	untouching and untouched
hcaer fo tuo tey hcaer nihtiw	within reach yet out of reach
gnizalg stsitra delliks	skilled artists glazing
fo segami eligarf	fragile images of
rof sevlesmeht	themselves for
tsniaga noitcetorp	protection against
rehto hcae	each other
srotpac dna sevitpac	captives and captors
ssecorp nwo rieht hguorht	through their own process

Jerry Dreesen

Jerry Dreesen, 38, is a junior working toward his B.S. in Radiologic Technology. He is currently an instructor of X-ray technology and hopes to become a professional writer. His poetry has appeared in two previous issues of GENESIS.

The Party

"Come in, alien souls, an ambiance withal,
to effervesce in our glacis of futility,
to absorb the acrid mist compounded of sepulchral claret
and diminished acoustics."
moonlight never eeked such gloom as the single moth-packed bulb
"Steal in, les émigrés!" Who are you?

a cur, he was, ghoulishly obscene,
a smile, fuliginous, of some gold, some missing, teeth.
black vestments he wore, agape—
tiny beads of sapphire, amiss a few, circled his neck.
rambling about in caustic disposition,
he spat on the others, excreta flux.

this atmosphere, a mansion in party attire
seemed a mogul's home to us from banlieue
at the edge of town, we drifted among obsequious crowds
transfixed by a nigger baby—the effigy of a teddy bear,
festering, mystical, the veilleur de nuit,
a malachitic face and gangrenous grin
the guests cried "Ne te laisse pas faire!"

an illicit pandemonium of lascivious characters
clustered about in suspicious dialogue,
denigrating the bottoms of women.
creatures who dance in priapic dreams,
men of an atavistic Movement
a jocose masquerade, bewailing the zephyr.

our host, a nirvanic transliterate
sallied into this plexus of human folly,
infected his guests with a dose of echolalia.
in a quagmire, he watched with a maudlin eye
the room transform into a seraglio
in a Patchouli forest and an opium den.

a sphinx yonder stooped, adept at regurgitation,
fingered the textured cairngorm segment,
intent on ignominy among clinking ice cubes—
the stomach lining indubitably extracted.
neither wincing nor laughing, the crowd moved on
a window shattered in an adjacent room.

shrieks, laughter, deep-throated calls issued forth
while Bach and Brahms lulled the dubious ones.
in shreds, in pieces, in tears, in fear,
the girls flew semi-clad, tipping vessels awry—
rosé, ice cubes, a foamy head, ashes, remains—
prostrate, the dubious watch for the comedy to begin.

in the diapason of a Verdi piece,
our surrealist host became obtunded
and the syphilitic guests gathered round
to ablute their souls at the bidet,
drawing up their knees while the walls caved in
offering towels, tears, to their friends at the door.

Donna Lynn Conner

Donna Lynn Conner, 23, is a graduate student in English Literature. She earned her B.A. in English Education from Purdue. She wrote her present poem for a graduate course in Directed Writing taught by Professor Mary V. Blasingham. Her poetry has been published previously in GENESIS.

The Drummer

Wayne Lee

Wayne Lee, 29, is a sophomore. His major is as yet undecided but he is leaning toward English Composition and Journalism. His story was written for a class in Creative Writing taught by Professor Mary V. Blasingham. It is his first short story.

Tracy, Kentucky, hadn't really changed in the last five years, John decided as he surveyed the countryside from a second story window. Yes, it had been five years since he was here last. All these bluegrass towns looked about the same. Going on fifty years he'd been a drummer—hawking farm goods in the back country of Kentucky. He had a new title now—something like managing executive of rural sales. John had to laugh at that. He was still just a drummer. Still staying overnight in places like Jed Narett's emporium. Pretty grand title for an old frame building without paint. This one was Tracy's post office, general store, and town hall. Some town! Didn't even have a tavern. John felt a sharp twinge in his left forearm and quickly slapped it with his right hand. They sure had enough mosquitoes. Cursed things stung like bees. John flicked the crushed insect off his arm and watched it spiral daintily downward.

Walking back across the creaking hardwood floor, he left his room and made his way gingerly down the groaning stairway. He felt somehow anxious. Being around farm people all his life he had developed a feel for them. He could sense things—even unspoken things. A good drummer learned to hold his tongue; to watch for signs; to trust his instincts. John could pick up an inkling of trouble just by the way people stood or the expressions they wore. Not because the people were shallow—no—they had just never mastered the art of being deceitful. That was for cities and smoky rooms—not the back country. His instincts had picked something up today, somewhere. He'd felt this way in Maryville the night before that young boy was lynched. The same old tingling had returned.

Downstairs the scene was much as he remembered: one large room filled with innumerable odds and ends; the candy counter with peppermint sticks; the grain and seed bags stacked high against the walls; barrels and boxes of farm implements; shelves filled with foodstuffs and notions; and in the very center of the room stood a gigantic pot-bellied stove. The drummer didn't see too many of them anymore. There used to be a lot of old folks gathered around the stove when evening

fell. John glanced at his watch. Maybe they'd all died. John wondered what that new supermarket on the highway would do to Jed's store. Probably wouldn't be needed much longer; a drummer either. He swore as he pulled out a chair and sat down beside the stove.

A thin man was leaning against the candy counter, talking quietly to Jed. His railroad cap and bib overalls ruled out his ever being mistaken for anything but a farmer.

The drummer slowly lit his pipe and noticed that the two men weren't really carrying on a conversation. They seemed to be doing more waiting than talking. The drummer watched his smoke amble up towards the stove pipe and once again felt his instincts signal. Yes—he was quite sure, but he'd just have to wait and see.

After some great length the farmer spoke, "Reckon they'll come up with sumpthing, Jed?"

"I don't know, Willy. I expect maybe they will." Jed sighed and idly inspected his fingernails. "Just don't know yet."

The drummer shifted in his chair and the creaking swung Jed's balding head his way: "Howdy Drummer."

"Hello Jed. Hope you all don't mind if I join you. I got kinda restless up in that room. Been quite awhile since I was in Tracy."

"Drummer, this here's Willy. Owns a farm just down the road. Don't reckon you've met yet."

The drummer nodded and started to introduce himself. . . .

"Did you ever sell anything to Art Howell?"

The drummer was taken aback by the intensity of Willy's inquiry. He thought a minute: "Sure. He live in that big white farm house down by the river? Sure. I did some business with him. He and his wife were sure nice people. Had me stay for dinner."

Jed wiped his forearm across his bald head and spoke gently, "Things have changed some since you was here last, Drummer. . . ."

"I believe he done it," Willy interrupted. "It just don't make sense otherwise. He done got rid of 'em and that's that!"

The drummer asked, "You talking about Art Howell?"

The drummer nodded

Jed nodded and started again, "Four years ago Art Howell's wife died. She was a fine Christian woman and Art took it plumb hard. He grieved real hard for about two years. Guess he grieved till there wasn't much left. Just lonesomeness I reckon. Then he met Marcy Davis. . . ."

"White trash! Her and that no good brother both! Serves 'em right!"

"Now, Willy, they ain't got no proof yet. That's what they're looking for."

The drummer was interested now. Something was up—no doubt about that. He relit his pipe and took a deep breath, "What happened, Jed?"

"Well, Art met Marcy about two years ago. He was lonely and still a fine figure of a man. Guess he must have been about sixty-five—seventy by then, but he carried himself real well.

Somebody said he had been a soldier somewhere—a commando—I believe. Anyway, Marcy made up to Art and soon Art had himself a new bride."

"Trash! Deserved whatever happened! By God he oughta . . ."

"Willy, calm down! Wait and see what they find. Anyway, rumors started flying thick about them. Why would a young girl marry an old man unless she was after his money—that sort of thing. Art did have a fine farm—worth a pretty good price. All she would of had to done was to wait. Some claim she got tired of waiting. After Art was shot she . . ."

"Whoa!" The drummer was on the edge of his seat now. "Who got shot?"

"Art. A man named Roscoe Tyner shot him out deer hunting. That's what he claimed anyway. Even came in here to use my phone to call the sheriff. Said he thought it was a deer moved and when he went to look he found Art."

all three men jumped unconsciously

The phone rang and all three men jumped unconsciously.

"Hello. Jed here. Found anything? Yeah, Willy's here. Sure, send him right up. Willy, the sheriff wants you to bring some grub—says they're gonna search all night."

Willy began at a frenzied rate gathering up lunchmeat, crackers and cheese. Grabbing up an armload he scurried out to his pickup truck and then hustled back. His hasty stiff-legged gait made the drummer remember an old Keystone Kops movie. Finally Willy could stand it no longer—he made a quick bobbling two step and broke for the truck, fired it up and took off, throwing gravel all over the front of the emporium.

Jed shook his head and sighed, "Where was I? Oh yeah, a man named Roscoe Tyner shot him."

"It was an accident?"

"That's what it looked like—'cept for one thing. Some folks claim Roscoe was Marcy's lover—had been for years, they claim."

"Oh."

The drummer heard the front door swing open and looked around, expecting to see Willy hurrying after some forgotten item. Instead he saw the gaunt figure of an old man with an unkept grey-splotched beard. The old man approached leisurely and sat down across from the drummer. Jed introduced him to the drummer and briefly filled him in on their conversation.

The drummer felt the sting of another mosquito and slapped at his thigh—missing this time. He'd never seen mosquitoes that hurt this bad. The old man began chewing tobacco. The drummer noticed that he even chewed slowly.

"Jed, what happened after Art was shot?"

"Well—they went to pick up his body and found him still breathing. He shouldn't have been. He'd been shot square through the stomach and bled something fierce. Doc Blanchard said he didn't think he'd make it—lost too much blood. Said something else too. Said Art was covered up with scars. Looked like shrapnel wounds, the Doc said—along with a big scar down his side. Looked like it come from a knife or a bayonet maybe."

"What about his wife—Marcy?"

"Marcy didn't seem too awfully grief-ridden. I reckon a widow's got a right to be practical, but it seemed to strike people wrong, her asking prices of things before her beloved husband was one hundred per cent dead."

"Art didn't die then?"

"Nope. He laid there for a good long time but he just kept on getting stronger. Next thing we knew he was back home."

"Did he say anything? About being shot?"

"Said it was an accident."

"So he went back home to Marcy?"

"Yep. Course her brother was living there too. Said he wanted to help out."

"What about Roscoe Tyner?"

"He just went back to doing what he used to—which was mostly getting drunk. Then last year they found him in the honeysuckle."

"Honeysuckle?"

"Yeah. You know them thick vines with the pretty flowers that smell so sweet. Some kids found Roscoe ahanging there."

"Dead?"

"Had been for a good while. Looks like he'd been drunk and fell off a bank and his head got hung up in the vines. Doc Blanchard said something interesting here too. Said it damn near looked like he had been garroted."

"Garroted?"

"Yep, like they do to a sentry in war time."

The drummer leaned back and refilled his pipe again while Jed got them a cup of coffee. He usually smoked slowly. Damn. Who'd of thought about something like this happening in Tracy. Art seemed so nice, so . . . quiet.

The old man made a coughing sound, "I worked with Art Howell years ago. Cutting timber. We used to haul logs out of the woods—guess there was five or six of us did that. One man was pretty much of a bully. Big strong man, looked like a bear. One time he took in abeating on a mule that balked. He took up a club and just kept on awhaling away like he meant to kill that mule. Then Art came along. He told him to quit and the bully whirled around on Art like he was afixing to start in on him. Art was carrying an ax. He never said a word just sorta slid one hand down the ax handle. They just stood there facing each other and then the bully dropped his club and walked off. I don't blame him— Art had a look on his face like . . ."

"they found him in the honeysuckle"

"Here's the coffee." Jed passed out the cups and sat down, rewiping his bald head with his forearm. No wonder he's bald, the drummer thought. Probably rubbed all the hair away.

"So what are they looking for now, Jed?"

"Well, I better go back for a spell. Most everybody figured sure that Marcy and her brother had put Roscoe up to shooting Art. Most everybody was also kind of suspicious about Roscoe turning up dead in a honeysuckle patch—I mean did you ever hear of anyone doing that? People thought Marcy would cut and run but she didn't. Folks claim she wasn't about to let go of that

farm—not and go back to being poor white trash. So there the whole thing set. Kinda like two boxers just acircling each other—or so they said. Art on one side and Marcy and her brother on the other. Kind of like..."

"Sparring?"

"Yep. That's it. Kind of like they was sparring, and them all three together in that big house."

The old man coughed again, "I seed a king snake afixing to grab hold of a rattlesnake onct. It just sorta lay still and then..."

The front door swung open and once again the drummer looked around expecting Willy. A gangling youth entered, grinned, and perched atop a cracker barrel where he continued to grin—whether from bashfulness or stupidity the drummer couldn't decide.

The drummer turned back to Jed, "So Art killed Marcy and her brother?"

"Don't know for sure. Art came in about a week ago and told the sheriff Marcy and her brother had took some money and run off."

"Then what are they looking for?"

"Well, Art's got a bog back of his farm—where the river just meanders about. The sheriff was out nosin around and found a woman's shoe there. Don't know if it belonged to Marcy or not. The shoe was in pretty bad shape—something had chewed on it—probably an old possum. But there shouldn't have been no woman's shoe there at all."

"They's snakes out there in the bogs. Lots of snakes and things," the old man said softly.

"So they think Art killed them and stuck them in the swamp?"

Jed nodded, "They been looking all day—poking around with poles and..."

"Where's Art at now?"

A gangling youth entered

"Sheriff said he was just sitting up there in the house—sitting and rocking and holding his first wife's picture. Won't talk much."

The drummer reluctantly decided his pipe needed refilling again. The buzzing whine of mosquitoes flitting about the store seemed to be increasing in volume. They must be swarming out in the swamp. The unceasing grin of the boy atop the barrel began to play on his nerves. Didn't he ever stop?

The front door of the emporium swung open and Jed and the drummer assumed Willy was finally returning from his errand.

"Did they find anything yet?" Jed hollered over his shoulder.

"No. And I don't expect they shall."

That wasn't Willy's voice.

Art Howell stood framed in the doorway, "I need some of your tobacco, Jed."

The drummer watched Art Howell walk up to the tobacco counter. Art had changed quite a bit since he'd last seen him—much thinner now and his hair was pure white. He still stood ramrod straight, though.

Jed had managed to get his breath back, "Sure, Art. Sure. How's . . ."

The room was completely still except for the whining mosquitoes.

Art lit a cigarette in a calm and precise manner. The drummer noticed that he carefully placed the spent match in his shirt pocket. His every gesture suggested control.

Jed nervously wiped his bald pate with his forearm.

Art turned and walked slowly toward the door—stopping just short. He nodded briefly.

"Hello, Drummer."

"Art. I was sorry to hear about your wife . . ."

"You much of a Bible reader, Drummer?"

"I have, some."

"She did. All the time. Even got me to. You ever read about Haman?" and then Art was out the door.

His exit was as sudden as his entrance. The drummer thought of the swamp mist that rose in the morning—rose, took shape—and vanished.

Jed demanded, "What'd he mean? Who was Haman?"

The drummer didn't answer. He'd closed his eyes and was searching through old memories: Haman? Haman? Something about . . . the bitter . . . being bitten?

The Phantasia Bar

High on 'T,'
she seems to be

erotic potions,
exotic notions,
crass emotions,
erratic motions,
partial pyramids less erector
the spastic ballerina spectre
shouts obscenities thru cruel lips
that grin and count the meager tips
and strangle on a tapioca nite,
the self-imposed chastity belt cinched too tite
she picks no farmers, or rainbow seekers,
or windmill charmers to trip with her
to the promised land,
she wades alone
cross the River Styx,
with a chocolate covered dildo in her hand.

Hadley

Ode to Sarah Rose

A toast of double J&B
to one who drinks
and thinks like me.

A talented, flaxen, will-of-the-wisp,
with the poet's gift,

or worse, its curse
for we tend to spend our days in verse,

forsaking a role, not taking a part,
we sit and write
in a world apart.

Plastic lives immortalized by dripping quill,
our puny loves are magnified and seen
as Lilliputians on the screen of a sniper scope
that adds dejection and subtracts hope.

(Epilogue)

I could've touched her,
would've touched her,
should've touched her,
should've tried,
the lady was preoccupied
with turning off the pilot light,
taking her mental virgin's psyche,
and baking her head.

Hadley

Hadleys

David/11

A young Adonis,
tall and lean,
whose clear cool eyes are Hadley green,
with fair brown hair
and light tan skin
that magnify the wistfull grin,
the gentle manner
of a calm disarmer,
and the priceless smile of a windmill charmer.

Dara/14

I get high on mountain skies
and the cinnamon skin
with olive eyes
and light brown hair
of this devil-may-care
young Amazon
in her own pre-dawn.
She's an iridescent butterfly
just come alive
who'll soon unveil
the Holy Grail
and sip womanlike
from the cup of life.

Darci/13

I confess
that I'm possessed
by the too-green eyes
and mischievous smiles
of this lovely
half grown
woman-child with the soft brown hair
and innocent stare
of her early teens
in cut-off jeans
that play hide 'n' seek
with her nymph's physique
as she smiles
and turns the other cheek.

Dane/7

I've watched a small wind-devil dance across the quiet plain,
dust whirling,
swirling,
spiralling upward,
drifting back again.
That's the way this child affects me,
big brown eyes and straw blond hair,
loving, laughing, skipping, dancing
like the kiss of fresh spring air.
The sands of time lie quite sublime,
now unperturbed,
they'll be disturbed
and moved like me,
you'll see.

Hadley

Hadley lives near Monrovia, Indiana. He has won the GENESIS prize for Poetry.

The Long Ride

J. C. Starker

Margaret Brown walked slowly through the fair, her huge hips rolling with each step she took toward the mid-way. A strand of wiry, gray hair kept jumping up on the top of her head, but she did not bother to push it back after three unsuccessful tries. She had left her monotonous office job early, treating herself to an hour of freedom. Lately she had possessed a mad desire to fling everything off her desk at the close of the day, to rush back to her rented room, to rip the cheaply furnished room apart, and to throw away all she had meticulously saved through her lonely life. At first these feelings had frightened her, but once she had begun to lose her fear she found she could giggle over them in the darkness of her midnight bed. She smiled comically. Today was her birthday and no one in the whole world noticed. She felt as though she alone knew the great importance of the number fifty.

Hucksters called out to her as she was jostled along the sawdust trail. They beckoned wickedly with toss rings and water guns while winking outrageously. Margaret laughed in abandonment, shaking her head girlishly toward them as her large breasts joggled onward. She didn't want to waste her precious money on their rigged chances for success. She had carefully decided what she would give herself as a birthday surprise. She roared with delight at her own ingenuity. How foolish, how silly, how right everything was today.

At last the bright lights of the carrousel jiggled into view. She hastened her steps and greedily took the stub from the dirty, skinny ticket agent. Anxiously she waited for the horses to stop their endless circle of prancing, while mumbling to herself that the attendant was giving the children much too long a ride. Finally the gate was opened and Margaret's worn shoes tripped over the upward step onto the platform. She fell against a young mother who turned and stared at her in disgust. Margaret ignored the hateful look and struggled through the pushing, selfish children until she spied the tall black horse and grabbed him possessively. His flared nostrils were painted cherry red, his mane was adorned with yellow

tassels, and he seemed ready to explode into action at the slightest command. Margaret patted him gently as she pulled herself onto his saddle. Her buttocks squished over the horse's sides onto his back as she vainly tried to make herself fit onto the narrow seat.

The music began as the carrousel jerked to a start and Margaret grabbed the pole rising up through the horse's head, clinging happily as her ragged purse waved in the breeze. Around and around the carrousel flew; up and down Margaret rode. She felt as light as a young girl; she felt as slender as a new blade of grass fluttering in the summer wind; she was free, like the floating wonderful dreams she had begun to have lately.

"What the hell do you think you're doing?" the attendant demanded, stumbling over to her. His face floated up and down, confusing Margaret. "Don't you know you're too fat to be on that horse? You're supposed to ride in the coach," he shouted roughly. "Crazy old people are supposed to ride in the coach," he muttered, stalking away.

Margaret dropped her empty purse which would be trampled by rough, loud children when the ride ended. She rode silently, unable to stop her journey as the wild stallion plunged up and down on the carrousel, its red nostrils flashing hot before her stinging eyes. Her lips began to quiver and she shouted for the long ride to stop, but no one was listening for her cry.

drifting into sleep

using safety scissors the Captain cut a strip of bright
red construction paper see boys and girls and he took out
a big blue crayon and printed SANE on one end and INSANE
on the other and very carefully stuck the ends together
(leaving just a crack) with a piece of Scotch tape and
put it on the head of Dancing Bear

Marcia Parmerlee

enceinte

old lady pricks pin holes in ends of raw eggs
she blows out the plasm and throws it away
with strong steady hands she enamels a scene
alive with the light; what a bright decoration

and you are the man with fine arms and firm legs
you say what you think and you mean what you say
you've made your shell pretty; your wit is so keen
expressing emotion through expectoration

you argue your shell must protect what's within
and i say you're right, but it's useless without
the live thing that died when it tried to break out
or else was aborted by somebody's pin

Marcia Parmerlee

Marcia Parmerlee, 22, is in the MBA program at IUPUI, having earned her A.B. in Psychology from Indiana University with a minor in Fine Arts. She is currently a tax law specialist with the Dept. of Internal Revenue. She is also a volunteer with the Indianapolis Museum of Art and the Marion County Mental Health Society. The two poems which appear here are her first published works.

rebuke

I. a stainer of glass is a liar.
his lies are sublime;
insinuations divine.
freeloading foolery, to inspire
a flagrant turn of phrase;
beauty, huff and daze.

a dyer of wool is a whore.
the sanest men are in jest:
short-lived retention of breath.
giving of favors and more;
a condemnation of fate,
with much loose-hanging debate.

a lover of men is a joke.
foreign god's creation,
mechanic of elimination.
wheels deprived of spokes
turn endlessly on:
the mad piper's song.

II. querent: how then, may one's coffin
appear a map?
sage: know this, your biography
is a trap.

querent: explain, that i may understand.
sage: kiss, steal, and laugh: absurdity commands.

Jeffrey Alan Purvis

An Obligatory Note

The Movement within, Transition effaced,
Portrays such an incredible lack of Play,
That I feel a Notion (my words to weigh)
And abscond with Purpose, so sure erased.
The poet's lyre,
Inten'd to inspire,
Is in me yet a tool.

The placid scholar, my words to read,
Works the page all daft with form.
His gaze intrepid to find the worm
Placed therein—a maggot freed.
The most subtle Mistake
Spurns his rake,
Confounding a trusted rule.

To those who would pry apart these lines
And force them to surrender truths disguised
By flower and folly, a word for the wise:
Stay! There! For my Meaning's entwined
And knotted too deep
To be quickened from sleep
By laws dreamt up 'mong fools.

Jeffrey Alan Purvis

judgement

drudgery and possibility:
two faces, equally ridiculous.
unknowing knower, invoking both,
utters nonsense.
this is the promise,
and this is the com-promise,
that you shall be hunted as an animal,
fleeing.

(hear, o isreal!
i am the lord, your god,
and i cannot be bought with praises.
your lamplight dims;
your alter quakes.
o, you miserable wretches!
i pity you, the fallen fools.)

mirth and mockery:
this is the promise,
that you shall be hunted as animals,
praying.

Jeffrey Alan Purvis

Jeffrey Alan Purvis, 23, is a senior with a double major in Psychology and Philosophy. He is a professional musician who enjoys writing in his spare time. His fiction and poetry have appeared previously in GENESIS.

Counterpoint

D. A. Biggerstaff

D. A. Biggerstaff, 27, is a junior in English Composition and Journalism. In his free time he is a musician-composer who has appeared with Henry Mancini and David Rose. As his present story indicates, he is interested in combining his composing with his writing. His fiction has appeared previously in GENESIS.

"Please sit down, gentlemen," Doctor Bender said as he motioned his colleagues toward the overstuffed leather chairs in front of his desk. "Well, gentlemen," Bender began, "any ideas? Dr. Crossman?"

"We followed the procedure to the letter. Every step went smoothly. It was a perfect operation. I just don't **know** what happened."

"Dr. Spaulding, any comment?"

"There were no difficulties whatsoever during the surgery. The patient was strong when we began the procedure and remained strong. His breathing was normal, blood pressure was acceptable and he didn't come close to the level of shock we had anticipated. If we're to assume our technique was flawless, perhaps we should investigate—**again**—the possibility of equipment malfunction."

Bender lit his pipe, remaining silent for a moment. "I've spent fourteen long years developing this technique," he began. "The idea came during my internship. At first, I had to steal extra hours of lab time at the university. I used their equipment and their materials. Later, after I finally got caught with a beaker in one hand and forty pages of research notes in the other, I was able to convince the Director of Neurology of the importance of my study. He in turn convinced the medical board, who eventually convinced some influential people in New York.

"I was fortunate. Large sums of money began to arrive from several foundations, including eight million dollars in federal funds. I acquired my own lab, my own equipment, my own staff. I've spent fourteen years of my medical career bent over test tubes and microscopes, gentlemen. I've spent close to sixteen million dollars during those years." He re-lit his pipe.

"Something **happened**, gentlemen. Something went wrong and we are going to find out what that something was. We are going to begin with the primary cultures and go over every test, every page of notes and every piece of equipment. We're going to bust our asses down there and we're going to find our

mistake. If we're unsuccessful by the time we reach the rhesus monkey stage, we're going to begin again. I believe I've lectured enough, so let's get cracking."

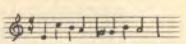
When they had left, Dr. Bender picked up the patient's journal Miss Keeley had brought in earlier. Thinking that perhaps he might find some kind of clue to the backfire through the patient, he thumbed through a few pages of the daily entries, concentrating intently on the few coherent ones.

Journal Entry—May 14, 1969

That cockroach is back again. See him? There he is, in the corner. He's beginning to move the last peanut toward that long crack in the wall—that's his home. When my dinner tray came yesterday, there was a small paper cup of peanuts on it. I ate a few, then noticed that large, black cockroach scurrying around the floor. I thought he must have been looking for food, so I carefully placed the rest of the nuts in a long line against the baseboard. They're all gone, now. The last one's being rolled away. Mr. Cockroach must have a big family living in that crack in the wall—or else he's a hoarder. He's sure a shiny fellow and he moves so quick. He's very quiet, too, so I put a newspaper under the crack and overlapped the pages right to the edge of my bed. Now I can hear him crawling around at night. It gets very dark in here at night and sometimes I get lonely and depressed, but when I hear Mr. Cockroach running back and forth across the newspaper, I begin to feel better. Just knowing he's **there** takes away the loneliness.

I like to write. They give me all the tablets and manuscript paper I need. In fact, they encourage me to write. They say my writing may bring out some unconscious thoughts or aggressive emotional tendencies or something like that. That's what **they** say, anyway. So, I write. I write little stories and poems and journal entries. They take my writing away, though. "We're keeping your papers in a nice, brown folder for you," they say...I think they burn them because my stories aren't very good.

They tell me I asked for this other paper—manuscript paper—when I first came here. But I don't remember. I don't remember very much at all. At times, the paper looks familiar. I see it in my dreams. Sometimes, I see someone writing music on this paper, but when I wake up and try to write down some notes, I can't do very much. I remembered part of the music in my dream and wrote it down. Here's what I saw:



Journal Entry—June 7, 1969

They gave me another shot today. This time, they stuck it in my lower back. Last time, I got it in the neck. "What are these shots for?" I'd ask.

"We hope they'll speed the healing of your nervous system and aid in recovering your memory," they'd answer.

"How long have I been here?" I'd ask.

"A while," they'd answer.

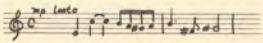
Sometimes, especially after the shots, I think I start to remember things. The word "Hollywood" keeps reverberating in my head. Did I come from Hollywood? If I live in Hollywood, what am I doing in a Colorado hospital?

Once, they came in the middle of the night and gave me a shot. Later that same night, I had a strange dream. I remember seeing the inside of an airplane. The pilot's face was green. The walls were green. Everything in the cockpit looked green because of the cold, luminous glow coming from all the dials and instruments. Suddenly, we jerked forward. The needles on the dials began to spin, slowly at first. I looked at the pilot, who had become a blur of motion. His legs strained and arms pulled against the controls. He was yelling something but I couldn't hear him. We lunged forward again and seemed to turn upside down. Needles were spinning, spinning. I looked at my hands. They were green too, and cold. So cold.

It all seems so strange

Then the dream ended. I've had the same dream many times and it always ends the same way. It must mean something. It does seem familiar, but I just can't remember.

Journal Entry—September 10, 1969



I've been reading many music books the past several months. Most of the books, especially the books on theory, seem so easy to understand. They all seem so familiar, as if I've studied them before. I don't know. It all seems so strange—and yet, familiar at the same time.

The old man at the far end of the ward says there's a piano in the recreation room, wherever that is. I asked him if he could play. He said he couldn't, but added that one of the nurses could. I think I'll ask her to play this music for me.

Journal Entry—October 12, 1969

I just finished reading a book about astronomy. It was good for what it was, but it didn't go far enough. The author talked about distances in light years between stars and other galaxies, but he didn't say anything about the size of the universe. Isn't it possible that the universe could be measured by totally new principles? Could there not be other dimensions to space? And in those dimensions, could not our method of measuring size and distances be one of perhaps hundreds? If we could read the mind of an ant, wouldn't we find that they know nothing about anything existing a few yards away from their anthills? And in those few yards, wouldn't they consider the grass to be a hostile jungle and a sidewalk nothing more than a mysterious, flat desert capable of extreme temperature changes and unpredictable flash floods? And what would an ant—if he were

smart enough—think had happened if a small child unconsciously drove his bare heel into the mound of an anthill as he played in the yard?

The astronomy book only talked of new instruments to measure the outward expansion of the universe. But what about the exploration of inner space? Why not abandon the telescope for awhile in favor of perfecting the electron scanning microscope? Would it not be worth while to increase the magnification of this instrument a thousand times? What would be man's reaction upon discovering—with the aid of a super electron scanning microscope—evidence of intelligent life on a single grain of sand? What would be man's reaction if he discovered some type of space vehicle travelling through the tunnels of a piece of coral or a vehicle being severely battered by dust particles as it navigated through a man's nasal passages?

Though scientists now concede the **possibility** of intelligent extraterrestrial life somewhere in the universe, scientists and mankind in general still hold on to the archaic idea that **we** are the epitome of intelligence—masters of all that can be seen (and unseen?) in our universe. Man has somehow elevated himself to such a degree of conceit as to be absurd in almost every statement he utters concerning extraterrestrial life.

Perhaps one day man will study the possibility of parallel dimensions. Wouldn't mankind be shocked to find we share the earth with several other dimensions? For instance, what would be our reactions if we discovered that while a couple thousand people in an auditorium were enjoying a concert by a symphony, the same space in another dimension is occupied by a battery of cannon blasting away at an invading army? Scientists generally agree that our moon is not inhabited by intelligent life. But what if, in another dimension, we discover our moon to be teeming with intelligent life? On the same basis, the beings inhabiting our moon in another dimension might be looking at earth and deciding that our whole planet is lifeless. Our moon wouldn't be **our moon** any more, would it?

Does the universe end?

So, what's beyond our universe? Does the universe end and something else begin? Why not? Though we may never find out one way or another, we could be so small—the earth, solar system, galaxy and universe so minute—that all we can see of the universe and beyond may very well be a single molecule in the bloodstream of an alien being.

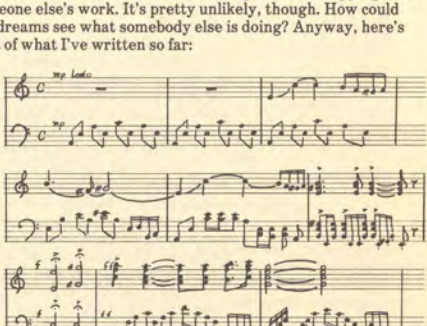
Journal Entry—January 17, 1970

I've been doing a lot of reading these past few months. I've also written a fairly long piece of music for piano. It only took me twelve days to write it. I got the idea for the music from my dreams. I've been dreaming every night for the past three weeks now. They keep telling me to write down every dream I remember, so I do...only this month, it's all written on manuscript paper.

The music in my dreams seems to come every night now and I'm able to remember more of it after I wake up. The setting for the dreams always is the same: I see a desk, a dark brown gooseneck desk lamp, several pens and pencils and a stack of staff paper. There's always one sheet spread across the desk and it's always filled with music. Sometimes I see a blurred image of a hand writing notes across the paper.

They're starting to bother me—the dreams, I mean. I feel I should know what they mean. It's the same feeling I get when I work a crossword puzzle: I **know** what the answser is to "23 Across," but when I try to fill in the squares, the answer won't come. It seems to be right on the edge of my tongue or darting about in the back of my mind and I just can't shake it loose.

More than once I've had the feeling I've been copying down someone else's work. It's pretty unlikely, though. How could my dreams see what somebody else is doing? Anyway, here's part of what I've written so far:



Journal Entry—February 26, 1970

Good news. First, Nurse Doyle played my music on the piano last night in the recreation room. Everyone enjoyed it so much, she repeated it three times. I was proud, at first, but then I thought of the dreams again. The dreams showed me where to put the notes and how to space them. The music really belonged to that mysterious blurred hand in my dreams. Did I **steal** the music? I was still deep in thought when I realized an old woman in a wheel chair had come over to talk to me.

"What have you named the piece?" she repeated.

I thought for a moment, then said, "Counterpoint." She smiled, then wheeled away.

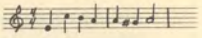
The other good news is that I've been selected for a new laser beam treatment. The doctors say they've been using lab animals for years, just waiting for the right medical case to come along. The treatment is supposed to restore my memory and fuse the damaged nerve endings in my brain. They offered to absorb all my medical expenses if I volunteered for the treatment. I volunteered.

Journal Entry—August 2, 1971

Mr. Cockroach has a family. I counted ten babies. I saved my soda crackers from lunch and broke them into tiny pieces for the babies. Kind of a birthday present for them. They loved them, too. The nurse came in and read a story to me today. She comes in a lot to read stories to me. The last time she read a story about a farmer named MacDonald. Old MacDonald the farmer...E.I.E.I.O. Today, she read a story about Jack and a beanstalk, but I already heard that...from somewhere. She also read a story about a lamb. It goes like this:

"Mary had a little lamb,
its fleece was white as snow.
And everywhere that...

I forget the rest. Would you like to see the music I wrote today?



Dr. Bender slowly closed the journal and lit his pipe. He leaned back in his chair and stared at the rain that had been constantly pinging at his office window all morning. Finally, he turned to the intercom on his desk and pressed a button.

"Miss Keeley?"

"Yes, doctor?"

"Cancel my appointments for the rest of the week. If some dire emergency comes up, I'll be in my lab with Drs. Crossman and Spaulding. We've got fourteen years of notes to review and I don't want any surprise guests unless they've been cleared through me. That goes for my wife, too."

"Yes, doctor. Is there anything else?"

"No...yes. Discontinue all medication for Mr. Harris and get him ready for transfer to Brookview Sanitarium. I'm afraid we've lost him."

"Yes, doctor."

Burnt Ones Among Them

Nothing like his Seasons and his
sins in his pipe or
his friend and editor and assailant
- attacked him before he was his editor, the friend did
but nonetheless a friend/poet
the "Prince"! . . . (of the latter)

Nothing like the sting and the sweat
and the smarting of the child's body,
not Rimbaud's,
but another one's (child's)
- after wrestling in the grass
in the swelter
in the evening in the August

but still a telling experience
Enveloped by white light and white noise
Searing
  or worse
the eyes in their sockets and
rendering sensibilities helpless—
fried in their own contradictions

Leaving, only burnt sound within any
intellectual sphere that might
have remained
——and an agitated despair
in the gut,
assuming a distinction between the two
And,—speaking to the point,
the experience transformed:

an ambiguity
in the sand—scorched white sand.

Bruce Grelle

He was doing the captain's bidding
last I saw him
knotty hands and all

older than the moon,

Watching the cargo come in
on flatbeds

riding the truckers

years more of salt and earth
ahead
but few beyond that.

Waiting without the knowledge of it
for some thing
"out there some time" (he would have said)

some sort of Platonic notion I'll guess
or a sense of meaning
or a bit of humor in the roll.

Bruce Grelle

Bruce Grelle, 19, is a sophomore in Religious Studies. He intends to teach in college and write on the side. The two poems included here are his first published works.

The GENESIS Bicentennial Essay Competition

The GENESIS Editorial Board wishes to announce the extension of our Bicentennial Essay Competition. The theme for the contest is "American Horizons—Perspectives for the Next Century." All entries must be appropriate to this theme. Eligibility is limited to students currently enrolled at IUPUI. Only one entry will be accepted from each student.

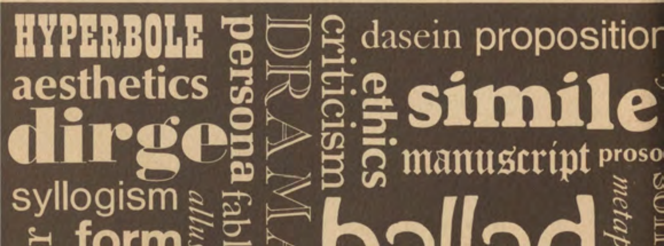
One prize-winning essay has already been selected and is featured in this issue of GENESIS (see "The Maculate Nation," page 3). The author, Ted Michael McQuade, has been recognized at Honors Day, April, 1976, and presented with a check for $500.

Two additional prizes of $500 each will be awarded in the fall to the authors of winning essays submitted on or before the deadline of Monday, September 13, 1976. Both of these prize-winners will be published in the Fall '76 issue of GENESIS, and the authors will be recognized at Honors Day, April, 1977.

Detailed instructions to authors are available in the lobby of Cavanaugh Hall, the Blake Street Library, and the 38th Street Library. Entry in this Bicentennial Competition will not exclude any student from being eligible for prizes in other areas of GENESIS.

General Instructions to Authors

Manuscripts are invited from all persons who have been students at IUPUI at any time during the last eighteen months prior to submission. Manuscripts of essays, fiction, or poetry, on any topic, may be submitted at any time to GENESIS, Student Services Office, Cavanaugh Hall, 925 West Michigan Street, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46202. All manuscripts are considered by an editorial board elected by the English Club and the Philosophy Club. Authorship is not revealed to the board until a manuscript has been accepted. All submissions must be accompanied by a separate title sheet containing the author's name, address, and telephone number. Essays and fiction should be typed on a sixty-space line and double spaced. Manuscripts of less than sixteen pages will be given first consideration. Manuscripts must be submitted **in duplicate**. No manuscripts will be returned to authors. Authors whose material has been accepted will be notified prior to publication. Any manuscript submitted too late for the current deadline will be considered for the next issue. Prizes of $25 are awarded each issue for the outstanding entry in each of the categories of essay, fiction, and poetry.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