

# EMANON



winter 1969-1970







# EMANON

Winter, 1969-70

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## Staff

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**For Johnny**

Jungle boy, raspberry  
Rough and excellent as sleet  
Moon's mister, wired to  
The rat tat tat of things.  
You count the sun out loud.

Light sleeper, hesitating  
Only out of courtesy  
Ear to the ground and  
Stacking lighting up like groceries  
You know just what you know.

All Anglo-Saxon, small investor  
Taking inventory from  
Your private stock. You caterwaul  
Past nightmare's cup  
Secure in your own skin.

**On The Back Porch at Cambridge**

Green floor, soupsweet  
Cobweb court and monitor  
I, intruder with my  
Daubs and ashes  
Am your vessel, yes  
Your hyacinth.

Back yard, tiny jungle  
Genuine 'tho tigerless  
I'll come tonight  
And kill the mop!  
That missionary!  
Flash and crockadiles  
I'll rule the underbrush  
A terrifying Negress  
Twenty times widowed  
Seven feet tall.

Here there is time  
For cultivation of the graces.  
For those books  
By fishermen and travellers  
Those catalogues  
Of pottery and shrubs.  
To learn about  
That other, spare America  
Brown rivers where I have  
No root or touchstone.

Here there is no Apocalypse.  
Here I am guileless,  
Unassuming as a milkweed.  
But you, still you, the hero  
Love, my waterboy.



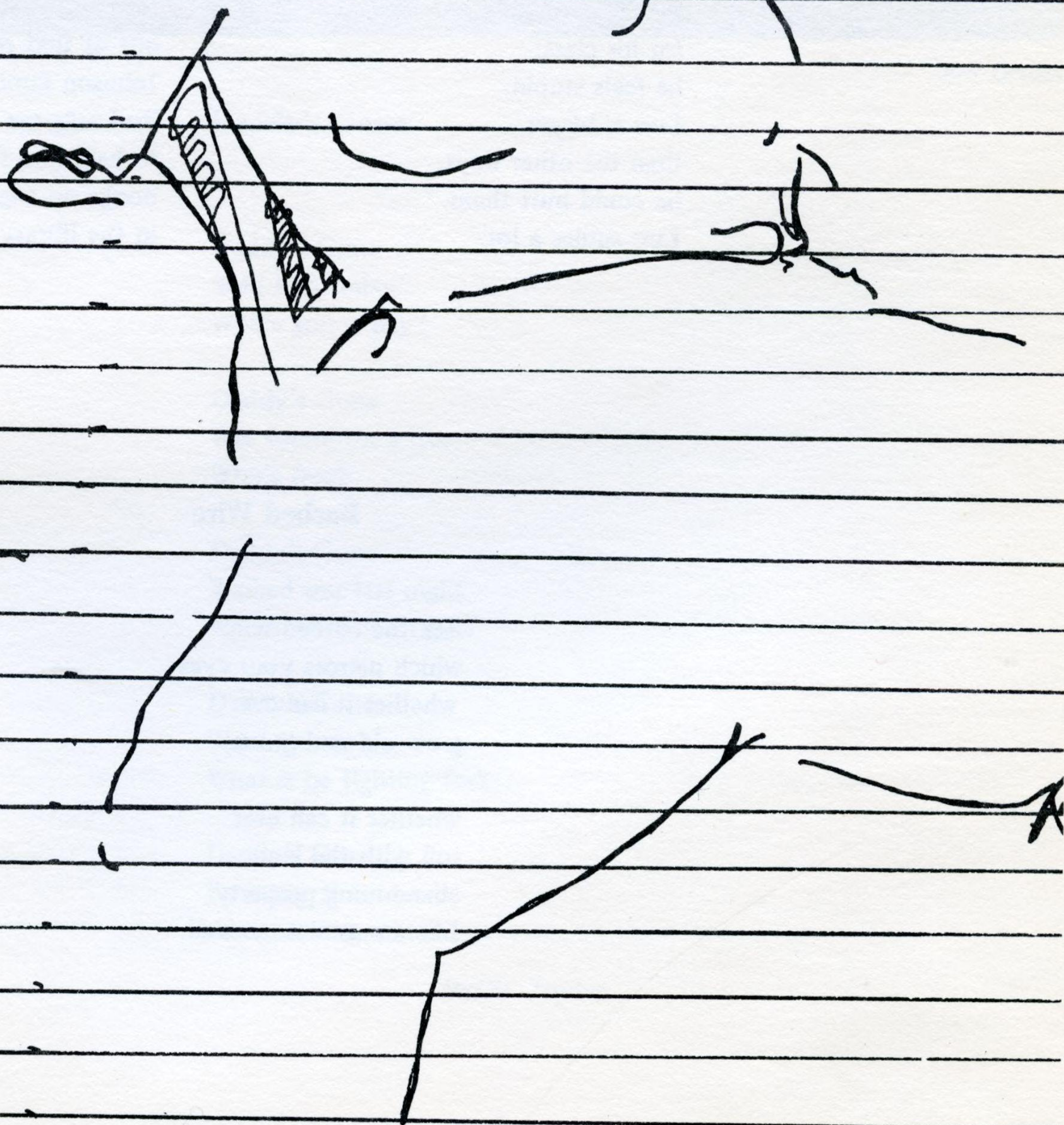
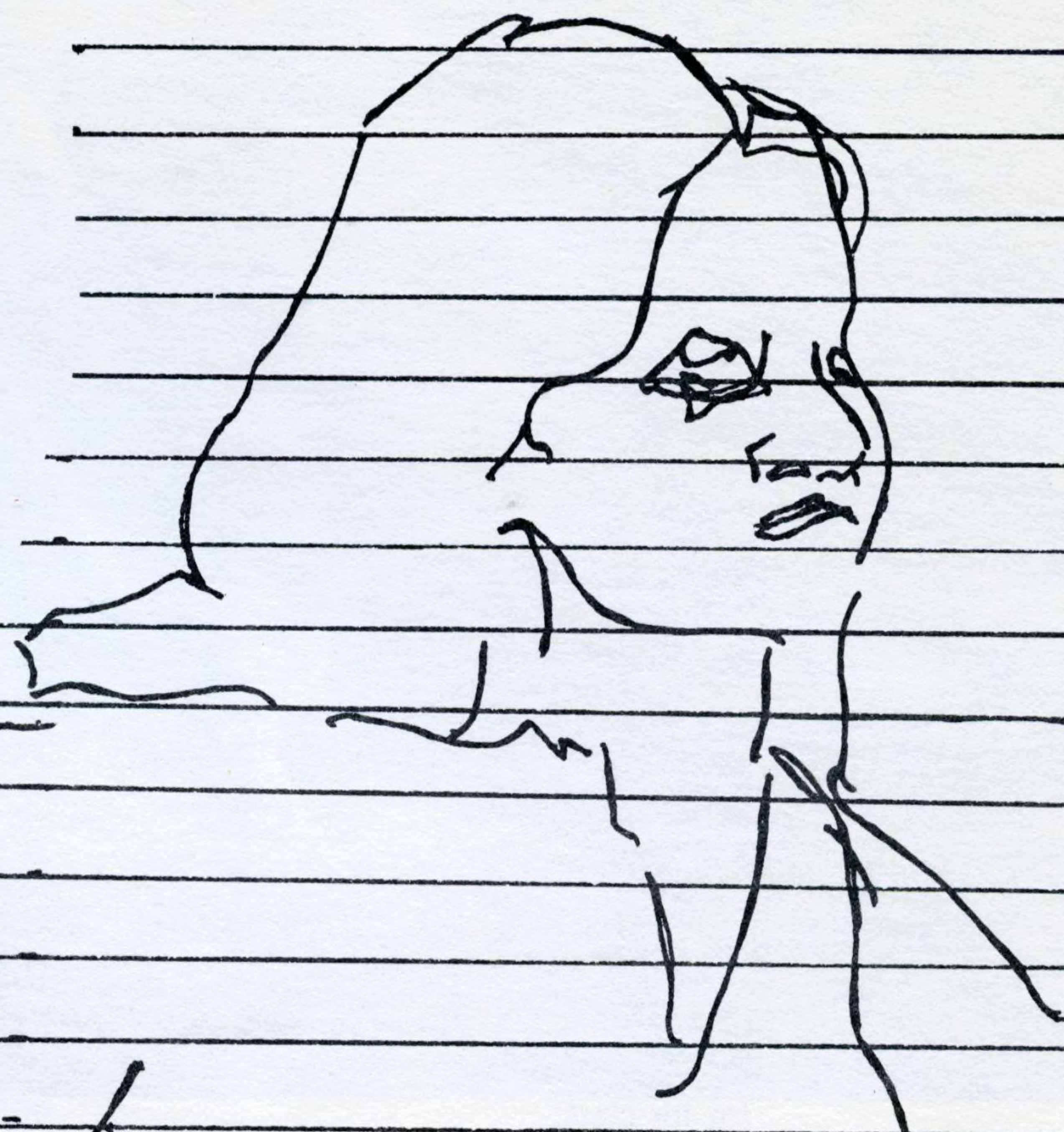
## Scrapping

Intrusive membrane, New York interferes  
And sets us at each other's throats.  
The streets are studded  
With bad memories like rhinestones.  
Glass grows queer and magical  
Around me.  
The dead texture turns my stomach.  
There's no traction.  
You retreat.

My heart shuts like a pocketbook.  
Slowly as tar the anger bubbles up.  
Our words hook on each other's skins  
Like beads.

(Is this the air  
That jets around our days?)

We'll buckle in again,  
Wheat into wind.  
What love there is there is  
It lies like sticks  
As silent as disease.





Jeffrey Burtch

**Paterson: Fourth Grade**

**I**

Lisa gets up  
every half hour  
to sharpen pencils.  
Lisa won't walk,  
she dances.  
When I ask her  
what she's doing,  
Lisa replies,  
"dancing!"

**II**

Luis is too old  
for his class;  
he feels stupid.  
Luis is bigger  
than the other boys,  
he could hurt them.  
Luis smiles a lot.

**III**

Stanley made me  
a teacher  
when he waited  
one cold morning  
to ask  
if he could wash  
the blackboards.

**IV**

Paul stutters.  
Another teacher  
tells me, "Paul's  
one of that retarded  
Johnson family."  
Paul asks me  
to help him find  
books on engines  
in the library.

**Barbed Wire**

Ask the barbed wire  
which pierces your eyes  
whether it can ever  
grow old and green,

whether it can ever  
roll with the land,  
abandoning property  
like an aged stone wall.





Joel Orzack

### Daddy's Gone

Daddy's Gone  
Sold him today  
Who's gonna pay?

Daddy's Gone  
Was found on a tree  
Who's free?

Daddy's Gone  
Walked out last night  
Who started the fight?

Daddy's Gone  
Went to war  
What is he fighting for?

Daddy's Gone  
So many times  
Aint nothing mine?

*Hattie Taylor*



## Real Reminiscences of the Last War Part II

We began before dark. The sun was settling strata when we reached the back stairs to the Imperial Palace and began to climb. We bent over the steep flights of black stones in a long row stopping to straighten our backs and calm our breathing. I was the first to reach the top where I spread myself out with my elbows on the wider landing in front of the low arched screen door. I lit a cigarette. A silent manservant opened the screen and placed an ashtray in front of me. His eyes reflected nothing but the last of the light dying behind us. He turned and disappeared. Some large sea birds flew in circles above us, calling to each other until we lost them in the dark towers and lost, finally, their voices in the sea beyond the mountain. They had gone, with the light, to the other side of the castle where the elaborate guard stood and ceremony went on. We waited, alone together in the dark. We sang. We stopped singing, the sounds trickling out into the empty dusk. Our silence was a concrete lull as hard as the stones and the outlines of the towers in the soft of the evenings' rhythms. In the quiet the stones' cold seemed to seep faster through clothes and into the flesh so I took my wood whistle out of my pocket and played. Others clapped their hands or beat rhythms on the steps. Many stairs below, where I couldn't see him Alfredo put his harmonica to his lips and wept for us all. Flat against my lower lip the whistle sobbed for breath, a strangling bird. I let it fly away . . . .

The screen door slammed outward and the square scuffed toe of a black boot was against my elbow. I looked up at a small paunch in a beautiful soft dark blue suit, tight buckled knickers, wrinkled white stockings, huge folded back lapels, gold buttons with his face stamped on them . . . his face . . . the man was masquerading impeccably as Napoleon. His hand was flat inside his coat. He'd forgotten his lovely hat. A skinny giant in a stocking cap stood above his right shoulder. "This is your emperor. What do you wish?" Alfredo stood up, "Patria o muerte! Venceremos!" The words blew his long mustaches apart. The stocking cap leaned forward, "I'm sorry, I don't speak the language." Others stood, "Patria o muerte! Venceremos!" Tears appeared in the Napoleon man's eyes. I was staring stupidly up, my head flopped back on my neck like a hanged man, so I stood up, "Patr . . ." The stocking cap grabbed my elbow and pulled me backwards towards him. His breath was like dead chickens. Napoleon grabbed my breasts from behind, through my armpits. He giggled and I saw that he

was wearing fuzzy red mittens. I dropped my whistle and started to cry. They pulled me backwards through the door and into a dark hall where I couldn't see and could smell dirty socks and cabbage boiling. I heard the screen door slam. "Patria o muerte! Venceremos!"

The floor was bumpy and slick. They dragged me several yards. I refused to use my feet. It was cold. The giant opened a door I hadn't seen on our left and shoved me inside. Napoleon came flying after me, his hands still hugging my breasts. I heard the door lock behind us. I pushed the little man away from me and he fell heavily with his legs stubbing straight out from his body. He grinned up at me. I stuck my hands in my pockets Gary Cooper style and stared back at him. "Are you the emperor?" "Who me?" he gurgled. Then coyly, "Well, maybe I am." "Forget it." I turned my back on him and looked around the room. It was small and seemed to be perfectly square. There were three heavy Victorian chests of drawers in dark wood, one on each wall except for the wall opposite the door and on that one was a single-bed mattress on the floor covered with dirty candy stripped sheets. There were no windows but there was another door so I tried it knowing ahead of time that it was only a closet. A shallow closet, full of dust and a couple of wire hangers. A single black high-heeled shoe of enormous size lay on its side in the corner. "Help me take off my boots" he whined beside me. "Please . . ." I bent over and braced myself. When I had them off I threw them in the closet and shut the door. I began to **look** through the drawers of the chests. They were heavy and **warped** and out of balance. All but one drawer contained **bolts** of cloth and it was full of paper clips. The cloth was heavy, brocade, wool, corduroy, velvet, satin and jewel colored, amethyst, emerald, ruby, tourmaline, sapphire, peridot, lapis lazuli, but I sat down beside the paper clip drawer and began to sort them "You're my woman now you know." He was playing with his toes and looked very pleased with himself. I laughed. "Okay little buddy, you can call me Josephine if you'd like." "Oh! I'd like that a lot! . . . . Josephine." He was gurgling again and sort of bouncing up and down. Should I chuck him under the chin or beat the shit out of him? "I don't suppose you know what's going on around here." He frowned, "A war." Almost immediately he started gurgling again and I went back to sorting paper clips. I decided to make a

continued on next page



mail shirt from them

I became very involved with the shirt and forgot everything else for some time. Then I heard footsteps coming down the hall towards us. I stopped still and listened but they went on past us. I looked down at the shirt and saw that it was nearly done. I took it up again to finish it but soon heard the footsteps again. Again they went past. "They're getting ready." "For what?" I asked. "The war." I went back to the shirt, deciding it should reach below my knees. The footsteps continued at shorter and shorter intervals. I tried on my coat of mail. "If you want to make a baby we'd better do it soon 'cause when they get in here they're going to kill us all." "No little man you've got it mixed up. When they get in here they're going to kill everyone but me. They're going to let me out . . . . And Maybe I'll kill you." "No they

won't, no they won't", he sing songed, "They're going to kill you specially for being in here with us!" I realized that he was right. I stood over him "Get out of here before I eat you alive." "I can't, it's locked." He looked doubtful. "I don't give a damn about that, just get out." He jumped up, fumbled a key from an inside pocket and scampered away without looking back. I went to close the door after him but it wouldn't shut all the way again; I tried to drag one of the chests against it but none of them would budge. The sounds in the hallway were sounds of marching now, and coming closer. I pulled one of the drawers open and took a bolt of cloth with me to the closet. Wrapping the cloth around myself I sat down next to the shoe and pulled the door closed. I heard things breaking outside. All I could do was wait. "Patria o muerte! Venceremos!"



*Delia Turner*

Delia Turner





Charley Ferguson



## Street Song

The rain shattered like quicksilver, and she stepped under a shop awning. She turned to the shop window and reached out toward the glitters and sheens spread on the display velvet. Let me pass! she instructed the plate glass. I am the Eternal She of two thousand years past and two thousand thousand future. The tips of my fingers desire play among those gleaming toys of light. But the plate glass held; she sighed and leaned back against it. Immediately Stephen's face assembled before her and began to speak its recurring lines, why? why not? She said aloud to the avenue bare of people, "I should have worn a heavier coat, I'm freezing." Then, peering up and down the streets, squinting at the orange glaze of light and water on the sidewalk and at the multiple kaleidoscopes around the streetlamps, "Damnation to you, Rain, my body says Walk."

Her walk is alive, isn't it? the student director whispered to the professional advisor, but she knew without their confirmation. My walk lives because my body swells full with everything it contacts; it encompasses and absorbs; its spine is the avenue sprawling downtown, twinkling ganglion of jewelry stores bracelet it—you see? You see how wrong you were? My body is everything. If it weren't, how could I create with it? How could I walk as if the pulse of the city pumped my blood? When you said I was afraid of myself, you were quite wrong. How could I give this body, this self, to a man who was so wrong?

But even in the triumph of her argument she realized that the rain was running over her temples and down her cheeks. She stopped at a green and blue awning that covered the step-down entrance to a restaurant. Inside the restaurant at the table nearest the window, a woman gazed outward but seemed really to be seeing some secret dimension of herself. She is looking at her reflection; she is an eternal one. Diamond eyes in violet velvet shadows, a painted sinuous serpent holding within her all possibilities. The man at her table would touch her: he moves his hand across the linen, hesitates, and she measures out a smile tenderly drawn from some infinitely deep resource. And she allows him to touch her ring. Gorgeous, enamelled serpent who hypnotizes and gives precisely what she wills. There sits, Stephen would say, a true blue super-honed-and-polished bitch. Self-conscious, polished, willful, carrying her body like a goblet, yes, but—That's what I mean, Stephen would say, a bitch. She shivered and was annoyed at the frown that crouched

over her forehead.

She kept her eyes on the woman in the restaurant, but she heard Stephen's inimitably declarative sentences: "Look, I know you have problems, but you're not a kid, you're a woman, and I am tired of your histrionics." As if anything were ever that simple. Of course, I'm a woman, but I am a woman who will not act under compulsion and ultimatums. A woman who gives what she chooses when she chooses. Please, he said. I do not choose to, she said, and you ask too much; you will become a dustball in my memory because of your asking. Why, he says, why? Because I am like the bitch-of-the-goblet, an artist whose theme and medium is myself, and I must absorb and shape and polish myself and allow myself to burst open only when I am ready. You would split me and turn me inside out to make me your kind of woman.

"Hey lady, want to buy a pencil?" A beggar? So near the golden restaurant? A beggar with a grin doubled in width by the shadow of his cap. Leaning forward, balancing precariously on rag-and-rubber covered thigh stubs in a rusty child's wagon, he held his can of pencils at arms length. A powerful arm with rain tracking its grime. She thought, What a long arm; you would have been a tall man. "All right," she said, reaching into her purse and firming her mouth as he pulled the wagon a little nearer, as though to say, Look, I could touch you if I wanted to, lady. She dropped a quarter among the pencils. If you touched me, it would be because I allowed you. She did not want a pencil, but he said, "For a pretty lady, I got a pretty pencil." Using his thumb and forefinger, he chose the only pastel green pencil among the red and yellow ones. As he pressed it towards her slowly, stopping it just short of her chest, she felt stage-fright nausea in her stomach. What if my body freezes and my lips balk over words? Grasping wide with her lungs, she took in so much of his odor and the odor of the street that the slime of fear was smothered in her fullness. "Thank you," she said carefully; his grin spread too, and took in a little more of her. Will you stare back at me forever? she thought, but a police car hovered near them, and a rectangularly solid voice said, "He bothering you, miss?" She smiled down at the beggar, comfortable again, and said, "Oh no, he's not bothering me." "You better move along anyhow, buddy," said the cop. The beggar's eyes still glinted into her face as he stretched out his gorilla arms and dragged his wagon away.



Now the police watched her; she tossed her head and glanced into the restaurant once more. If you were my mother superior, serpent-bitch, and I were your novice, and if this were a different world, I should go to the beggar and say, I make you a gift of this body, this body which contains all of the golden shadows of the city; I would embrace his great shoulders and his long arms, and bandage his mutilated thighs—not in romance of him or his life, but because by giving myself to him I would be most fully free. When I freely make a gift of my body, that is the moment when I am completed, when my self is entire.

Can you understand that, Stephen? Does that explain to you why, why I refused your attempts to make me your idea of woman? I am a fabric to be cut, but the scissors must be mine. Even if my body stirred when your fingertips soothed its tremors and traced its surfaces, that was my pleasure, felt by me, used by me. My pleasure when I watched the pores of my nipples under your hands contracting and patterning little creases like patches of mud fed by blue rivers under my thinnest skin—but these were my pleasure, my surfaces. And all of these things—the undulation of my pleasure, the snake-woman, the mist, and the lights, the beggar—I am weaving all into myself. For you, Stephen, to enter there now would be to rip the threads not yet woven. Someday when the fabric is complete, I shall offer it whole to someone—but only when it is complete

And thus I walked away from Stephen with the threads unbroken and the spaces unfilled. She hunched herself, compact and enduring like a cat, against a fresh spray of rain-slivers. I am a bubble, ever-expanding to make room for my parts. A brittle, new-blown glass bubble. She rubbed a dribble of cold water on her neck. Not a brittle bubble, a contracting, expanding bubble—an actress; I am subtle and deft, not because the director says so, but because of the power that weaves the words into a net of energy that holds the theater. I make the net with precision from the materials encompassed by my body—I make it and see myself making it even as I saw myself walk out of Stephen's apartment into the reflections of light and mist.

The rain came harder, and she stepped under the awning of a flowershop seeing the park ahead and wondering where was a busstop. Stephen had said, I'll get you a cab, and she had arched her neckline like an arabian mare on parade. No, no, I'll go alone. And I want to be alone now—if only it weren't raining so hard. She turned to the greenish-half light of the shop populated by antediluvian ferns. There were flowers closed behind two thicknesses of glass on the far wall. She pretended to see her uncle lying there among the chrysanthemums and roses in his bronze casket. Someone seemed to have massaged his jowls methodically down and away from his face, and then buffed them to a satiny texture. She had stared at his pink-beige coverlet so she would not be tempted to stroke the downflow of cool

dead flesh.

I never cried for my uncle even though he used to play monopoly with us for two hours at a time and always gave me a dollar for every A on my report card. But his corpse was more beautiful than ever his body alive. If Stephen was a corpse I would not be able to stop myself from touching, from rubbing my thumbs over the hollows of his temples. I might even climb under the shiny quilt and lie beside him in the coffin with my hands cupped over my navel like his.

Now that you are dead, Stephen, and your skull echoes with splendid emptiness, now do you understand what it means to be complete and enclosed? But of course you don't like it; you don't want to be a burnished sculpture of overripe flesh. Perhaps then, because your demand is frozen into two shadows on your pale topaz forehead, perhaps I shall allow them to seal me up with you. Then you will not be alone, and I shall still hold myself enclosed and separate. And after I have spent fifty years fingering the limits of myself inside myself I shall touch your shoulder and say, Now Stephen, I make a gift of my body to you. But by then your burnished body will have collapsed; it has already begun to rot. She opened her eyes and saw a dusty pot of plastic ivy near the window. I have rehearsal. I have to get uptown.

As she walked now, she tried to think only of the clash of leather heels against concrete that reverberated in her legs and dispelled itself finally in gentle ripples through her buttocks. But nearer the park she had a sensation that something was prodding at her from beyond where the street lights smeared in the rain. I shall walk among the shadows there, alone, to escape Stephen's body; I won't be afraid, not even when I pass the shadow behind a red cigarette ash, not even when I sense the mass of the shadow following me down the path deeper into the trees, even though I grow deadly chilled I shall not run.

Now she walked toward the hotels where doormen directed gray limousines close to the awnings and carpets that shielded the bitch-of-the-goblet's daughters from fag and concrete. Their voices surrounded her like the light clatter of clean glasses being overturned on a tray. Look at me, you lady with endless sliver-glazed legs. Turn that baroque tower of nylon and hair and look at me, tell me how to build myself beautiful and unperturbed. She walked between the woman and her escort's negligently draped scarf. The woman paused in the middle of her metallic pink smile that did not include dark eyes sulking between silver lines of mascara. But you didn't create yourself—you were stamped out by someone else for anyone's use, stamped out, and your sex welded open.

She leaped into the street but was stopped by the horn of a car that almost struck her. Back on the curb she felt them all watching her, but especially one man uninvited to the carpet and awning. He has no right to watch me while he lights that cigarette. I want to be watched when I am onstage full of myself, but not now, not when I am

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piecemeal with anger. As she began to cross the street, he began too, moving at an angle that would touch her before she reached the other side. But he has no right, has no right to touch me. She arched her neck, but felt her eyes rolling freely. I shall stop him with the power of the city absorbed in me; I shall dispell him with my eyes—

“Will you walk with me?” he whispered, cutting her off, dominating her with his shoulders, with his grin.

She stopped in the center of the street, tossed her head to clear her vision of his face and shouted “Taxi!” waving

her arms as if she could seize one out of the mist. “Taxi!” What if he followed her, what if he walked up behind her and took her buttocks in his hands and spoke in her ear again? She went to the awning, but didn’t step on the carpet, and said to the escort with the scarf, “Please get me a taxi, I can’t get a taxi.”

They all reached into her with their eyes as she got into the cab: the escort, the silver-legged callgirl, the man with the cigarette. She watched herself to, in the mirror that reflected her glances back and forth at herself.





**To Bill on the Road**

Blue veins and muscles—yet you  
look more like a girl, even seem like a girl  
when I see you nude. Your black locks  
and single earring rock as you smile.

Once I loved a girl, better, Bill,  
than I love you now. No joke—and yet  
I understand how strange the case must seem  
But I loved her, hot and fertile love, still  
pregnant with mythic promise. You  
give your body to me and jingle. But  
your looks remind me of the old, the meant,  
the overgrown roads we never knew.

**The Waning of the Public Treasury**

Mr. Adams squashed his smoke out in  
a cup of lemon tea. It fizzed. He called  
to tell his New York broker how appalled  
he was at prices, how it was his skin  
when corporate market holdings took a spin.  
The New York broker coughed, agreed, and stalled.  
Mr. Adams smoothed his head. It's bald,  
he chuckled to himself, as a pin.

The banks were empty on the Tuesday after.  
Mobs with hollow bellies filled the streets.  
At his window, puffing his cigar,  
Mr. Adams charged the sun in laughter:  
You dump here your unbalanced trade of heats  
and so maintain dominion from afar!





Mike Aigen



### Stephen

Bed of my fathers,  
Boasting years of semen  
That trickled into tireless wombs,  
Ages of sweet sweat  
Drying into the yellow, chalked sheets,  
All for the agonizing ecstasy of lifegiving.

Chain of the womb-spark,  
Endless bondage of birth and burial  
    burial in birth  
    birth in burial.  
Warm birthing crotches,  
And cold hands, grasping from the grave.

Graveyard of my fathers' spark,  
Womb of my mothers' toil,  
Open your doors.  
Give me life  
And set me free.

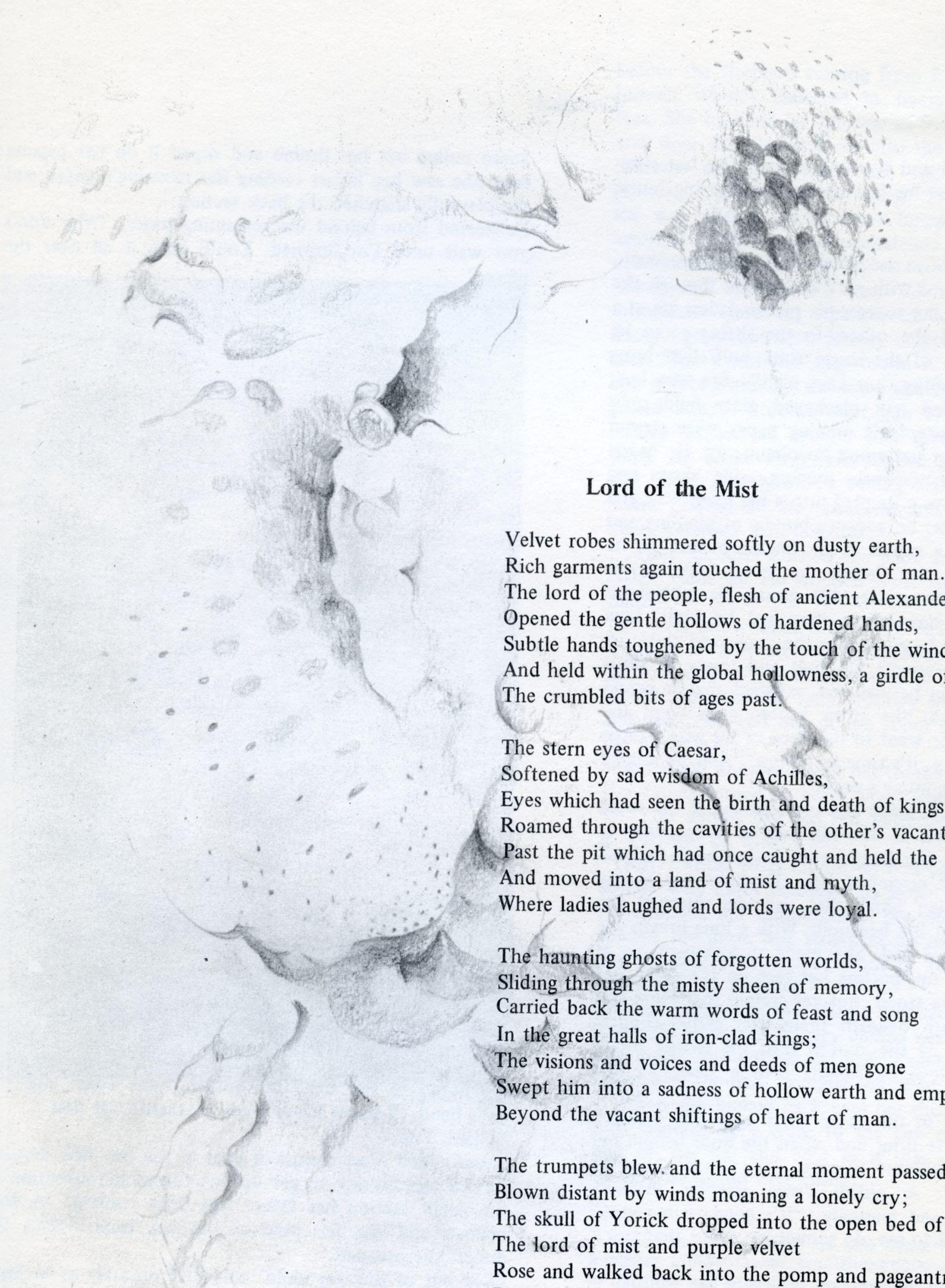
### Soul's Sunset

In the burning bases of forgotten candles,  
In the quiet erosion of moaning spirits,  
In the void of sunset's soul,  
The lean, pointed filament of chaos  
Flickers    flaters    fails

In the wooded recesses of ancient ids,  
Limping Druids congregate in clusters,  
Sets of blazing eyes bursting forth from shadowy bushes,  
Watching some silky priest slit the pulsing throat  
And offer the chalice of black lamb's blood.

And while memory's strains bark clear and cold  
In some resonant mental chamber,  
The sceptered murderer of Time listens,  
Waiting to crucify a shadow  
Under the howling silence of the hallowed moon.





### Lord of the Mist

Velvet robes shimmered softly on dusty earth,  
Rich garments again touched the mother of man.  
The lord of the people, flesh of ancient Alexander,  
Opened the gentle hollows of hardened hands,  
Subtle hands toughened by the touch of the wind and the sea,  
And held within the global hollowness, a girdle of firm fingers,  
The crumbled bits of ages past.

The stern eyes of Caesar,  
Softened by sad wisdom of Achilles,  
Eyes which had seen the birth and death of kings and kingdoms,  
Roamed through the cavities of the other's vacant sockets,  
Past the pit which had once caught and held the cunning of a joker,  
And moved into a land of mist and myth,  
Where ladies laughed and lords were loyal.

The haunting ghosts of forgotten worlds,  
Sliding through the misty sheen of memory,  
Carried back the warm words of feast and song  
In the great halls of iron-clad kings;  
The visions and voices and deeds of men gone  
Swept him into a sadness of hollow earth and empty plains,  
Beyond the vacant shiftings of heart of man.

The trumpets blew and the eternal moment passed into dust,  
Blown distant by winds moaning a lonely cry;  
The skull of Yorick dropped into the open bed of the earth.  
The lord of mist and purple velvet  
Rose and walked back into the pomp and pageantry,  
Back into the yellow halls of a parasite king,  
Who was waiting for him

Mike Aigen



## Conflict

The earth had turned and it was morning. The last stray dog drifted away from his bed underneath the big house of aged white shingles.

Inside the man woke as he always did, without touch, without call. He moved with muffled caution through the morning shadows of the rooms, his plaster laden leg at a forced linger behind the other. In the sitting room he tugged at the chain of the single stark bulb that hung from the warped ceiling . . . . Last night's fire was long out and the lopsided and blackened grate held only cinders. Pages of yesterday's evening paper were strewn over the dirty flower patterned lineoleum rug. He began to gather up the newspaper, moving aside shoes and boots. The pages were crumpled into a big loose wad and stuffed into the grate; he added a bundle of kindling and lit them both from a match struck on the hearth. As he crouched to watch the flames the sweat blue of his overalls took on a momentary rich gleam. He rubbed his dark bristled face; how many fires had he built, how many mornings had he come into the same cold cluttered room and made it warm? He rose and threw in some lumps of coal. Again he watched, satisfied that it would burn steadily, he got the straw broom and swept the hearth. This done he went to the door of his wife's room and shouted, "Nancy, it's time to get up." And he limped outside to get the morning's paper.

She heard his blunt voice and the coldness of the room that had been unfelt in the oblivion of sleep came to weigh on her face. Her hands went to her head to back the thick plaits of unpinned hair. Daylight was sliding through the venetian blind slits and she watched the patterns it made on the bed quilt. With a long breath she began getting out of bed. She made an awkward tug at the covers and sat up, putting her feet on the floor, her legs trembled as she stood, not yet certain that there was anything of strength beneath them. Her carpet slippers dragged the floor as she moved into the sitting room. Once there she lowered herself into a chair by the fireplace.

From the back of the house there came the sound of bare feet hitting the floor and when the door behind her opened she said without turning, "Get some shoes on those big feet." A girlish voice sleepily intoned, "Good morning," and teasingly, "It's good to see you." "You ain't so good to see, do something about that hair." Susan ignored the commands and the criticism, pulled a chair to the fire and plopped her thumb in her mouth. Her mother grimaced, "Get your finger out of your mouth before I knock it out."

Susan pulled out her thumb and wiped it on her pajama top. She saw her father reading the morning's paper and she playfully snatched the back section.

He peered from behind the remaining pages, "Why don't you wait until I'm finished. You'll have it all over the place."

She made no amends and he muttered, "So hardheaded can't tell you nothing."

"She's like that because you let her get away with it. She wouldn't snatch nothing from me and live."

"I don't have nothing to do with them." And he went back to the paper.

"You said the truth that time," she snorted, wrapped her house coat around her and left the room.

He laid the paper aside and took a cigar from his shirt pocket.

Susan, absorbed in the paper but conscious of her mother's departure, slid her thumb back into her mouth. Her mother shouted from the other room. "Susan find my shoes and coat."

"Ma'm?"

"You heard me! Find my shoes and coat."

She grunted and went on reading. Her father removed his dime store glasses and asked, "Didn't Nancy tell you to do something?"

She made no answer but flung aside the pages and clattered out of the room. He went outside to start the motor of the car.

When her mother came out Susan had the coat and shoes ready. She held the coat and helped her into it and then knelt to tie the strings of the old work oxfords.

"You tell Shirley that I want the living room clean when I get home and I mean it, and tell Ed that I want the kitchen floor mopped and I don't want it messed over."

"Yes, ma'm"

Her mother was almost out of the door before Susan asked in a timid voice, "Mama, can I have fifty cents?"

"Why don't you ask your Daddy for something? Sometimes you must think I'm made out of money." She rummaged in her bag and pushed some coins into the girl's hand. "I know I won't get no thanks for that."

"Thank You."

Susan added more lumps of coal to the fire. She shouted for Ed and Shirley to get up and turned her attention to the paper section her father had been reading. A door opened and she felt cold air on her back. "Shut the door," she snapped.

"Get out of the way child" said Ed brusquely as he came toward the fire. He pushed her a little aside and stood

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Delia Turner

before the fireplace turning from front to back to warm himself. Shirley clattered in, heavy men's shoes on her feet. She huddled by the side of Susan's chair for a while and then she clattered on into the kitchen. The jostling cadence of some rock and roll broke the morning placidity. "Hey that's my song" Shirley screamed. Then she was twirling on the worn lineoleum kitchen floor in assorted hair rollers and mismatched pajamas. But she was not encumbered by any of it, not even by the heavy shoes and that saved her. Ed on his way to the refrigerator gave his opinion of his sister's efforts by doing a grotesque turn. Shirley stopped to survey him and said "That's not the way to do it. Let me show you." She grabbed him by the arms and tried to guide him. He pulled away, "I don't want you to teach me nothing." Shirley danced all around him greatly exaggerating his steps. He broke away. His lopped limbs had no rhythm and his long body didn't belong with what he was doing. Susan hooted at the spectacle and finally all three of them collapsed with laughter.

They all turned when the back door opened and their father came in. He stopped short and looked about him angrily.

"Do ya'll know what time it is? Ya'll must think the bus is going to wait on you. Everybody else is out there at the road and ya'll in here cutting up."

He disconnected the radio. Shirley watched him defiantly and then flounced out of the room. Ed busied himself in the refrigerator.

Susan stood unmoved with her thumb in her mouth.

Her father turned to her, "Don't you know what time it is? You almost got bus left yesterday. Ain't no sense in it. You was up when I left."

"Yeah, I know what time it is. You ain't the one going to school. Why don't you leave us alone!"

He snatched her thumb out of her mouth and pushed her toward the door. She struck at his hands, "You been so hateful since you stopped working. It ain't our fault you fell and broke your leg."

He made no reply and after a moment she left the room. The cold air in the hallway chilled her and she felt empty and mean. She wished she hadn't said all that. She didn't know why she had. "Forgive me Jesus," she whispered.

When she looked back over her shoulder, she could see him standing very close to the fire even though he still had on his hat and coat as if that would be the only warmth he would ever know.

"The Conflict" is based on Miss Bennett's journal which will be published in 1970 by Winter House Ltd. under the title, *Members of the Class Will Keep Daily Journals*.





Delia Turner

### Nasty Surprise

Several hours  
of good smoke,  
reading poetry,  
we stormed  
the Kelvinator Bastille.

Searching for peaches  
in heavy syrup,  
I opened a can.

Popping a slice  
into my mouth,  
I was kicked  
in the teeth  
by a grapefruit section.

*Jeffrey Burtch*



### Alka-Seltzers Don't Make It

Bleary, steaming orbs greet the morning  
Nothing's wrong,  
No taxes,  
No love to lose.  
Just the cement mixer that is my mind,  
Churning up the contents overtime.  
Alka-Seltzers don't make it.  
(What good are little fizzly  
Acid-fighters to a green-fungused brain?)

*Beth Lipsey*

### SNCC'D

ju-  
lian bond  
isn't any courtland cox or  
ivanhoe  
(crackerscarred live martyr-heroes).  
rap's sinewed hands and/or stokeley's  
trinidadian cool.  
Foreign to him.  
his poems aren't quiteupto  
charlie cobb's piercing lyric and  
he has yet to earn  
77 years  
like cleve.  
maybe that's why  
the peckerwood belles in  
Arkadelphia, Arkansas  
went fucking crazy when  
he last  
visited.

*Paulette Williams*



**Silent Movies**

Across the silent screen I wobble  
Twirling my warped cane of respectability  
—like a powerless propeller  
My thumbprint moustache quivers as my  
Lips flap and jaw bounces  
—but the music steals my words  
The toothy piano devours my every syllable  
And digests it with a musical grumbling  
Or sometimes I mouth my piece  
Then black engulfs the screen and informs you  
With hypocritical white letters in a condensed version  
—what I'd said—more or less.  
But even then my words remain severed from  
me  
I can't bear it, though you laugh  
As I kick cops in the ass  
And splatter the grocers with over-ripe fruit  
And plop buckets of red (on the screen it looks black)  
Paint—WHOOPS!—right on burly workmen's heads  
Trying to show them the absurdity of it all  
Still you howl  
And forget the smears, specks, splotches that fly by  
—the film is old, very old.  
Laugh! I know I would  
If I saw myself short-stepping it along  
As though my ankles were shackled together  
But they are, and that's no laughing matter  
Locked in celluloid for an eternity  
Without even my words.







### Brother Lem

Brother Lem walks with sass. Spotting him easing across campus, I smile to myself thinking of the imposing impression he must make on other people. His two-hundred pounds of former wrestling weight bow up and down in a tennis shoe pimp. Always in a leather coat, today he wears a bright green jacket, that stands out against his coppery skin and black shiny afro. He glides up, a slight nod of the head, a slow, deep greeting: "Sister Barbara, what's happening?" "Oh nothing much," my standard reply. "Yeah?" his eyes widen and his eyebrows rise and fall quickly into a confident smile, "too bad." "What's new with you?" I ask. "Well, I'm high, but that's not new." He chuckles and his chest shakes enjoying his understatement. "By the way sister Barbara, what sign are you?" The question grabs my attention, I always like to talk astrology. "I'm a Cancer." He thinks about it a second, "that's hip, that's hip. I'm an Aries, you know, the ram, aggressive, forceful, energetic, god of war." I smile to myself at his enthusiasm, and respond, "Right, cardinal fire sign, man of activity, quick-tempered, determined." Lem beams, he is recognized. "Well," I go on, "I am the cardinal water sign, plunged and floundering in my emotions. I could be your opposite, indecisive and undetermined, checking out every side of everything, maybe never getting anywhere." Lem listens to people with his face, opening his eyes real wide as if to take in something new in every word while he lets his head kind of bob up and down to make the listener feel well attended to. Half of what he hears must bore him; doesn't most of what we hear bore us? But Lem has an original air of formality. Those of us he bothers to talk to get a special attention from his presence and it is well enjoyed, because we spend so much energy dispensing pieces of our souls to reflexed smiles and bored nods. Lem is the giver of advice and these are his opportunities to divulge little bits of wisdom, quick solutions or maybe just notes of information.

He rubs his chin as if to consider things seriously. "Well sister Barbara, if you're wandering around so much, maybe you need some direction. A strong person could help you find yourself." We both smiled. I seldom take counsel too seriously, but he has rarely been deluded about it. It is an unspoken mutual joke. Several years ago he had seen in me the promise of great black womanhood but felt I needed some philosophy upon which to build my true black self. He tried a nice far-out one on me. He

had met in one of his favorite Chicago southside hangouts a guy who believed himself to be a witch. He had a small following which I imagined to be about five in actual number. He had certain knowledge, I learned, that the world as we know it was ending very soon. This sphere of reality in which we live was actually a state of non-being and those few black people here who were aware of the true black deity and were prepared for a pure, non-white life, would be removed to the real earth to begin life. Lem thought if I could grasp this idea I might find inspiration to build my character towards my true blackness, and towards being chosen for real life. Skeptic that I am, I debated with him about wanting any more life than this, and have remained ignorant of my true nature.

Lem's generous offers of guidance never seem quite right for me but the life and the adventures that have given him his notions of wisdom have always intrigued me. Beneath his assurance is an everyday middleclass kid who left his neighborhood one day and tried to get into the everyday of a different world.

Lemuel Anderson has a big time dad, whom he has called "Daddy Cool." Lem's old man is everything Frazier wrote *Black Bourgeoisie* about. When Lem was a kid, this was cool. But when we are kids, we are cool in our own neighborhood. Lem went out and really dug what pimps and hustlers and winos and whores are all about and in that world, big-time dad and mom and two cars didn't look so great, a little too clean. Dad made a living off the uncool neighborhoods yet he sent Lem off to boarding school, to be a great scholar, and yes, to be kept clean and pressed.

Lem, warrior, rebel, came to college with a process. To middle class brown children like myself a process was the ghetto's unmistakable hybrid of hair straightening. Grease and lye mold a head of thick kinky hair into a shellacked sculpture that somehow desperately resembled that ideal of straight white hair. Lem definitely didn't show any signs of Exeter breeding. He was, and is, a wealth of southside tales. He has bought wine for the train station winos and gotten drunk with them to get them to rap about their lives. He has his own seat at the bar in Thereasa's where he hears B.B. King and Junior Wells. And he is the man in the know on how to get high. The Chicago blues ghetto is Lem's world, the neighborhood he goes home to when he gets back. Lem is now "Brother

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Lem," and his full kinky afro is a symbol of his new, better rebellion. The ghetto is now his cause. He is black. He is the energetic and determined disciple of the fire of southside.

Our conversation is uneventful, our sketchy knowledge of each other has been renewed in our pleasant non-meanings and unspokens. He leans towards me and

strokes his mustache again, and speaks with concern: "Sister Barbara, when are you going to get a natural?" I laugh at the familiar question. "I don't think its possible. This is my hair's *natural* state." My usual answer. "Aw, sister, you just have to release it from its bonds, I know a chick named Black Rose uptown, I bet she could help you. Let me give you her address."



Charles Nanson



Here nor There

The candlelight is partially tripped  
By the rim of its frosted glass  
Casting a parabolic corona—  
Our midnight sun

February came this November  
Morning bringing its liquid  
Air that pours  
Under sills and hems and  
Our mouths are factory chimneys

I should obviously be in Peru  
Away from these walks and walls  
Of imperfect brush strokes  
Away with your impertinent pouts  
And turned back

Can I want more than  
Empty wrappers and habits  
Known to be everywhere  
Intended

We are here alone  
In our hut  
On the eighth floor  
Winter strolling in a park not  
Near enough or deep enough to  
Camouflage the skyline of fences  
Bidding us stay

We must enjoy the winds' orders  
Because we obey the rug's  
Commanded coziness

If we herringbone our fears  
To tailor a colorful coat  
To leave behind bloodied  
Our escape might pass  
As an unnoticed  
Murder





## Lecture To A Little Girl

Lot's wife offered a triple appeal  
Every woman who is not a gypsy  
Can never claim any part of un-  
Til their eyes are  
Uncotied and  
Reglossed with the innocent deception of yours and  
Eve's.

Tigress of flame,  
Overmatch the extinguishing winds of

Age.

Like hurricaines, golgothas and be-  
Ins; unpropheted admittance and  
Too-soons, you  
Tear apart established codes of  
Love and war with your  
Extravagance.

Genesis of maturity will  
Introduce you to  
Revelations you can put in place with your  
Laughter.



*Dave Rick*

Dave Rick

You're a foot taller than me,  
And wide enough,  
That my arms go full about you.

But I wish that I were truly tiny,  
To be capable or pocketworthiness:  
Undermining,  
From the lining

of your jacket,  
And wrecking orange giggles against your chest.

*Robin Geist*





Joel Orzack

II

The hollowness of the moon's smile  
reflects time-cracked eternity

Deep in a dream  
you grope  
and find me

What shadow am I now?

III

A bubble in the dark  
surfacing we break.

*Elizabeth Langland Hassan*

I

Silently shade-pull  
and shutter-close  
the day

Gather my loose limbs  
relaxed and free  
and print us on the night

A cat's howl rattles  
against the buildings  
Hush now.

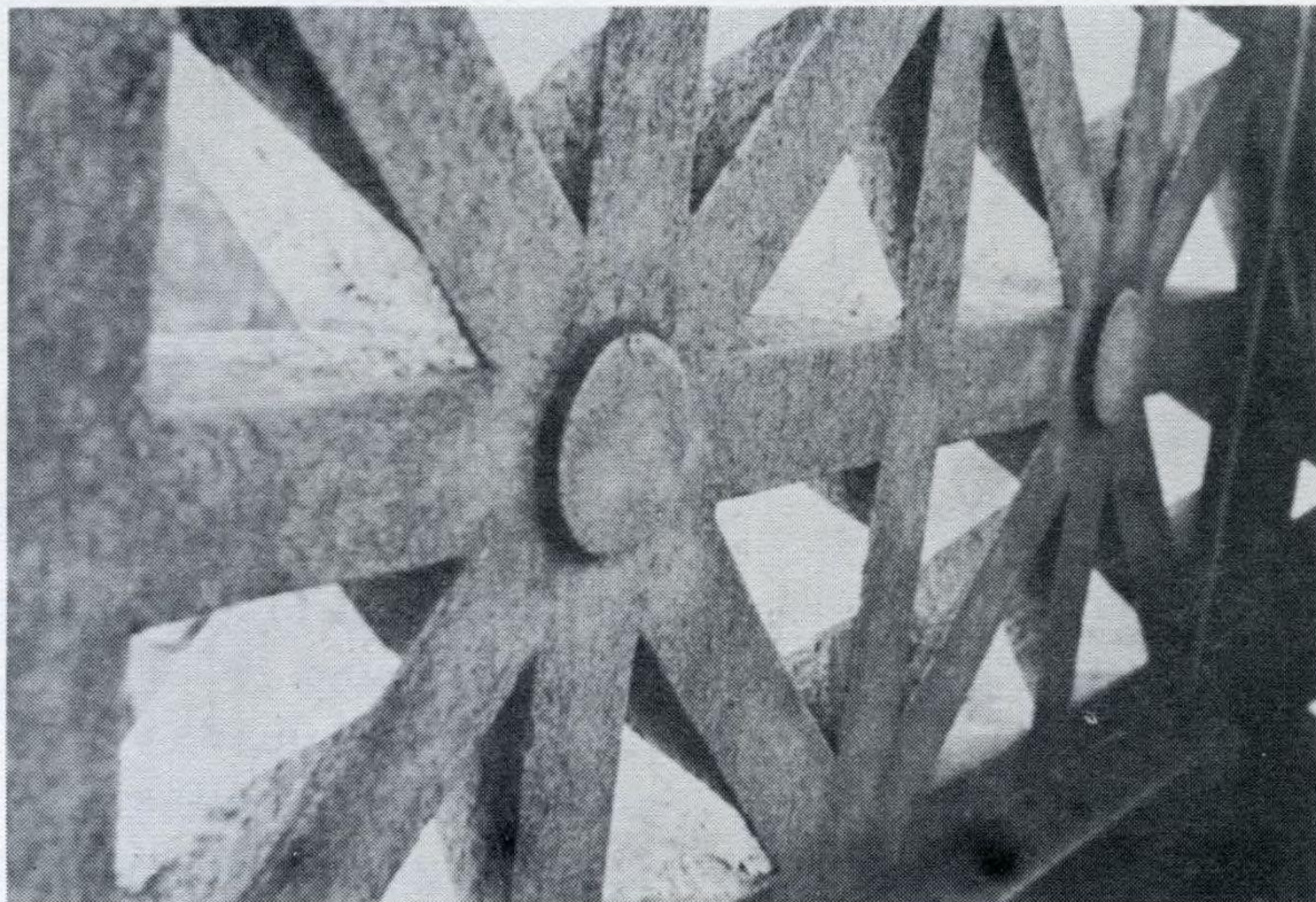


## Dedication

For a different day  
They salvaged me the cactus,  
What a monument. It waited like  
An oracle off duty, arms  
Uplifted in despair  
Of hollow reverence.

By a lower sun  
I picked the spines and  
Counted them like wishes,  
Joining those  
Who lock their future in their diaries  
Yet hope.

*Elizabeth Klein*



Barbara Davis



Plunky

Bricks baked  
hard and red  
under one sun  
Burned dry  
under lappings  
by its ember-lit tongue  
Pores closed,  
licked in  
between spaces  
of  
now arbitrary nations.  
Edgebuilders,  
creators of  
incidental separations,  
the masonry of  
we and they.  
Bricklayers  
weavers of  
nature's pall,  
Step forward and  
hurl Progress One  
over the wall.

*Dorothy Foltz*



god, they need to do something  
about Baltimore.  
it's all jammed up.  
maybe they just haven't seen it  
(it's easy to miss. like who ever goes there?)  
But should you take a minute  
to be in Baltimore  
you might be struck by what you see there.  
ruler straight streets  
houses inches even  
it's deadly neat cause  
everything's jammed in little backyards  
rows, piles, stacks  
chimneys, houses, little white steps  
three story red bricks with  
three story shack backs  
people shoved together with their old cars,  
iron stoves and clothes lines.  
so many black folks sweating and freezing  
in the sooty beer town  
looks to me like even the white folks must be livin' tight  
rusting with the steel mill strip show pasted place  
yeah, i think they need to check out the  
crabbing city at the top of the bay,  
damn i hope they see if soon.

*Barbara Davis*



