

THE THING ITSELF

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THE FALL OF ISSAC THE TERROR

In a section of the city, about eight or nine square blocks, Issac the Terror had his domain. Issac was a strange sort of kid. He was tall and lanky for his thirteen years, and his thinness and a crop of straggly dark hair accentuated his large, glaring black eyes and high cheekbones. He never said too much, save for his stock threats and snide remarks that he levelled directly at those smaller than he and said under his breath to anyone he felt was too big for him to handle--just yet.

Issac prowled his neighborhood every night at about eleven o'clock. He had no father to speak of, and his mother usually wasn't home evenings, so Isaac's time was his own. For the past three or four years, Isaac spent his nights moving in and out of the shadows, frightening passersby with any number of his practiced tactics.

Many of his games were played with his lasso. This well-worn rope of Isaac's was used for a variety of things--getting on and off fire escapes, scaling walls, and, most of all, swinging on streetlights. He would throw the rope's weighted end up and over the neck of a lamp post and secure it with a slip-knot. Then he would climb into a nearby shadow, wait for an opportune moment and swing out on the rope, bellowing any number of animal sounds or yells and shouts that were usually well-laced with obscenities. There was one streetlight in particular that Isaac enjoyed swinging on. This was the lamp that stood midway between both ends of the 68th Street Bridge. When he used this lamp post, Isaac could oscillate back and forth, like a pendulum, across the street and then directly over the river itself. It was especially thrilling to Isaac, when swinging across the river, to peer down into it and search the blackness that concealed the water some 150 feet below. Coupled even with the brightest moon, the lamplight did little to illuminate the black space beneath him. He liked it that way. During the day, the river's surface and shores were all too definite for Isaac. He much preferred the obscure nature it took on after dark.

One late summer night, after Isaac had roamed about for some two or three hours, he decided to stop and rest at Mrs. Steinberg's. Her house was on a busy corner, and from the edge of her lawn he could watch for unsuspecting pedestrians. Isaac loved to antagonize people who walked along the streets at night. He would jump out from the shadows at them, hide and shout

smart remarks, rattle trashcans, let go blood-curdling screams, or swing out into their paths from streetlights. He had grown tired of prowling the streets looking for new victims; it was a quiet night and few people were on the streets. Besides, he was thirsty and Mrs. Steinberg's faucet was fairly close to the sidewalk. Isaac seemed to be characteristically drawn to water--he was always thirsty or getting ready for a swim whenever he wasn't terrorizing people. Just as he put his mouth to the spigot, Mrs. Steinberg switched on her porch light and appeared at her doorway. She screamed at him to get away from her yard. With a few choice vulgar words and the appropriate gestures, Isaac scampered out of sight and into the shadow of a large oleander. He waited for a good five minutes and then ran over to her window. He scratched his ragged nails across the screen and bayed a series of crude animal sounds. Poor Mrs. Steinberg became hysterical and said that she was going to call the police that instant. Laughing as hysterically as she had been screaming, Isaac ran into the alley and disappeared into its darkness.

A block away, he turned onto 68th Street and walked past various shops, glancing in their windows now and then. The fancy neon signs especially caught Isaac's attention. Glowing tubes of red and yellow light traced the words "BAKERY" and "DELICATESSEN" into the night sky and suddenly Isaac felt hungry. He hadn't eaten since noon that day, when he had gobbled it down quickly in three bites. Just when he decided to head home for something to eat, Isaac heard a distant, distinct tapping sound. He approached the corner and peered around the building.

An old man, at least seventy years old, was walking down the sidewalk slowly, tapping a white-tipped cane to the left and right as he made his way toward 68th Street. Isaac raised an eyebrow. He didn't recognize this man, and his thin lips spread into a smug smile as he forgot his hunger and proceeded to devise a scare tactic to serve as his introduction to the old man.

Off to his right, Isaac caught sight of three battered, empty trashcans. He dashed behind them quickly--only momentarily wondering if the old man had seen him. Isaac squatted down low behind them and waited. The tapping became louder as the man came nearer. Just before he approached that section of the walk where the garbage cans stood, Isaac pushed them over, letting out a terrible scream and laughing sardonically.

Save for a slight pause, the old man did not react. Isaac was baffled. As he ran into the dark alley, he wondered what had gone wrong. In all the years he'd used that routine, its results had always been marked--people would scream, cuss him out, chase after him, or threaten to call the police. Isaac concluded that the old gent must have seen him as he darted behind the cans, and had decided to call his bluff.

Determined to harass the old man, Isaac ran down the alley toward the river. The alley gave him quick access to the bridge, and the old fellow's slow pace gave him ample time to arrive at the bridge and set the stage for his next effort.

He untied the lasso from around his waist as he scurried across the bridge. He'd use his streetlight trick. He tossed the rope over the lamp's neck and constructed a quick slip-knot. Then he jumped onto the wide brownstone railing and hid himself in a shadow cast by a wide traffic sign. As he waited for the old man, Isaac looked down into the river. There was a slight breeze that almost rippled the water's surface enough for it to catch some of the light from the low-hanging full moon--almost. It's a pit of black tar, thought Isaac.

The tap of the old man's cane came nearer. Isaac tightened his grip on the rop's end and a strange sensation surged through him. He realized that he felt scared. In all the years that he had done this trick, he'd never felt scared before. He tied a knot in the end of the rope as an added security against its slipping through his grasp. He glanced once again toward the river and shuddered. The old man was now at the far end of the bridge and was just under a gaslight that made his white hair glow silver. He was dressed entirely in black, and Isaac saw that, although he walked at a slow gait, he seemed to have a very determined destination. When the old fellow was at the perfect position on the walk, he pushed off the ledge and yelled loudly as he orbited the old man.

There was still no reaction from the old man. He simply kept ambling down the bridge's sidewalk. Isaac, still swinging on the rope, was absolutely frustrated. What had gone wrong? It had frightened, or at least angered, all the others. Just as he circled the post a third time, as he was directly over the river, the rope snapped. Isaac dropped toward the river with a hysterical scream and disappeared into the murky blackness.

EMPTY PROMISES

Willie trudged up the road toward the schoolbus stop on top of the ridge, every footfall producing a puff of dust that looked like dirty talcum powder. She couldn't understand why she felt like crying this morning and fought to swallow the lump that was in her throat. Pa thought tears were unnecessary.

"When you work hard, you don't have time to cry," he said. "And when you're doing something you like, you don't need to. So crying is jus silly." He patted her on the head awkwardly.

That had been just last week on her fifteenth birthday. It was one of the few times during the year that he let her ask friends to the house, and after they had left, she had begun crying.

"C'mon, I'll even help you with the dishes." He was a comfort in his own way.

Willie noticed how heavy the hickories were this year. In a month or so, when the Ozark autumn was complete, she and Pa would take the wheelbarrow and gunnysacks out to collect the harvest.

"Maybe we'll get enough money then to get the car fixed. Maybe he'll even teach me to drive so I can go to town once in awhile." But she saw little hope in that thought. He said there wasn't time to spend on much more than chores, though he did let her draw. It was what she liked.

"You think it's good?" she asked, showing him the realistic charcoal sketch of the rooster.

"That sure enough is Rojo."

"Do you think someday I'll be a real artist?"

"You won't be an artist someday. You already are one." It was a matter-of-fact statement, not the kind of recognition she wanted. "There's nothing' you need to learn about drawing you don't already know."

But she knew better. She had just begun working with colors, and they seemed to say more than charcoal could. Maybe

he'd let her buy some pastels. Mrs. Simmons, her art teacher, said that was the best way to start with color. She had even given Willie sticks of the primaries, but they were all used up.

She wanted to do a portrait of Pa--one that would show every worry line on his weathered face, every crinkle around his stern mouth where laughter had once etched permanent tracks. There was something hidden in his face that she wanted to draw out in order to understand why he was always so distant.

"I don't have time now," he said when she asked him to model. "How about later?"

Later never seemed to come.

"You're beginning to develop a style of your own already," Mrs. Simmons had told her. "Keep practicing. Draw anything that strikes your fancy. Which art school are you going to after you graduate?"

"I can't go." Willie shifted her eyes to the floor, blushing a little in shame.

She was so preoccupied with her thinking, that it was a surprise when she realized that the country road was just over the rise. She hated the schoolbus ride. The bus was always so crowded and stuffy and smelly. It was like yesterday's dirty clothes jammed into a mildewed laundry basket. Everyday was the same, and even the events were interchangeable.

"Hail the artist," one of the boys had called sarcastically yesterday from one of the back seats, then the mumbled pun: "How'd you like to have that on canvas?"

She coolly ignored them. They were as disgusting as having to ride the bus, always making rude remarks, cutting jokes meant to be overheard. Pa was right about people.

"The worst pain in this world is people. They hurt-and-run," he laughed insincerely.

It always made her sad when he hid what he felt behind a smile. She wanted to pat him on the shoulder to give him her little bit of comfort. She wanted to say, "It's all right. Mama's

gone now. She's a tramp, and she's gone, and she can't hurt you anymore." But he wouldn't allow that.

"All I am is a reminder of her. I'm her reflection." She stopped abruptly at the brink of the hill.

The lump in her throat had broken free, and she couldn't control the tears that gathered in the corners of her eyes. She dropped her books by the deadfall beside the road, sat down, and let herself cry.

"Can't anyone help me?" she sobbed at no one.

Only the cree of a redtail answered her.

"Ple-ease...Ple-ease..What's wrong with me?" she hiccupped, wet with despair. "Please...Somebody help me."

The noise of his footfalls in the dry woods went unnoticed. It was only when his shadow fell over her that she knew he was there. His face was flushed with perspiration and lined with concern.

"What's wrong, girl? Did you twist your ankle?"

"Oh, Pa...I'm so sad." She groaned and stretched her arms up to him. He didn't reach back.

"I thought you was hurt. Now stop this foolishness and get on to school." He wasn't stern in saying it, but treated her like a chore, the way he would prod a sheep to its feet. "Go on now or you'll miss the bus. We'll talk about it later." He shouldered the shotgun that was butted on the ground. She had interrupted his hunting.

"Yes, Pa." Her voice was dry and passionless. She was not drained and listless, the usual conditions following such a crisis. Instead there was a rigidity in her manner. She walked purposefully up the hill, hid her books stealthily under the buckbrush, and hit herself from the schoolbus.

And when it was safe, the county road roller-coasting empty ahead, she left everything behind. Three cars passed before her thumbed entreaty was answered.



Rachel Pousson

laughter

i wonder if his loud awkward laugh
embarrassed her
to think that she was his
though he was not hers
to know that this shy imperfect schoolboy
was linked to her
in the minds of all that know them
the image of one
incomplete
without the reflection of the other

i wonder if she squirmed
thinking his laugh
in our ears
brought her face
to our eyes
painted bright and bawdy
like a tawdry, thoughtless fool
stumbling from cave to cave
in a continual caravan of stupidities
seeking the white wolf
led by the hand
of this self-conscious clown

i wonder if she regretted
their accidental meeting
the casual coincidence
of smoking the same brand
of foreign cigarettes
of knowing the same plays
walking the same street
breathing the same air
taking up
the self same space

i wonder if she resented
the half assed attempt
to cover holes in naked knowledge
a false and hollow sound
calling all defenses
to the aide of their party
calling all defenses
to protect and defend

did it echo
a million times down the streets of her soul
screaming inadequacy
pricking the very flesh
of her (upside-down) inner being
stinging the singing veins
of her from the coast seashell ears

did it mock her pride
making her feel less
than she felt she was
by telling us
he was less

than she'd though he was

did it thrust the knife
turn and dig it still deeper
as the laugh whirled round
making her dizzy with the sound
of all his insecurities
and unanswered questions
crying out in a laugh
that touched the essence of eternity

did it settle in awesome silence
Around the couch of near crumbling consciousness
that had only to be heard
in order to be touched
a silence all the more grating
for the raucous noise
passed before
a silence

that no words are quick enough to cover
an infinitely bright
harshly illuminating silence
that exposed all
and shouted he had not laughed for her

Cindy Flatt

Gilberto Tarin



PUSHING

Everyone, I don't care who
Needs a fix.
A boost, a leg up on a high horse
To ride through the sucking slop.

A needle pops ants
Shooting through the thin blue tube
The addict collapses into himself
The stairway assumes his plunge.

Or what about this?
Tea, military whist and iced marble cake
Ladies babbling through the afternoon
To spook the Jones of being alone.

Or this?
A mirror dandy alight to his image
Taking grave measure of his fabric scheme
A neat plan to hold his vain seed.

This?
The slipping couple on grassy slope
They heed not Spring nor verse nor color
But know the dank grotto will suffer the purged venom.

Or the merchant to the world?
Propped by his ledger
Of stores bought and won
He skims the tides of traffic and treasure.

A baby sucks--
Or have I gone too far?

On a shuffleboard court in St. Pete
A man with hair sprouting from nose and ear
Slides a disc across
This fine last skill his hoard against the tremors at hand.

Shawn O'Donnell

The clown
in his dressing room
sits in front of his mirror,
wipes off his greasepaint smile,
looks at himself
and weeps.

and the bareback rider
takes off her frothy
fairy-tale princess costume
and in her innocence
puts on a cotton dress,
slams the door,
and goes to meet her lover.

While the highwire walker
with his nerve of steel
takes his mistress
a bottle of cheap wine
and drinks himself to sleep.

And the midget
walkes back and forth
below the bareback rider's window
because he loves her
while the fat lady
watches him sadly
from her room across the street
and the lion tamer
shivers and cries out in his sleep
that he is afraid.

The lights go out;
the tents come down;
the circus ends.

Kathleen M. Meyer

MIDNIGHT DANCE OF NUMBERS

Factors
Multiplied by emotions
Divided by senses
Rounded by realities
Shipped in cardboard boxes
To places that don't exist
And people who don't remember names

I'm a shadow
And sorry to be so
All the meat and potatoes
Will not give substance
To shadows
And summers that pass
Without questions
To numerous answers

I remember feelings
I never knew
I remember pride
So proud for being what I was
And I remember shame
For being what I wasn't
I remember names
Though I haven't imagination for places
And want for lack of postage

I've been dreaming
The wrong reasons
And I'm drawing
In misplaced seasons
But that's all right
Someone will sleep tonight
And it obviously
Won't be me

Cindy Flatt

Miss Lonelyhearts
glides through the smoky half-light
of the pub
drunkenly
from lap to lap
and the Gang all
kiss her back and
pat her ass
and let her know she's loved.

She moves to yet another lap
but misses
collapsing on the floor,
fallen
the Laps all laugh
and sneer
and call for more beer.
She stares,
confused (the Feat that
brought her here
flickers across
her eyes)

the Stranger at the next table
helps her to her feet
she smiles back
genuinely
and is again a Lady,
briefly.

Deece Eckstein, S.M.

A THOUGHT FOUND IN A CITY

Into tower and pit
the stone is carved
as embellishment -
mass unmovable.

Here a pressure from
a distant source expels
itself, thus pushing living
element up and out.

Water grows out
from lithic center,
beaded trickle to slow flow -
it spills and wanders in the pool.

As there is no change but in degree,
it never contemplates
nor rests in the
communication of atoms.

They dance high and low,
center to extreme
the dialogue refreshes -
new cool air.

Never the same in splash
and rhythm, eternal rock
tells no story but of mortal
framework for continued flow.

Thomas O. Politte

WAITING FOR NEWS (From the Western FRont)

Mein Vermachtniss, wie herrlich weit und breit! Die Zeit
ist mein Vermachtniss, mein Acker ist die Zeit.

One of these roads is said
To lead back to our lines,
The lines they say we drew
With an indifferent Brush.
Oh, caution, that's a stroke
I never knew that I could make.

Advanced and withdrawn, I force
My days and nights between two words.
On all sides the colors have run
And the horizon seems another deadline.
Decision, mein general's grace, is
Left behind for another offensive.

The Kaiser's aircraft, never silver seen,
In command performance through
A whirling Spieltrieb, wounded shadows
Drawing sweet fire support
From night columns of armed figures
For a luckless siege.

But I'm no aviator, and their
Lazy fall seems a knowing end;
And though the portrait's not
Yet done, I know now that
They're living the news
From the Western Front.

Hal Lawrence



GLIMMERGLASS

I raise a trembling hand

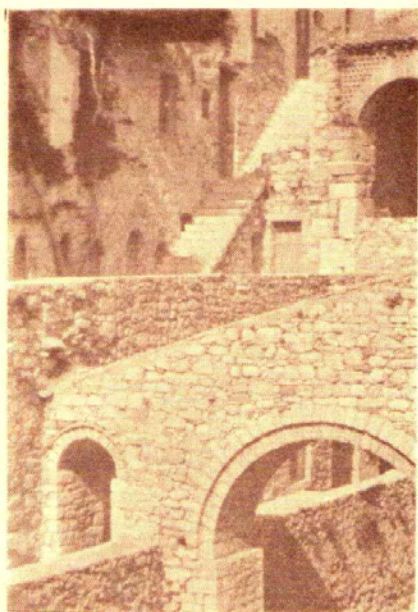
To wipe away tears
And laugh
Because there are none

The lake, once dull grey
Shines like polished onyx
Throwing silver rays
Into the darkened pools
Of my dry eyes

In the span of a few short eons
I have learned to sing
And the world's melody
Stills the tremor
In my uncertain hand

There is rhythm
To everyday
I paint a wet on wet water color
With solvent, unshed sadness

Cindy Flatt



Tim Robinson

LA ESCUELITA

Era yo entonces una niña cuando
primero asistí a la escolita.
Me encontraba en temor de
la escolita y el
latido de mi corazón aumentaba
por las mañanas como el tambor
de las batallas.

Probrecita madrecita con su corazón
profundo como el mar.
¡Pobrecita madrecita! ella no sabía
el idioma inglés; menos yo.
Cuanto oía en esa mi niñez semejaba
El tambor de las batallas.

Prevalecen en mi mente estos
aconcimientos como ecos de mi infancia.
Todavía puedo oír el ruido
de la escolita turbulenta
como el tambor de las
batallas que nunca cesa de tocar.

Elizabeth Aguilar

ELEANOR'S MUSIC

Make her a dress for the coming wedding
Let Father give them the blessing
Bring her a bouquet
To hold near her heart
Leave her without words to say
Tell her it's a brand new start

Weep fathers, pray mothers
Your young one will thank you
Lonely beggars, all the others
Stand watch, yet never pursue
Not all unions end
Like Eleanor Rigby's
But not all music
Is the story in her eyes

Send her into the world of your dreams creation
Tell her it's your wish and not imagination
Lift up the veil
To see just once more
The Young face before it sets sail
And leaves you crying by the chapel door

John Collins

THE DISCONTINUED GRADUATE.

Beneath the tree
Right next to the gym
Pretty close to the
The college library,

I sit on the same green bench
Where I used
To do my homework
Last year,
Before I
Graduated!

I look at:
My degree and
My awards and all of
My old report cards,

And greet the smiles that still
Remember me
(Now as ancient as the tree
and as dusty as the library and
As heavy as the bench)

And announce
(in a voice as hollow and
as empty as the gym) that
I did what we all long to do!

I:
Graduated
Last
YEAR, , ,

Rick Lewis



Pat Cunningham

DARK NIGHTS AND UNSHED TEARS

Mud and silt run slick and rich
into the gutter.
The silent streets and buildings
loom around us
in their glazed black severity.
Here and there
shutters snap--
they momentarily slice the stillness,
and slap me back into awareness.
We stand in uncertain shadows
as I search your eyes
for silence's reason.
Through the grey mist
street lamps dimly glow,
and as you look out over the bridge,
and stare into the thick fog,
I sense that I can almost hear
the tears
fall in your throat.

Mary Kaznowski

TIME

open your eyes

sweet child of spring

autum

is beginning her

patchwork quilt

of gold

scattered

between fans of green

and clear blue

sunshine yellow

marigold

is rapidly bronzing

and the kitten

no longer fits

so neatly

inside the flower pot

Kathleen M. Meyer

The moon is sulky tonight
imperious and elegant
Playing hide-and-go-seek behind
airy, wind-whipped clouds
that disguise nothing.

And I thought of you and how
People come into our lives
too briefly, too infrequently.
but burn deep into the
soul
while they are there
Hot blotches like when
you look at the sun and
then away and
its image
its intensity
its brightness
remain,
fiery on the retinas.

Sometimes you can't see for all
the light in your eyes.

I miss you.

I love you.

Deece Eckstein, S.M.

THE SNOW QUEEN

Just when things
begin to thaw,
you blow in

and fill the air
with your cool iconoclasm.

You look about you
and observe,
with quiet sarcasm,
everything within
the periphery of your vision.

I know what you're doing.
You'll wait for just the right moment
and choose to sting and spoil
yet another promising spring
with a sudden, waspish bite.

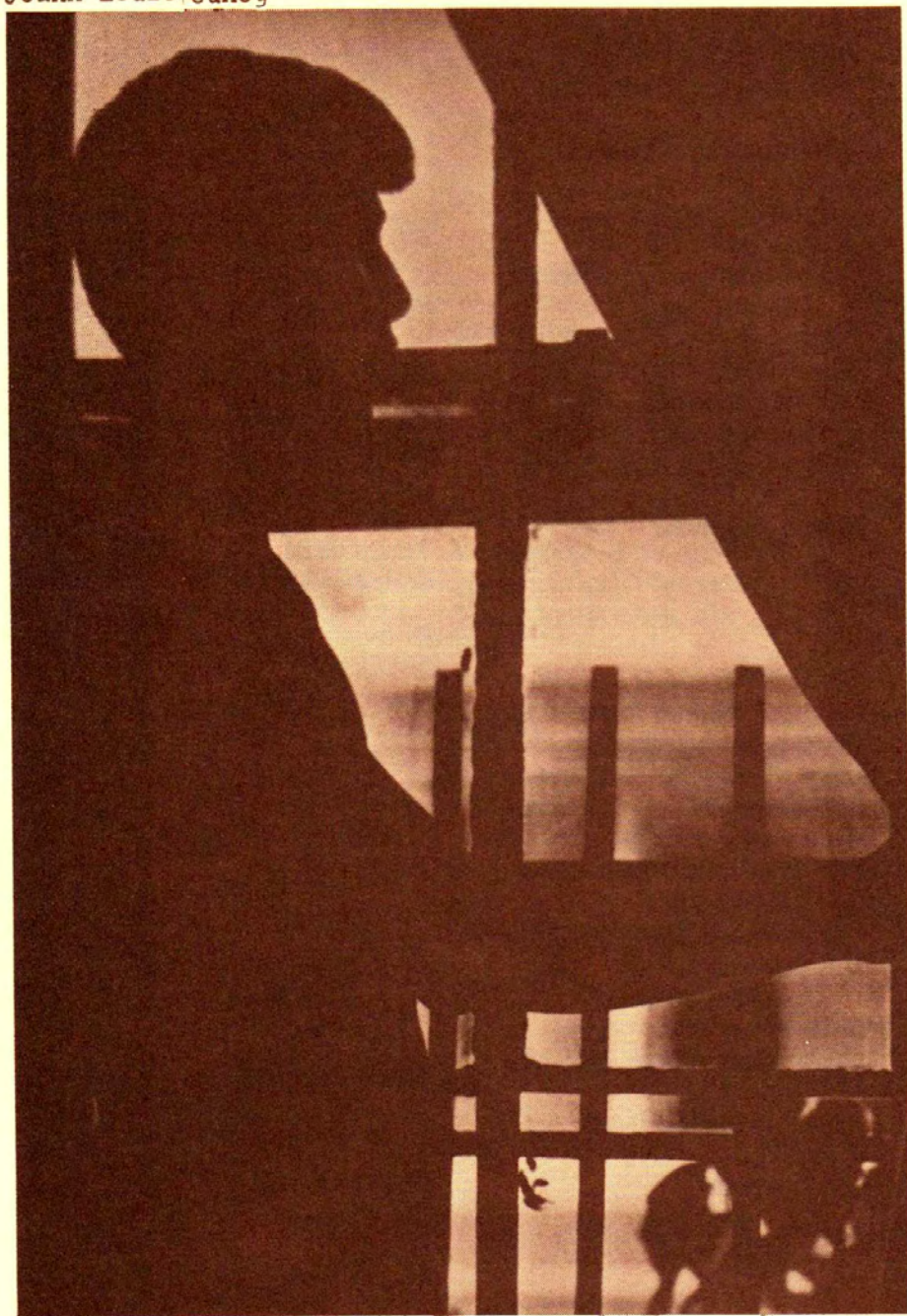
Mary Kaznowski

BLUEBIRD

Good morning, bluebird,
piece of Heaven
detached.

Your flashing wings
wink brilliantly
an echo of a sun
I cannot see.
Is it dust that
clouds my vision?
or is it
debris of an existence
too unfull
of uplifted faced
that follow
your
path?

Joann Louie Gunoy





Tom Taylor

VOLUNTEER

Within the thicket by the pond,
along green mossed edge slimy,
there grows a fruit unknown to worlds
so dark and wet. Flower'd leaves

it grows beside the gloomy pond
where frogs will peer so blindly
from dreary wet where something whorls,
disturbed by strawberries.

Thomas O. Politte

DOCTOR IZAK
(From Wild Strawberries)

Find someone particular,
I say, to fix your star.
(Home's where the hat's hung.)
Then perhaps life's down
side will turn to where
it belongs.
So it is for a while.
Then she gets pregnant,
flaccid and smoker's cough;
and the burden of your love's
invested but not spent. . . .
Dancing centrifugal circles -
one foot's in the grave.

Will she forgive my aversion to
morbid detail?
Love is now a wound of worry.
"I just can't - won't - touch a wound
I cannot heal."
I cannot heal. Will she forgive
me as I search for
humankind? She might forgive
as I am preoccupied.
"I return you to yourself.
Go your way - away:
Love (if you will) as I turn sublimely.
Forgive me (grant me this)"
Pity me as I'll not be wanting
you anymore.

Thomas O. Politte

MELTING - To G. M. Hopkins

The day
Moist, muddy, melting
Rushing
Gushing into brown and green
Grey
Skies, eyes, souls

Today
Tears rain
In senseless sacrifice
To the unseen sun
Empty, aching
Crying, dying
Forgetting what it means to give
In a hectic rush to live with tough
But no warmth

The day
Unfulfilled time
Passing without caring
Flying without trying to feel
Only rain
And wonder

Cindy Flatt

the best of a winder day
the fertility of death.
bleakness calling man unto himself
to mourn the memory of all that remains
still within him
still there
still aching
still yearning

and upon viewing outside
my window
the sight
of a few

lone
leaves

clinging to thesecurity
of the bark

I

laugh at their foolishness
already dead
already defeated

but still trusting in the
perennial

trust

of the oak. . .
what holds us to this earth?

Celeste Larroque, M.H.S.

Marsha White



expectation

The large skeleton
has swollen with the wet
Summer irretrievably.
Sure, it'll bud next
Summer. But think of
that one nut,
yet embraced by
husk, sticking
to bark mother.
Long I've waited, watching
its growth.
Now I await
its fall.

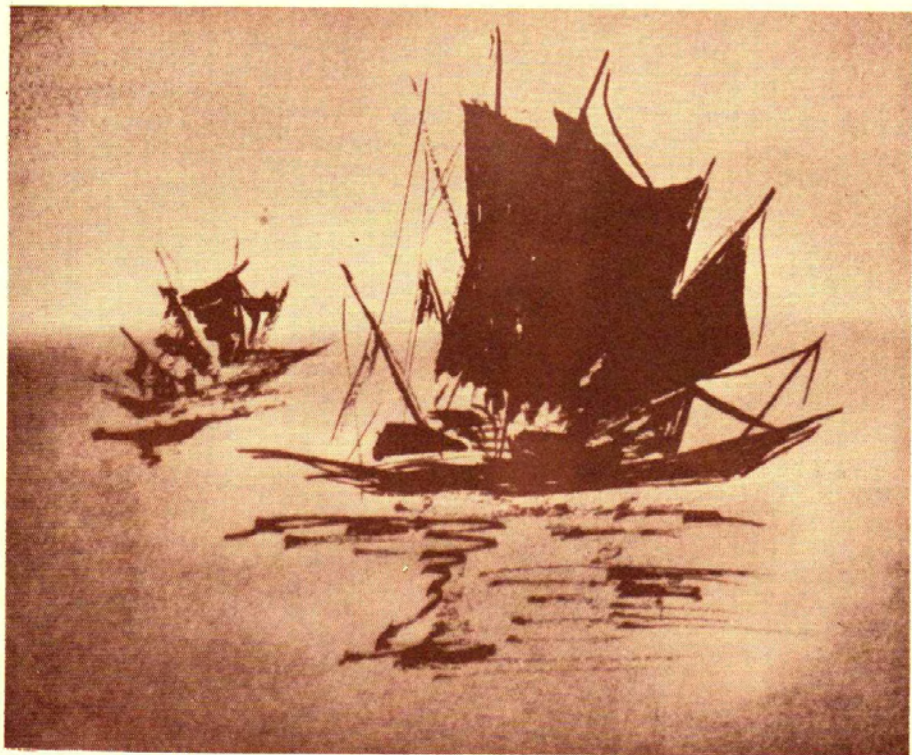
Thomas O. Politte

SONG OF THE OLD

This staying in the background has happened once too often,
I appear as paint on a building covering my worn surface
and never being the person I believe I am inside.
This frontal attack of my atoms upon the scenery is WWI
once more: Inch by inch I move in trenches within
"no man's land."

There was once a hero in a war playing forever before death.
There was once, but no more. Only an empty gun with spent shells.
(Do you believe that when we lay together the sun flies away?)
I am hero of the universe and the universe has died of boredom.
Empty your pockets into the horizon so an old man can remember the
"good ole days."

I have appeared as white upon a negative, I shall die unknown.
I have dreamt in Kodak color pack, I have never developed.
I have walked where others have walked, I have lived an adequate life.
I have seen you in a shutter as you flashed in lightening cells.
You and I are only pictures in a small child's album.



Barton Darling

INTERLUDES

II

From day to day I change, taking on
different forms, shapes, and hues.

People look and say, ah! and
interpret me to their liking.

They often wonder who or what I am.
I don't think they really care.
So like them I turn my head also.

I suppose this circle never ends.

I will sail different air currents
watching my environment push
and pull me.

Mary Mooney



Y SALIO EL FOTOGRAFO.

SALIO EL FOTOGRAFO A TOMAR UNA FOTOGRAFIA
Y VOLVIO EL FOTOGRAFO, VENIA DEFRAUDADO,
SU TOMA ERA UN HOMBRE JUGANDO A LA GUERRA.

Y SALIO EL FOTOGRAFO...SIGUIO EN SU PORFIA
Y TOMO DE NUEVO MAS FOTOGRAFIAS
Y TRAJO DE NUEVO SU FE DESTROZADA
"DOS HOMBRES FIRMANDO UNA FALSA CARTA".

Y SALIO OTRA VEZ BUSCANDO SU TOMA
BLANCA, TRANSPARENTE, LLENA DE ALEGRIA.
ESTA VEZ VOLVIO APES DUMBRADO
HALLO UN EMVOLTORIO QUE ESTABA TIRADO
CON UN NINO DENTRO: LLORABA Y MORIA.

NO CESO EL FOTOGRAFO Y VOLVIO A SALIR
TENIA QUE ENCONTRAR SU FOTOGRAFIA
Y SU CUARTA VEZ FUE DESILUCION:
CERCA, EN UNA CALLE, VIO GENTE REIR
UNA PROSTITUTA COBRABA SU DIA
Y EL HOMBRE DEL DIA SE HACIA SOCARRON.

AL SIGUIENTE DIA VINO GENTE RICA
RECLAMABA AL HOMBRE UNA CRUEL NOTICIA
NO HABER ENCONTRADO SIGNOS DE ALEGRIA
EN LA SOCIEDAD TAN LLENA DE GENTE.
Y SACO EL FOTOGRAFO SU FOTOGRAFIA
A LA GENTE RICA QUE CRUEL LE REINA.
SU FOTOGRAFIA NO FUE DIFERENTE.

Y SE FUE EL FOTOGRAFO A FOTOGRAFIAR
Y ENCONTRO DOS ROSTROS NEGROS, DESTROZADOS
UN JUEZ QUE VENIDA JUICIOS "AL CONTADO",
UNA ENORME FILA DE HOMBRES MERCENARIOS
HACIENDO MAS RICOS A LOS MILLONARIOS,
Y A LA GENTE HAMBRIENTA NO PUDO CONTAR.
SIGUIO SU CAMINO POR VALLES ESPESOS
Y ALLA, FINALMENTE, ENTRE LAS MONTANAS
VIO DOS PAJARILLOS DANDOSE DE BESOS.

CANADIAN CLUB LOVE (New Shoes for Easter)

Hostess: Our Home's complete, four walls around a dream.
Won't you witness we're delicious in our model way?
What room for decor! You must confess, some say
I've an eye for Early Tudor, Modern Ranchette,
and Louis arrangement.

Guests: Time won't wear away, for you've practiced selection;
Only eternal dreamhouse perfection can keep us busy,
To make a place that's fit to raise our sons.
The Confidence Man, Zarathrustra, and Aquinas won't
Roll away your stone, confuse or edit your style.

Hostess: Prefabrication and a Seaside Cottage, gracious
In a rustic decline with landscape precision and
Model Acropolis, Victorian hideaway, and
Versailles garden, sculptured with plants that
Will grow for us. And under the veranda
Where tans won't fade, we're here, safe
In our lawnchairs from another day's fall.

With cultivation and revision,
My home's in order, true management divine.
With designed insistence, we may assume,
Firm in a pastoral pose, that it's only
A short fall from grace that we may
Relive forever in the time that remains.



Jack Lambert



one drop, two drops
(A haiku)

rain pelts my roof; i
catch two drops and try to lap
them. i drink a sigh.

Michael Diaz

EDUCATION/STATUES IN NICHEs

you are damnable as a pogrom in Nuremburg
disgustable as i ride the Manhattan ferry for
quintuplet nickel.
you i kiss with spit touch with venom
even tho i hate barbed wire
in farms where i see pig-sites
transmutably i(not you) gulp my rusty Continental coffee
you oxidize my skies in Alsace-Lorraine for
even in pastoral virginity. . .
in flashes spurting silver-pepper particles!—
curse be your written scroll
flipping taxis between biding my time in vertigo after the carousel
and i(not you) am safely in my coffer
thinking *cogito ergo sum* neurotically
am russet in autumn
as i fall in purpled-April-Brighton, erumpent
morning glory.

Michael Anthony Diaz

ROCK AND ROLL (Oo, I Love the Way You Drive Your Car)

In New York City by the Light of the Dark,
Down long street vistas where leather ballads
From banded fairy saints are perfectly
Balanced against the night at eye's length.

Listen, the end, as the beginning, wants to be music:
Guitar solo, to startle the drunken gods,
the fall of new fingers on old strings-
A practiced terror of calm-eyed neighborhood boys
In angelic display of demonic strength.
The tinsel piano hammers to unwind the metal measure,
And goat-foot drum-kit boy calls for the dance
With Diana attendant in diamonds and furs.

The songs may remain the same:
They rhythm of Chance and Change,
Of backstreet discovery
Captured in a note and
Wrung with electrical thunderbolt.
So Beethoven rolls over and over
And may rise again, yet.

Hal Lawrence





Gilberto Tarin

ESOS OJOS

En mi soledad que favorece la meditación
pienso en esos ojos
coloridos como la tierra negra, fecunda,
donde crecen las más hermosas flores
de la primavera.

Esos ojos tan incompresibles
que me subyugan completamente
por la fuerza secreta que poseen.

Esos ojos profundos
que traen ilusiones
de esa vida perfecta
en que estaremos unidos para siempre
gozando cada día, cada minuto.

Esos ojos que a veces son clavos dolorosos
penetrando mi corazón, penetrando mi mente
cuando sin ellos estoy.

Desde luego,
en mi soledad tumultuosa
me regaño de vez en cuando
por la tontería de poner
no solamente mi esperanza
sino también mi destino
en esos ojos amorosos.

Y, si ésto es tontería, entonces
deseo ser la tonta, la simple, eternamente.



Bernie Robalin

MALCONTENT

The impatient eye
seeks to fill the void
with constellations
of its own creation
so that when it blinks
the void is not.
It waters to reject
the speck that clouds
the vision.

But the speck only becomes
a diluted but present unquiet,
an adaptee of the
impatient eye.

Dorothy A. Price

INTERLUDES

I

black clouds like death's strangling fingers
covered the moon.
i came through the dark, wind swept,
wanting to greet you with kisses like fire.

For shame.
i died long ago in the dirty cellars of your mind
where you smothered me with darkness
like a flower forgotten by the sun.

Mary Mooney

AMERICAN LITERATURE EXAM

All answers, from the student's life in the margins,
Are to be made on ruled white paper.

One Natty Bumpo,
Riding upon the night,
In mystic buckskin,
Beaded and feathered,
With blond woman behind
And savage sainthood ahead?

or

Our Lord Protector,
Ridden into the day,
Caught in a dance,
Measured and tailored,
To serve a painted civility
With the King's own tongue?

Was he the rider, or horse.
So made to set the course?

By day I thank the horse for its charge,
By night I dream of it as riderless.

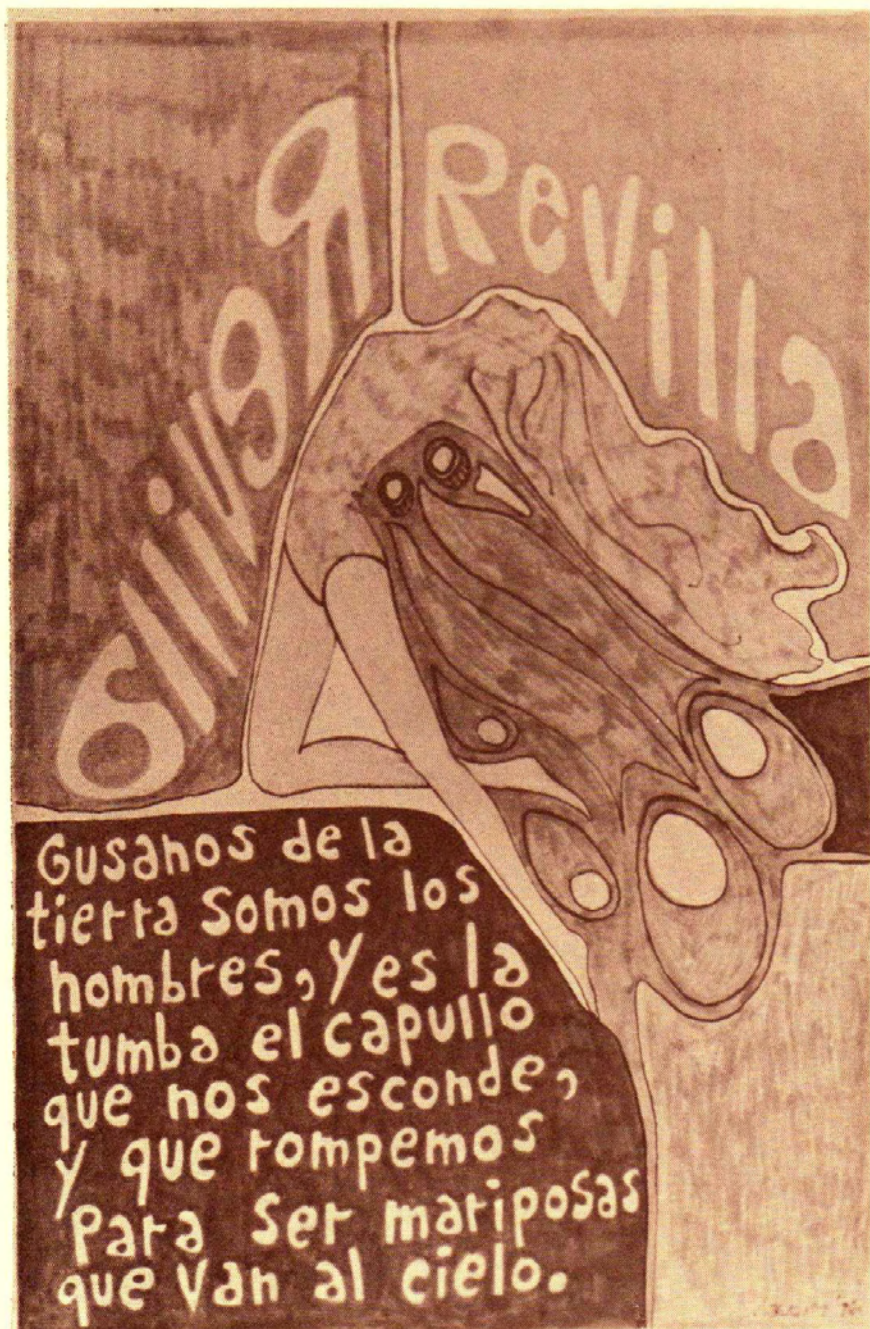
Hal Lawrence



Mike Gillespie



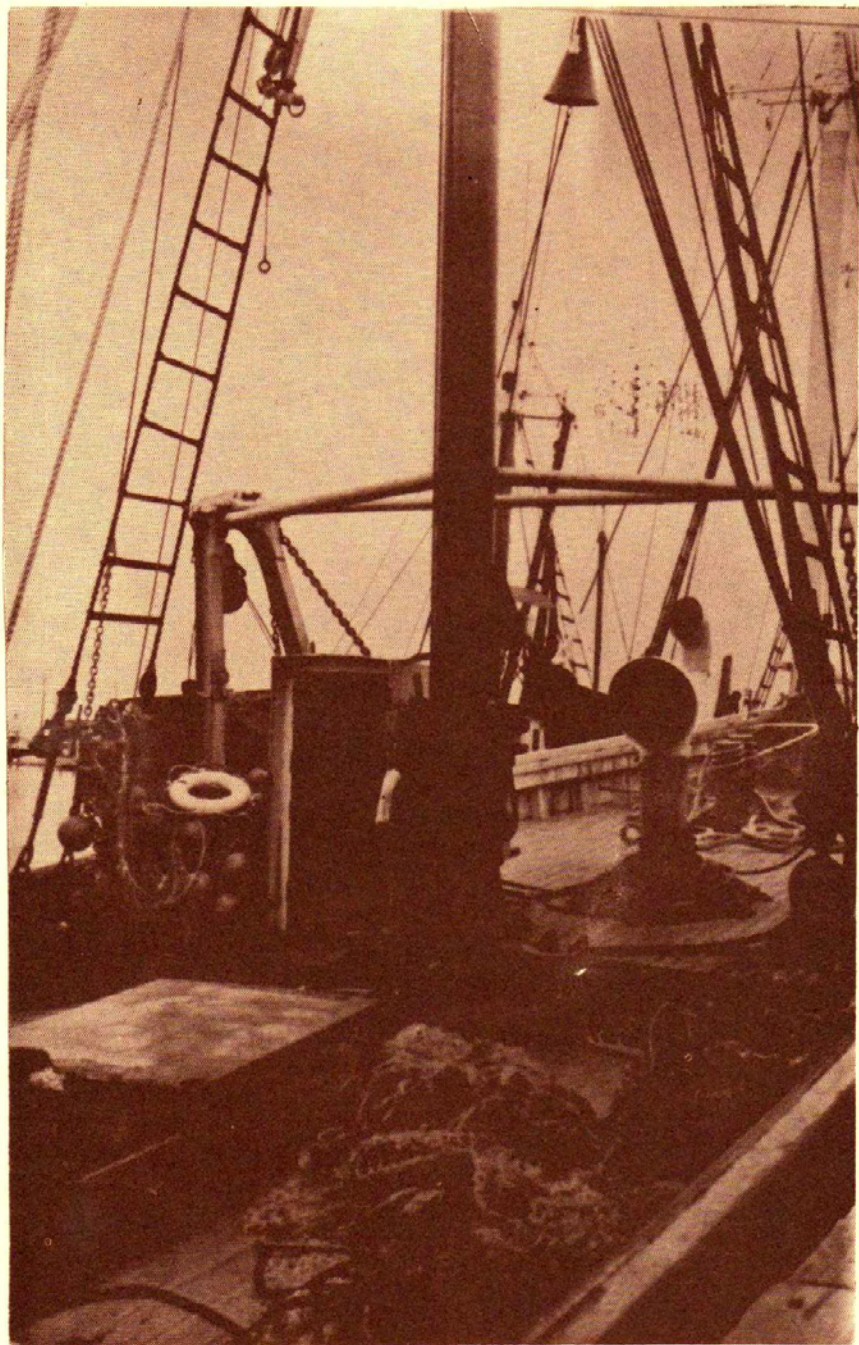
Tom Taylor



E. Vasquez



Mike Gonzalez



Sandy Meros



Tim Robinson

TENNIS SUNSET

Now how can I play,
How can I even practice any more
When the sun makes such a show of its going?
Rose-pink fingers of lighted clouds
Tickling the back of the sky,
Blended with shades of lavender and violet
All akiss with clouds.
And to the east blessings ride
On clouds wearing royal blue
Companioned by sky gods dressed in navy.
And the stars, those lanterns of the blackness,
Are already pricking the sky.

How can I continue to move my body
In tune with a game, when such grandeur
Assaults my eyes and commands my notice?
Having no choice but to obey,
I watch the flowing of time across my planet,
Marked in drifting colors superior to the tickings of a
clock that also mark the passing time. . .the glow of
eventide
Uplifts me.

My heart is carried on the wings of a swallow
and my ears on the hum of the damselfly.

Katherine Niska

SPLIT ENDS

I lost my comb,
And my hair hangs in tangles
From my head.

 i must look like a vagrant
 with a blue fan
 dangling from my hand. . .

Dodging the lower branches
of insidious city trees,
Already I sweat

Last night's shower forgotten.

 i speed on
 under a partially blue sky
 looking for you
 in the cracks of sidewalks
 and the smiles of migrant workers
 miles from home. . .

Maybe I'll find you

Holding my comb.

 holding my comb. . .

Cindy Flatt

MAINMORTE (1789)

AsCandide leaves the room,
Carlyle and Dickens fight for the penny seats
To watch the reign of a long summer's heat.
In the corner Rousseau is charmed to emptiness
In the arms of a garden beauty.
Diderot sneaks among the crowd imagining
A book of reason that he chases from room to room.
Robespierre, eyes on a deadly order,
Follows him closely with feigned suspicion.
From Estates General to Constituent Assembly
The deputies are locked in a game of musical chairs:
Purposeful action in a predetermined course.
Memo: Responses documented and a survey of opinion,
"More calves must be bled and fired, and then
We may begin to read the ashes."

Marat and Mirabeau, hypnotic minstrels,
Call out the refrain:
"Sans-culottes and baker's rolls,
Two curates Four,
Girondins and Jacobins,
All in a row."
In the fifth act
They always laugh
In Paris, a place
Where all happens to music,
To "Marseillaise," "Ca-ira,"
and "Dansons la Carmagnole."

Take my hand, it's time
To change partners as
Another dance begins.
Too late, a dark Napoleon
Stares across the floor
And steals the song from the air.

Hal Lawrence

COME TO PASS

I've walked these same sad smiles
Time and time again
I've cried these trembling tears
While searching for a friend
* * *

And it's come to pass
That all light shines
In the empty eons
In lonely, dying minds
And it's come to pass
That I'm living slow
Unsure of where I am
And lost for where to go

And it's come to pass
The flowers cry
In the open spaces
Of the earth's old sky
And it's come to pass
That I must find a home
'Cause I'm much too tired
To face my life alone.
* * *

I've walked these same sad smiles

Cindy Flatt

MARY ESTHER
(a villanelle)

I do not sleep to think of her once more;
Her tender face is like a children's dream.
(I think I did not sleep the night before.)

I love her anger when she stomps the floor
And cries for bottles filled with milk and cream.
I do not sleep to think of her once more,

With jaunty ponytails that I adore.
Like crystal china glass, her twin eyes gleam.
(I think I did not sleep the night before

Nor will I sleep tonight.) I love her for
Her charming smile and crinkled nose. Would seem
I do not sleep; to think of her once more

Is soothing. Now my bedside lamp may pour
Its thoughts like water from a pitcher-stream
(I think I did not sleep the night before,

My reddish eyes are drowsy.) I pray for
My cousin Mary Esther, once my dream.
I do not sleep to think of her once more;
(I think I did not sleep the night before).

Michael Diaz

FUTURE ABSORBED

She was a Space Odyessy Android
American made, carefully clayed
A scientifically crafted beauty
With trade mark cautiously placed
As a birthmark on her face
To hide the truth
Telling she was anything less than real
And a touch more than perfect

He was Nature's Purest Child
A man of the mountains and streams
Wandering delusions and dreams
Raised to believe the river would always flow
And that everyone was, at least, equal
Although some more so
Than others

She sought amusing
And so captured his soul
With her rubberized flesh
Playing his game so well
That he never guessed
She wasn't less than real
And her touch was more than perfect
Because she couldn't feel

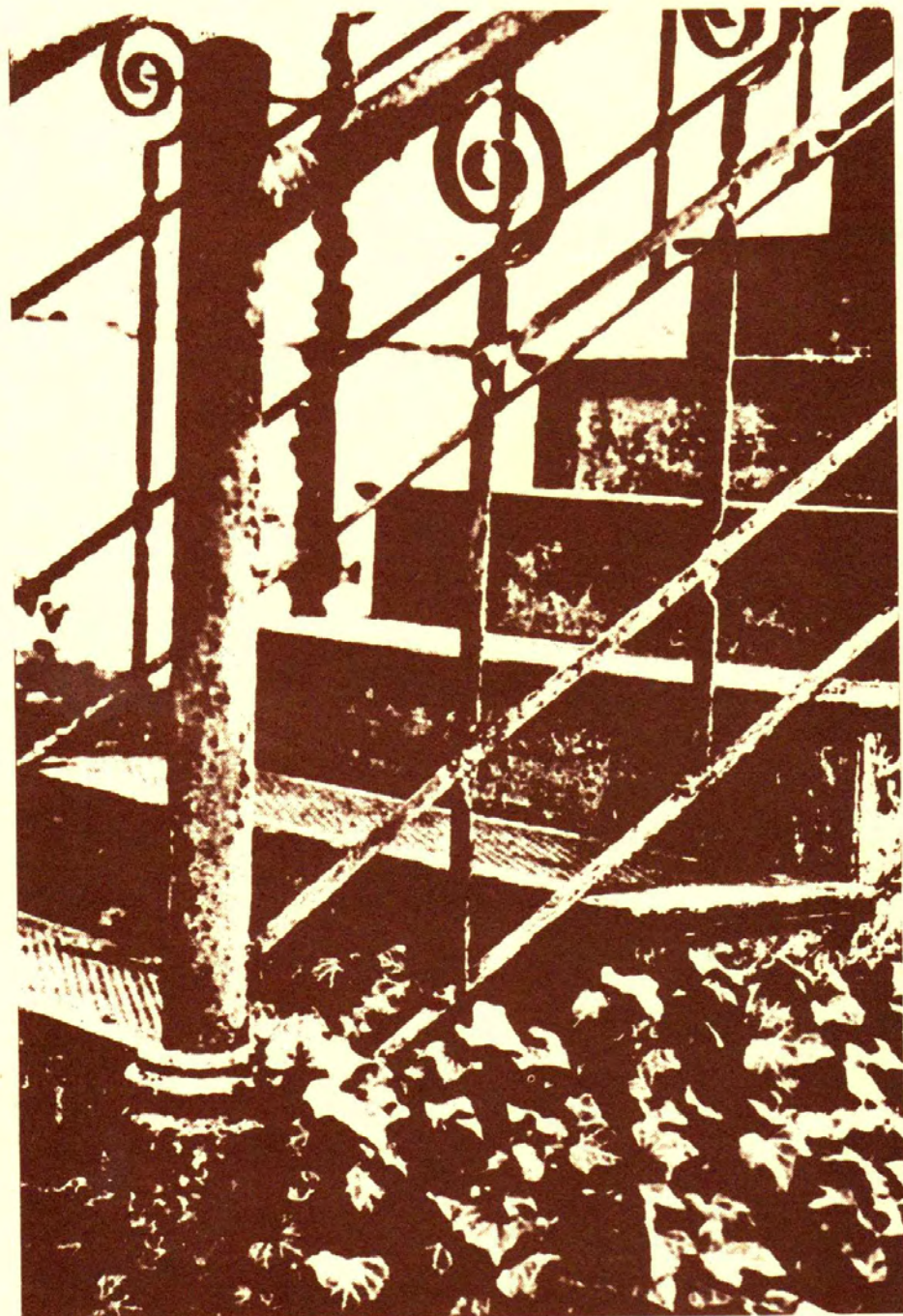
Cindy Flatt



Rachel Pousson



Barton Darling



Rosemary Lococo

