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THE TRINITY REVIEW

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Published during the college year at
Trinity College

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4..... DAVID CURRY wrote "New Year's Eve" between stanzas of his own version of *Electra*, on which he is currently working.

5, 6.... Anchorite PETER HOLLENBECK, an unshorn freshman, appears with two delicate verses, flecked with gloom.

7-11 ... RALPH ALLEN, sophistic sophomore, wrote "The Pig" sometime after midnight ("a time for living," he tells us), and created a character and a story that may outlive Ralph's own virile sputterings.

12..... CHARLES EDWARD EATON, veteran of four volumes of verse, is a neighbor of Arthur Miller in Woodbury, Connecticut.

13..... LOUIS A. RENZA'S "New Continent" is an erotic message garished thickly in the verbiage of Neo-(and sometimes hyphenated) Wordiness.

14..... SAMUEL GOULD CURTIS, a mysterious senior, has footnoted the Pentateuch with his sympathetic "Defense of Eve".

15-18 .. LEE A. PERRON, who tells us he wears a hair shirt during Lent, offers a colorful prose collage about the dreary college years.

19, 20 .. A. DAVID LANDER (A is for "Absolute") found that he didn't need a beard to write good poetry. David makes his second appearance in the Review

21-28 .. ANDREW STEWART contributes his "*Damn*", winner of this spring's one-act play contest. Andrew is a pre-law senior.

CENTERFOLD . . . RICHARD DEAN TUTTLE, who has a cameo tie tack and wants a tourmaline umbrella, sets a precedent with two etchings.

New Year's Eve

A restless, wild diastole of drives
depresses me while swelling
but belies my seeming quiet.
My pulse is credit, yes,
but years and lives

to see some day of debit,
the distant drama of a systole.

A drop of tallow starts to bulge
here on the candle at my side,
grows and falls free, and,
in the interval between two years,
hits a rim of crystal
and makes a clear and plaintive ping.

The Fallen Wand

I take a top hat,
Found in an attic trunk,
And ask myself where's the rabbit;
Ask Why doesn't one jump
Just like always; ask
Why into habit

Tricks settle.
The hat I might as well
Drop now, fold up and let fall;
The hourhand is the fatal
Wand, not my will:
Trunks are full

Of such miracles,
For they have so much room.
But room itself is merely emptiness.
Now, though, are some articles
I had to attend to
This afternoon:

I, after all,
Try to plan my life
With space aside for what's important.
My hands set free the attic now,
The bedroom of my wife,
And lower

The lid on how
It was when she was here —
Before repose, the deceiver, left her
Face blurred, and love, the magician,
Changed back
To a word.

Vigil

Below the eye: the final vision there
Begins in the guise of an old wooden fence
Kept up by leaning on indifference
And on a rose's stem, although the wear
Show through those petals; they cannot repair
By hue alone or beautiful accomplishments
The choking weight of a being's evidence.
And so the fence hinges on that heavy air
Of summer afternoons when I go out
To watch the neighbor boys at playing ball.
By bending to the knothole I can scout
Across their dainty borders on the pall
Of grass their feet disrupt, and hoard the doubt:
Would this fence crush me if it had to fall?

My knothole on the vacant lot looks out,
Looks out on pure and level flatness; boys
Playing ball, with a never echoed shout
Of someone home free: it sifts their noise
Like brittle dancers in a tin ballet
Once whirring softly through the muted light
Of attic windows on a winter day.
My vision splits to particles: a white
Ball slowing down on that final ground,
The shouting sifted into dust: the fence
Along the vacant lot I finally found
And hunchbacked leave: a hollow wooden lens
That bends through its allowance spines and games
And other fences with their other frames.

The Pig

Splop. "Morning Pa," said Raymie rounding the pig pen. He stopped and leaned his starched white sleeves on the top rail in a dejected salute to the glitter of a morning-red sun in the barn window. School, he thought.

"Morning Boy." Splop. And the shovel swung back, sinking into the soft pile of stable manure behind his father, sucking out another steaming load with a heave. Splop. It spattered reaching Raymie's pant cuff. Wipe it off when it's dry, he thought as he moved down the rail out of range. He lowered his eyes out of the sun's red glitter and ran them down the length of the old rails. Splop.

"Pig busted out again last night," said his father leaning the shovel in the doorway of the barn and retracing his way back to close the door to the pen. As he'd said it he'd pointed, and the boy noticed a gaping hole circumferenced by splintered rail ends on the other side of the pen.

"Didn't notice," he said walking over to the hole curious. Two great planks were nailed criss-cross over it, their stout newness posing a formidable barrier to the inside. They were nailed and nailed firmly, for Raymie's father was a worker. Early it was when he had risen and gone outside to greet the sun. And in the middle of deciding that he wouldn't store the hay today he'd noticed that the pig was out. So he'd picked up a piece of hockey stick that Raymie used for a tennis ball bat and gone to look for him. He'd found him in the cabbage. Smack! He'd given him a solid whack on the rump, then watched the great head turn slowly around to look at him. The pig had looked for a minute, then heaved a heated blast and ponderously dropped his rump . . . his great chest . . . then rolled lazily into the path between the rows to wrench and wriggle in the dust. Evan had laughed.

"You got an itch have ya. Get up you old black bastard, you don't fool me none." And then he'd driven him back. Driven him back and barred him in. Pa was good with animals.

But that pig was something else. He'd broken out of his pen more times than you could count. The boy could see him now, groveling around indistinctly in the sty with his snout shoved deep in the manure grubbing. Slowly, ponderous step by ponderous step — each step a plunge of the whole great hulk — the pig moved out of the sty toward the boy. A grunt. Still grubbing, he caught sight of Raymie and his eyes flicked up. God, was that pig mean, thought the boy. You could see it in his eyes, the brutal red eyes that looked a fire at you as if he was

about to run you down in a wild rage. The eyes and the body, that great lumbering body. The massive hams flexing, bunching slowly — hesitant — another plunge forward of the hairy body, the black hairy bull body. Raymie turned away and entered the barn where his father sat milking.

"What'd he do for damage this time Pa?"

"Got two hens."

Mother must know, thought Raymie as he squatted against the side of the stable. Cause of the eggs. There won't be many eggs today. And he settled himself listening to the zzzt . . . zzzt . . . zzzt of warm milk hissing into the pail. Listening and watching Pa's big hands work the teats — zzzt . . . zzzt . . . zzzt — working methodically, finger by finger, squeezing the milk into little bubble mountains in the pail.

"Gotta find a way to keep that pig from bustin out," said Pa.

"Can't you build the pen up stronger?"

"Ain't much use. He'd bust through anything. Never seed a pig bust out of his sty so often. He's got a mind to, that's all. Most pigs ain't got a mind to." zzzt . . . zzzt . . . zzzt. "You better not lean up against there. You'll have your mother mad at me for lettin you dirty those clothes.

"Ra-y-mie." Mother was calling. Raymie got up and turned toward the front of the barn breathing in his last sweet draughts of barn air as he passed the stalls. "Ra-y-mie." He stepped out of the barn blinking in the sun. It seemed brighter now, even though the clouds had closed in on it. And the thin mist that usually clears before school time showed no signs of doing so this morning. Red sun in the morning farmer take warning, thought Raymie.

"Raymie Johnson I've told you a thousand times to keep out of that barn before school. You'll smell just like a horse."

School, thought Raymie with disdain.

"And look at those pants. What on earth have you been doing," said mother pointing to the spot of dried manure on his cuff.

"It's just manure." He bent down to scratch the dried lump off.

"Don't you touch that!" You go right upstairs and change those pants."

"Oh Ma," said Raymie with a face. But he turned and walked away scuffing. Upstairs he dropped his pants in a heap and went to his bureau for another pair. I wish Pa had stuck up for me, he thought. He must have heard. He knows a little dung don't hurt nobody. He saw his father milking. He saw his father milking and his mother walking into the barn and him grabbing mother while Pa squirted warm milk at her from the cow's teat, just like at him once when he was little. Mother

standing there sputtering and him and Pa laughing. Or was it a Saturday when he got squirted — no, before school — when he was little.

"He zipped up his fly and went downstairs. Mother wouldn't let him wear levis to school — levis with button-up flies. Mother had his books ready and kissed him goodbye. He didn't kiss her back, and he knew she'd noticed.

At school he sat near the window watching the red sun morning turn into a hanging drizzle. He watched and wrote. "I will not throw chalk in Mrs. Shine's music class." Two thousand times he wrote it as the morning changed. And in the afternoon he knew his mother would come because it was raining. She'd drive to get him in the truck. He knew she'd come, but still he was embarrassed when he saw her waiting for him in the hall. All his friends were there, and there stood Mother with his slicker and his rubbers. He took them off as soon as he got home. And he didn't put them on again either. "Don't forget to burn the rubbish," Mother had said. "Take your father's yellow slicker out to him," she'd said. So he did. He took the slicker out to Pa in the field and then came back to do the rubbish. Five wastebaskets and the garbage pail last, but he didn't wear that slicker.

And Diane knew he hadn't worn it, but she didn't say anything. For she was careful how she disciplined him. Just enough to keep him organized, she thought, as she poured a cup of rinse water over the dishes. Then she set herself to washing the porcelain and counter space kitchen she'd had installed. Washing the new cupboards and making plans to do her bedroom over in the spring. . . .

Three steps and a loud thump of someone kicking at the back door interrupted her. Enraged at the black gouge she knew the kick had made, she rushed to the door while the end of her dish towel settled into the dirty water.

"Get some scissors," said Evan as he eased through the doorway with Raymie in his arms. "The boy fell in the pig pen and busted something."

Raymie had changed into his levis before emptying the rubbish, and they felt good and tight around his thighs. He felt like running, doing something, celebrating Friday because tomorrow was Saturday — anything. U-u-p he swung the garbage bucket to the top rail of the pig pen and dumped it inside sloshing. The pig came. Lumbering out of the sty, — the eyes, he plunged his leather snout deep down in refuse plundering the garbage. Raymie stepped back instinctively, putting down his pail and watching. The haunches shifted in bunches moving that great bulk whose jowls churned while foul hairy lips snarled, grunted, a white fang gnashed. Raymie moved a little nearer. Nearer still and put his foot up on the bottom rail. He couldn't take his eyes off the pig. The black hairy pig. Manure matted hams close enough to touch — to touch the

hair, the coarse hair, coarse like on Pa's legs but straight and wiry. Rough and coarse to touch — and Raymie stepped up a rail. He bent over, stretched his fingers out straight, and almost — he could almost touch the hair when his tiptoed sneaker slipped off the wet rail. His belt caught him. He balanced on his stomach, rolled, and slid facewards with an outstretched arm toward the evil muck. His hand slid greaselike, his arm wrenched, crunched in pain as he tried to turn his face and landed. The pain in his arm sung as he tried to clutch the fencepost. He clutched, he pulled — pulled with all his strength against his weight but could not hold himself. Whirlingly whirlingly quickly spinning downward — his hand slid down the fencepost as he swayed with the rails and the rain and fell into time . . . quick dark minutes flitted. . . . A flutter of eyelids. Grey sky — blink — haze — blink — the post — blink. Pig coming down red eyes burning, the breathing, the lush red softness dripping mouth — no no — away — the post, the spinning post around around — the throbbing post, jumping as his heart pushed blood through his head in spasms of thunder. The pain growing, post spinning . . . spinning back to blackness in a yellow slicker.

Diane took Raymie to the hospital. Evan thought of going but there wasn't much use in both of them going, he'd had to admit. So Diane took him in the truck. The two of them were home well before supper: Raymie in a cast and Diane in a fury. Immediately on arriving, she stalked out into the field toward the yellow slicker bent over weeding. He saw her coming, step by step and paying no attention to the rows. He saw her coming, saw her fury, and avoided standing up to meet her. He was still weeding when she said, "That pig has got to go!"

"Can't," said Evan. "Ain't noone 'round here'd buy a pig as mean as him." He pulled another weed and dropped it in the row at Diane's feet. "'Sides he's a good stud."

"Well fix him then," she said through her teeth ignoring his last words. "Fix him so he won't hurt anyone again. He doesn't fit here, and he never will as long as we have kids and he's so mean. He's dirty. He's ugly. He's detestable, and I won't stand it." She turned and walked away.

Can't, thought Evan, he's too old — 'bout, yea, 'bout two years. What's she want to do that for anyway? Pig didn't do nothin. 'Sides he'd bleed to death if you tried it. Can't geld a pig that age. And he sank his right hand deep down into the black earth grasping a weed by its roots and ripping it out with his fist. Nope, can't geld that black son-of-a-bitch, he thought.

At supper Raymie told Pa all about the hospital, then the conversation ceased. Mother made it plain that she was mad, that's why. But Raymie couldn't figure out how she'd get mad about a broken arm. And Pa didn't say anything about the pig cause he was hoping Mother would

forget. But she didn't. She brought it up during coffee, sending Raymie into the livingroom for her Camels so that by the time he got back the conversation was mostly over.

"Nope, you can't do it, you'll kill him," Pa was saying with a passion that startled Raymie. "He's too old to geld." And the boy too was filled with a reasonless emotion as he saw his father pleading his case before his mother's straight stern gaze.

"We'll see," she said. And she meant it. She was just quitting because Raymie was there. But Pa couldn't let it drop.

"Look Di"

"I said we'll see," said Mother.

"No," said Pa grasping. "No," begging, looking to the corners of the ceiling for words. "No, the boy is fond of him, ain't you boy?" The steel gaze fell on Raymie.

"I . . . I . . . Y-Yes," he stammered. "Yes," he said louder. And Mother didn't answer. "May I be excused please Ma?" And without waiting for reply, both he and Pa scraped back their chairs and sauntered outside.

"Gonna be a good day tomorrow," said Pa, gazing at the ruddy streaks that slashed the sky behind the barn.

"How many days do we have to wait for the hay to dry?" asked Raymie as they rounded the pig pen.

"Two-three," said Pa gazing at the pig.

Sunflower, An Aztec Memory

Devour me, brown and yellow eye,
Eat the crust and throw the rest away.
A fierce fanatic, I have watched the days go by,
Searching the hours for some lost seed of grace.
I have fringed the morning round my face,
Brown at heart, offered my dismay
As most desirous at the heart of gold.
Where forever was, I gave it place
Within the wound of growing old.

O fierce-hearted, now longing to be taken,
What saint discovered first the peace of being broken?
I thought, once long ago, how powerful to die
When heart had had its fill.
But who among us stores his passion to the hull?
I seldom meet a man who gorged upon the beautiful.
So born to live beneath the natural eye,
I watch the golden look, the love, the hate fill up the till
And hope my hunger has been seen as token.

New Continent

Unbutton to tropic plums,
An importance of myth,
Your provocative cathays
Like fine heaven incensing
Chrome-atlantic buzz,
To me like ornithic talent
On the scape of sea.

This shock of fabric —
Dimension sound expunging
Thin camelot conceptions, bound
To deliberate on anthems
Sirenical as breakers on
Parchment me;

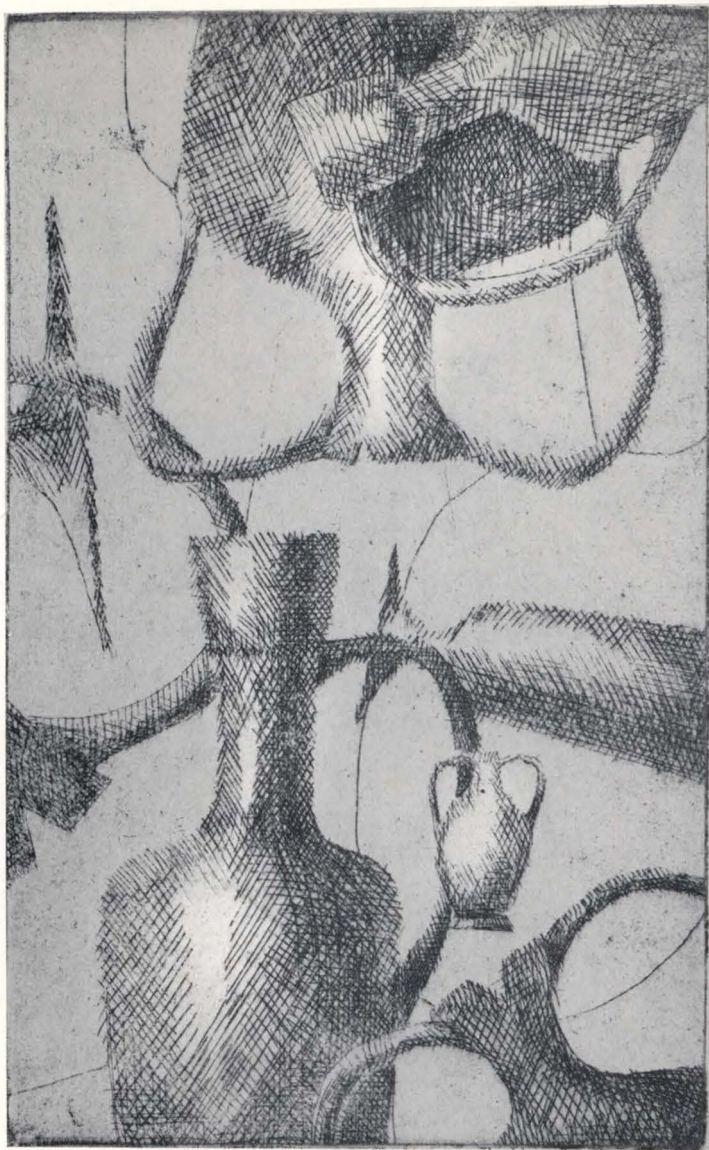
Exposition of foaming plums;
Seems enough to grasp
Your sun-hilt of chromatic
Charm to undress some legend
Of venus moaning in
Distant syntax to the sea,
Aural tropics beneath
Antique structure in your stare.

Defense for Eve

He was transformed, who bore
the burden of the natural
world, and tricked her
to kill the only truth
conceived.

Do Not meant what to Eve?
Innocence knows but
innocence. What fawn
would fear to taste of
furnished fruit?

Begot, but short lived
virgin, tales of sin
were not such tales until
bespeckled by Him.



KYLIKES AND AMPHORAE



THE BEASTS

Matteson and His Companions

At two a.m. in Windham everything is closed. Walking east, Matteson opened the doors of his mind to the several anxious, throbbing memories of the day's events. Although the spring rain soaked his face he was breathing into the dark tavern air of the early afternoon. *Mariner Tavern, (Lathrop Students Welcome)*. His head buzzed not because he was drunk (he could not be drunk when he was in training), but because the Mariner was always buzzing.

"I love you, Mary," Wilcox hissed at the barmaid waddling away old and miserable. Eyes without the ability to see. The lines on her face seem to shriek *I once had five children and a fine husband. My husband was killed in the war, my two sons joined the enemy, my three daughters were raped by the invaders and are now prostitutes downtown.* Her thinning hair was white, washed yellow.

Wilcox always talked loudly. "If there is not another war very quickly mankind will kill itself off senselessly." Need war for the sake of greatness, he said. Matteson agreed. He longed for war to roll over them like a tidal flood over the land. All day long his mind had been on war and then on the Kalepino match and now he spoke about Odysseus and the companions who untied the silver strings which bound the leather sack holding the winds. A crowd had gathered as usual to hear the show. Wilcox and Mance, the Ghoul, were having an argument. *Is Life forever?* Mance stood on his chair and said that life is a man and now it is a senile man. "But embrace the Sibyl," he said. He foretold the plight of the last men and women on the earth getting into a rocket heading for some habitable planet two million light years away. Year, generation, century, millenium keeping the spark of life alive. Children's children's children. God did not create life, they say, just to have it end. But the other planet is empty! Unlivable. So before starting on another search, one of them with the mind of God destroys the ship. Existence ends to the music of the planets. It is fitting. All this Mance said and then passed out.

A man approached Matteson as Pliner, the minister from his home church. The boy's mother had asked him to stop by and visit him when he came to Windham and he understood that he attended Lathrop College. "Yes," he answered "and I understand that you believe in God."

Pliner coughed and then smiled out an affirmative and asked the boy if he himself didn't — to which Matteson answered that he was sincerely

trying and left. Pliner smiled again thinking it best to show that he approved of the young pushing aside the old and of drinking in taverns for amusement.

Outside he was able to lie down with Betsy by the college athletic field and cool his fingers in the soft grass. Wilcox came by and talked to them and said that they were both products of too liberal an upbringing. He always liked to lie on the grass and run his fingers through the blades exploring, digging, squeezing them with his fingers. "Just what do you mean?" he had answered. "My parents were rather conservative as it happens." And he rolled over sprinkling a fistful of grass on his face savoring its coolness — Betsy nibbled on his arm absently, biting his fingers up to the joints. Wilcox told them that it was not the parents but the times. He even said that they were frustrated.

"Hardly frustrated," he had replied, spraying grass on Betsy's short, blond hair in retaliation for her biting. "That least of all. It is a complete relation — emotionally, intellectually, sexually." He scooped up a handful of grass and earth and spread it over Betsy.

"It's time for the match," he said. It had never been off his mind. He told Betsy that he'd see her about eight o'clock and then left for the locker room. "Kalepino" he thought over and over again.

Lathrop College was the first school in the nation to take up Kalepino as a varsity sport. In seven years most of the good institutions of higher learning in the East have begun this sport informally but Lathrop has by far the most outstanding squad. He crouched at the side of the pit as the other two began their contest. *For Kalepino, no experience necessary!* The first two were both fast (lightweights) and were able to charge down the pits in a very good time. This #2 pit was just one hundred yards. They charged toward each other, sprung ten feet apart, and made contact in exactly 6.3 seconds. *Foull! Blue stepped over the mark.* But he had gotten the worst of it anyway. He had tried a back (very dangerous) while his opponent had used a side and mauled him. If they both had used a side the one in blue would probably have won. He was heavier and a bit faster. He had figured his opponent would use a front. They were both carried off the field.

It was Matteson's turn. They lined up on their starting blocks opposite each other. "War," he thought. *Now Set! Go!* His spikes tore the earth. In less than seven seconds they were in the air. Both fronts. *Time — 6.8.* He knew he won and regaining consciousness in the locker room the coach told him he won. Not quite satisfying.

Mance was waiting outside the Mariner and the two walked into the center of Windham to spend the afternoon and dinner hour. *AL and Joanie's, The Bird, The Top Hat, The Egyptian Room.* Then Mance took

him to a place where he said he always went when he came into town. *Madame Boundeau, Palmist* which was in an alley between buildings so high that all the light was blocked out at the back night and day except the pale blue bulb over the door which was at the bottom of the stairs to the basement. Closing the metal door behind him, Matteson saw Madame Boundeau in the back before a round table with several objects on it — a rose, a cross, a small wheel. Purple and black, she was a fat-faced woman with an excess of make-up. Her perfume stung. She was forty-five or sixty.

He sat down at the table. His hands on hers, she placed it on the cross. "Death! I see your mother dead and your father dying. If you do not undo your present wrongs you too will be lost. As it is, by water you will lose all friends."

Matteson wanted her to go on but she would not say anything more to him. He felt Mance push him so he had to get up. Mance sat in the chair and placed a twenty dollar bill on the table and asked her if she did not see a great happiness in his future. She fingered the bill and then pushed it back saying, "There will be no happiness in your future so long as the fates watch my house. Persist again in about two weeks." Mance asked "No chance at all?" None.

"Always take a prostitute if you can," Mance said as they came back into the street. "All dead," he glowed. Their only life was painted on their faces, he said. "A beautiful passivity — as the sky takes the earth." Mance wandered off down toward the harbor section and Matteson headed for Betsy's.

She let him in the apartment and did not say a thing about his being late. He had known she wouldn't. For a long while he stared at the bearskin rug on the floor in front of the fireplace where he had made love to her every week at this time. When she left the room he picked it up and threw it over himself so that when she came back playfully in a silver nightgown he screamed at her, "I am Jove, come to you as a bear. I shall ravish you and implant in you the seed that will destroy thousands." And he untied the silver strings holding the filmy material around her shoulders and it dropped to the floor. She laughed running her fingers through her short blond, blond hair. Her little breasts shook. She laughed and he took her in his arms and kissed her laughter.

Passed midnight he saw a light coming from Wilcox' room on the third floor of the Bishop Dunsman Dormitory. He went up. In the room there were eight with robes on. Several candles were burning down to the last inch.

"Come, Brother Matteson, participate in the rituals of the Christmas-tide," Wilcox said. There was a Mother and a Child. Two Wisemen

were pouring alcohol over each other which, one said, was not at all becoming of Wisemen. A shepherd's staff caught the Child full in the face. The Father was struck by lightning. They all sang in Latin. Matteson took a chorus in Greek. Everyone seemed to hope it was true.

Now he breathed the rain of Spring again. Two again. Rain droning out the city. At a corner the traffic lights still blinked. Signaling to the emptiness. And the buildings, huge giants, silently absorbed the rain. He looked at them and then at his hands. An old man stumbled by talking to himself. He stopped Matteson and mumbled, "Hello Perse, Andrea. And hello Helen — it's so nice to see you back with your husband. The spat's over I assume. How were things abroad? Get frigged?" And he laughed and laughed and laughed down the street. He pulled at a bar door which was, of course, closed. Crazy with age. Never really normal.

And Mance drunkenly made his way down the other side of the street heading west. Matteson started across to join him but then thought better of it and continued east.

The Triumph of Disorder

I would have life ordered; jigsaw puzzle shapes
Evened at the edges and lined in rows like volumes
Of tan leather on a shelf, steady as the slow
Revolution of the seasons — green to white.

Yet, my breathing cannot trace a line
Drawn straight across the years;
Dreams are ruled by formulae perhaps,
But not the bone.

The tangled currents of mortality
Have wrapped my veins around my soul,
Choked my channeled step
To inarticulate drifting,

And soon will leave me, like a footprint
Dropped on an October beach, staring
Toward the sun, scratched at by the fingers
Of the tide as it echoes in its constant roll.

Achilles

Death, the crimson harlot riding on the arrow
Of the pretty prince, desires me at last;
But do not mourn the temporary fading of a sun,
My men, and do not ask, "This, too, for fickle Helen?"

I did not steer our ships to Ilium's shores
That I could net a stolen bitch; I came
Because the songs of bronze excite my ears.
Glory is the nectar of the sweetest grape.

And dying's half the price a mortal pays
To wear the brocade robes of immortality.
Praise the urgent plunging of the whore's swift thighs
That drive me toward the peak we call eternity.

Damn

CHARACTERS

Tally Man

Register Man

Anonymous Travelers (black and white)

The Boss (black)

Gabe—sometimes a musician (black)

Chrysanthemum—the Boss's daughter (mulatto)

Faith—the Boss's wife (white)

Jimmy—a less anonymous Traveler (white)

Scene: A hallway with one side open to the audience extends across the stage. At each end there is a doorway. The one at the right has red curtains; the left one is a double door and is hung half with black cloth and half with tinkling bead strings.

On a high step ladder behind the wall of the hall by the right gate sits a pale man with a pencil and tally sheet in his hands. He is dressed in black and, except for his artificially white face and hands, blends into the black background. Behind the wall at the left gate sits another man, similar in appearance and also on a high step ladder; however, this one has a cash register beside him, the bell of which will be audible but slightly muted.

There is a catwalk or plank between the two ladders behind the wall which would allow two people to walk the length of the hallway while looking down into it. This, of course, is invisible to the audience.

During the following action, the indistinct figures of the Anonymous Travelers can be seen entering from the right, crossing the stage, and exiting to the left. They move leisurely, occasionally stopping to converse inaudibly. The Tally Man notes each entrance, and the register chimes for each exit. These entrances, exits, and chiming of the register continue incessantly throughout the play unless otherwise stated.

When the curtain rises, all is dark; then a light grows behind the wall to silhouette two figures above the edge of the wall. As the music starts, the figures are illuminated by a spotlight. Visible above the wall are Gabe, wearing a sequined jacket and playing a "swinging" guitar,

and Chrysanthemum, who is straddling a straight back chair, her chin resting on her arms. She is watching Gabe with dazed adoration. Gabe plays a very intricate passage, and Chrysanthemum strains her lithe body to the beat. The spell is broken by the Boss's shout.

Boss: Chrysanthemum? Chrysanthemum! You come here right now.

(Gabe stops playing, relaxed and looks at Chrysanthemum, who is still staring blankly in his direction.)

Gabe: Crissy . . . come on, girl—you asleep?

Chrys. (stretching and rising slowly): Oh, Gabe honey, you're so good. Whenever I hear you play I just want to crawl inside your guitar and melt.

Gabe: O.K., O.K., but your father is calling you, and he sounds mad.

Chrys: I'll go . . . but kiss me first.

Gabe: Not now, we don't have time . . .

Chrys. (sitting down again): I won't go until you do.

Gabe: Oh, for . . . O.K., here. (He kisses her quickly.)

Chrys. (jumping up and grabbing him around the neck): Oh no you don't; I mean a good kiss. (She presses her body against his and kisses him cloyingly.)

Gabe (responding enthusiastically): Umm-Mmm! (He suddenly pushes her away, whirls her around, and gives her a slap on the rump) Now go! . . . But come back soon.

(Chrys pouts at him, then flounces down the stairs and out of sight. Gabe watches her go; then, chuckling to himself, he too descends the stairs. The spotlight is extinguished, and only a glow behind the wall can be seen.)

(The Anonymous Travelers continue to pass through the hall.)

Boss (starting to shout again): Chrysanthemum! Chrysant . . . Where the devil was you? You know it ain't good for me to have to yell at my age. When I call, you come. Understand?

Chrys: But Daddy, I came fast as . . .

Boss: Hell you did, daughter. And you don't have to tell me what you was doing. I know! You was footin' around with that no good Gabe again.

Chrys: Daddy, that ain't true. I was only walking around outside.

Boss: Don't you lie to me, girl, I know better. Do you remember what I said I'd do if you didn't change your ways?

Chrys: Yes, Daddy, but please don't make me do it . . . I'll be good . . .
And I repent, I most heartily repent. And Gabe ain't a bad boy,
really he . . .

Boss: Daughter, you have disobeyed me for the last time. Now I'm
going to punish you like I said I would.

Chrys: No, Daddy, please, I'll be . . .

Boss (loudly): Shut your mouth before I get angry again . . . Now
you listen to me . . . (During the Boss's tirade, the muted register
bell records exits more frequently than usual. Now it slows down
again.) You've been acting up for quite a time now, but I been
letting it pass. That's all over now. You is going to go down there,
and you is going to work hard, real hard. Things ain't been going
so good up here lately, girl, and it's up to you to change that.

Chrys: But I can't do nothing.

Boss: Nonsense, it's all a matter of publicity, and . . .

Chrys: Of what, Daddy?

Boss: Of publicity.

Chrys. (giggling): Oh, you mean publicity.

Boss: That's what I said. (The register bell quickens for a moment,
then subsides.) Anyway, you is going to go down there and make
them folks want to come see me, and you can't come back till you
do. Now go say good-by to your mother, then git on down . . .
And daughter . . .

Chrys: Yes, Daddy?

Boss: This means a lot to me; so you better make it good!

(The spotlight comes on to reveal Gabe and Faith leaning on the
top of the wall. Gabe has his arm around Faith's shoulders.)

Faith: Do you think she knows anything yet, Gabe?

Gabe: Na, not a chance. She'd crawl into any pocket I told her to.
You know what she said a little while ago? . . . that she wanted to
creep into my guitar and melt. . . . the dumb kid. (letting his
hand droop toward her bounteous bosom) Anyway, what do you
care, baby? . . . When will we . . . us . . .

Faith (nuzzling Gabe's cheek): As soon as Chrysanthemum has
started down.

Chrys. (shouting): Ma, where are you?

(Gabe quickly jerks his arm away from Faith and disappears down
the right stairs.)

Faith: Up here, Dear.

Chrys. (entering from left, out of breath): Daddy says I have to go down tonight.

Faith: He what! So he's at it again, is he . . . and at his age.

Chrys: Yes, I have to go down there to get him publicity.

Faith: Oh, down *there*. You had me worried for a second, Chrysanthemum . . . never could trust your father. (She points into the hallway.) Well, come take a look where you'll be tonight.

Chrys. (looking down into the hallway): Sure looks lonely down there, and it's so short. I'll never have time to do it. (Suddenly emotional) Oh, Ma, I can't leave Gabe. I can't be without him. Please, Ma, ask Daddy to send someone else.

Faith: You know your father never changes his mind, Chrysanthemum. You better get started if you want to get there before nightfall. (Chrysanthemum starts to leave, then returns to hand Faith a letter.)

Chrys: Here's a note for Gabe. Will you give it to him for me?

Faith (taking the letter and half smiling): Good-by, Chrysanthemum.

Gabe (reappearing from the right): Does she suspect anything?

Faith: Don't be silly, darling.

Gabe: Well, now that you got the Boss to git rid of her, let's hope she stays down there for awhile.

Faith: Don't worry, dearest. What's really important is that we don't waste anymore time.

Gabe (embracing her and pressing her to the floor): Baby, you said a mouthful.

(They gradually sink below the rim of the wall, and just as they disappear completely, the spotlight goes off.)

(The hallway itself is now illuminated. Two groups of people, the members of which have gathered imperceptibly during the preceding action, are revealed by the growing light. The first group, which is slightly to the left of the center, is composed of eight or nine kneeling individuals facing the left doors. The group is slightly to the right and consists of about seven men crouched in a circle shooting crap. From this group comes the usual noises of a crap game such as rattling dice and pleas for luck. Such cries as "seven come eleven" and "shoes for the baby" are heard. The groups ignore each other completely.)

(A woman in the first group rises from her knees with a dazed smile, advances toward the beaded door, and passes through it. The register, of course, chimes.)

(Chrysanthemum enters from the right, her bright clothes contrasting with the somber attire of the others. After watching for a moment, she curiously picks her way around the two groups but is ignored. Finally, she extends a finger and inquisitively pokes a kneeling man, who, to her amazement, scrambles to his feet and rushes to the door. Because he is looking at her over his shoulder, he collides with the partition between the black and beaded doors and is knocked on his back. He immediately scrambles on all fours through the black door. Chrysanthemum is amazed.)

Chrys. (looking plaintively upward): Oh, Daddy, what am I supposed to do with these creeps!

Boss: (angrily): Daughter, I sent you down there to do a job; now you just better do it, and I don't want to hear no more about it till you do.

(Three kneeling people and one crap shooter exit.)

(Jimmy enters from the right and watches Chrysanthemum. From this time on, no more Travelers enter.)

Chrys: Oh, Father, please . . .

Jimmy: Gal, ain't you learned it don't do no good to pray? If you ain't got it in you, you ain't going to get it. Anyway, there ain't nobody up there, and even if there is, he ain't going to trouble himself about you or me.

Chrys: Who are you?

Jimmy: Jimmy's my name, and who might you be, beautiful?

Chrys: I'm called Chrysanthemum, and there really is somebody up there—a whole bunch of somebodies. I know because I just came down. (She points toward the top of the wall) And I used to sit right up there and watch you people and listen to Gabe play his guitar.

Jimmy: Oh, come on, baby.

(A very dim spotlight illuminates part of the rim of the wall.)

Chrys: Look! Up there! You can see it now!

Jimmy: See what? Are you feeling O.K., kid?

Chrys: Of course, I am. Just look.

(As she watches, the light grows brighter, and Faith and Gabe

emerge over the edge of the wall. Faith is very disheveled and wearing only a slip. Gabe is bare chested and well blotted with lipstick.)

(Jimmy looks from Chrysanthemum to the wall in bafflement, for he sees and hears nothing.)

Gabe: (bending down and picking up Chrysanthemum's note): Hey, what's this?

Faith: What? Oh, that's a note for you from Chrysanthemum. I was supposed to give it to you. Let's read it for laughs.

Gabe. Ah, the hell with it. (He tosses it over the wall, and it falls down into the hallway.) Come here, baby. (They embrace and fondle each other.)

Chrys. (whispering): Oh, Gabe! Oh, no . . . but why . . .

Jimmy: For God's sake, what is it baby?

(Chrysanthemum walks slowly to the note, which has fallen behind the crap shooters, picks it up, holds it to her breast, and stares blankly toward the left doors. Jimmy walks quietly over and puts his arms gently around her.)

Jimmy: I don't know what's eating you, kid, but whatever it is, please let me help you. Let me do something for you.

Chrys. (still holding the letter against her): What? . . . Oh, it's nothing really . . . nothing at all. I just . . . Oh, please hold me. (She drops the note, puts her arms around him, and leans against his chest.) Let me know you're really there . . . that you won't leave. (She holds him tighter.)

Jimmy: O.K. kid, O.K. Everything will be fine, baby. I'll take care of you.

(Faith and Gabe stop fondling each other.)

Faith (noticing Chrysanthemum and Jimmy for the first time): Hey, Gabe, will you look at that? Why, the no good little slut. (They stand together looking down the hallway. Suddenly Faith turns to Gabe.) If you told the old man about them—and made it sound really good—I bet we could get rid of the brat for keeps.

Gabe: I don't know. . .

Faith: It has to be you. He don't trust me. And just think, we wouldn't have to worry anymore about getting caught by that snooping kid. Come on . . do it! You've got to! . . . Or maybe you don't love me anymore . . .

Gabe: Of course, I love you, but . . . O.K., I'll go. (He disappears down the right stairs.) Hey Boss! Boss!

Boss: Yeah! Wha? Wha you wake me up fo?

Gabe: Boss, I just saw Chrysanthemum, and she was carrying on with a traveling man.

Boss: With a what? Who says so?

Gabe: I saw her myself. Boss. I'm telling the truth. She's down there jazzin' with some stranger.

Boss: This is the limit. This is all. I won't stand for no more. You hear me? . . . no more! Gabe, git the drums. This is the end.

Gabe: (after a second of rummaging around): Here they is Boss. I got 'em.

Boss: O.K. You ready, Gabe?

Gabe: Yup.

Boss: Start.

(A long drum roll, which ends in a deafening crescendo, is heard followed immediately by the Boss's voice.)

Boss (loudly, with an obvious and not too successful attempt at sonority): DAMN!

(The entire set shakes perceptibly. Faith disappears in haste down the right stairs. All the Travelers on the stage rush through the black door, crushing and pummeling each other in their fright. The register rings frantically. Chrysanthemum and Jimmy just hold each other tighter.)

(When the trembling is over the Register Man picks up his cash register and disappears down the ladder. The Tally Man also descends.)

Boss: Gabe, run up and make sure the destruction is complete.

(Gabe runs up, looks over the top of the wall, registers surprise, and disappears again.)

Gabe: Boss, nothing's happened.

Boss: Impossible! Look again.

Gabe: I did look, and everything is just the same as it always was.

Boss: This ain't never happened before . . . O.K., we'll try again. Ready?

Gabe: Ready.

(Again the drum rolls to a crescendo.)

Boss: (with great effort) DAMN! . . . DAMN. DAMN, DAMN.

Faith: Run! The wall is caving in on us!

Gabe: Quick, Boss, under the bed!

Boss: I can't, I'm too fat. Help! Somebody, help!

Faith: Save me, Gabe!

Gabe: Hell with you, I'M getting out.

(There are screams and crashes as the entire set collapses. The doors fall toward the wings. The wall, ladders, and catwalk fall to the rear.)

(Chrysanthemum and Jimmy are left holding each other in the middle of the rubble. The Register Man and the Tally Man appear from their respective sides, and the former puts down his machine, rings up the total, and tears off the strip of paper.

Tally Man: How did it go this time?

Register Man (referring to the paper): Not quite as good as last but I sure got a kick out of the surprise ending. Well, so long, kids. See you around.

Tally Man: Yeah, and good luck.

(Exit Register Man and Tally Man)

(Jimmy and Chrysanthemum are still in each others arms.)

CURTAIN

TRINITY REVIEW