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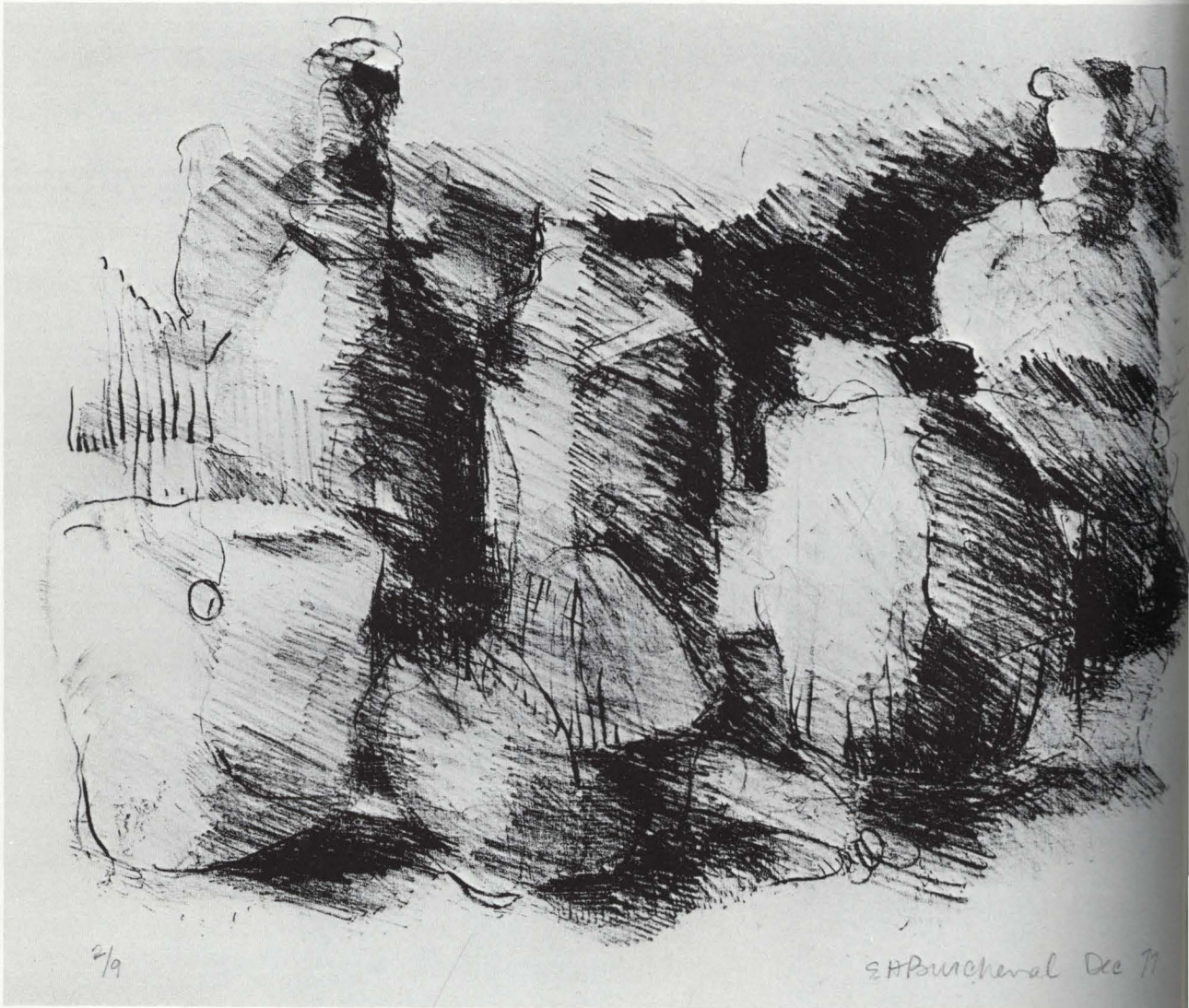


THE TRINITY REVIEW
SPRING 1978

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Ellen Burchenal

To Deny Adrienne Rich:
Four Voices

1

Did she say "The Patriarchal Mansion?"
Did I hear there is a room for rent?
I'm looking around, you know.
Please understand, I'm not real choosey.
Please Man, if anything becomes available
keep me in mind?
I could be interested.

2

There is no place for you —
"Dinner?"
"Can't. I need time."
"For us?"
"No."

This framework true to itself,
excuse me,
I mean true to myself,
must in effect
exclude you from me.

I'm sorry.

3

Are you watching me?
Carefully, deliberately
we step in a circle and
pause
never touching.
My hands and feet are cold.
I throw off the sheets
to hear clearly
a common rhythm.
My eyes adjust to the darkness.
I reach in your direction and
you are invisible.

4

You say you're deaf?
Wait, I'll speak up so that
you will see my lips
my mouth making
distortions for your convenience and comfort.
Can you hear
now?
Sure you do.
I can see you hear.
I can see you hear me.
Your hands on my throat
your kiss pressing my mouth
I breath in response

revealing secrets.



Ghost

Convinced insanity ensues
if broken skin's exposed
to air that's all exhaust,
she, having hangnails,
stays inside and reapplies
the castor oil to her eyes,
the cream of avocado
to her thighs (to cure
her crows feet, chicken
skin) She alternately
spreads, for bigger breasts,
her bread with extra butter,
starves to keep her waist
a waist, a wasp's. For whom?
The ghost, her lover in
another life, her last. All
day, shades drawn, she waits
to see at least his shoes
descend the stairs,
but disappointed, tears
the skin around her nails
off with her teeth and bleeds
and tears for more, the taste,
and wonders: will he wait?



Bruce Polsky

Antennae and Pens

Stanzas come to my antennae and pens
From famous men dressed in Athena's guise.
They catch up youths with woven oaths and cries,
Hailing her wisdom and singing her hymns.
But I, bent upon more devious charms,
Seek arching lines and Daedalean ways
To scale new heights with my fiery blaze.
I call to sirens for their ancient arms.
No muses can mold my hard anvilled struts
That grasp at the wind and hold it tight bound,
Emitting no gasps till I let it sound.
My quest is sacred, no man dare abuts.
So saying, should I make my engines gleam
With silver, gold and jewels of every sort?
Baubled beyond any critic's retort?
Technical, or like some old master's dream?
I have no doubts, no considerations
For poets gone on in more modern styles.
I seek not to make copies of their trials,
Nor to pound my way through wasteland stations.
Let them lift souls into heavenly skies
Where white angels flit, colours turn and swirl,
Where harps sonorously pluck and gods twirl.
Let them awake, and see, to their surprise,
Their rules and rulers poetic'ly caught.
Let them cry out in verse that they're dismayed
And that modern blanks are being betrayed
As they are shown what they ought to have taught,
Then tell me not to sip at Pierian springs.
Tell me not to write lines of short dull words
And that my rhymes are inconstant and poor.
What if my purple mountains have no rings.

— Jeremy Meyer



Steve Roberts

gee

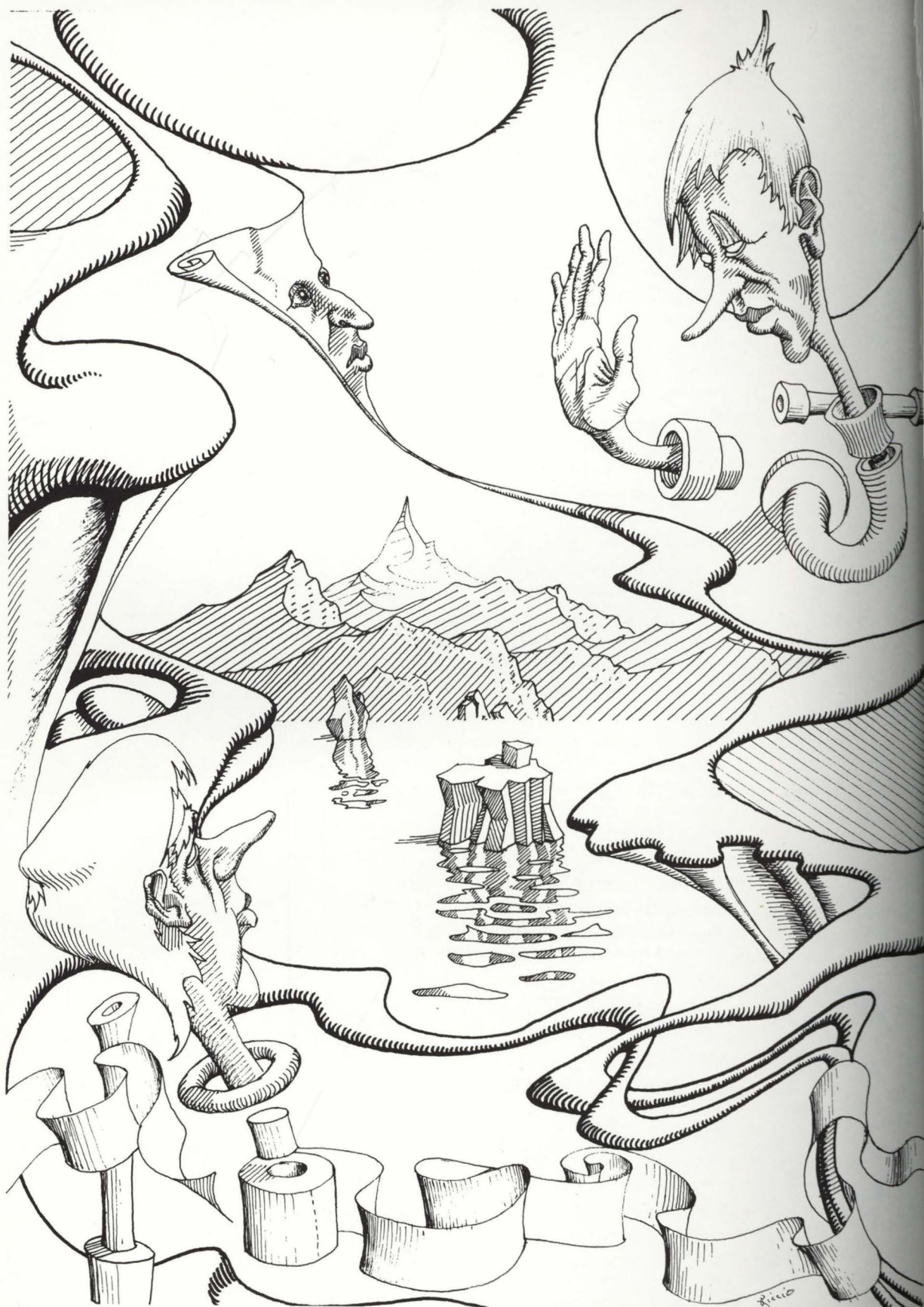
gee I shall be free
of this muzzle
the whip
with a twisted bird's throat
in its tongue
obscene nonentities bleating
wisdom
the crazed fiend
of bubble-gum hutching
peanut-shells to fondle
like diamonds
the rain sheds
its submission
the day perches
suicidal wonder
a little creature
on a minuscule platform
i a miniature
of a dough half-risen
a bush strangled
in its roots
think of the spring
tiger-dozing in me

— Helen Lawson

Brontosaurus at the Chicago Field Museum

How long has it been
since I've thought of that skeleton,
my grave and silent dinosaur —
piecings of all your brothers,
glued with unseen thirty ton thunder flesh,
eras of storms, neck protruding from the center of earth, coaster-glide tail.
My son whispers at the museum.
Not because he's afraid, but in awe
of bones burnished,
boulder bones that could crumble any instant,
like the instant, it must have been, you
saved yourself and became extinct.
Blessed are the wild
who have lived without whispers
and now leave me refusing to whisper,
angry at our inheritance, envious of my hushed monster,
empty babyflesh, pure of bone,
that lusters here and will not crumble.

— Amy G. Rosenthal



Ward 23: The first Night

finally
I am caught
unaware
this game leaves me vulnerable
the moon shines in as a
searchlight on a mass grave
without pen
I stab ourselves
in an endless succession
of debasing blows
the Wind subsides
I rub the broken button
on my green smock
until it crumbles in my
moist hand
gentle gentle Thorazine
you lull us into waking sleep
of dreamless cohesion
the shadows of window bars
cover me in a new suit of armor
until the throbbing corridor quiets
for but a moment
the footfalls of countless strangers
parade before my halfopened door
the sheets hide my humility
in puerile awkwardness
until Pilate interrupts the hall
with screeches of confused babbling
"What is Truth?"
I halfway smile in knowing silence
the same smile a fur seal might smile
before the backwoods huntsman levels
a wooden club squarely between
his imploring eyes
Reason & Folly drive us stark mad
while Silence and certainless slumber
feed the fires of Discord
and what do you know
for sure
anyway

?

— W. E. E.

The Wandering Jew

Charles J. Johnson

I asked the manager for a room in the front of the building and offered him a bottle of scotch in return for his assurance that no maids would enter my room to turn down the bed covers or wash the basin.

"You from this city?" he asked.

"No," I said politely, afraid that I had aroused his suspicions. "Just like to have some time alone, undisturbed. Business is hectic these days, you know."

"Listen, mister, I don't care if you want to bring dames into the room. It's just that sometimes we get complaints from customers who can't sleep with the city traffic and all. Mostly people from out of town."

"Thank you, I'll be fine. I'd like the room for two nights. How much do I owe you?"

"You can pay when you leave, you needn't bother now." I insisted and paid the manager in full. My three cases were heavy but I did not let the bellhop help me. I made two trips.

The room, as I expected, was just right. I pushed and tugged at the lock, but though it was old, it would not yield. I had a clear view of the street and I knew I would have no trouble making the proper selection.

When I awoke I felt heavy, my throat burned; I grew more alert and stood up. Gradually my eyes made out a clear glass above the basin and I slowly filled it to the top with water. I had not even remembered to draw the shades and the morning sunlight sprayed across the desktop and onto my equipment. I had been too tired the night before to arrange the equipment so I spent an hour making preparations while listening to my transistor radio.

The twenty-four hour news station came in without any static. Mostly local stuff. Two teenagers were stabbed in Roosevelt Park during the early evening, the subway token sellers were threatening a strike, and the circus was in town. My mirror fit conveniently on the desktop and I placed the empty cases under the bed. After breakfast in the hotel coffee shop, I returned to my room and sat in front of the window.

I stared at the stooped woman who ran the newspaper stand just below me. Through my binoculars I carefully watched her smile as she handed change from the front pockets of her apron to the customers. Business depended largely on the bus schedule and every twenty minutes or so her arms would move quickly fingering nickels and dimes in exchange for the tabloids. She rarely altered her expression and never exchanged more than a half word or mumble.

I watched dirt-smeared children across the block chasing cats and each other around delivery trucks and cars. I must have spent over an hour trying to picture the many faces that lived behind the windows that stood facing me. Later, after lunch, I decided on a woman who stood alone in front of a clothing store.

On the street I approached the woman: her face was thickly painted and the shape of her figure lost in an ill-fitting dress. After some talk, she agreed to accompany me.

In the room she undressed and then reached to unbutton my shirt. There was a familiarity to her touch, as though her hands were guided over my skin by the current she felt pulsing underneath it. I kissed her and then drew back, telling her to lie down on the bed. I fingered the radio and turned the volume up loud. Perplexed, she drew near me again, but I reasserted my order that she stay on the bed. She could even take a nap, I told her, if she didn't mind the scratchy music. I sat in the chair next to the desk and carefully felt for the device taped under the seat. I told her that I admired her body and said that I could see her better if the bed light was left on.

After a half hour I paid her the sum we had agreed upon and thanked her. When she left I

removed my camera from behind the mirror and checked the film. The full roll of thirty-six had reached the end and I carefully placed my equipment back into the black cases.

Farmhouses and barns stood on the level ground. The fields were silent. It was Sunday and there were no signs of life except for wisps of smoke curling lazily up from a few chimneys.

"Haven't taken anyone out to the Tewks' place in four or five years now. Used to be a time when I'd make a half dozen trips every Saturday morning and Sunday night. Guess they were mostly Old Tewks' important business clients. But sometimes they'd be so hung over on Sunday that I had to help them get back up on the train. Didn't mind though, 'cause they'd always give me an extra five or ten."

"I guess that wasn't bad for business," I said.

"Hell, you kiddin' me? Listen, you know the Tewks or something?"

"Yes, you could say that." The taxi moved steadily along the unpaved road, past unfenced hayfields and apple orchards. Scattered around these pastures, suspended somewhere in time, were twenty-two summers of my life. The wobbly rock path across Beezer's Brook. The short cut through the cemetery fence. My remembrances, broken and uneven, were like this gravel road.

"Just an old housekeeper and her husband living in the big house now, ain't that right?"

"Yes, I think so."

"I know Mr. Tewks had one son. Saul Tewks, Jr., I think. Sort of a strange kid, if I remember correctly. I'm not sure whether he works for his father's company in the city now. Don't see why he should though ..."

"Why not?" I asked quickly.

"Well, you know with the talk of problems between him and his father, though I guess the old man left him a good chunk of cash anyway ... Yipes, you must know more about this than I do."

I said nothing and wondered if the house would look the same. The driver pulled the gear shift, which was attached to the steering wheel, forward as he slowed around a curve.

"The place ain't for sale, is it? Not gonna buy it, are ya?" the driver asked.

"No, I'm just a friend of the family's. I thought I would take a look around since I was in the neighborhood."

Had you ever been on a farm before?

Only a few times. But I guess I didn't understand that there were sometimes ways to get from one building to another without going outside.

And you followed her?

She scampered along first, her little hands pointing the way. We went through several doors and then skipped down steps that led to a basement used for storing equipment. I lost sight of her, but thought that I heard her voice from behind some tractor parts. I found myself facing a heavy iron door leading into a narrow, windowless corridor. Inside it was black. For a moment I trailed my fingertips over the damp walls. There were doors on each side of the passage, but they were all sealed. Then I heard a succession of noises coming from behind a door at the far end of the passage. Before I could reach it, I heard a voice and hoped it was hers. As I moved closer, I stumbled over some piece of machinery and fell hard. I thought I had broken my foot, but later the doctor said it was only a sprain.

Was she pretty? You must have been interested in girls by then.

Yes, she had nice hair. But she also said that there was a place where they could never find us. Where she always went when her father's face turned red. She was going to share her secret with me.

Sometimes I would take short-term jobs. One evening, while employed as a waiter in a diner, I noticed a well-dressed man and a girl sitting in one of my booths. He must have been in his early fifties and was rather handsome; women from around the room glanced at him and he talked easily with this girl who I guessed to be his daughter.

She sat beside him, listening and looking down at her lap, where she buckled and unbuckled her fingers. I felt a compelling urge to go to my locker in the back room and find

my camera. If I could focus in on her alone, I could take marvelous studies of her hands, neck, and eyebrows. I could capture the passions and secrets of her inner self.

As I continued to spy on this couple, I realized they had yet to be served even a glass of water. The man spoke freely and the girl's eyes remained on her lap as she locked her fingers. After a moment, he casually uncoiled his arm and rested it in back of her seat. He whispered to her and she lifted her eyes and chuckled; magically she was no longer cold and stiff and quiet.

Suddenly, I could not move toward the table. I stepped behind the curtain, stuffed my overalls in a suede bag, and took a subway home to my apartment. The doorman grumbled something as I entered and I reached in my pocket for the keys to my door.

Before slipping into the shower, I pulled from my desk drawer several albums, filled with photographs carefully enlarged and meticulously pasted onto thick cardboard. I removed several dozen enlargements and placed them all over the living room floor, recalling the movements and images of the individuals frozen within the frames. Street artists, orphans, rock stars, and prostitutes lay on my rug laughing together.

The old man's hands fluttered like a magician's as he swiftly snipped the branches and peeled off dried leaves. I signaled for his attention. "I'd like to buy some plants for my apartment and I wonder if you could help me make a selection?" He nodded understandingly and led me around to a counter by the window.

"Most of these grow well inside and you needn't do much but add a little water."

I looked at the various tags: Spider, wandering jew, geranium, and coleus. The wandering jew was rich purple and I closed my eyes as I stooped to sniff it. I had never seen this kind of plant before, and the aroma was light and pleasing.

"That's always a favorite," he said. "It's especially popular since you can breed it easily. Just cut off a leaf and rest it in a glass of water. It hardly grows any roots at all. Once they look like tiny hairs, stick the branch in a shallow pot, and a beautiful plant will blossom. Just make sure it gets plenty of morning sunlight."

"Sounds good," I said. "Let me take one." I peeled several dollars from my billfold and the old man went back to his work.

"Well, I won't argue with ya, but it's some drive out here."

The first thing Mrs. Willinberg wanted to show me was the greenhouse. It was sunny and the large artificial sun lamps were turned off. Her husband had replaced the sprinkler system and all she had to do now was pull a brass lever and spray guns would water the plants automatically. She pointed to the plants father had raised which were still alive. "He always told me to use big pots so there would be enough room for thick, sturdy roots to develop," she said.

Then Mr. Willinberg asked all the usual questions: How was the train trip? Where had I been? How was business? Was I married? ... I gave him a full account and then casually returned his attention by asking about his health.

Mrs. Willinberg wanted to know how long I was staying and I told her one night — I said I had a business meeting the day after tomorrow. She led me upstairs and stepped into the master bedroom. "You might as well sleep in here," she said. "I just polished the bed posts this morning, just as always." The mahogany was a rich reddish-brown and shined in the sunlight. I told her I would prefer to sleep in my own room.

I called the taxi company an hour later.

Recently a waitress told me about a new club on the south side which features up-and-coming comedians and singers. Each is allowed to give a half-hour performance. The waitress explained that the owners entice popular acts from smaller cities and towns by suggesting to the performers that talent scouts frequented this area and enjoyed the club.

I found the club to be modestly priced and guessed that much of the audience was comprised of students from the university. Most of the performers were quite polished and the students, full of admiration, often broke into exuberant applause, sometimes demanding encores. After some acts, the performers would step down from the low stage and join a table in the audience rather than returning backstage. I assumed they were meeting friends

who had come to urge them on.

There was one artist I found particularly talented: a male folk singer who performed with unusual poise and grace on a twelve string guitar. He went through a series of ballads during which an unequaled hush spread throughout the room. Even the cocktail waitresses paused to watch the deft plucking of the instrument and listen to this clear voice. He commented between songs that he had written all his own lyrics and most of the songs seemed to be about love. When he finished, he drew a long breath and lowered his eyes as if possessed by the tension and energy he had mastered moments earlier.

I watched his performance for three successive nights; the program said that he was from a small village in the northern part of the state and he was the son of a blacksmith. It also said he was quickly attracting an avid following in that region. I observed that each evening a slender dark-haired girl sat alone at a table to the left of the stage and never took her eyes off the singer during the entire set. Later, he would sit with her and they would laugh and engage in animated conversation.

The singer was scheduled to perform for two more evenings; I decided to meet him. I knew it would be difficult since the artists kept to themselves, and I had no convincing reason for intruding upon him.

The next night was Friday and extra tables had been squeezed around the stage to accommodate the large audience. I sighted the dark-haired girl in her usual spot and approached her. "Excuse me, Miss, but I wonder if I could join you at your table. It is very difficult to find a free seat and I need a good view of the stage. It's important for my job."

"Thank you, but I have a friend who is performing tonight and I'll be leaving with him later," she responded coolly.

"No, you don't understand. I just want to sit near the stage. I won't be of any nuisance."

"Oh, all right," she said. I sat close to her and took a small note pad out of my chest pocket. "By the way, what is this job of yours anyway?" she asked, turning to me.

"Oh, it's nothing terribly impressive. I work for a record company. Lots of time on the road and when I finally get into town, it's arranging cocktail parties for all these big shots. If you really want to know the truth, I'm looking to make a change ..."

"What sort of work do you do for this record company?" she interrupted. "What do you do on the road?"

Nonchalantly I continued explaining to her that I was a talent scout and that I had to visit many concerts and clubs looking for performers good enough to invite to the company's recording studios for a test tape. "You mean that if you saw a singer here tonight that you thought was very good, you might ask him to make a record?" she asked, as if wanting to be reassured.

"No, we only bring people in to make a test tape at first. But, yes, I could find someone here tonight, but they would have to be very good." Suddenly the girl appeared to be frightened and almost short of breath. Clutching the glass in front of her, she said that she knew a *very* good singer performing shortly — he would be the biggest star in the country soon. I explained that there were many talented recording artists around today. But I added that because I liked her, and because I sensed that her judgement was good, I would listen carefully when her friend performed.

The singer soon stepped on stage and his performance was even better than the previous evenings. The crowd responded enthusiastically and called for two encores. The girl, who kept sneaking glances at me, stood on her feet and cheered wildly when the last song was over. I nodded to her repeatedly.

I told the singer that I could not promise anything, but that I would give him a strong recommendation. As a matter of fact, I continued, I was meeting with the company's chief producer next week and I would be sure to mention his name. The singer's eyes were glued to my face and I watched him reach for the girl's hand under the table.

I mentioned that the only problem was that I did not have any business cards with me at the moment and asked if I could trust him not to lose my name and office number if I wrote it on a napkin. He nodded eagerly and I said that I would be in my office on Monday morning and we could arrange a tape session then.

We all shook hands and I carefully stepped around the tables and made my way toward the exit.





Sally Rogers

of Cy

I keep of then the disc
of smokey, ice —
blue glass, this
circle in my palm of snow
he said the seagulls
black against bright clouds
would bring, and did,
on wind that all
day from the Adirondacks fed
our fire, froze within
the lake the mountains, leaves.

And of the fire — the ash
in air like seed, no,
snow — I have
another gift he gave to hold:
a shell in which the spiral
of the smoke is
still, the always
unseen center empty of its animal.

— Carol Henrikson



Hugh Mohr

Rumpelmayer's (50 Central Park South Pl 5-5800)

"it has been shown as proof positive that carefully prepared chocolate is as healthful a food as it is pleasant; that it is nourishing and easily digested; that it does not cause the same harmful effects to feminine beauty which are blamed on coffee, but is on the contrary a remedy for them; that it is above all helpful to people who must do a great deal of mental work, to those who labor in the pulpit or the court room, and especially to the travelers; that it has produced good results in cases of chronic illness ..."

Brillat-Savarin

un gastronomique of the 18th cent.

The apartment is small
a find in the area according to the listings.
Pinks and purples, a Louisiana lady's den
feathered with little things.
Fine frames, filigreed company
a paperweight of glass and mint
flowers of silk, captured butterflies
a jaded decanter webbed tight in silver mesh
smell of grandmother's last loved scent
satin pillows, crocheted and laced year-long valentines.

The apartment is small.
Shelves of well-worn books
chancery of consequence and chaos
a white step ladder aids the seeker,
Scarlett's Tara, Sartre's *Nausea*, l'haute couture de Paris,
Katherine Anne Porter.
A writing desk to the left of the case,
letters from friends. A book records their birthdays
the dates marked in French.
The language is confection adding sweetness to remembering.

The apartment is small.
Black satin purse and beaded gloves
immodestly forgotten on the table,
cigarettes, a half-smoked display
tapered white merges to black ash
lipstick punctuates the contrast.

For Sally, a Sufi follower,
the apartment is small.
Elegant and gentle
more sedate, than electrically beautiful
a southern lady from New Orleans
Sally, a worshipper, not a seeker,
is a woman
who has sipped hot chocolate at Rumpelmayer's (50 Central Park South
pl 5-5800)
and tasted it.

— Robin Pohl

Jerry Stone: Albert's Son

I

I see your face,
Drawn over sturdy bones
With eyes fixed on some distant point,
Beyond the fields of Cushing.
Your hair, cropped short,
Pretends to be no shield
'Gainst the Maine gales you've braved.
In the barn doorway, you lean
Looking out;
Over family plots,
Fields stripped soil-bare by glaciers
Leaving rocks to be cleared,
Piled into mounds, walls,
Walling in, walling out.

II

Behind, barely lit,
A barred window waits.
It does not let light into this room
With the hay bed above your head.
Do you see the sea;
Full and brimming brine-laden,
Overflowing biting spray
That flies upon the rocks
And tears with long bony hands
'Gainst the Maine land.
I feel your face
Filled with studied pain,
Eyes fixed on some nearby point.
In the fields of Cushing.

— Jeremy Meyer



Lois Ordway

All Over

John Sandman

I was relaxed before the race. I almost felt tired, but I had gotten plenty of sleep the night before. The coaches took too long to start the race; they explained every inch of the five mile course. The runners around me were getting tense, shaking their hands, jumping up and down, but I just stood with my arms folded. When the gun finally went off I started out at a jog and surveyed the situation. Then I picked it up a bit. After about a quarter mile I was right where I wanted to be: to the outside and behind the top twenty or so runners. If you go out fast and stay with the lead pack of runners, you have to put up with a lot of stray knees and elbows. I have learned to start out slow.

The first time I ever ran the mile was in the ninth grade. I was the county champion in the half mile in the eighth grade, so everyone expected a lot from me. I was given the inside lane, and my whole team lined up on the field to watch me win. When the gun went off I turned all my nervous energy into speed. I felt strong and built up a big lead on all the other runners. I did the first quarter in fifty-nine seconds. Everyone was going wild, but my coach shouted to me that I had blown it. I didn't believe him until I got about two hundred yards into my second quarter. Something in my chest gave. My breathing started to rattle and there was mucus crawling up my throat. For the rest of the race I was coughing and sucking for air. I finished the race and even managed to beat a couple of runners. After I crossed the finish line I dropped to my knees and spat red foam out onto the cinders. I had ruptured my lung and couldn't run for the rest of the season.

After about a half mile I saw a guy up ahead of me from Amherst. It isn't really a fair generalization, but I've never liked guys from Amherst. They always seem to think that they're special, because they got into a school that is a little bit harder to get into. Whenever they show us their cross-country course, they talk to us as if we are morons who are going to have real trouble remembering when to go left and when to go right. And the most infuriating part of it is that they usually beat us by a considerable distance in the race. But not this time, I pushed myself, went by the Amherst snob, and didn't see him for the rest of the race.

I was taking this race very seriously. It was the last race of my college cross-country

career, the last race I would ever run. It was a championship meet with about thirty other small New England colleges. I felt that I had the chance to win it. I had worked out all summer, on days so hot that the sweat clouded my eyes and the pavement burned through my shoes. When I got back to school I ran double workouts. I would get up as the sun was rising, and wake up two miles later to find myself trudging along some deserted street. I was trying to work towards something, and I guess this race was it.

I had never been a great runner in college. In high school I was one of the top runners in the state on one of the top teams in the state. I ran times that I haven't come close to since. At first I was disappointed with college because the coaches weren't as good, and there weren't as many good runners to compete with. I fractured my foot in the first race, and that began a whole string of injuries — sprained ankles, floating kneecaps, pulled hamstrings. And when I was able to run, I had all I could do just to keep up with the mediocre runners. As a team we never won more than two meets a year, and they were usually against junior colleges or colleges that had just recently accepted male coeds.

This year it was all coming back to me. I never won the tough races, but I never finished farther back than fourth place. I was beginning to feel respectable again, but it seemed like it might be too late.

I had one of those dreams the night before the race. I was at a dance and it felt like I was drunk. All of a sudden, like it was flashed on a screen in front of me, I saw Broonzy dancing with Sarah. Broonzy is a football player who I just barely knew, and who might be the missing link between man and ape. Sarah is a girl who I liked. I shouted at Broonzy. (I don't know what I said, I just felt the vibration of my words.) He came at me, and the next thing I knew I was running away from him. I was flying and there was no way he could catch me. Somehow it became broad daylight, and I was running on a track with freshly painted lanes. The bleachers were filled with familiar faces. My legs started to tighten up. It was my thighs, and they got so tight that I could barely lift them. He was gaining on me and the crowd was screaming. I was pushing myself as hard as I could, but I wasn't moving. I felt hot breath on the back of my neck. I screamed.

My stomach always reacts more than the rest of me. I get incredible cramps before tests, dates and races. These cramps always make me have to shit at the wrong time, like when I'm two and a half miles into a race. You think that your stomach would learn to control itself after twenty years. It seems like I have cramps and diarrhea more often than I don't.

I had to take a shit before the start of the race. There were only two available toilets in a fraternity house near the starting line. There was a long waiting line. (Almost every runner wants to take a good dump before the start of the race.) When I sat down on the toilet an amazing thing happened. I took a really nice shit. I mean they were big pieces and it came out clean: when I wiped there was nothing on the paper. It felt great. It's rare that I take such a nice shit. I knew I was going to have a good race.

When I screamed I woke myself up. It must have been loud because it woke up my roommate, Andy, in his bedroom. As I was stepping into a pair of pants, he came into my bedroom and asked me what the fuck I was screaming about. I told him that I had had a nightmare. He told me that I had no right to be having nightmares. I was winning races, I had a girlfriend, and I had no problems that should be causing nightmares.

After about a mile I was really picking up the pace. A song started playing in my head. It was a song called "All Over" by Phoebe Snow. I have no idea why the song was in my head; maybe I had heard it on the radio that morning. I don't really like the song. I just kept repeating the same two lines: "All over, all over, / I hope that soon it will be all over." Those probably aren't even the right words to the song, but that is the way that I was singing it to myself. It was kind of like a prayer asking for the race to be over. I started moving with the song and ran faster. If you can get your body going to the rhythm of a song, sometimes you can actually forget the fact that your legs are moving, that you are in pain. There is no effort and your body moves without you thinking about it. I was beginning to feel pretty loose. The lead runners were within my sight.

There was somebody waiting for me at the finish line. Sarah. I'd only known her for a couple of weeks, but I had seen a lot of her in that time.

I met her in the laundry room. She had the dryer next to mine, and I was looking at her as I stuffed my dry clothes back into my laundry bag. I had probably seen her around campus, but sometimes you don't notice someone until you are alone with them in a place like the laundry room. She was pretty, but not too pretty. She didn't look like the type of girl who is always being told that she is pretty, who has had guys drooling over her since she was fifteen, who is going to make you sorry that you tried to talk to her. The reason I decided to talk with her was because she was nice looking, but she didn't seem to have that "I'm pretty" attitude. I said something stupid like, "This is one of the few times I miss my mother." The most important thing in a situation like that is to say something. Almost anything can get a conversation going, and this did.

When I looked into her face, I noticed something that I hadn't seen at first. One of her eyes was slightly crossed. The normal eye was phlegmatic, but the wandering eye got worried and excited. I really like that eye. We talked a little bit about the fascinating topic of laundry, and then we played twenty questions. (What's your major? What dorm do you live in? What courses are you taking? etc.) I didn't pick her up that night. I had to go through the usual formalities. I said hello to her whenever I saw her on campus. Then I searched her out at a couple of keg parties. She was a freshman and wasn't going out with anybody at school or at home. Sarah was actually interested in some of the same things I was, so I didn't have to rack my brains to keep a conversation going. One week night I went to her room and asked her if she wanted to go to the movies the next night. She said, "Yes." It wasn't long before we were spending all of our time together. We went to meals together, we went to the library together, we went to parties together. It was nice.

After I have run a couple of miles in a race, I am in a whole different world. It is a silent world, kind of like a dream, a nightmare; I wish that I could wake up. The world extends about four feet in front of my eyes. (I am near-sighted, but too vain to wear glasses.) All I can hear is the sound of my own footsteps and breathing. Sometimes I'm not sure if my own footsteps and breathing are echoing, or whether there is someone right behind me. I'm too afraid to look. All of the faces of people walking by or watching the race look strange, rubbery, and familiar, as if I might have seen them in a dream.

Sarah was surprised when I asked her to come and watch the race. She knew I was a runner, and I had never talked about it with her. I hate talking about running with people who don't run. Some runners talk about it all the time, and they are very boring. She said yes in a way that told me that she really did want to come and see me run. I really enjoyed driving with her up to the race, talking about things we both liked: Jackson Browne, Richard Brautigan, root beer popsicles, the view from a rooftop.

It seemed as if the three mile mark came up too quickly. Time is funny during a race. The first half of the race flies by, but the second half makes you feel some pain, and time stretches out.

At the three mile point the course took you by the starting line. There were spectators, I picked up the pace, because I always run faster when there are people watching. It doesn't matter if you slow down, later on, alone on a path in the woods, because you were looking good when there were people watching.

I saw Sarah. She was wearing a red sweatshirt with a hood. There was something pretty about the way her blonde hair kind of collected in the hood. She was waving and cheering for me; I hadn't really been sure if she would. At first I was going to make as if I was concentrating on the race, but then I found myself waving and smiling back. My coach was about a hundred yards further on. When I went past him I grimaced and breathed a lot harder than I had to. I like to have my coach think that I'm working hard.

Sarah and I had the usual problems. She had her friends, and I had mine. We didn't like each other's friends, which meant we had to spend a lot of time by ourselves. We spent so much time with each other, so soon after we had met, that it was hard not to get on each

other's nerves.

And she was neurotic. I mean she was funny about sex. One night we went out to a bar, and I got her very drunk. She wasn't used to drinking, so it didn't take much. We were drinking pitchers of beer, and I kept filling her up whenever the beer was an angstrom below the top of the glass. We went back to my room and fooled around a little. We were lying still on the couch in the living room, and I asked her if she wanted to stay the night. She said, "Okay," We went into my room. I took off all her clothes. She had a nice body, but maybe I didn't react to it the way I should have. I mean it wasn't anything like the ones you see in the magazines. I took off all of my clothes and got into the bed. When I tried to get on top of her, she pushed her arms against me and said, "Please don't." I couldn't believe it. I felt like screaming. "What do you mean, 'please don't.' How could you let me take off all your clothes, get into my bed, and then tell me 'please don't.'?" But instead of getting mad I played the nice guy, thinking that I might still have a chance. "What's the matter?" I asked.

"Nothing," she said. "Let's just go to sleep."

So she fell asleep crushing my arm, while I tried to figure out what went wrong. I knew that there had to be something wrong with me. Why else would a girl go that far and then stop? I thought about it all the time.

As I ran into my fourth mile, I began to gain on a runner ahead of me very quickly. Then I realized that it was Burkin, who was a runner for our team. It was on a short loop that you did twice, and I was lapping him. I must have been more than a half mile ahead of him. He was waddling more than he was running, with his ass sticking out, kind of bent over. As I passed him I said, "Hey man, don't give up." Burkin was the worst guy on our team. I used to be showered, dressed, and on my way to dinner by the time he would finish the workouts. We had other guys on our team who were almost as bad as Burkin. They would always get on me for running so hard in practice. They'd say, "Slow down, it's just practice." I don't see how guys like Burkin get themselves to go out and run every day. I don't understand how they get themselves out of bed in the morning.

The night I slept with Sarah, she got up early in the morning and left. I guess she didn't want anyone to know that she had slept in my room. She kissed me when she left, and asked me to pick her up to go to brunch at eleven-thirty. She acted as if nothing had changed between us.

My roommate, Andy, realized that Sarah had slept in my room, and he made a big deal of it. (Neither of us had girls coming and going.) At first he joked around. "Does she just lie there like a log, or does she move her ass?" But then he sensed that something was wrong so he asked me, "How did it go?" I said that it went okay, but in a way that made it clear that I didn't want to talk about it. I usually tell him everything, but I couldn't tell him the truth, — that I hadn't fucked her — so I let him go on believing that I had. I felt lousy lying to him; I wished it wasn't so complicated, that nothing had gone wrong, that I could just stand there truthfully and say, "Yes, I did fuck her."

People are always asking me why I run. They say that I must be masochistic, or that it must be very boring to go out and do a long distance run. Sometimes I tell them that only people with feeble minds get bored when they run. Sometimes I just shrug my shoulders. It bothers me when people question or make fun of my running, because I have no idea why I run. I'm not one of those natural runners. I always have to push myself. Whenever I've just finished a hard workout, I feel weak: my stomach is filled with cramps, and sometimes I get headaches and feel dizzy. I have to lie down in my room for an hour or so before I can make it to dinner.

Whenever I think about the rewards of running, it is difficult to figure out why I run. If you play football or basketball, and if you score two touchdowns or twenty points, you are assured of getting laid by some gorgeous cheerleader. But girls and just about everyone else pay very little attention to long distance running. It is very boring to watch. You can't count on any recognition. After you've won a race and you go to the campus center to pick up your mail, nobody looks at you any differently. You're still the same loser you've always been.

They say that running keeps you in shape, that it builds up your body. But it also tears your body down. I lose so much weight that all the bones in my face stick out and make me

uglier. I have to walk funny because my legs are always hurting from one thing or another. I get hemorrhoids because of the stress that running puts on my ass. Sometimes after I've run very far on a hard surface, there's blood in my urine. I'm always looking forward to a time when I won't have to go out and run anymore.

I had steadily been picking up the pace since the first mile. I was passing a lot of runners, and no one was passing me. Near the end of the race, I was running with the real class runners. Even though we had run almost four miles, nobody was breathing hard. It was all silence. My stride kept getting longer and longer. I tried to run faster, and there was no pain to stop me.

In most races there is at least one point where you consider dropping out of the race. You could pretend that you sprained your ankle or came up with a leg cramp. And all the pain would stop; everyone would feel sorry for you. I didn't think about quitting during this race.

I've only quit in the middle of a race once. It was in my junior year in college during the indoor season. I was running the mile, and was very out of shape. (I might have been drunk the night before the race.) During the fifth lap I got a cramp that felt like a knife trying to work its way out of my stomach. First I just slowed down. But when everyone had passed me, I said, "Fuck this." And I let my legs stop moving. The coach ran over to find out what was wrong with me. I started making as if I was going to puke, so that I could get by him into the locker room without having to explain. When I was little I used to dive in swim meets at the Y.M.C.A. After I had made an awkward, splashing dive, I used to consider not coming up from underwater. When I did come up, it would be in the farthest part of the pool, where I hoped that no one would be watching for me. After I've really blown something, I have to get away, I have to be alone. But I always seem to get over that feeling.

I didn't run any more that year. I avoided the coach and the guys on the team. It was a big relief not having to worry about a race every Saturday. When I'm not running my stomach isn't so jumpy and I can drink a lot more. And there was no reason to worry about being in shape. Most of my friends drank a lot, and they were always trying to get me drunk. I had no excuses when I wasn't running, so I used to drink four or five nights a week. We divided our time between frat parties, the school rathskeller, and local bars. Sometimes we just sat around the room and drank.

Almost everything that I look forward to in my life — weekends, parties, dates — involves getting drunk. I always thought that the best kind of life would be one where there was no limit on how much and when I could drink. But I learned that the limits are part of what makes getting drunk enjoyable for me. I need the time in between the getting drunk, to make getting drunk special.

I had more friends than I've ever had that semester. (I've never been a very popular guy.) I talked a lot more to the people I knew and started talking to people I'd never met. I didn't spend as much time alone, running or thinking about running. But after a while it was frightening waking up every morning and realizing what an ass I'd made of myself — picking up ugly girls, peeing under a streetlight in the middle of the campus, trying to get my hands down some girl's pants in the middle of a dance floor, etc. And then I would walk around the campus scared to see all the people who had seen me the night before. I saw myself turning into the kind of a person I hate: someone who has nothing special or private about himself, someone who will tell anyone everything about himself. I was loud and obnoxious when I got drunk. Sometimes when I was drunk I would find myself talking to someone I hardly knew, telling them about when I used to run, and what a great runner I was. It was like being an old man or being dead. That's what made me start running again.

I was moving faster and faster. There was a mile to go. I began to feel some pain, but it just made me run faster. (To get it over with.) I made out a runner ahead of me, and as I got closer I realized that he was the leader. His name was Jones and he ran for Williams. He was one of the top distance runners in New England. I once saw him do a mile in four minutes and twelve seconds, and when he came across the finish line he calmly asked what his time was. He wasn't even breathing heavily.

I remembered what my coach in high school used to say. If you are in a race over two miles long, and someone beats you by less than a hundred yards, you choked. Skill and conditioning have nothing to do with it. When it comes to the last quarter mile of a long race, it is just a matter of which runner has more guts; which guy believes in himself more. This coach was full of shit. He probably couldn't even walk two miles at the time he was coaching us. But a lot of the things that he used to say still stick in my mind.

I gritted my teeth and closed my eyes. I tried to squeeze out more energy. I ran faster. When I opened up my eyes he was right in front of me. I was more surprised than he was. I moved to go around him, but he would have none of it. So I ran at his side, stride for stride. We must have run like that for a quarter mile, but it seemed longer. And then I heard him let out something like a sigh instead of a breath. He fell from my side like a wounded bird. And then there was no mistaking it. I was all alone. I was going to win. It seemed as if all the training, injuries, and pain had been worth going through. For the first time in the race, I felt like I had to shit. But I kept on moving.

I started to think of what it would be like when I got back to school. After a race everyone always asked me, "Did you win?" I can never give them a simple yes. I can't explain to them that there are millions of guys who run, that there is always going to be someone better than me, but that I am better than a whole lot of runners. They wouldn't listen. They're just asking to be polite; they want a one word answer. Sometimes with people who I know don't care, I say, "Yes, I won," and let them believe it. I always feel shitty about that. But this time I wouldn't have to think. I could simply say, "Yes, I won."

I started to consider my appearance at the finish line. Sometimes there are people taking pictures, so you have to consider your image. I had to make a decision: Would I smile to show them how easy it was, or would I writhe my face in agony to show them the pain of it. (I had practiced both looks in the mirror several times.) I decided on the smile. If I was grimacing, everyone would say that I was just another ugly distance runner.

I chanced a look over my shoulder and saw Jones, struggling, out of reach. The music started up in my head again. It had been gone for a couple of miles. The same two lines: "All over, all over, / I hope that soon it will be all over." I flowed across the finish line between two ropes and into a chute. The music stopped.

There was scattered applause like the kind you hear at a golf match. I should have known, but somehow I had always pictured a crowd going wild. I guess it isn't very exciting. The people standing at the finish line just see some guy come trotting in for about two hundred yards. They don't have any conception of what's been going on for the last five miles. The man at the end of the chute handed me a popsicle stick with the number, "1" written on it. He congratulated me.

Sarah came over and threw her arms around me. By reflex my arms went around her. We stood there with our arms around each other for a while. I was panting, she said nothing. People started to come over and congratulate me. The coach came over and put his arms around me and told me that he knew I could do it or some such bullshit. Jones came over and put his fingertips on my shoulder and mumbled, "Good race." I guess he felt like he had to do that.

I tried to picture what was still ahead of me: a party that night in my room, Sarah and I drunk-dancing, people congratulating me (most of them I wouldn't even like or know), an article in the newspaper, and maybe even a picture.

Sarah walked me back to the locker room. She asked me a lot of questions about what it had been like. I made polite replies. I was barely listening to her. I was wondering how long we would stay together. I could tell from the way she hugged me at the finish line that I could do anything I wanted with her now. I could decide how long we would stay together. I wouldn't have to worry about proving myself so much.

When I was in the race, the only thing I could think of was getting it over with. But even after I'd won, I still didn't feel satisfied. I thought of all the places where I could have run faster. I still had some energy and I almost wished that I was back on the course again. There was something about running in a fast race, alone, that was more pleasing than walking across a field with Sarah. When we got to the locker room we stopped, and she kissed me. For the first time that day I realized that it was very cold, (it was early November) and I began to shiver.

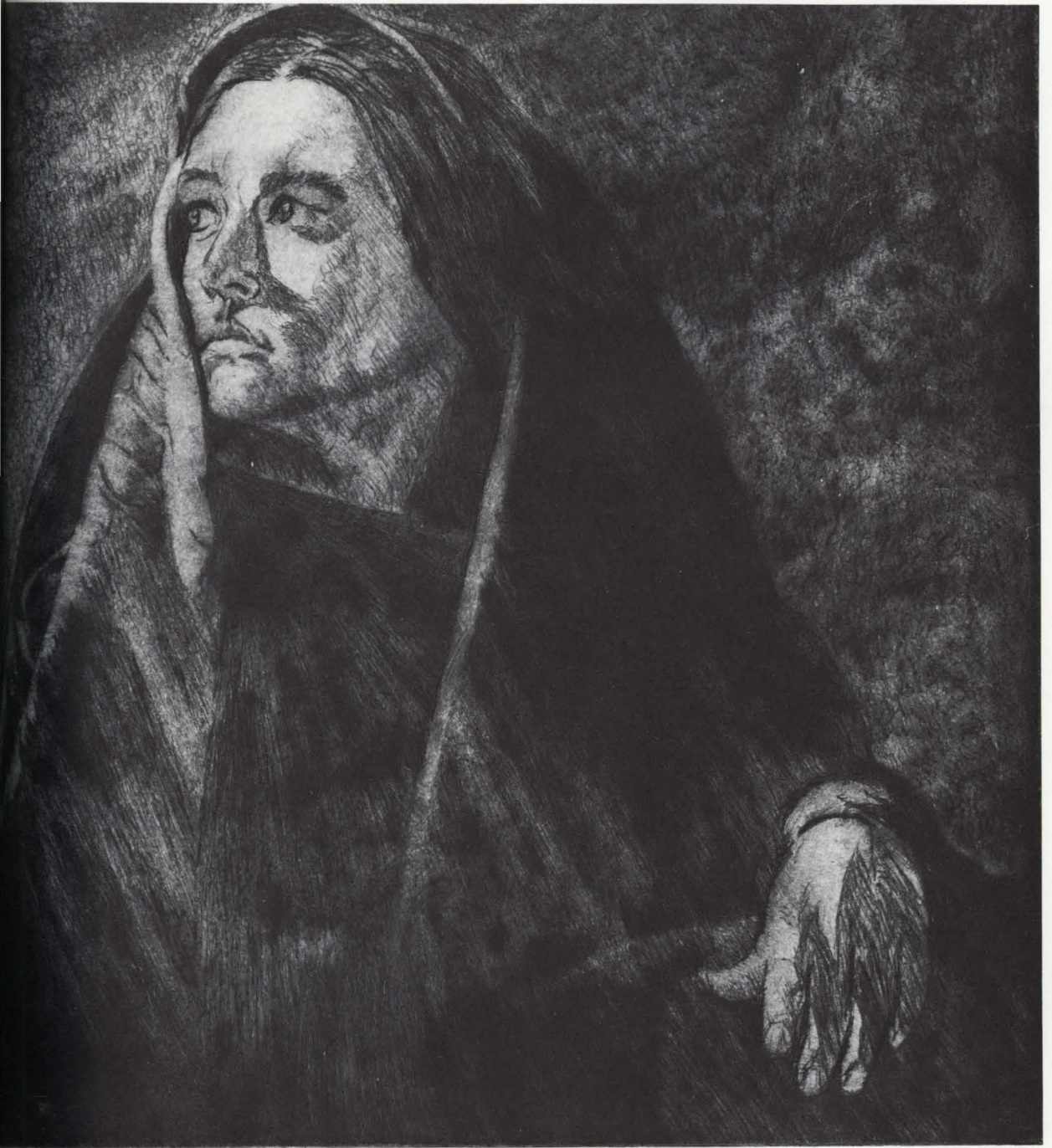
Never having forgotten anything
of ultimate meaning,
being able to distinguish the sad spring of his twelfth year
from that of his fortieth,
he walks to work
mind filled —
fires in Hiroshima, olive trees in Spain,
tusk of elephant, and wife's piano keys.
Cheap buildings of grand soliloquy
do not intimidate
for he knows them all, has toppled them all —
like the ivory octaves, the wire hangers in his closet,
mustards on the shelf —
has measured them all, the windows, the frames.
The avenue shifts to the color of his golden suit,
not, he hopes, the other way around.
As he enters the elevator,
he is only happy that
the snow has stopped seeping through the hole of his shoe
and that he is going higher somehow.

— Amy G. Rosenthal

The Blind Night

During the winter solstice,
the old woman goes to work about four in the afternoon.
She slowly loosens the strings,
relaxes the hinges,
releases the endless navy curtain from its pulleys.
She takes her brush
and wipes the worn blue canvas with saffron.
She let her hand fall
into a weathered wooden bucket
filled with salt.
Then throws her arm upwards,
and looks as the small crystals
become stars.
Tired now, she stretches a white arching
moon across her shoulders
and takes it home with her.
The night is born without its eye.

— Kathy Koch



Clay Kansler

The Scythe

What is it? The anticipation, the silence,
a novel that's run out, words light and dark.
Is it just that; the bent brick wall —
green and yellow cement.
It bends like a dancer.
Support.

Time is green, with a rope round its feet.
Tied to a submarine running deep.
Time's lost its elasticity —
that tactile consciousness.
Worrying.

It won't do, all of those horses running, walking.
They are so big, so big.

The light from the jellyfish flows up.
The blue-green waves desire
a color which fits — the green-black, the blue-black.
Red chair, a red seat.
Dark white and pine under your closed eyes.
Pass, two no, three no.
A cold man, dead, listening to a dead man;
telling him of the justification.
Flowers grow in the brown dirt of his grave,
Brown irises.
Can't see much down there.
The black; how it eats light.
How it eats his color,
his color and his illumination.
He made a dead cold entrance.
He came swaying back as if to Brahms.
The pachysandra eat his graduated body.
He knows no difference.
The bastard doesn't think at all.
He tells me right though,
he says he does.

— S. P. Elsaesser



The Review

**Stephen Elsaesser
Aaron Thomas**

**Jonathan Baiman
Clinton Macsherry
Amy G. Rosenthal
Helen Bartlett
David Schwab
John Sandman
Ellen Sherman
Jim Shepard
Cathy Spera
Lois Ordway
Megan Ryan**



Steve Roberts