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HOWTH CASTLE

...WE PASS THROUGH GRASS BEHUSH THE BUSH TO, WHISH! A GULL. GULLS. FAR CALLS. COMING, FAR! END HERE. US THEN.
FINN, AGAIN! TAKE. BUSSOFTHLHEE, MEMEMORMEE! TILL THOUSENDSTHEE. LFS. THE KEYS TO. GIVEN! A WAY ALONE A LAST
A LOVED A LONG THE

-PP. 628, LAST PAGE
OF FINNEGANS WAKE

Volume One, Number One

April 1985

Howth Castle is:

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WITH GRATEFUL RECOGNITION TO PROFESSOR JOEL BLAIR, OUR FACULTY
ADVISOR.

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NEW YEAR'S EVE

H.C. Chang

"D-Dad, I've borrowed the boat. When should we go?" Dorway, 24 years old, ran into the house, pulled the door after him, the door blew open. He turned around and bolted it.

His father, Old Bundin, was smoking. He looked as though he did not hear what his son said.

"D-Dad, don't just smoke like that! Don't you care about my future? all-all right, I will call Loda and we can go without you!" Loda was Dorway's cousin who had been a fine boatman.

Dorway leafed through the wall-calendar which had only a few pages left, then he tore off the top page, December 25, 1977. "It's only one more week. If we don't go tomorrow, we'll never make it."

Dorway was getting married. His wedding day, chosen by his future mother-in-law, would be the day after New Year's. Old Bundin had been planning the best feast ever held in the village for his only son's wedding. He had invited the whole clan and all his relatives, and the party would go on for three days. There was a tradition in this area: if any family had an important event such as a wedding or a funeral, people in same clan were expected to offer help when they were needed, and this family had to prepare a sumptuous feast for the whole clan - the more sumptuous the wedding feast, the better luck the family would have. Old Bundin had already bought two barrels of wine, each was 200 jins. He had raised three big porkers, a dozen geese and a large flock of chickens. So there was plenty of meat for the party. But he still needed five hundred jins of fresh sea food which he had to get from one of the fishing harbors.

The nearest fishing harbor was in the Cat Hill Island, 50 nautical miles across the sea. If they borrowed a boat, sailed by an experienced boatman, if the wind and tide were favorable, it would take a day to get there. Unfortunately, a force 10 storm started three days ago, and it was reported that it might continue for a week. If so, the wedding feast would be ruined because it would be too dangerous to sail a ten-ton wooden boat in the East China Sea's force 10 storm.

"D-Dad, didn't you hear what I said?"

"Yes, I heard." Old Bundin said slowly. "But don't you know what you're saying. I've eaten more salt than you've eaten rice. You don't know how dangerous it is to sail in weather like this. You forget last year Lee's two brothers were drowned?"

"But th-they didn't know ha-how to sail. They had no experience at all. That's why their boat turned turtle. Loda knows how to sail and he's promised to help us."

"Don't ever say those kinds of bad words, you fool." Old Bundin felt nervous about unlucky words like "turned turtle". He stubbed out the cigarette, carefully putting the remaining half into his shirt pocket, then caressed something under his shirt. "If the weather clears, we can go. But not like this. How can I ever afford it if the boat gets wrecked? I'm too old to save another thousand yuans."

"Oh, come on Dad. Don't say that." It was Dorway's turn to complain

about unlucky words. "I don't want to hear any more nonsense like that before my wedding. I-I don't like it, and I don't care about the weather, and I'm going tomorrow!"

Their argument continued until dinner time.

No decision had been made. Next day, the storm subsided a little. Dorway sulked all day long, but he knew that his father would finally do what he wanted.

Just as Dorway expected, on the afternoon of the third day, the 29th of December, they hoisted the sail on the boat and left for Cat Hill Island. The northwest wind was still very strong, between force 7 and 8. Since the Cat Hill was to the east, the wind drove the boat faster than usual. There were four men in the boat, Old Bundin, Dorway, Loda, and Mowen, who was Dorway's other cousin and had some experience sailing.

Two men were on deck - Mowen held the tiller and Old Bundin sat aside smoking. He needed only to take care of the sail occasionally when Mowen advised him to. The other two were resting in the cabin. After four hours it would be their turn to work on deck.

It was cold. Old Bundin sat in the lee of the boat, in his sheepskin coat and cotton-padded shoes. A boatman would be bare-footed even in winter. But Old Bundin was not a boatman. He had been a carpenter for a long time before people put "Old" in front of his name. He was not only the best in his home village - Red Stone, but also well-known in towns 25 li away. He was a hard-working man, working every day and only taking the New Year's holiday. He was a frugal man. He loved wine but he only drank when someone else paid. He only smoked half a pack a day of Green Leaf, the cheapest cigarettes he could buy. In a word, he saved every possible cent, which he had piled up into twenty five hundred yuans savings in the bank.

Old Bundin did this for Dorway, his only son. Dorway was neither handsome nor hard working, but because of his father's money he was one of the richest young men in the village. That might have been the reason that May's father accepted Dorway's proposal. May, who lived at the other end of the village, was a nice looking girl with smiling eyes. Though she was not the prettiest one in the clan, she was the most diligent. Everybody in Red Stone knew that she liked to keep herself busy all the time, and that might have been the reason Old Bundin said yes when Aunt Lee, the matchmaker, came to introduce May to Dorway. Old Bundin knew that Dorway, pampered since his childhood, needed a wife like May who could manage things well.

Having finished his cigarette, Old Bundin asked Mowen what time it was, then lightly heaved a sigh. Something had been bothering him for a while, but he could not tell exactly what it was. He was a Buddhist, and he was superstitious. He felt that a storm coming before his son's wedding was an ill omen, and the unhappy conversation with Dorway the other night made him feel even worse. He was afraid that people in the clan would not forgive him if he offered a wedding party without fresh seafood, they would probably wish him bad luck. He really intended to be overly generous in order to have better fortune for his son. That was the reason that he was on the way to Cat Hill now before the storm was completely over.

At that moment, Dorway was not resting but playing poker with Loda in the cabin. Both young men sat on the floor smoking and listening to Can-

ton music on Dorway's radio. A half empty pack of Great Front Gate, the best cigarette from Shanghai, lay on the floor between them. Each man had a small pile of coin by his side.

Dorway was no good at anything but playing poker. Loda was no match for him. A while later, Loda's coin pile disappeared and Dorway's was doubled.

"All right, Buddy. You win." Loda said with a sneaky smile, "Are you getting excited now?"

"Wh-what about?" Dorway pretended not to understand what Loda meant.

"Oh, come on. Don't play tricky games with me! I really want to help. Your big brother is experienced. Hmm, May is really a nice girl. You lucky boy, she's getting more and more attractive every day." Loda was a few years older than Dorway. He had married two years ago and already had a son.

Different than his father, Dorway did not care about diligence or idleness. Whenever he saw May, he stared with greedy eyes at her healthy, apple-colored face, her slender and charming waist, her well developed attractive bosom and hips. He never had a date with her. "Dating" was a city boy's word, but in the country it was almost a synonym for "adultery". He salivated when he imagined what it would be like to have May naked in his arms. However, he did not want to appear inexperienced in front of Loda.

"Ok, ok, you are experienced. You just tell me who-o made the first move, you or her?" Dorway puffed smoke from his pug-nose, narrowed his eyes into a complacent smile.

"I forget," it was Loda's turn to play games, "but she got pregnant in the first month, and it was a boy." Loda sounded proud of the job he had done as a father, because to have a boy as the first child is the most important thing to a Chinese country family.

"S-so what? You just had your boy by chance. You didn't know what you were doing." Dorway mumbled, the cigarette between his thick lips bobbed up and down.

"Ha, what'd you mean 'by chance'? Of course I knew what I was doing. Listen, little brother, I know exactly what you are. If you want to have a son, you better take it easy. Didn't you hear the old saying....."

"'An impetuous man gets dau-daughter.' I heard that ten years ago."

The cabin's door opened. Old Bundin came to call them on deck, because they were going through the Ghost Head Reefs. This was a coral reef area. A few reefs were visible, but dozens of them were submerged. Numerous accidents had happened here before.

They lowered the sail. Loda held the tiller, and each of the other three held a punt-pole in their hands. They used the poles to push the boat away from danger. The Ghost Head was only three cables' length, but they spent twenty minutes getting through it.

The boat, under full sail again, moved fast before the strong wind. There was no difficulty during the rest of the cruise. They reached Cat Hill harbor the next morning before dawn.

When darkness faded away, they saw that the harbor was already filled with thousands of the boats- most of them taking shelter from the storm. The thousands of masts looked like a huge bamboo forest without leaves.

There were many fishing boats in the boat-forest. Old Bundin and his

men rowed the boat slowly, moving through the narrow paths left by the others, asking the people in the boats they passed the prices of the various fishes, crabs, cuttle-fish and shrimp. Bargains were made one by one. Two hours later, they had all they needed.

The clouds seemed to be thinning, and the world looked brighter. Some boats hoisted their sails and slowly moved out to sea. Dorway wanted to go for a stroll since this was the first time better idea?" Old Bundin said. Everyone could hear the fearfulness in his voice. Three young men looked at each other. They nodded then shook their heads. They knew that sculling was the only way to increase the speed. They also knew that this boat might be too small to stand the high sea's storm, but on the other hand, it seemed a little too big to be sculled a long distance. The wooden boat had neither engine, nor magnetic compass, nor any modern equipment. All their fate was in their own hands.

Old Bundin, because of his age, took over his son's place at the tiller. The three young men took turns, one working on the sail and two sculling. The northwest wind was at 6 or 7. They still had to tack. The sculling added some speed to the boat.

"Mowen, would you take over? My arms are sore!" Dorway shouted with a long face. "I wish we still had a motor-boat." Massaging his arm, he said.

Old Bundin heard what his son said. He shook his head lightly without saying anything. Ten years ago, Red Stone had a publicly-owned motor-boat. But the village leaders sold it in the revolution. No one could do anything about it, because owning a motor-boat seemed politically against the Party's "take grain as the key link" policy. "I wish we had a motor-boat, too," he thought.

After two hours of hard work, everyone was tired. Two day's sailing had taken most of Old Bundin's energy. His eyes became sunken. His back was sore. The three young men all had blisters on their palms. No one said anything but a few brief orders. They felt that the wind was getting stronger and the waves were getting higher and darker. They saw the thick, gloomy clouds appear in the northwest corner of the sky and approach rapidly.

Night had fallen. Old Bundin sat by the tiller too long. Although he was in his sheep-skin coat, he felt his whole body cold all the way through. They did not have time to cook. Everyone took turns to have some biscuits and drink some water. Now they were working in the noisy, terrifying darkness. There were neither moon nor stars in the sky. The only bright thing was the mast head light.

"Loda, where are we now? D'you have any idea?" Old Bundin shouted at the top of his voice.

"What, Uncle Bundin? I'm not sure. I just feel we're not too far from Ghost Head!"

"I ne-need to buy some batteries. My radio is getting husky." Dorway tried to convince his father. But the old man was even more obstinate than he was.

"We can't find a place to pull in to the shore. Don't you see it's so crowded here."

"But it's only seven o'clock. I'll be back in half an hour."

"No, the stores won't be open in two hours. We can't wait here with a

full boat of fish so long." Old Bundin was still bothered by the ill omen. He wanted to go back home as early as possible.

"All right, all right," Dorway gave up reluctantly. He felt embarrassed being rebuked by his father in front of the cousins, "you're the boss!"

"It's ok, brother, you should save some energy." Loda patted Dorway on his back.

"Get lost!" Dorway said, but Loda laughed.

On the way to Cat Hill, they had been sailing downwind. Now they were forward against the wind. They had to tack against the northwest wind, which made their moving difficult and slow. After two o'clock in the afternoon, they had their lunch in relays, then Old Bundin and Mowen went into the cabin to rest.

Dorway held the tiller, changing its angle when Loda told him to. His radio, by his side, was on. But the Canton music was dis-torted.

"Ha-how boring!" Dorway said, he was still unhappy about not going ashore.

"Hey, listen to the weather forecast," Loda said, ".....did you hear the storm warning?"

Dorway did not pay any particular attention to the weather report. It was very common to hear a storm warning. He did not think that it made any difference because this time he was on the sea instead of ashore. But Loda was more sensitive. He told Dorway to turn the volume up, but the volume remained at the same level - the batteries were getting low.

"When? When's the storm coming?" Loda was working on the sail. He could not come to the radio.

"Mi-midnight to to-morrow morning, it seems," Dorway was not too sure. "Sometimes the weather forecast isn't very accurate."

"I really hope so this time. What time is it?"

"Three fifteen."

"We're more than half way back now. If we can't get through the Ghost Head before midnight, we may be in trouble. This boat is too small to withstand stormy waves."

"Is it that bad? Wh-what should we do?"

"Ask your father and Mowen to come on deck."

All four men were on deck now. They wanted to listen to the weather forecast again, but the batteries were nearly dead. The noise of the sea overcame the weak murmuring of the radio.

"Can you boys scull? Or have you some better idea?" Old Bundin said. Everyone could hear the fearfulness in his voice. Three young men looked at each other. They nodded then shook their heads. They knew that sculling was the only way to increase the speed. They also knew that this boat might be too small to stand the high sea's storm, but on the other hand, it seemed a little too big to be sculled a long distance. The wooden boat had neither engine, nor magnetic compass, nor any modern equipment. All their fate was in their own hands.

Ghost Head! Old Bundin was suddenly aware of something wrong in the name of the reefs, which he had never felt the same way before. He touched his left hand to his chest. There was something hard and small under his coat. It was a bronze *Avalokitesvara* statuette hanging around his neck. During the Revolution, all the religions were forbidden. The village revolutionary leaders took away his *Avalokitesvara* statue which he had consecrated for half his life. But he still kept the small statuette. No one knew

this except his wife and son. Now he was praying, murmuring: "Infinitely merciful *Avalokitesvara*, please help..."

A huge wave pushed the boat, tilting it to its left side. Seawater was all over the deck. Another enormous wave raised the boat to its top as if it was a small, withered leaf.

"Uncle Bundin, Uncle Bundin! Turn the tiller and head into the wave, head into it!" shouted Loda.

But before Old Bundin moved, the next wave came. It almost turned the boat over. Old Bundin lost his balance and fell on the deck. Fortunately Loda caught the tiller. He turned the tiller and the boat directly into the coming wave. The boat was under control again.

"Lower the sail, lower the sail! Hurry!" shouted Loda.

"I can't, I can't untie the rope!" Dorway was nearly crying in the darkness. The sail was totally wet and it seemed it might be torn apart by the wind any second.

"Cut the rope!"

"Wh-where's the ax?" I, I can't find it!" Dorway was crying now. His voice was trembling with fear.

"I'll get it." It was Mowen's voice. He gave up the scull fumbling on the deck for the ax.

The ax was one second too late. Another huge wave charged the boat. Everyone felt a weak shaking and cracking. Mowen got the rope with the ax. The wet, loosened canvas cracked in the wind as if a giant bird flapped its wings, then fell down the mast with a heavy thump.

"Oh, no damn it! The rudder's broken!" Loda's upset voice came from the stern. Without rudder, the boat was totally out of control.

"Get the scull, scull!" Loda and Mowen almost caught the scull at the same time.

They felt a little more stable now. But unlike a tiller, the scull was not so easy to hold. Both young men, already totally wet, were exerting their utmost strength and struggling for their lives.

No one at that moment had time to take care of Old Bundin. When he was thrown to the deck he instinctively grabbed a rope tied fast to the side of the boat. The cold wind chilled him to the bone. His hands were so numb from the cold that he was not able to pull himself up on his feet. His whole body was trembling with cold and fear.

"Oh, Infinitely Merciful *Avalokitesvara*, Infinitely Merciful *Avalokitesvara*!" His praying became a mere muttering.

Under the mast, Dorway was nearly sacred to death. He seized the canvas with both hands, watching the boiling, roaring sea with a bewildered gaze, and screaming "Help". However, nothing could be seen but the furious, mountainous waves which might swallow them any minute.

Old Bundin, as a carpenter, had often been away from home several times across the sea in order to get work. He had been in danger but every time he had made it through. However, he had never met a desperate situation like this before.

...He remembered, twenty years ago, on a summer night, when he walked home through a mountain path with a whole bag of carpenter's tools on his back. He heard some rustling behind him. Holding an ax in his hand, he, still young and strong, suddenly jumped turning around to where the noise was. Under the moonlight, he saw two jackals, their green eyes flashing cold, greediness. Bundin's unexpected move stopped them. For minutes

all movement stopped. For minutes, neither side retreated nor charged. If there had been only one jackal, Bundin knew that he could have taken care of it. But two jackals were ten times more difficult to deal with than one. After at least five minutes of silent staring he remembered what his father once told him to do if he met jackals. He squatted down slowly, pulling up a handful of hay in his hand, twisting it into a bunch, fishing a match out of his pocket, striking it and lighting the hay torch. Then, he jumped all the way up, roaring as loud as he could, wielding the torch and ax, and charged the jackal. The animals retreated and ran away with a wail. Bundin himself was in a cold sweat. After so many years, every time he recalled that encounter, he could hardly drive the two pairs of cold, greedy, savage, green eyes out of his mind. Now those eyes seemed to be appearing and threatening in front of him again. This time he was no longer young and strong, but his opponent was a million times stronger than the jackals. He felt so weak, so paltry as if he were a candle stub, his last flame was to be put out by the furious storm. If he had had time, he might have thought of who should have been responsible for his troubles. Himself? No, it had been all May's parents' fault, they had chosen such a damned wedding day and now they were sleeping as deeply as pigs but someone else was suffering and dying. It had been the village leaders' fault, if this were a motor-boat, they should have been home by now. It had been their own people's fault, what's so important to have a feast with seafood? you gluttons!.....

The sea did not show any mercy. A huge wave rolled over the side of the boat, covered most of the deck, overcame all four men. Thirty seconds later, only one man could get to his feet to catch the scull. But before he reached it, the boat bumped into something. Very heavily the man on his feet fell again as if he had been knocked out.

Loda was hurt badly because his head hit a sail yard when he fell, but he was still able to cry out: "We ran on a rock!"

Seawater started pouring in to the hole in the bottom of the boat. The raging torrent bit off the half-rotten piece of wood piece by piece. The leak doubled its size in seconds. There was no way to plug it, and the boat began sinking. Everything was chaos. Dorway crawled over the canvas on all fours and climbed up the mast. His voice was husky but he was still screaming: "Help, Help! Mama, help! Dad, where are you?"

After him, Mowen was the second one climbing the mast and Loda was the third. When Old Bundin crawled on to the canvas, the deck had sunk under the water. The three young men, following one another, continued climbing all the way up to the top of the mast. Old Bundin tried to climb the

mast but he slipped down, since his hands and arms were frozen and numb, nearly paralyzed. He struggled once again but failed. "Buddha, I can't make it!" He finally gave up the last try with a desperate sigh and slid slowly down into a fold of the canvas. He lay in the canvas as though he was in a hammock. He felt his life leaving his body. All his remaining energy kept him murmuring: "Infinitely Merciful Avalo, please help!....." He did not know for whom he was praying, for what? for himself? for his only son? Dorway never believed in Buddha. He used to laugh at his old man about his religion. But Dorway was all he had. Now his son, with two other young men from his own clan, were holding onto the mast. They might have a little more chance to survive than he had, but that did not really mean anything only that they might drown a little later than he did. "I'd rather die, but don't take my son." He tried to shout, but his lips were too numb, too heavy to move, he could not even utter a sigh.

The boat stopped sinking. It ran aground. The hull was submerged but the mast was still standing in the air tilted by the wind and waves.

The storm raged on. Gigantic waves were raised higher than the mast. The three men holding on to it had been soaked over and over again. Tons of cold salt water pounded on the canvas in which Old Bundin lay. At last, one of the three on the mast could hold no longer. He was blown by a fierce wind like a papaya falling from a tree. The mast lantern was gone, no one knew when. Old Bundin could not see anything because his eyes were shut and he had no strength to open them. He heard the screaming and splashing.

"Avalo, Avalo, please....."

After a while, another man dropped from the mast, swallowed by the roaring sea.

"Avalo....."

Fifteen minutes later, perhaps twenty minutes. The last man on the the mast lost his hold. His screaming stimulated Old Bundin's every nerve as if something bit off a piece of his heart. That was his son, his only son's screaming!

It was all over!

Next morning, New Year's Eve, the storm was gone and the sky was clear. When the sun performed its daily routine, shining over the quiet world, a ship passed by. A wreck was found by the ship near Ghost Head Reefs. An old man, lying in the fold of the canvas, frozen, but still weakly breathing. Three young men's corpses, not very far from the wreck, were floating on the peaceful, blue sea.



SALLY JACOBSON



SALLY JACOBSON



SALLY JACOBSON



SALLY JACOBSON

DARLENE IN DEMAND

Kate Bartholomew

"Bath time," Darlene sang out. There was a sigh from the direction of the mound in the bed by the window. The mound stirred itself to burrow deeper in the covers.

"Up and at it!" Darlene barked like a drill sergeant, flipping back the blankets from the woman's curled body. Mary pulled the covers back up to her chin, and raised herself stiffly on her elbow to sit up in the bed. She looked around the room in a daze. Her fat chin collapsed as the tears came.

Two bath towels slung rakishly over her shoulder, Darlene shambled back in the room, and slammed a basin of water on Mary's bedside table. Some of the water leaped over the side, and splashed on Mary, who pulled back to shake herself like an indignant cat. Darlene pretended not to notice. Blowing a large pink bubble with her gum, she looked triumphantly down at Mary, her meaty arms crossed. She let the bubble burst with a loud pop, a smirk in the corner of her mouth. She was in no hurry to start the bath. Her jaw was working furiously preparing for another bubble. Swiveling around suddenly, she snapped at the other woman in the room, "Jane! Have you been fighting with Mary again? She's been crying."

The tiny woman, hardly bigger than a midget, spat out quickly, "Maybe she's crying because you're always so rough. Mean, too." She lowered her wrinkled face to the book on her lap. Darlene was furious. She was itching to pick the little bag of bones out of the bed, and shake her until her teeth rattled, but she didn't dare. She turned away angrily, her floppy bangs flying. I'll get her later. Jerking the bed curtain closed, she twisted Mary's arms every which way, forcing the night gown over her head. The water in the basin was cold. She'd be darned if she'd walk to the bath room again. Her head was splitting. She didn't hear Miss Rogers, the supervisor of the nursing home, come in the room.

"Darlene, you have a telephone call in my office." Darlene swallowed the large wad of gum. Telephone calls weren't allowed except for emergencies such as a death in the family, an accident, or a serious illness. Darlene wiped her hands on one of Mary's towels, staring open-mouthed at Miss Roger's back disappearing down the hall. She hadn't thanked her for the message. It had to be her mother on the phone. That wasn't worth any thanks. Nothing was going right today. She had been late for work. God-damnit, she hated this job. Leaving Mary's curtain open, she sailed out of the room, a crease between her eyes.

"Where the hell were you last night?" Darlene's mother yelled as soon as she heard Darlene's mumbled, "Hello." She didn't give the girl a chance to explain, going off in a tongue-lashing. "Don't lie to me! I know you were getting laid by some no-good bum." Darlene was glad Miss Rogers wasn't in the office. Hell, you could hear her mother clear to Cahuengo county. Edna, Miss Rogers' secretary, was at her typewriter a few feet away. She hadn't looked up once; she was tapping away, not missing a beat on the machine.

"You ain't gonna plank no bastard on me," her mother screamed, choosing to forget that Darlene herself was illegitimate, as were her two

younger brothers. Darlene heard a distinct belch over the wire. Oh, God, she's drunk already. There ain't gonna be no stopping her now. there was a pause, then a gurgling sound. Her mother began with new energy. "Out the door you'll go on your ass, tramp!"

I should be so lucky, Darlene thought glumly. You ain't gonna let me go long's I'm bringing you a pay check. She stared blankly at a painting of Miss Florence Nightingale hanging over Miss Rogers' desk. The nurse was on her knees in a voluminous, black dress, and she was tenderly supporting the bloody, bandaged head of a wounded soldier. Darlene shifted from one foot to another. She had to go to the toilet. She couldn't listen to any more. Holding the phone away from her ear, she hummed an Elvis Presley tune offkey.

Just you wait. Soon's I'm old enough I'm going bye bye. New York, maybe. Drop dead, creep. Her lips formed the words to the plastic receiver. she looked over quickly at Edna who wasn't paying her any attention at all. The woman had eyes only for the sheet of paper in the typewriter. I don't give a shit about you neither. Darlene sneered at the bent salt and pepper head. She forgot that only a minute ago she was glad that Edna was minding her own business. Now she was sure that the woman was deliberately snubbing her. She listened without any feeling to her mother's promise to fracture her as soon as she stepped in the door of the light green, paint-peeling house in the projects.

Darlene's headache had gotten worse. She held her head gingerly to one side as if the slightest move would dislodge some loose parts. For the first time in her life, she had stayed out all night because she had passed out from drinking too much at a party. Her mother's sarcastic dig about pregnancy had brought on some nagging doubts of her own. She couldn't remember very much about last night. Did Eddie or some of the other guys take advantage of her after she had blacked out? Everything was a blank after the third paper cup of Dago red wine. She felt like throwing up, remembering a blurry Eddie clamping his wet mouth over hers, while his rough hand sneaked under her skirt up her thigh. Not that she disapproved of the act, but she had always hated the scrawny weasel. Until last night, she had refused to have anything to do with him even though he zoomed through the streets on his fancy, stolen motorcycle in his silver-studded, imitation leather jacket like he was the king of Siam. Fuck you! The thought of his sly smile, the missing front tooth made her sick. The "fuck you" that slid from her mouth so easily took on a new meaning after last night. God help me, she begged, looking up at a crack in the ceiling.

Walking back to Mary's room, Darlene saw that something was wrong. People were passing her, running from all directions. Even the dignified Miss Rogers was following in the wake of the crowd. Darlene thought she had heard a scream a minute ago. That was not so unusual. When she turned a corridor, she saw that the mob was turning into Mary's room. It wouldn't be the first time that the woman had pulled a tantrum. She was known for them, especially at meal time. Mary could raise a fine scene if she imagined that Jane had gotten a larger portion of oatmeal than she did at breakfast, or if the mound of instant mashed potatoes arrived cold at dinner. But this wasn't meal time. Darlene remembered with a twinge that neither Mary or Jane had had their sponge baths yet.

Crowding around Mary's bed, the nurses tried to find out what was wrong with the woman. The piercing screech she had let loose was

downright spooky. "What hurts?" they asked. "Do you have a cramp?" The questions only brought on louder cries. The woman had managed to somehow wrap her body tightly in the bed sheets. She was done up like a mummy trussed neatly for sacred burial. She was fighting for breath.

"Unloosen the sheets!" commanded Miss Rogers. "Give her some air! Out! Out! Everybody!" She shoed the employees out of the room. They didn't mind leaving. A few of them enjoyed just such a diversion from their work. But even they were becoming bored. After the loud shriek, it looked to be only another one of Mary's fits. The woman was a pest. Everyone left except Darlene who stood at the door like a visitor unsure of her welcome. She was twisting a long strand of hair round and round.

"What happened?" Miss Rogers asked Darlene. Jane answered quickly almost before the words left the supervisor's mouth.

"That one," pointing a crooked, bony finger at Darlene, "left Mary nekkid. Not a stitch on. A man came in. Had himself a good look. You know the one I mean."

Miss Rogers knew indeed. Everyone knew Eli. He shuffled aimlessly up and down the halls in his shabby food-encrusted sweater all day long. The poor soul didn't know enough to swipe a fly off his nose, but he would bother visitors. More times than not, his fly was open.

Mary had settled down to an occasional sniff or two, but Jane had set her off again.

"Shh, now, now," Miss Rogers patted Mary's plump cheek as if she were cossetting a precious baby. "No one is going to bother my Mary." She gave Darlene a hard look over the woman's shoulder. Darlene dropped her eyes. "Let's treat these ladies nicely," she smiled pleasantly to both of the old women. Brushing by Darlene, she told the girl in a low voice that she wanted to see her in her office before she went home.

After the early morning drama, Mary had found a new courage. She was buoyed up by Miss Rogers' babying. She started at once to chew Darlene out, "Leaving me here like that--," she couldn't bring herself to say naked. "I could die of pneumonia." It wasn't worry over pneumonia, nor the shame of being seen naked that was bothering Mary now, but real, gnawing hunger. She had worked up a ravenous appetite, what with all the excitement. A barely remembered dream of food haunted her.

Darlene pushed Mary's arm into the sleeve of a cotton under-shirt. There was a sharp crack from a stiff joint, but Mary was too busy listening to her own voice to hear it. Darlene was humming loudly to drown out Mary's whining. A derisive snort came from the direction of Jane's wheel-chair.

"A decent woman like me--," Mary was babbling, getting herself worked up again. Big deal! Darlene's lip curled. No one cares, old lady. She gave her gum a loud, lewd pop. Reaching for Mary's drip-dry house dress, something caught her eye. There were black marks on the flab of Mary's upper arm. Darlene already had one warning from Miss Rogers when someone reported her for shoving old Eli when he wouldn't get out of her way. Not a big shove neither. This was worse. Oh, my God! I'll be fired for sure. Maybe arrested. Put in jail. There was no way to hide the marks for long. It would be weeks before they faded from purple to dingy yellow before disappearing. Darlene could hear Miss Rogers' voice, "Don't be so rough, Darlene, or you'll break somebody's arm." I swear I don't know how she got those marks. You can hardly touch these people without them getting all black and blue. She could not bring herself to report the bruises.

The breakfast trays were late because the fuss over Mary had thrown off the employees' timing. Standing about in small groups, they joked and gossiped in subdued voices, waiting for the old folks to finish eating. Except for a spoon scraping a dish, or a knife grating on a plastic plate it was quiet on the ward. Darlene stood alone, biting nervously on a hang nail, and watching Mary. The woman had wiped her plate clean with a wedge of toast. She was busy chasing about a hard bit of bacon that had bounced from her plate onto her lap. Even with her thick glasses, she couldn't trap it against the flower-sprigged pattern of the dress.

It isn't fair, Darlene brooded, giving Mary a sour look. Just when everything was going so good. She would be blamed for the marks. Maybe fired. She knew that Miss Rogers hadn't wanted to hire her. But I showed her. I showed them all. Darlene was as strong as a horse. All day at the nursing home, she was being summoned here and there to help lift one or another obese, or inert body from one place to another.

Before Darlene came, when Charlie went berserk at the full moon, it took the combined forces of the entire staff to subdue him, many of them suffering various scratches and contusions. Darlene could do the job single-handed. As quick as a wink, she would straddle the crazed man neatly on the floor, a generous portion of her thigh showing. It must be said that Miss Rogers did not completely approve of this method, and there were those who felt affronted by the seeming superiority of someone as unworthy of notice as Darlene. They were quick to point out that Charlie was terrified of Darlene; a look from her turned the man to jelly.

Darlene was about to take Mary's tray away, swooshing it dangerously close to the woman's nose, the way she always did, making sure no one was looking, of course. It made her laugh to see Mary's eyes bug out. She stopped herself just in time. I gotta be nice to her. At least for awhile. She slid a piece of left-over toast from Jane's tray on Mary's lap, giving her a broad wink. The woman gobbled the toast down in two bites. Darlene knew her troubles were over. She would buy Mary a small pizza from the sub shop. Just the ticket. She hated spending a single penny on the woman, but it couldn't be helped.

At two o'clock in the afternoon when many of the patients were taking their afternoon naps, Miss Rogers walked briskly down the corridor on her rubber-soled shoes. Some of the girls complained that she sneaked up on them. She was on her way to inspect a stopped-up toilet before she called the plumber. Some of the patients, like children, were irresistibly drawn to water. Charlie had once stuffed a toilet with a pocket-sized Gideon bible which caused no end of trouble.

For a second time that day, a scream came from Mary's room. What now? Miss Rogers was getting exasperated. The scream had not come from Mary, but from one of the nurses, a new recruit. Miss Rogers pushed past her rudely to see what had caused such an unprofessional outcry. A small gasp left her mouth as she stared at the woman sprawled on the disarrayed bed. It looked as if a bloody wrestling match had taken place there. On a closer look, the smears didn't look like blood at all--too orange. There were flecks of tomato and bits of the pepperoni sausage used in making pizza sprayed everywhere. Peering into the agonized, purple face, Miss Rogers could see that the woman had choked to death. She lowered the lids gently over the dreadful stare in the woman's eyes. You're in better hands now. Miss Rogers sighed.

The matter would have to be hushed up. One look at Darlene's face told Miss Rogers all she wanted to know. The girl would have to go. And very soon. She wasted no time. With her usual efficiency she located an agency that placed Darlene in a salon that catered to women who wanted to lose weight without going to too much trouble. Germaine's Salon boasted expert, professional massage. Madame Germaine called Miss Rogers on the telephone to thank her for sending her such a jewel like Darlene. "Have you got any more like her? Ha, ha!" forgetting for the moment her French ac-

cent. "My ladies adore her. Magnifique, they tell me. Such hands! Mademoiselle Darlene just pounds away the fat. Pouf, pouf! it's gone."

Darlene is in demand again. All the day it is, "Darlene, honey, fetch me a diet coke, or, toss me a towel like a good girl." Darlene's mother still waits at the door of the paint-peeling house to snatch the pay check every Friday. It is unlikely that she will hear of the many discretely folded bills pressed in to Darlene's hand that she quickly tucks inside her 38D Maidenform bra.

A TENT IN NEBRASKA

K.C. Frederick

Tomorrow she'll be sitting beside the long table, tomorrow they'll leave from different sides of the room and walk, the judge will call them up tomorrow. She'll rise and start to walk, she'll push back the chair and rise, she'll smooth her skirt take a deep breath and look straight ahead. Sarah will turn toward her saying now this is it, that's all there is. Sarah will nod and she'll push back the seat and rise and she won't be looking but she'll know the way he moves in his suit, his body moving under the blue suit.

It's all right Sarah will say, just a few minutes, keep your head up and walk.

All I want for myself and my child is
All I want for my child is
Nebraska

Ponca, mornings, smell of ground coffee, grandma singing to herself, she wants a biscuit. Clock's sharp ticking looking, ma looking up with a tired face that slowly becomes a smile. Wait here, granny's banging her cup. Sunlight, ice on the windows. In the spring we'll go camping, spring will be here soon, it'll be here before we know it.

Tomorrow, just a few hours from now she'll take Jill to Carol's place, Sarah will drive. Mommy will be back honey. Be good.

Come on, Sarah will say, the real battle's over, I've seen this a thousand times. Believe me. Inhaling. Exhaling. Smoke floats and stretches, slowly rises. I know how you feel.

Rain drumming on the cottage in New Hampshire. Like a shower stall. He's crying, his face hidden in her lap. I'll never do it again honey. If you only knew how little it meant.

She lying there stiff, his face in her lap. The soft stubble of his beard is not unpleasant on her skin, she feels the warm rill of his tears. In the rain her hand runs idly through his hair, she lets herself go soft.

Shh, shh, it's all right.

She'll watch him move under his dark blue suit. She won't be looking but she knows his walk, the light step, hands at his side, body held high.

It didn't mean anything.

She won't look but she'll feel him walking toward the front of the room.

All I want for myself and my child is peace

All I want is a tent in Nebraska

The clock stares out at her, wide-faced. Cambridge is turning in its sleep.

Only hours till Sarah will

Jill and I and a tent in Nebraska

You goddammed bitch you goddammed bitch what do you mean you're colder than a witch's tit.

Breathe breathe inhale exhale. Yes she'll be seeing him again in a few hours.

Lurching in the kitchen. You get drunk you'll know how I feel you ought to know how I feel you know how it feels to be humiliated like that you know what it feels like. Are you listening bitch.

I want a tent in Nebraska. Jill and me.

Sarah will say I've handled dozens of these, you've done the hard part she'll say it's just putting one foot in front of the other, you'll be OK. Standing in the courtroom. Sunshine. The floor shining. One foot in front

The judge will lean down, moving under his robes.

My mother was born in Ponca, Nebraska. She wanted to see Chicago before she died. My father took her. Chicago was pretty, she said.

We can't Terry we can't we just can't make it. Hands spread on the table. Still. Space between the hands. Space between the coffee cup and the spoon. Crumbs shining, a little galaxy.

It'll be all right, Sarah will say. A hand on her shoulder.

All I want is for me and Jill

Smell the sweet grass isn't it great when the grass smells, listen to the wind the grass is waving in the wind like water. Inside the tent the smell of canvas, flutter of flaps, feel of cool earth under the plastic floor, shiny utensils banging like Chinese drums. Listen to the wind. Hot soup, test it with the tongue, let it cool. I'm scared mommy the sky's so black. Oh but it's fun when we were kids we'd watch the lightning stretch across the sky over that ridge there, dark dark blue, cracks of lightning, and the wind is singing, thunder makes the ground shake but everything's all right here hold on to mommy I'll rock you and sing, see the storm's gone already. Look at the grass look at the sunset didn't mommy tell you it would be fun.

Smell the sweet grass, let's walk to those trees you and me. That way, far off, there's a big big river.

They'll walk side by side

Cambridge is icy but here in the dark are the wet summer prairie and the wide rivers of Nebraska.



HALLIE SALRY

WAKING DREAMS

Rebecca R. Kovar

Sunrise. The one moment during which the grey of the city was pushed aside, the rose colored glint of early morning reflected by smooth stone, steel and glass, filtering through the haze to the near empty streets. Dane looked up from the doorway in which he had slept all night and groaned. The subtle swell of color gave way to a stronger sunlight, returning his surroundings to their customary dinginess. He asked himself why he had not ended his life the night before, as he always did first thing in the morning. There was no answer.

"Figures. Never any goddamn answer to the real questions. I shoulda never left L.A. Stupid move. Wonder what's going on down on the waterfront. Gotta get breakfast. Gotta get somethin'..." He continued to mumble to himself as he headed for the nearest liquor store, the occasional early worker circuiting him, eyes downcast. No one ever looked at him with anything but pity. How had it happened? He did not care to go over the details again. It was still too fresh.

Black's was one of the few 24-hour liquor emporiums left. As Dane entered, he noticed several of the street people from the waterfront area. It was not a good practice to move in a group. He paused for a moment in one of the aisles, his sight suddenly going dim. There was that sense of imbalance he knew too well. He struggled to keep his feet.

"Oh, no, no, no," he thought, the chant familiar in his head, "not now. Not again. Not here!" He struggled to stop the attack, but it was futile. He knew that as he lost focus all together.

There was the waterfront, the little park where it was almost safe to sit and talk, watching the motions on the bay, wondering if it would be easy to drown. There were some people there. A little closer and he could tell that they were the people in the store. He saw the hill behind the benches, and heard movement coming from that direction, though he was not really there. The Polished Force came over the hill, swinging in time, but not marching. He saw very clearly the spikes on their leather jackets, the clubs attached to their wide belts, the stun pistols hanging on the perfect angle for a draw. Rarely used, they were the prized pieces of the Polished Force. They were humming an eerie tune, softly. Several of the bums turned, shivering at the tune. The Polished just smiled that pleasant, almost sweet look on their hard young faces. They were chosen for their beauty, though that was widely denied. Their smiles seemed to say, in the same smooth voice they all used, "Relax, you are going to die." They didn't really kill you, but it didn't matter. Their calm was unnerving. None of the people on the benches even moved. They just shook their heads, some of them covering their faces with dirty hands. One woman stood. She was young, he realized, though it was not obvious through the pain on her face. She moved around the benches and began walking towards the force, a twisted grin on her face. The Polished seemed not to notice. Coming up in front of the man on the far left of the force, she stopped. In that instant, his face changed. There was recognition as she spoke to him.

"I love you," she almost whispered. He stopped, blue eyes faltering as he looked at her. Wordless, he swept her up, cradling her to his chest, and turned away. The rest of the Force continued as if nothing had happened. Surrounding the bench, they raised their clubs and asked if anyone would care to resist. No one did. They all rose and left, the Polished behind them, swinging in stride, clubs in hand, waiting...

Dane came out of his daze and looked around. It was still early in the morning, so he had not been noticed. He got up from the floor where he must have collapsed some time during the vision. He shook his head several times and continued down the aisle, looking for salvation. The waterfront people were in line, almost ready to leave. He hurried to catch up with them, thinking, "Maybe there's a way to stop it this time."

Sometimes his visions were not definite. He knew that circumstance could change the future. If the waterfront people were warned to go somewhere else that afternoon, maybe...

"Hey," he called, following them out of the store, "wait up!" One of them turned. The others stopped.

"Listen," he began, "I'm not drunk yet, so don't think I am, okay? I had a flash, just now, in the store. I wanted to tell you..." He noticed their blank stares, puffy faces. "Don't go back to the waterfront today. The Polished are making a sweep. Please..." his voice trailed off as they turned away, muttering.

He caught the arm of one of the women. It turned out to be the young one in his vision. He stopped with the realization that she had once been beautiful. There was nothing he could say that would matter to her. He dropped her arm.

"Just tell him you love him," he said lamely. She nodded, though she could not have understood what he meant.

Dane spent the rest of the day drinking, as he had spent the past year. It did not seem to help. He had once heard that if you drank enough you could forget who you were, what had happened in your past. He wondered how much he would have to drink to forget. Maybe he would die soon. That was a comforting thought. No one ever envisioned their own death. He was as helpless as the rest of the populace in that respect. He had once dreamed of being the first person to record the instances leading up to his own death, but The Institute had changed his mind. The Institute had changed everything about his life. Any thing, any person he had cared about, he had lost, of his own accord. He had driven Carin away, afraid of what he might see concerning her, sure that she would be better off with someone normal. He remembered being considered normal. It hurt to think about it. He held his head in his hands, trying to stop the thoughts from coming all together.

Around sunset, he walked towards the waterfront. It was deserted, and for a moment he thought that they might have listened. Moving over to the benches, he knew it was not so. The grass on the hill was trampled by the heavy black boots and there was an emptiness to the area, as if someone had vacuumed up all the dregs of society. He should have been there. It would have been easy, letting the Polished take him along, clean him up, wipe clear his mind, put him to work as if he were a whole human being and not just some poor grunt on the street.

There were hundreds of "reconditioned" people in the city, in all the

cities. The Polished Force was very efficient. There wasn't even any pain involved. That was what scared him most. To be stripped of all the vestiges of humanity — memory, free association, dreams, emotion — without the slightest taste of what it would mean to die eventually seemed to him more cruel than the tortures the Polished Forces had used in the early days of the reformation. Dane knew that he would fight all the way to the cleansing chambers if the Polished ever took hold of him. Maybe then they'd be willing to kill him outright.

Dane moved away from the benches, following the path that the Polished must have taken. He noticed, through the alcohol haze, that one set of footprints had led in a completely different direction. There was no mistaking the imprint of those boots. He thought, "She must have told him. I wonder what that did to his trained mind. I wonder if he took her home with him before turning her in to the chambers."

Perhaps she had escaped that fate. There were stories. Sometimes one of the Polished would make a special request to recondition a person himself. It was within their power to ask. They always chose women, who would be reconditioned to serve that particular officer, to keep his apartment clean and make sure his boots were polished to a shine, and fall to her knees to please him, whatever his pleasure might be... Dane shook his head, telling himself that it must be better than going to those white rooms with the bright lights and having your mind wiped. He could see her laying on the bed, waiting for the beautiful young man whose job it was to keep people like her from interfering with the rest of the world. She would probably look nice with her blonde hair clean and brushed, laying against the pillow, the scars of her life erased by one of the laser machines, all clean and soft and pretty — the perfect slave. The Polished never married. They didn't have to. Besides, no citizen with papers would lay with one of the Polished. They could tell everything about you when you slept, and a great deal while you were awake. No woman wanted that. Secrets are part of remaining human. Mystery is a woman's weapon and no one likes to be disarmed.

Walking in a different sector a week or so after the waterfront incident, Dane felt the hair at the back of his neck rise. "Just like my old Shepherd," he thought as he turned. The officer of the Polished Force was looking at him, but not smiling. He wondered at that, but did not ask.

"Have you your papers, sir?" came the calm, polite voice of death.

"Burned them," he replied honestly. This seemed to throw the officer.

"What would possess a man to destroy the only thing that makes him real?" That was a philosophical question, to which the Polished were not prone.

"I was a trained Visionary. I don't particularly care to be real. It kinda sucks, knowing what's gonna happen to everyone but you. So, I was thinkin' about dying and burned my papers. 'Bout three months ago, now, as far as I can tell, but I'm drunk, so I may not make too much sense." Dane shrugged, thinking about going to be wiped, how that must feel, if you were aware enough to know what they were trying to do. He noticed the slight tilt of the officer's head as he checked into the Source. The Polished Force was somehow electronically hooked into the intelligence computer.

"There are only seven practicing Visionaries in this country. One has

been committed, four are working under the Council, and two are missing. Now, if you are one that is missing, I can return you to your proper place. But I doubt that you are." Now the smile spread slowly over his almost perfect features. He reminded Dane of his younger brother, who had been applying to The Academy when Dane had left L.A. There was that same cropped blonde hair, the clear blue or green eyes and slightly sunken cheeks, straight nose and full lips covering perfect dental work. He wondered if Cory was one of the Polished yet. He hoped so.

"My name, last I knew, is Dane Malavar. Check with Central Intelligence. I know that they do not release to the public the names of the Visionaries. Never know who might want to get hold of them." He felt calm, and wanted to tell this young man everything that had led up to his departure from society.

He watched, as the officer turned his back for a moment, consulting the Source. On the back of the black leather jacket was painted a woman's face. She had red hair that was spiked over her forehead like an awning on a shop, sharp eyes, lined with black, which narrowed at the corners. Across the hollowed cheeks were swashes of rouge resembling war paint. She had a smile on her dark red lips which seemed almost cruel, but wasn't, and a long earring of iridescent purple. He had seen the design before. It was a sign of prominence among the Force, a challenge which stated that the close-set spikes studding the backs of most Polished jackets were unnecessary. It symbolized the lack of fear of death, more than anything. Dane understood. He continued to take stock of this beautiful man, this walking death machine. He was wearing the customary black leather pants, and motorcycle boots off of which the sunset gleamed. On his hands, which he held clasped behind his back, were black gloves, studded across the fingers from the knuckle to the joint, fingerless to the tips. The Polished could knock you out before you took two breaths, though they usually had no need. If you fought one of the Polished, they were allowed to kill you. They lived for those rare chances.

The young man turned to face Dane. He seemed perplexed. That in itself was unusual, since the Polished knew almost everything worth knowing, and had access to much that was not. A hand went up to rub the clean-shaven face, a boy's face, really.

"Your brother is one of our order," the officer stated. Dane smiled.

"Cory? That pleases me. He should be very good. Our talents are different, but his is more suited to the times, I think." Dane paused. "Are you going to kill me?" It suddenly seemed very important to know.

"No one has ever asked me that before. Why do you?" The young man's face was becoming easier to read. He had dropped the mask.

"Curiosity. I can't tell when I'm going. I saw the sweep of the waterfront this morning — before you got there. I know that the girl, whoever she turned out to be, is not going to be mindwiped, is not going to die the way the others are. It's a different kind of death, though, slavery. Isn't it?" Dane looked up. He was becoming more sober by the minute. He could feel it and knew that it had something to do with this officer. Did the boy know that he was having this effect? Inevitably, yes.

"I believe that you are a Visionary. As for the rest, I have no reply that will please you."

"Is that so bad? You didn't become one of the Polished to please people,

did you?" Dane realized that he was returning to himself. All those drunk days for nothing. He could not escape his training, his past, this officer.

"I am a member of the Polished Force because I wanted power, that is all. It is the only reason to join. It is the only thing that matters. Isn't that why you became a Visionary, so that people would come to you and listen to what you told them?"

Dane paused. Was that it? He knew it was not. He had not even wanted to *be* a Visionary. No one did who was one. Only those ignorant of what the Institute did to you desired the precognition.

"No. The Institute does not accept applications. They pull your ticket if they think you have what it takes to be a Visionary. They make it seem like some kind of honor. They hype it up — how great it would be to see the future, to know what was up ahead — then they get you inside. There are restrictions, you know, many, many, many restrictions." Dane shrugged. "I could never explain it to you — that's one of the drawbacks. The other is that I don't know when my own death is coming, but other people — I see that clear."

"Special permission to retain insurgent at private quarters," the officer said aloud, though it was not necessary.

"That's for my benefit," thought Dane. "I wonder why. Oh God, I hope he's not strange. I don't have the disposition to be a slave, especially not to this all too pretty boy." Only Visionaries still appealed to God. Only Visionaries were told the rituals of the past. It was one of the burdens they carried.

"Wouldn't it be easier to take me to the cleansing chamber straight away?" Dane asked as he walked beside the officer.

"No." There was finality.

"What's your name, if you don't mind me asking?" Dane queried.

"Hans." The mask was back up. Dane knew that it would be dropped again when he entered the apartment.

Dane felt the tension between them. Hans had not made him walk in front, the way most Polished did. Perhaps that was a measure of respect, or maybe just another sign of status. There was no need to worry about the prisoner escaping because he would not go far. Dane knew that he would be stunned, not battered with the gauntlets or beaten with the club. The Special Order had a higher purpose, though not even the rest of the Polished knew of it. They were not, on the whole, envied their position within the Force, because to be a member of the Force was power itself. The Special Order had restrictions.

As they approached the apartment, Hans dropped behind, his warm breath heavy on the back of Dane's neck. There was a handprint panel that allowed Hans to enter, and a surveillance camera that recorded Dane as well. Several other people were waiting for the elevator. They allowed Hans to enter first. As was customary, he put Dane against the wall and stood directly in front of him so that he would not get near the other passengers, muscular arms stretched out, fists above the shoulders. The warmth of Hans' body was overwhelming, yet he did not sweat. In fact, he had about him a very heady smell. That habitual smile had returned, as if he knew that Dane was nervous, and why. Animals could sense fear much the same way.

They were the last off the elevator, though Hans had not moved when

the other passengers had left. Dane kept telling himself that it was just the way things were done. No order was ignored, no custom breached. Hans led the way to his apartment. It was a penthouse with a large garden terrace. The view of the city was spectacular. Hans just grinned when Dane commented on the beauty of it — a real grin. He led the way to bathroom and told Dane to shower, that he would provide him with clothing when he was done. It had been a long time since Dane had showered.

There was no lock on the bathroom door. As Dane stripped, he watched his reflection in the full-length mirror. God, he looked old. He was not yet 40, but his hair was almost all grey and he had several weeks growth that was no proper beard but a tangle. His body had not softened so much. He wondered how much he could bench. He would never find out. Soon they would wipe him. He stepped into the hot shower with a sense of relief. He could almost feel human again. It was as if the alcohol were washed away with the dirt.

He started as the door opened. Hans had come in, still in the leather pants of his uniform, but wearing a T-shirt which bore witness to his health. He set down a large soft towel on the shelf by the shower. For a moment he stood, watching Dane through the curtain. Then he laughed.

"Relax, would you? I have no intention of sexually assaulting you. There are no homosexuals in the Polished Force. I will be on the terrace when you get through. There is a pair of scissors and a fresh razor if you wish to shave. Here are some clothes. They might be a bit big on you, but it's all I have. Tea will be ready within fifteen minutes, if you'd care for some." Hans turned and left, closing the door behind him.

It had been well over a year since he had sipped tea and relaxed. The idea appealed to him. He hurried his shower. It actually felt good to shave, to see what time had done to his face. His grey eyes were sunken and his cheeks were hollow. He had not eaten in days. Still, it was not as bad as might have been. He still wished that he had been able to drink himself to forget, so that there could be no comparison. He joined Hans in the garden.

The night was warm. Neither man spoke for awhile, each absorbed in thoughts. Dane took special care not to focus too hard on anything. He did not want a vision now, here on the roof with a Polished Force officer of the Special Order looking on. That could be disaster, especially if the vision were of Hans' death. People always wanted to know — though they despised him when they found out and spent the rest of their lives paranoid. The visions did not often tell when, just where and who and how. The flash in the liquor store had been an exception, only the third time it had happened since his training.

"When are you going to take me to be wiped?" Dane finally asked. He too had the desire to know his fate.

"I'm not," answered Hans, turning his blue eyes on Dane.

"You have to, don't you? I cannot be enslaved because there is only one justification for that — gratification. And you've said that is not your intention. I know a little law."

"The Special Order has nothing to do with the law as you know it. As a matter of fact, without clearance, we would probably be the most vicious criminals in existence and would be actively involved in the destruction of the Council. I can do whatever I want — including using you for gratifica-

tion, if I so choose — without anything to stop me. But I don't want to do anything except talk to you." Hans took out a cigarette, offered one to Dane who accepted gratefully. Another privilege the Polished were awarded. It tasted fine.

"So, what would you like to talk about?"

"Visions."

"I cannot tell you about your death, if that is what you want. You will kill me first. You would kill me afterwards, for that matter."

"I do not want to know about my death. It does not interest me." Hans stretched and went to the garden wall, looking down on the street.

"No, of course not. You're still young and full of yourself. You probably still have dreams. They let you dream, don't they?" Hans nodded. Very few people talked about dreams. Dreams were dangerous.

"Have you ever seen into the past?" the question took Dane by surprise.

"I have studied the past. It is one of the things a Visionary must do to understand how the power evolved."

"No. I meant have you ever focused and seen someone's past and not their future?"

"Not to the best of my knowledge."

"Could you?" Hans had turned around, a flicker of hope on his hardened face.

"I have no answer for that. Maybe yes, maybe no. Why?"

The answer entered the garden before Hans could speak. She was very pretty, long blond hair against a lavender kimono. Her face was smooth, none of the marks of a hard life left on her. Dane would not have known who she was if she had not turned her eyes on him. They had not changed. There was still that ring of gold around the green — and the pain of things not quite remembered. He sighed, burying his face in his hands as she lay the tray on the table beside him and went to Hans. He put his arm around her, stroked her hair and kissed her. Then he sent her back in to the apartment to await further orders.

"You were at the waterfront." Dane eventually said.

"Yes, obviously."

"So, what is it that you want me to do?" Seeing her a slave had shaken Dane, though he had known it would happen.

"I want to find out who she was, why she dropped out, all the things the alcohol stripped from her memory."

"Why? She's yours now regardless of all of that."

"Listen. Only people like you drop out. People who are capable of free thought beyond what the Council deems safe. There is a certain frequency which stops dangerous thoughts. A frequency which the Special Order can override — because they know it exists. You didn't even know it was there, did you?" Dane shook his head. Hans continued.

"So, I think she might have figured out that things were not well with the world, and that knowledge pushed her over the edge. I know that there is a great deal happening that would madden people, but I find it amusing. Because there is no way they can touch me."

"Anyone can be wiped," Dane pointed out.

"I can't be. Neither can you." Hans smiled at the obvious confusion on Dane's face.

"What did you just say?"

"I said that you cannot be mindwiped. Why? Because you are superior,

because the Institute maintains the hold on your mind the same way the Special Order retains ownership of mine. Granted, it is only on record — not actual control — but it means that you are not under the sway of the Council." Hans looked triumphant.

"I thought the Council ran everything," Dane returned skeptically.

"Not so. The Institute is one of the most grossly powerful organizations in existence. That is why they train so few Visionaries. There would be problems if a whole bunch of you were loose. That's also why they tend to lend out your brains to the Council for military planning, political and economic trends and the like. Not to mention that you can tell them when their leaders are going to die. Always good to be prepared that way, eh?" Hans sipped his tea, watching Dane.

"How do you know all this?"

"Ah, I thought you might ask. It is very simple. The Special Order is at least as powerful as the Institute. The difference is that we're power-hungry and they tell us the price we have to pay, which is obviously something the Institute fails to do. They train you Visionaries to see everything but what it is they're doing to you. I guess you found out in a round-about way. That's the real reason you burned your papers."

"So, you want to see if maybe they trained me to see into the past, without telling me that I know how to do it, the same way they neglected to tell me I couldn't be wiped. I should have understood that when the alcohol failed to work. It never occurred to me." Dane sat a moment, reflecting on the new knowledge.

"Are you willing to help me?"

"Do I have a choice?" It was a rhetorical question. "I still don't understand why it's so important for you to know about this girl."

"Because," Hans said, "she told me that she loved me. Right before I was about to stun her. And her eyes were very clear, not filmy with the booze, and I felt the need to know if it was true. No one loves a member of the Polished Force." His voice was both hard and desperate.

"I told you I had a vision that day. I heard her say it. I knew it was the only thing that would have saved her, so when she left the store I told her to say it, just in case the vision was inaccurate. I just wanted to tell you before I got started. I don't know if it means anything." Dane was almost afraid to stare into Hans' eyes. When he finally looked up, there was a hardness there, as if he were preparing for the worst of all outcomes. It was probably the best idea.

When Dane arose the next day, Hans was gone. Looking into the suite, he saw that the girl was sitting on the bed, as if she did not know what else to do without an order. The apartment was already clean, Dane noted. He moved towards the kitchen. That forced her to move. She intercepted him and went to make breakfast. He shivered, watching her perform these tasks mindlessly. She was wearing a dark green dress, which brought out the color in her eyes. Dane realized that it would be quite some time before he could fathom this girl to the extent that Hans desired. He hoped that the Special Order taught patience.

They did. Dane spent several hours a day trying to focus on the girl. He found out that her name was Sabrina. She had lived in New York before coming out here. None of the scattered pieces of her life seemed to point to a drop out. He did not understand. Slowly, she came to trust him. It was

easier for him to focus on her when she was relaxed, so he had her lay down on Hans' bed. Even then, he could not grasp what had driven her over.

The eighth day, he finally caught something in a vision of her. He focused, followed it, tracing a history that was not his, should not have been known. He understood fully why she was no longer concerned with citizenship or reality. It was ironic, really, considering where she was. God, how he wished he could make things better for her, though doubtless she did not remember what he had just seen. It made him ill. He leaned over and stroked her face, her hair. She was dazed, but not sleeping. As he moved closer, she pulled him down and kissed him. It was not an automatic response. He backed out of the room, swearing softly. He understood danger, now.

Dane decided not to tell Hans what he had seen, just yet. He had a feeling that there was more to that vision of Sabrina's past than he had been allowed to glimpse. He wanted very much to bring her back to herself, to succeed in what Hans had requested — that he return to her the humanity she no longer possessed. It was not, in his mind, an easy task.

Ninth day. Quiet. He moved in and out of her history as if he belonged there. She did not resist him — could not. He wanted to cry for the things she had been subjected to, the horror show that was her life. He hated himself for knowing all about her. Not for the first time since he began did he wish that Hans had just killed him outright. He had no place invading this girl. She kept reaching for him, touching his hand, his leg, her eyes wide and roaming about the room, settling always on his face. He kissed her again, knowing he shouldn't. She smiled. It was the first time he had seen her do so.

"Dane," her voice cut through his daze abruptly, "I think I love you."

"Oh God," he groaned. "You can't, Sabrina. You just can't." That should have been the end of it. She had been conditioned to understand orders. He had told her something. That was the way it was.

"Why not?" she really did not know. He realized that she probably was not aware of what had been going on for the past several weeks. Perhaps even years had passed her by. For all her conditioning, she should not have been able to ask that question, any question of importance.

"You belong to Hans. He kept you from being mindwiped. You will belong to him forever. There is nothing you can do. To love me would be futile, as well as dangerous." He spoke in a monotone.

"How do you feel?"

"I feel okay." She was still staring at him. "I feel like making love to you." Dane froze. Sabrina loosened the belt on her robe, opened it, put her arms around him.

"No." Dane heard his own voice, but did not heed it. He had never been more afraid than he was when he knew he was going to make love to her. He had succeeded in his task, and he might die for it.

They did not lay together when it was over. She showered and dressed and he did the same, as if they had never touched. She went to the kitchen and made tea, brought him some as he sat in the garden. He wanted very desperately to be somewhere else, but he was a prisoner here, just as she was. He doubted that she understood.

"Who's Hans?" she asked. Dane shivered. What would she say when he

told her? What would she do? Knowing her past, he could not tell her.

"He's the man who lives here. He took you from the street people as he did with me. He brought me here to see if I could undo what all the alcohol had done to your memory. Do you remember what I have done in the past week?" He was loathe to hear the answer.

"Some. I am beginning to remember where I came from, and who I was, but not why I dropped out. You know, don't you?" Sabrina had come around to the front of his chair and knelt down. Dane nodded.

"Yes, I know."

"Good," came a voice from behind them. Dane turned slowly, as if he had not been surprised. He was proud of the control he exhibited. Hans was smiling, a natural smile, the sign of friendship and appreciation.

"Perhaps you would care to enlighten me?" he came around to the front of the chair, helped Sabrina to her feet, put an arm around her.

"I would," Dane started, "but I don't really think Sabrina should hear it quite yet."

"Why not?" she asked. That question again. Hans turned her around and looked at her, realizing that she was becoming whole, but not why.

"Sabrina, I want you to go into the other room and wait for me. Do not ask any more questions." Hans had the voice of authority. It would not matter if Sabrina became a full citizen again, she would always obey him. That part of the conditioning went deeper than reasoning. She left without another word, casting a glance backwards at the young man who had controlled her. Dane hoped that she had not figured out what Hans was.

"So?" Hans turned to him.

"She was raped," Dane stated flatly.

"That is not all you have to tell me. It is only part of the reason she became an insurgent. I want to know the rest — now."

"As far as I can tell, and she has blocked some of this very effectively, she was assaulted and raped by several members of the Polished Force." There, he had said it. He wondered how long it would be before Hans began to hurt him. Even though he had seen her trials in visions, he found it hard to accept.

"You are not lying, though I have never heard of such a thing happening before. When did it happen?" Hans was a shade more pale.

"Visions do not usually tell when, just where and who and how. I think she was running an errand, and did not have papers in order. She was stopped — they were cadets — and resisted because she really was a citizen, one of some standing, and they decided that it would be more fun to rape her than kill her. It makes me ill just thinking about it. I couldn't tell her, not when she's your property. She'd snap. You'd be better off having her wiped completely." Dane was shaking. How could he say that? If he had not known that it could not be done to him, he never would have made the suggestion.

"You should not have made love to her, you know." The voice of death was resigned, friendly, and almost sad.

"I know. It was not my intention to do so. I am sorry." He looked up into Hans' eyes, regretting the entire morning, sad that they could not have met under different circumstances. They were so much alike, neither of them fitting the perfect niche carved out by their organizations.

"I am surprised that you were so successful. Reading into the past has never been done before. We weren't sure that Visionaries could do that. What you have shown me is extraordinary. I went to a great deal of trouble to find you and even more to draw you out. Sabrina was part of the bait, but I did not expect her to love me — or you, for that matter. I want her, but not as a slave. You do not want her, am I right?"

"Of course you're right. So, what are you going to do with me? I am obviously the X factor."

"I have thought about returning you to the Institute. I doubt that idea appeals to you." Dane just shuddered. "I thought as much. I ought to tell you that the Institute *can* have you wiped, just as the Special Order can pull me off duty and shoot me at any time for any reason, or none."

"So, we are neither of us safe," Dane sighed.

"That is correct. No one is safe." Hans was twitching.

"It would have been nice to have met another way," Dane speculated.

"We would never have met any other way," Hans responded. He was right. The Polished did not enter the lives of citizen's. Only those without papers were subject to the Force. Hans was not the kind of person you met at a club.

"Are you going to kill me?" Dane asked. Hans nodded. It would not be soon. Dane would know by the smile, that sweet, relaxing smile. Dane imagined that Jesus might have smiled that way, before he died. Now it was the killers who had that kind of peace. For the first time in ages, Dane did not want to die.

"Would you like some lunch?" Hans asked. It was a strange question for a killer to pose.

"Yes. I'd like that very much," Dane replied, as if he had no fear. Both men glanced away. When their eyes met, there was understanding.

"I'll see what Sabrina can throw together," Hans said over his shoulder as he walked into the spacious living room. Dane put his head back, feeling the tension in his neck. This game could go on for days.

He focused, the daze overwhelming the present until he forgot where he forgot where he was, who he was, why he existed outside of the vision. He had never before felt so helpless, and he understood why. He was nowhere to be found in this vision, not even in corporeal form. Each detail, each movement was clear and defined, each had a purpose. Had he seen himself, he would have seen a smile much like the one he feared spread across his face, engulfing even the blank eyes. When he came out of the vision, there was a sandwich beside him, and a cup of cold water. Hans was studying him while he ate his own lunch.

"What did you see?"

"Eat first. I need the time to recover," he lied.

"You're lying, but I can wait." Sabrina stood in the door, puzzled.

"You may join us." Hans indicated a seat beside him. Sabrina moved to it, her skirt fluttering slightly as it brushed the stone floor. She gazed at Dane with a distant longing, as if she knew she could never have him again.

How did she know that?

"Well?" Hans started.

"I wanted to thank you for the opportunity to discover that Visionaries could view the past. I don't know if it will be particularly useful knowledge, though I am sure that between the Polished Force Special Order, the Council and the Institute, a way will be found to make untold numbers of people suffer for it. I suppose I should not be concerned, considering that I will be dead by that time. I also wanted to tell you that I know you are going to start a hunt for the officers who defiled our lady here." Dane was walking a dangerous line, and he knew it. Hans could kill him in a moment. He kept his eyes trained on Hans, waiting for the smile. Sabrina had turned, then paled. Dane had figured that she would remember if prompted. So much for his mission, then.

"Continue," prompted Hans.

"Certainly. I appreciate that show of nobility in you. It is a rare and wonderful thing. Love her well."

"You are not saying something," Hans commented.

"You're right. Soon you will know why, and wish that you didn't. Then you will kill me," Dane paused for effect as much as for breath. After all, this was his one moment of power. He finally understood its purpose.

"Someone you have met is going to kill you. You will be stunned first, with a weapon not unlike the one used by the Polished Force. You will be allowed to awake, so that you know before the death blow comes, so that you might have a chance to fight back, to escape. Visions show the future, but they are not infallible. The right move at the right moment might save you. You're resourceful. I hope you prove me wrong. But the vision did not tell me when, so its up to you to be careful — for the rest of your life." Dane had looked at his hands while he spoke, unable to take as much pleasure from his last vision as he had thought.

Maybe Hans would not die that way. Maybe visions were wrong. There must be statistics somewhere detailing that. Dane would never see them, though. He looked up. The smile of death was almost reassuring.

"Tell Cory I'm proud of him, okay?" Dane trembled. He had hoped to have more control than that. Hans nodded.

"In another time I could almost have loved you," Dane whispered.

"In another time, you might. I send you to your God." Hans leaned over. Taking Dane's hand, he squeezed it once. It was the last thing Dane knew before he slumped, the deathblow painless, as ever. Hans picked him up and carried him inside, laying him on the couch. He knelt down beside the body and buried his face in his hands.

"I never understood what death meant," he muttered.

"I did," replied Sabrina, "Come. I'll tell you about it." Lifting his face from his hands, she smiled, an almost eerie reflection of what was wrong with the world. Hans shuddered and followed her out of the apartment, down to the waterfront, into humanity.



RON BEDIG

THE FLARE GUN

Conrad Payphone

When he walked in the apartment she poured him a glass of Pepsi. That was the first thing she did. He sat down beside the kitchen table. She offered him a plastic cola glass that was white and said "Coke" on the side of it, but he waived it away telling her, "No, no, any glass but that...I won't drink out of that glass, not if it says Coke on it." She had known he would say that; she had expected him to tell her not to pour him Pepsi in that glass. She knew he only drank Pepsi. He didn't drink Coke because he thought it was evil. He thought that Pepsi was the divine cola; the Frosty Bev - he was in love with the Holy Pepsi Spirit... the idea that if one drank Pepsi that everything would be alright. He refused to drink any other cola. Coke was evil. Coke was not the wonderful nice cola that had made his life so terrific. Coke was not love. Coke was the terrible anti-Bev. There were three types of people in the world. There were those who drank Pepsi. There were those who drank Coke. And there were the others who drank neither Coke or Pepsi. "They are just as bad," he said of the third group one day, "if they are not for us than they are against us." She handed him the Pepsi, and poured herself and her sister each a glass of Pepsi also. They all sat near the kitchen table watching TV and listening to the stereo, drinking Pepsi.

She was Lyn. Her and Stiv Penrose were best friends. They had gone to college together in suburban Massachusetts. They had each gone to Magnolia State University on the North Shore. Both of them had dropped out and moved into the city. They had to move into the city. It had called them.

Stiv had always thought that Lyn was a good friend. She was tall, lanky and pale. He liked her because she was cynical and streetwise. She was good to hang around with, she knew when to run. She was good at being his friend because she knew how to flatter him; what to say to keep him from getting angry when people wanted to pick fights with them on the orange line. They hung around in the dives alot; they always went to the hard core shows. He had always liked her because when he was with her he didn't have to be alone but she could take care of herself if he went up front. Whenever they were seeing a band and he went up front to thrash or do some stage dives, when he came back she would always be leaning up against a wall drinking a beer and talking to someone. She could've almost been a guy. There was something about the way she looked that he thought was ugly, something that repulsed him. Maybe it was all the makeup she wore. She repulsed him when he thought of her as a girl; but she sure was a good friend.

In the kitchen he sat looking across at Lyn. She looked back at him, brushing her hair back with her hand. Next to her was her sister Alice. Alice was younger. She didn't look anything like her sister Lyn. When he had first met them he couldn't believe they were sisters. (Later he found out Alice was adopted) Alice had long dark hair, hair that went all the way down to her knees. Alice was two years younger than her sister, she was 19. He had met Alice once before. She was a singer. She sang old music

like Rickie Lee Jones, stuff he usually hated. He didn't hate it when she sang it though; it made him wonder. He usually hated all that old hippie crap.

Above the kitchen table the initials JASL were spraypainted on the wall in dayglow orange spray paint. Stiv looked up at it. Lyn saw him looking up at it and smiled at him. He smiled back. The initials stood for Junior Anti-Sex League. It had been their band. Junior Anti-Sex League had started at Magnolia State University. Everytime he saw those initials it reminded him of Magnolia State University. Alice was going there now. Some of her friends even knew who he was. When she had first met him she had heard of the 'little band' that he had started.

Stiv started the Junior Anti Sex League when he was a freshman at Magnolia State. Stiv and Lyn as well as Joel and Willie had been the Junior Anti Sex League. They had started the band one afternoon in Stiv's kitchen; they were all disgusted with the dating game and scummy fraternity attitudes towards sex. The frat had even threatened to gang-rape Lyn. They spray painted the frat with anti-frat slogans to get even. "Rock is dead and we don't care. Punks." they had written in huge letters on the front of the house late one night. After that they all shaved their heads bare and started playing gigs in Boston at Cantones and the Rat. The Junior Anti Sex League was almost successful, they had put out a single and were often booked as the opening band for alot of big hard core bands. Stiv and Joel were even going to get castrated. They decided to use will power and masturbation instead; they also used physical exhaustion as a productive means of celibacy - they had spraypainted JASL all over the steets of Boston. One day Stiv fell in love with a girl who had short dark hair. He broke up the band after he had sex with her. It was a moral issue to him. He couldn't sing in the band if he was having sex. The girl wasn't even Stiv's girlfriend; he just felt he couldn't justify being in the band if he himself was no longer clean. So the band broke up. Ever since then they had been converted to Pepsi by Stiv. Pepsi was the big force in Stiv's life now. He wanted to start a Frosty bev band. Willie had been mad at Stiv after he made the band break up-but Lyn and Joel had stuck Stiv. They were trying to like Pepsi. It was hard but they were sure they could do it.

The three of them sat in the kitchen drinking Pepsi, waiting for Joel to come and get them his car. Stiv was sitting and listening to Alice talking about her music. She was telling him, "I really like the 60's music, there's something great about it. I wish I was alive then, I would have been a flower child I think." Lyn looked at Stiv and rolled her eyes in disgust, expecting him to do the same or smile or show her some other sign which meant that he disapproved of Alice and her attitude. He did not look at Lyn, or nod back at her or anything. He just listened to Alice, not taking his eyes off her, nodding to what she had just said.

"Now this is too much," Lyn thought to herself. She was watching Stiv listening to everything he hated. She knew he hated hippies and sappy peace-love-understanding attitudes. "What's wrong with him."

Then she heard him saying to Alice, "Yeah, all the hippies sold out...but all the punks sold out to, all the big bands are into metal now; I think its sick - I think everyone sells out and it makes me sick. I'll never sell out. I think I'll probably never even have a band again; and my voice is so ripped that I can only sing punk; but there is no punk anymore - punk is dead; killed itself." Now Lyn was mad. He was talking about the future now, not just his.

"What does he mean never had a band!" she wondered. She looked at her sister. Her sister had stopped talking about hippie stuff for a moment. "I've always like Pepsi," she told Stiv. Stiv nodded and she went on, "our first dad he always used to drink Pepsi, so when I was a little kid I always like Pepsi more than anything. There is no other cola, not for me."

Lyn listened to them. She was still thinking about what Stiv had just said about the band. "Why are they agreeing with each other" she wondered. She stood up, turning off the stereo. "Let's wait for Joel outside," she told them. Alice stood up with her back pack, Stiv reached down and picked up his skateboard and stood up beside Alice.

"Bringing the Pepsi?" he asked Lyn. She tried to look bitchy but he didn't notice it. He just walked down the stairs and out the front door with Alice.

Alice and Lyn sat on the steps out front. Stiv stood in front of them on his skateboard. He was doing kickspins and 360's on the skateboard. Alice watched him from the steps for a moment, then stood on the end of the side walk and watched him.

"I used to have a skateboard when I was in Junior High," she said to Stiv. Stiv stopped his spinning.

"Oh yeah?" he said.

"Yeah, it was skinny, not big like this one, but I liked it alot. I was pretty good at it. I used to have a lot of fun. That one looks really fun."

"They make'm a lot better now. This cost me a hundred bucks when I bought it." He kicked a spin, spinning around four times before stopping. "Do you want to try it?"

"Yeah, show me how you stand on it." So she stood on it and waivered, and started off slowly down the street, Stiv walking beside her, holding her arms, her hands so she wouldn't fall. Lyn sat on the steps watching Stiv and Alice go off down the street together. Now Alice was skating alone. Then Stiv was showing her how to turn by crouching down and holding his hand out over the pavement so that it created a new center of gravity. He handed the board to Alice and they both stood talking and laughing.

Joel arrived in his dad's Rambler and they all got in. Stiv wanted to get in and sit beside Alice, but Lyn gets in back and sits down next to her. Stiv sat up front next to Joel, his arm hanging out the window. Joel had just bought a new Pine Tree Air Freshener which was hanging off the mirror outside instead of the mirror inside.

"Why is that outside." Alice asked.

"They smell so bad for the first couple of weeks when you get them that you got to drive around with them hanging outside. My dad always gets them to get rid of the smell of fish-he's a fisherman." Alice listened thoughtfully. "My dad he likes them, so I always put them on the outside mirror when I drive." Stiv listened. He moved his feet around on the floor. The floor in the front seat was crowded with rope and old gloves. An open wooden toolbox was pushed up against the seat. Stiv could just see the orange end of a screwdriver sticking out. "Aren't you supposed to have those tree things in the little plastic thing they come in and then pull them down a little every week so the smell lasts?"

"Yeah, but he doesn't do it that way - my dad, he likes the smell." They drove along, Stiv trying to find a radio station with good music and finally giving up and putting it on BCN. A hard rock song from when they had all

been in high school came on. They turned the radio up full blast so the old speaker rattled and the sound was distorted. They all hopped up in down in their seats to this song which they had hated so much in high school. Lyn didn't hop up and down though, she just sat and looked at Stiv.

"He's so arrogant," she thought. Sometimes she hated the way he had fun and right then she felt like hitting him. But she had never hit him, even though she felt like it. She hit other people, but not him.

They pulled over to a diner. They were all going to get English muffins and Pepsi. They went in and ate. Stiv and Joel each ordered large Pepsi's. Alice ordered a small Pepsi. Lyn ordered a Coke. Stiv stared across the table at her, not believing she was actually asking for a Coke.

"No Coke, only Pepsi," the waitress told Lyn. Stiv smiled, playing with his fork again, as he had been before he heard the word Coke. Joel was writing some lyrics he wanted to remember on a napkin. Stiv and Alice were playing with each other's feet. Stiv looked up for a moment at Lyn. She looked across the table at him with a cold look of hate. She was still, her eyes were wide open. She blew smoke across the table into his face and then looked out the window. Stiv coughed because of the smoke, wondering why she had blown it in his face.

Lyn and Joel were in the bathroom. Stiv and Alice went outside and waited by the car, watching the cars pass by on the interstate. They told each other how much they loved the highway, and she asked him if he liked to hitchhike. He told her he did. They walked around Joel's dad's old Rambler, Alice running her hands along the edge of the car, touching it and feeling it.

"Its a nice car."

"It is."

They got in the back seat. Stiv saw Joel and Lyn across the parking lot walking slowly towards the car. "How do you like Magnolia State?" he asked.

"It's OK. Its kind of boring. You ought to come up and visit sometime."

"I will I think." He paused and watched the doors open, Lyn looking in at them in the back seat. "I like to drive, I like to drive a lot. I wouldn't mind it at all." Lyn sat turned around in the front, listening to the two of them. It made her sick. Joel got in the car and stuck the keys in the ignition. He turned and looked back.

Stiv accidentally hit Alice on the back of her head with his elbow. She swore at him.

"Sorry." he said. Lyn giggled. Alice was reaching down into the utility box. That was when she found the flaregun. She pulled it out, pointing it at Stiv's head.

"Go ahead punk, make my day," she said to him.

He gave her the finger, Alice squeezed the trigger, Stiv ducked. There was a loud noise, a flash of light and suddenly the rear window shattered, a spray of glass. Stiv sat shaking looking at Alice. The two of them looked at each other, Stiv shaking his head. There was glass all over the trunk of the rambler.

"We better get out of here!" Joel said. He turned the key and the Rambler started.

The flare was burning on the other side of the parking lot.

A GIRL WHO AVOIDS E's

Alice Sunderland

Sara, a young author, always avoids writing with E's and sits for days and days thinking of ways to avoid that awful script. As Sara sits in a yoga position, Sara's imagination fills with brilliant forms that will soon occupy blank books that sit in a cupboard.

Today Sara is thinking of Butch, a young man who is madly in passion for a girl with punk pink hair. Butch will sit in front of Nicki's door until Nicki climbs Nicki's stairs and Butch waits until Nicki says hi. (Sara is scribbling in a blank book now)

Nicki says hi to Butch.

"Hi, Butch. How ya doin'?"

"I'm okay, Nicki. Your hair looks good. What did you do to it?"

"Oh, I had it cut by Max, a local hit man."

"Good job. Good coloring. Pink is your color."

"Thanks. Want to stop in for a drink?"

"Oh, okay. Sounds good."

In Nicki's doorway Butch saw that Nicki wasn't a girl you could bring back to mom.

"Good whips ya got, Nicki. Did you buy a lot of this stuff at Al's Prison Shop?"

"Nah, my old man got my whips for my sixth birthday. I was bad at six. Do you think I'm bad? You should spank Nicki for having such naughty toys."

"Oh, no Nicki, that's okay. Your toys....good stuff. How was work?"

"Awful, Butch. My pimp is on vacation and a cop was hassling my body."

"Oh, I didn't know that was your work. It must pay good, though."

"Pays shit, Butch. And not so good to pay my doctor's bills."

"Bills for what?"

"Bills that go along with my risky job. Know what I'm saying?"

"Oh."

"So, what do you want to drink?"

"Anything is okay."

"How about a Bloody Mary?"

"Sounds Good."

Nicki pours Butch a drink.

"How is it, Butch."

"It's good stuff, Nicki."

"Good, I'm glad. Wanna go into my room?"

"Ummmm....I'm not asking you to do your job, I just want to talk."

"Grow up, Butch. I don't mind at all. Try it for just a bit."

"Okay, but just for a bit. I must go soon."

That was Butch, whom nobody saw again.

Sara, happy with Sara's story about Butch and Nicki, stops scribbling, turns off a small lamp and waits for Nicki to climb Sara's stairs.

Hugh C. Abernathy

FLIGHT OF THE UKIOY-E

Ukiyo-e sees a second image
behind flying forms.

Cranes in flight shake snow
blossoms pour light
on rice paper,
make a poem where shadows
cross clear water and ascend
to touch the winter
moon sleeping in the hair
of Mount Kurokami.

Peregrines stretch necks on silk-
fine linings of bitter air
and slender evergreens,

convey a feeling through winter
windows to the poet.
Strange sensation ripples
in his hair like light
breaking dark water.

He is confused
and a little angered
by the mysteries that move
beneath the natural shape
of things he sees

but can never capture
as a poem and a sketch,

fluid symbols
framed on the genius
of rice paper.

Frank Afflitto

BEIRUT KITCHEN

when clawing through the rubble
the worst thing's the
anonymity
when you can't tell
whose bones are whose
whose stinking rotting meat decayed
flesh is that sticking
to that floor tile

then there's
the icebox
up above which
your mother hid the candy
which you so cleverly
stole
engorged yourself
engaged yourself

you can't look for him
can't search for her
they'll supply heavy machinery
they'll bulldoze the earth

there's just nothing left
at all of that
Beirut kitchen.

TO FATMEH JABER- AGE TWELVE

(One-Armed Victim
of Israeli Invasion)

if rhythm left the world at
large, then the rhythm of
hope you'd still retain.

if melody sank to the bottom of
the seas, it could never drag you
with it.

if love were to committ suicide off
a rocky ledge overlooking a
canyon of despair,
i would pick up the pieces and
sew together my own
Frankenstein
of love.

you and others like
you remain
the breath of life in
an otherwise
suffocating room.

girl with one arm
and more courage
than all Knessets
all Parliaments
all General Sharons
little unarmed girl
little one-armed girl
child of these dread times
i salute you.

SUGAR CANE

sittin' in a car
waitin' for a West Indian friend
chewin' his sugar cane

isn't this what it's all about
sugar, rice, bananas
coffee, cacao, gasoline too
o, isn't this what it's all about
isn't this what it's all about

sucking out the sweet juice
like some sustenance of life
chewin' his sugar cane

tape player playin'
roots and roots alone
more of that sugar cane

isn't this what it's all about
sugar, rice, bananas
coffee, cacao, gasoline, too
o, isn't this what it's all about
isn't this what it's all about

Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica
Dominican Republic
chewin' that sugar cane

St. Kitts, St. Croix
Montserrat
more of that sugar cane

isn't this what it's all about
sugar, rice, bananas
coffee, cacao, gasoline too
o, isn't this what it's all about
isn't this what it's all about

Ernest. J. Ames

A TREE GROWS IN AMESVILLE

'tis often I'd heard
the moralist had said
to do good is good
to do bad is bad.

It's a moralist's relief
to pursue in the belief
until the day bad luck I had
when I made the chicken salad.

'tis often I'd heard
the preacher had said
to do good is good
to do bad is bad.
It's a spiritual relief
to have firmer faith in belief
until the day bad luck I had
when I made the chicken salad.

'tis often I'd heard
the chemist had said
to do good is good
to do bad is bad.

It's chemist belief
to pursue finds relief
until the day bad luck I had
when I made the chicken salad.

Julia Childs is not my superior peer.
My concoctions are greeted with a cheer.
My head held high, my countenance so glad
on the feteful day the chicken, diced, had,
and for a gastronomical flavor,
a half lemon squeezed to add to the savor.

Alas! Alack! like a bolt from heaven
in the mix fell with the juice a seed from the lemon
to desappear, despite the application
of the savants beliefs of salation.

'tis said "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn"
also grows in my stomach lining (g).
Since the day bad luck I had
when I made the chicken salad.

T.J. Anderson III

THE DANCE OF ALEXANDRIA VICTORIA

What star-crazy girl would trade her name
And peel off stockings as if the world were smooth?
Adagio- as slow as the coat of oil
That shines on your skin.
Andante- the ice that skids into a glass of rum
And slides down my throat like a razor.
What finds you here between the light is a lost meaning.
Answering the voices behind the dollar,
Your moves choregraphed by the heat.
Alexandria Victoria I am waiting,
Flesh to footlight with an acrobat's balance,
The applause clicking like a metronome.

EMILIO'S RAIN

In the downpour. In the rainy season.
 I have come to your borders
 Like a runaway hero
 To touch the blurred shapes
 And focus on my closing years.
 Sweat has crystallized on my face.
 The knocking of knees, the shift of shoulders.
 A city of thirsty soldiers.
 Brazil, Brazil.
 Your name falls from my corroded tongue.
 I see the lights reflecting from your bayonets.
 And I hear a sergeant's cadence.
 The crowd of rain blurred faces
 That stumble into the night with no purpose.
 I walk the blood splashed cobblestones
 To visit with an old friend
 And to escape the glare of patrolling headlights.
 I had told him I would be coming.
 Here at odd times in Brazil.
 Came to sit with his family in the damp black.
 He opens the broken door and I enter.
 There is talk of the scattered times
 When we were college students in America.
 Our laughter shatters the terror of the night.
 His daughter, a dark haired girl
 Brings me lukewarm beer in a tin can.
 The plaster falls from the ceiling
 Onto our heads and into my beer.
 So many things are disarranged here in Brazil.
 Outside a stray dog chews on a dead man.
 A white light slices the darkness,
 A sergeant knocks on the door with dispatch.
 I watch my friend Emilio dragged
 Out to his front porch and gutted like a fish.
 It has somehow come to that.
 Where we sat and held
 The small china cups of espresso,
 Our hands trembling, our fingers dancing on the rims

And a Jesus of the Andes
 Raised his arms and held up the sky
 Then lowered them and let the ceiling
 Come crumbling down on us.

BLACKMAN IN A BROWNSTONE

He returns from a party where he stood in the corner
 Camouflaged by the potted plants.
 "You seem to look natural standing there. Just like a savage"
 She told him.
 And he walked out with not so much
 as a word of thanks to his host.
 He walks home black and suspect.
 Someone for the police to check out
 and squawk identification over the transistor.
 "It's okay charlie he's a local nigger"

Occasionally he would call me to come to
 the city and compare nightmares.
 Singled, alone, caught in the wide-eyed
 Well-read community of brownstones.
 The odors of the street outside,
 The bleached walls that surround us.
 The constant wondering of who we are.

His neighbor comes over to tell her problems
 Flirting her white body a little longer
 than she should, her eyes making suggestion.
 Hoping his bed will suffice for plantation hay.
 "It's not like I don't have a boyfriend."
 And she quickly excuses herself.
 We step out into the midnight
 to smoke a joint on the fire escape.
 He says he has had enough of it
 and he jumps over in a blinding blur.

Anonymous

DRUMMER

(for Carl Bunde)

What am i supposed to you, to say, to hear?

We played,

jammed,

and butchered jazz,

and after a few years i realized

you sucked.

Couldn't keep straight time, stop time,

never played straight,

stoned throwing crazy cymbal crashes,

rolls around tight tom skins,

hi-hat splashes,

double bass-beats

twirling sticks

and dropping them, throwing every possible fit in and out of
time,

blowing the rythm of whatever song it would be,

whatever song it could be.

You and me and kloman, amps cranked up

to 10, hours vamping out, totally outside

banging like mad til cops were banging

on the basement windows to make it stop.

And when we put our axes down you

slammed a cymbal again,

pounding the butt-end of

sticks on toms

higher-hat bashes and

bombardment bass time,

smashing your head on the riveted cymbal

as you crashed in a heap on the red-sparkle set.

What made you get up and do it again?

Like some drumming raskolnikov you gave up on jazz, and me, and kloman.
Convinced you were polyrhythmic forever
jamming between time and the time you missed,
sunken to beat-off top 40 hits,
and snake divorcees in fake-velvet pits,
you got ripped one night and fired off
into the snorting sunrise, winding up with an imitation rose,
a deadhead outfit, playing biker-bars, dealing on the side...

Hadnt seen you for years
but i knew,
strains too familiar
passed between piss partners
in a mens room in wisconsin,
the scuzziest beer bar in mad city
talkin some hero, some star, another Moon, or Syd,
(not at all like Trane, or Bird)
"..this guy. crazy drummer...played here...heavy coke-fiend..."
I pissed and asked, knowing damn well, if

(heartbeat, wretched bass drum bowels,
hissing hi-hat in the porcelain,
crashing deja-vu symbols,
ringing music of the spheres-ears,
they were talking about you.

In scattered eligiac distorted fragments
you played in time for the first time in your life:

Three strangers holding their sticks in tribute,
You were the beat.

Margot FitzGerald

DETECTIVE WEATHER

Poetry is the profession
of a thief.
The sky tonight is turning
so slowly,
like an object in the hand
of a magician.
The river is lit
with an intermittent greasy light.
The water is oily;
no boats go there.

We stood before a statue today
Bodhisatva, early eastern Wei
A.D. 530
and we felt its oldness
washing over us,
pulsing through us.
We held our hands up
to his hand outstretched.
I placed my head briefly
in his limestone lap.
"Okay girls,
no touching the artwork."
We'd offended the guards.

Somehow this, or the Cezannes or the Monets,
or the furtive trenchcoat shadows
flitting up and down the cobblestones
of the Back Bay,
have sent me running to the river,
running after the rain,
running to where there are no stars
and the ducks have ceased to fly.

I shall go away now,
I shall go away,
back across town
through the soft-footed shadows,
back through the wet streets
where there is no art
and no magician's hand,
past the all-night diners
and ice cream shops,
where I seem to have
dissapeared entirely,
before I have even
arrived.

MASS AVE BRIDGE

Light on dark water

Swaying under me,
as I sway over you
the water moves darkly

If I were to fall
from the bridge to the river,
my last sight would be myself,
rushing upward to meet my plummeting body
on the surface of the water.

Robert B. Fitzgerald

AT THE GRAVE OF ELPENOR

Where be you now, Elpenor?
Where have your arguments crept?
What false and fearless Captain
left you unburied and unwept?
Odysseus of the nimble wits
must have feared for his own head
to leave you with a broken neck
and save his own instead.

Where be your departed shade?
Won't you speak to your old friend?
Haven't you a tale to tell
of your unnatural end?
Will there be nothing more
than bare bones in this cold ground
and will you not appear again
to see this burial mound?
And will you never turn this oar
astride with your old mates
and with it cut the brackish swells
on way to Hades gates?

Let this oar speak for you
and men lost in wine-dark seas,
in mem'ry of an unlucky man
who now has found release.

J.B. Gerard

SHOWER

the water falls
off your shoulders
and cleaves
a spillway between
your small breasts
as easily
as the big dipper
catches up a ladle-full
of the swirling night sky

COMING CLEAN

harbor didn't you once wonder
when the water peels back
like a dry plaster
from your face
where will it run to

when the space between
the dunes
widens dries and sinks
deep like water in sand

it is hard standing there
not to chase it
to believe it washes clean
higher up
on another beach
tomorrow

Michael Holley

What is not, heard
Stacatto splashing of rain, waiting
if only a moment of music, there
is the sun shining, malevolently
wind removes the source, but
puddles remain, remnants of life
teeming within, sun's warmth, black
the night freezing these February chances, yet
one survives in cessant lee
Anxiously awaiting tomorrow, then

Daybreak
A single drop of dew
Falls to the fragrant forest floor

Absorbed completes a cycle

Sunshine - Sunset - Somenight, those
Colors people bathe themselves, quotidian
Red Blue Black and White, Eyes
define, malign the depths pumbed, shadows
light. Recall the serence darkness last, turmoil
Tangled sleep morning hair, And I
Dream with u of yester and tomorrow, Fall
foreward Sunrise - Green, yes

Anne Mackie

ODE TO A VIRGIN

With my head in this place I can see
the rise and fall of tender breaths
upon her breasts and heaving thighs
and well worn soles on the bottom of her aging feet
pressing back and fighting all the laws
like gravity and age and hate.
the pinkness rubbed away in stages past red
through to grey. And hard now
oh so hard, but tough
My eyes can see from angles never imagined
held or understood, never mind existed
pinching pink cheeks and laughter
Rising red and hot patching burns
biting down so hard it hurts
savage sweating, beating rythms
an old brass bed banging
out the old passions till
the clock within her body ran them down and
spewed them out, bloody and screaming
and sucking her dry till
her milk turned to sand and bellowed away
in the aftermath rain.

Conrad Payphone

THE RED POPSICLE

The red popsicle
 You left behind
 In your childhood
 Can't come get you
 On it's wooden legs
 It sits alone in the cold
 Waiting for you
 To pick it up
 That red popsicle you left behind
 Wants to melt inside of you,

ADULTERY.

The old priest in the next booth over is
 Slowly meditating on a piece of toast and
 He looks kinda sad or anyway I figure he's
 Not jumping for joy Those black shoulders are
 Powdered with dandruff and his breath kinda smells
 He stares at his grape juice and he is quiet - yes
 He is a quiet man and he wipes his mouth
 With a napkin and I notice the church
 Ring on his finger and just then
 He reminds me of a man whose wife is fat
 And I wonder how it all was
 When he was young

ICE

Some people put it in drinks
 Others are afraid to use it
 Because when people die they are 'on ice'
 If you take a Tylenol you're on drugs
 If you swallow an ice cube you're on ice
 When people die they are on ice
 Cars crash because of ice
 Ships sink because of ice
 Batman almost died because of ice
 Hockey players kill each other in the name of ice
 When I was a boy an icicle fell off the roof and hit me
 I want to burn I want to melt ice
 I light fires in the woods
 I want to light the world on fire and melt all the ice
 I wait for ice I'm ready I'm gonna burn
 I want to kill the cold I don't want people to be cold-
 I'm like a marshmallow over a fire

Nancy J. Mades

MIRROR

Her face falls to the floor
Crumpled in little white papers
on the rug
He is standing in the doorway
And all she can see
Is the outline of his body in the darkness.

Well, then,
Have we grown old,
You and I?
I have been looking in the mirror,
Seeing the years ooze out of the sky,
Feeling the time pass
By me and beyond me.
We are alive and
That is all we are,
Quiet, listening, waiting while
Our illusion lies shattered
Like a mirror on the surface of a star.

We have grown old.
I am sure of it now
Because we can smile all the way
Through it.
They were right.
Some people do deserve
To get fucked with their eyes open.

Drohan O'Neill

SILENT CONVERSATIONS

In a room full of people
I alone
stand and eye
silent conversations.

Toasted glasses of
tonal praise
mere
vibrations
from the walls.
I am accustomed to pianos without voices.

Silent rooms on either side
trap
my thoughts
within
a grey mass catacomb.

Repetition repels
loved ones
from consuming
thoughts
and phrases
weary
they no longer share.
I am accustomed to pianos without voices.

I long to contribute, but retreat,
hands in pockets
no one responds to
my
mute articulations.

Silence bellows from the walls as
I sit
waiting
for the sign
telling me to leave.
In the end
my thoughts
reverbrate
throughout the catacomb
for
I am accustomed to pianos without voices.

Michael Thompson-Renzi

ECUADOREAN BLUE

You roll around in the water
raising feathers and fans of spray
against steel blue

small pinions and dull shrieks graze the sky
and goat-headed women
in one-piece potatoe sacks
blandish children with sweet nic-nacs

the motorboat speeds
over schools of intimidated fish
that wash ashore in the evening
when the blues
jostle the tide with their teeth
as it stretches away with the moon
like balloon skin on Long Island

uncle Jose is trying
to iron his wrinkles
and fleshy inroads
with little success, though
he tried pomegranate suntan oil, the best
wasn't enough nor could it have been

cousin Carlos woos her in the yellow
bikini, deep brown curve,
but she seems to flirt with all eyes
as though they are strung puppets
on her every cell

the women with binoculars
strain to see the nudists across the bay,
they are past child bearing age, and everyone
thinks it healthy for them, especially
their husbands who think it healthier
to foray the scant clad girls
at the snackbar, where the lines
are lone and tenuous
and the patience great

somewhere out there in the floating
sunlight on the waves, Maria the whale
is raising her fin, and rectangular crabs
are crawling beneath her
as she swims

on the distant mountains black rocks
climb to the clouds
sticking their noses in the rain
and Salvadore's coffee beans love it

You disrobe yourself of the sea and walk
through coconut-scented air
through the haze of radio noise
and lie down
on your thick white towel.

MAYBE THERE IS A KRAKEN

Maybe there is a Kraken sleeping under the sea
dreaming about living things above,
thriving little monsters of protein
with fins and hair and some with large foreheads
rising and churning into vapors and burly clouds
swarming and dissolving on the surface.
Maybe in its dreams the Kraken dreams of land
that appears as mutable as the sea:
moving in fluid dimensions of time,
streets, woods vacant of houses, continuously
falling leaves, red marble in the ground
crimped with iron and gold redolent of an intangible
sweet smell; a closer look shows him
fields of humans growing out of each other
like bamboo shoots, a surfacing society
over the submerged bombs, purple thunders,
rainbows over crumbling walls, of the past
flinging graffiti at the windless
reminders of old episodes.

There is the Kraken lying under the sea
hidden in the cold ice like the hidden moon
looking upward at darkness dreaming about stars
while grotesque sniper-fish bat eyes
and wander past his bulk, dormant in the black
thicknesses of his speculative existence.

THREE PANDEMONIUMS

I

Pandemonium can even be mainstreet
on a summer night or winter day
a pit of seething mufflers
flying bottles and golden showers
leaping through dark lacunae between
street lights that keep the stars away,
a thousand nostrils hunched over pocket
mirrors, the content of conversation
changing from water to a gaseous blather,
a blank stare becoming a leer,
a declarative becoming a tribal whoop.
The village green is danced to war.

II

The pandemonium was blue,
red dots flying on its face.

A hundred purple devils lined
the path that led to the orange archway.

Coils of blue smoke like tall cypress
thinned against the sky

doing their uncivil squirms
in mauves of night, falling

in the morning into heaps of rock.

III

You and I saw the moon jump
over the pandemonium,
we saw its light fall on
the city of rock, pressing against us
squirting our imaginations
to the tops of our heads
making us want to find other worlds.

But you told me the moon would
come back
green with the morning's weeds
leaning a yellow chin
on the hat of another city
brought to life by that ball of dust.

Julia Robbins

SYMBIOSIS

When a flea bites your ear
it means that someone is lying to you.
And if the insect lives
in driftwood,
you will suffer a broken heart.

Your heart will break
at each new-minted morning, every moonlit
sonata.
You weep
into your sleeve,
like a sentimental drunk.

Even the flea finds a mate but you don't.
You get through February, thickly-sweatered,
muttering about the price
of heat,
dreaming
of the warm hand
that once cupped your breast all night.
Of course this story is about me.

I have bitten your lobe, despite all caution.

DIARY OF A DEAF-MUTE CHILD

Words die so close
to my lips.
I see a woman
through a Venetian blind.
These shapes are exploding
behind my teeth.

One time I was driven
to the Science Museum.
I saw
a life-sized model
of a dinosaur. Some feeling,
large and extinct,
rumbled in my memory.

My parents used to take me
to the city.
I learned the signs for Noise,
and Danger.

I think I was left here
millions of years ago, I can't say
exactly.
The clock in my head
doesn't work anymore.

I can't stop the alarm and the hands
that feed me
refuse
to hear.

Stephen Sadowski

SUNDAY OBLIGATION

I sit in a pew,
study stained glass,
an altar of marble and wood;
notice a man
walk the aisle,
right arm withered.
Unresponsive flesh and
bone flaps with his stride.
A camera dangles
from a shoulder.
I wonder how he aims
and shoots. Down on one knee
beside a bench,
he makes a left-handed sign
of the cross,
rises and enters a row,
kneels.
He looks to the Blessed Virgin,
his dead hand grasped
firmly in his right.
I suppose he's praying.

ON A RAINY NIGHT

you like to hear the rain
on the roof of my car
tapping for a way in--
drops rolling across
the windshield
that soon fogs
from a single breath.

Elliot Spieler

I REMAIN A MENSHEVIK.

Please, this is no manifesto
nor revolutionary tour de force
but it is yours-

Do with it what you will.

I have solicited from comrades internal
fragments that may fall upon unseeing eyes.

We are no entity, or polity-

We fool ourselves, on our good days.

We look in groves of grass and green
In hallowed coves-we lose our innocence.

We awake beneath the marching clouds, Barbarians riding
Hard in and our civilized heads.

Is it our Rome they have come for?

And they look at me with piercing puzzlement
For they see no Alaric in the sky, nor Attila.

The hungry children know the middle, their consciousness is only
middle, for beginning is without consciousness,
And end is but middle.

And I remain a Menshevik.

Everyone has a moment;
some have more (though fair it ain't).

It is one thing to talk of action
and quite another to seize your moment-

Take it by the collar, shake it down, extract and
expropriate the very blood, wrench the bones till they crunch
and out seeps the marrow of the morrow;

And when you find yourself, comrade, with fragments in your palm,
bits of bone, useless and dry-
are you strong enough to release them windward?

No, you will mourn and pray and conjure
seeking resurrection of these bones, your bones

And when you fail, you will go home,
and read some books.

Who says they've no wish to be
an entity, a polity;
To crave life, sans legitimacy?

Stepping deep in drifts of dread,
Finely cracked window, yesteryear's dust
On the peeling sill,

Periscopic eye fixed on the street, the snow is melting-
There is no comfort in that.

And the starving cat claws frantically
at the garbage can, but the lid is sealed tight
as is her life; she will find nothing there.

And I sip my bourbon, and munch my take-out Chinese spare ribs
And I would call you on the phone but you would be asleep anyway
And I wouldn't want to wake you up-but if I did...

I would say-Be my entity, my polity.

But I wouldn't want to wake you up-but if I did...

But I wouldn't want to wake you.

In truth, I remain a Menshevik.

Alexa Trefonides

DEDICATED TO ME

You traced my name on granite
guiding my finger along
your trail. When you finished,
my name on your lips
was stone cold.

Now you lead me
(as if we weren't there just yesterday)
to the place
where you erected the monument with
Alexa
invisible on its face.

With digger's strength,
you press me
against the hard surface.
For want of air, I can't
speak your name.

Soon my heart
beat fades, and
you leave me crumpled
at the base.



SALLY JACOBSON



SALLY JACOBSON



COLLEEN O'RORK

AGAINST THE CONCEPT OF RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

Sara Ellenbogen

In this paper I shall argue that, while it is right that some people should suffer, no one ever deserves to suffer. The concepts of retributive justice and desert are as evil, pernicious, and ill-conceived as they are popular. Let us examine first these concepts, and then their dreadful application in C.S. Lewis's "The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment."

The reportive definitions of "justice" and "retribution" are, respectively, "the administration of deserved punishment or reward" and "a deserved punishment." "Deserve" and "punish" have the following meanings in everyday English: "To be rightfully worthy of reward or punishment" and "to subject a person to pain, confinement, death, etc., as for a crime; to inflict a penalty for an offense." Now, according to the definitions of justice, retribution, and desert (or the entire concept of retributive justice), we may say of a person who has done a wrong action, "X deserves to suffer punishment, he is rightfully worthy of suffering punishment, and it is right that he suffer punishment."

What is wrong with this is that there is a basic, fundamental moral principle which states that it is always wrong for everyone to inflict suffering on anyone *as an end*. To inflict suffering on someone as a means to the end of achieving retributive justice is really the same thing: the "end" of retributive justice is that people who commit wrong actions suffer punishment. And, as the set of people who commit wrong actions is a subset of the set of people (and is included in the "anyone" of the aforementioned principle), the concept of retributive justice goes against the principle that it is wrong to make people suffer as an end. So, to inflict suffering on a person as an end and to do so as a means to an end of achieving retributive justice (i.e., to punish him) are the same. Both are wrong, and to punish is immoral.

The belief in retributive justice is born out of the natural human emotions of anger and desire for revenge. Of course, when someone hurts us, we want to hurt them back. Because we are intellectual beings, we can sometimes see that the belief that those who injure us should suffer is based on our feeling of wanting revenge rather than on reason. When what we want to do is quite out of proportion to what has been done to us, we sometimes say to ourselves, "I only want this because I am angry, not because it is right." But because we are capable of perceptual defense mechanisms such as rationalization, we do not always know that our belief in revenge is based on our desire for it. Most people accept the claim that it is wrong to inflict suffering on people who *have* committed wrong actions is merely equivalent to the old saying, "Two wrongs don't make a right".

Some people would object to the claim that we ought not to punish by saying that if crime goes unpunished, rapists and murderers will continue to rape and murder without cessation. But this does not follow. We do not have to imprison criminals as punishment or as a means to the end of

retributive justice. We can also imprison them to protect the lives and property of the rest of society. When the imprisonment is done for this reason, it is not punishment; it is a necessary, pragmatic action to protect society. It is done for this reason; it is not punishment; it is a necessary pragmatic action to protect society. It is done not to punish the guilty but to protect the innocent.

In "The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment," C.S. Lewis manages to simultaneously show a shockingly small amount of concern for the criminal and an almost equally small amount for society. He asserts that we should punish criminals according to what they deserve and that "so long as we are thinking in terms of Desert, the propriety of the penal code...is a question on which every man has a right to an opinion...simply because he is a man." First of all, everyone may have a right to an opinion on desert and the penal code, but everyone does not have a right to act on his opinion. In fact, Sartre would say that people do not even have the right to an opinion on such a matter or that their opinions were not opinions; he writes, "...I refuse to call an opinion a doctrine which is expressly directed toward particular persons and which tends to suppress their rights or to exterminate them."²

Secondly, even if the concepts of justice and desert were acceptable, Lewis does not say how we are supposed to know, beyond a doubt, exactly what people deserve. He implies that it is self-evident and if we only mull over moral philosophy and jurisprudence long enough we will know. But even if people did deserve to suffer, we are not in a position to know how much, and even if we were, our anger could make us think that the amount was greater than it actually was. Since we could never know what people deserved, to punish them and risk give them "unjust deserts" would be morally regugnant.

Lewis's inhumanity extends to society as well as to the criminal. He takes issue with a psychiatrist who says that criminals should be detained until they are cured of the disease which makes them criminals. Lewis says that the prisoner might be held indefinitely and for longer than he deserved, since only a psychiatrist could say when he was cured. Perhaps Lewis is right that psychiatric care should not be forced on anybody, but neither should anyone be released from prison when it is probable that they will commit a crime again. Lewis discusses two motives for punishment in the status quo: rehabilitation and deterrent. He ignores an important third one: the protection of society. It is barbarously cruel and inhumane to society at large to imprison a criminal for as long as he is supposed to deserve instead of for as long as he is likely to be dangerous, saying "Convict X was a violent inmate who is very likely to rape and murder again, but he only deserved Y years and he's done his time; we must let him go."

The most humane way of dealing with criminals in regard both to them

and to their societies, is not to imprison them as punishment, but to imprison them to protect their societies from them. In this way, society does not suffer, and criminals only suffer confinement; they do not suffer terrible prison conditions.

Some people might object to this system by saying that it punishes people all the same, even if punishment is called by a different name--pragmatic, protective action. Today the United States constitution prohibits cruel and unusual punishment. Criminals may be jailed, but the law requires that wardens feed them decently, take them outside to walk, and prevent them from being gang-raped. If they were not imprisoned as punishment, but only to protect society, one might argue, they might still be undernourished and abused.

But actually, they would not be. The reason why prison conditions are so terrible is that we think prisoners are there as punishment, and after we decide that it is all right to punish people we inevitably grow to treat them abominably. If criminals were imprisoned solely to protect society and not as punishment, then no one would think it acceptable to harm them at all, and no one would do so.

NOTES

1. C.S. Lewis, "The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment," in John R. Burr & Milton Goldinger, eds., *Philosophy and Contemporary Issues*, 4th ed. (New York, 1984), p.75.
2. Jean-Paul Sartre, "Portrait of an Anti-Semite," in Walter Kaufmann, ed., *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre* (New York, 1956), p.330.

INTEGRITY AND COMPROMISE IN *THE HEART OF DARKNESS*

Charlie Goldberg

Heart of Darkness is a tale of redemption and damnation, of moral goodness and personal greatness. Marlow's journey takes him all the way from moral hypocrisy to moral compromise. Both states involve an incongruence of one's ideal with one's actions, but the difference is that in one a moral ideal is adopted to justify one's actions, and in the other it is sacrificed for a more immediate good. His transformation is brought about by contact with Kurtz, the man who has gone over the edge. It is Kurtz who is the novel's central character. One must understand Kurtz to understand *Heart of Darkness*.

Kurtz is, in fact, a tragic hero. he is a powerful man, an eloquent man, a painter, a musician, a writer, a trader, a soldier, a leader--a "universal genius." He inspires awe, devotion, terror, love. Above all else, however, he is a moralist--a crusader, even. Kurtz' flaw is his inability to compromise, his lack of restraint. His imperfection is his need for perfection. "He was an extremist."

It is Kurtz' morality, unique among his peers, that first attracts Marlow. He is fascinated when he overhears the manager telling of his own contact with Kurtz:

'And the pestiferous absurdity of his talk...he bothered me enough when he was here. "Each station should be like a beacon on the road towards better things, a centre for trade, of course, but also for humanizing, improving, instructing." Conceive you that ass. And he wants to be manager.'

Marlow is "...curious to see whether this man who had come out equipped with moral ideas of some sort would climb to the top after all and how he would set about his work when there." The answers Marlow does get are more than worth the curiosity invested in them.

The same Kurtz who wrote, "'By the simple exercise of our will we can

exert a power for good practically unbounded,'" later added, "'Exterminate all the brutes!'" What happened in the interim to change this man? He travelled through a wild, passionate, and ugly world that he could never have imagined, one without policemen or public opinion, and encountered, like Marlow would, "...truth stripped of the cloak of time." This was a world where, "Principles (were) rags that would fly off at the first good shake." And there were many good shakes--the realization that the noble mission of the "pilgrims" was a lie, that he himself was an accomplice to brutal exploitation. Like Marlow, he must have realized that

...My speech or my silence, indeed any action of mine would be a mere futility. What did it matter, what anyone knew or ignored? What did it matter who was manager?...The essentials of this affair lay deep under the surface beyond my reach, beyond my power of meddling.

What a blow this realization must have been! There was no potential for boundless good. His ideals were shattered. He was a believer without a belief. There was only one virtue left for Kurtz--honesty; only one evil--hypocrisy, or judgment, which was the same thing.

Kurtz is often referred to as a "voice," but we learn about him mostly through Marlow--rarely hear that voice for ourselves. In Francis Ford Coppola's film *Apocalypse Now* (which sets Kurtz in the Vietnam War, perhaps the supreme modern example of hypocrisy), Marlon Brando gives Kurtz a voice.

I've seen the horror--the horrors that you've seen. You have a right to kill me...but you have no right to judge me. It's impossible for words to describe what is necessary for those who do not know what horror means. Horror has a face, and you must make a friend of horror--horror and moral terror are

your friends; if not they are enemies to be feared. They are truly enemies. I remember when I was with Special Forces, it seems a thousand centuries ago, we went into a camp to inoculate some children. We left the camp, after we had inoculated the children for polio, and this old man came running after us, he was crying, he couldn't say...we went back there and they had hacked off every inoculated arm, and they were in a pile--a pile of little arms. And, I remember, I, I cried, I wept like some grandmother. I wanted to tear my teeth out, I don't know what I wanted to do. And I want to remember it. I never want to forget it...And then I realized, like I was shot, like I was shot with a diamond, a diamond bullet right through my forehead, and I thought my God, the genius of that--the genius, the will to do that--Perfect, genuine, complete, crystalline, pure. Then I realized, they were stronger than we, because they could stand it--these were not monsters. These were men, trained cadres, these men who fought with their heads, who had families, who had children, who were filled with love. But they had the strength--the strength to do that. If I had ten divisions of those men, then our troubles here would be over, very quickly. You have to have men who are moral, and at the same time are able to utilize their primordial instincts to kill without feeling, without passion, without judgement,--because its judgment that defeats. I worry that my son might not understand what I've tried to be, and if I were to be killed, Willard, I would want someone to go to my home and tell my son everything. Everything I did, everything you saw, because there's nothing that I detest more than deception, lies, and if you understand me, Willard, you will do this for me.

Can we call this Kurtz immoral? Abstract principles of goodness only deny or mock the truth, preserving the aggressor's false sense of morality at the expense of his integrity. For Kurtz integrity is the only morality. (To thine own self be true.) To judge is to deny one's true nature. What this Kurtz admires and strives for is the strength to do what is "necessary" and to allow others that right, even if what is necessary for Captain Willard is to kill him.

Of course, Kurtz has failed miserably. In both film and novel he waits for

death to save him. His soul is a battlefield in the war between "the diabolic love and the unearthly hate of the mysteries it had penetrated," the poles he had never reconciled. He couldn't bring the world up to the level of his ideals, he couldn't quite bring his ideals down to the level of the world, and he wouldn't compromise. He tried to eliminate the horror around him, and couldn't. He then tried to disarm the horror by befriending it. (If you can't beat 'em, join 'em.) But the ideal, denied, wouldn't die--it shines a bright light over his awareness as he dies, illuminating the damnation he has chosen for himself--"The horror! The horror!"

As a psychologist, Conrad brilliantly anticipates the Freudian notion that behind every strong emotion lies its opposite. If we hate something, if we fight it, by defining ourselves on that level, we begin to take on the characteristics of that which we fight.

As a moralist, Conrad uses his two major characters to symbolize the problems and solutions facing mankind as a whole. The greatest evils inflicted by man on man over the face of the earth have been committed not by the self seekers, the pleasure lovers or the merely amoral, but by the fervent devotees of ideals. Kurtz though he consciously tries to deny it is just such a man. The extremes he goes to are an effort to defy his own ideal, once he realizes its impossibility.

What does Marlow learn from his experience? He transcends both the strict adherence to an ideal and the denial of morality. What is left is the particular, the here-and-now, which is the only reality worthy of the name. Like Kurtz, Marlow perceives his own complicity in the evils of the ivory trade; because he can do nothing about it, he accepts it. What he can do is scare the natives away before the others shoot them for sport, so he does.

Like Kurtz, Marlow hates lies:

'You know I hate, detest, and can't bear a lie, not because I am straighter than the rest of us, but simply because it appals me. There is a taint of death, a flavour of morality in lies--which is exactly what I hate and detest in the world--what I want to forget. It makes me miserable and sick, like biting something rotten would do.'

To lie is to compromise an ideal, just as death is the ultimate compromiser of man's aspirations. To allow the Intended some measure of solace and happiness, to allow Kurtz himself, though dead, to have some effect for good, Marlow compromises himself and lies. This is the culmination of Marlow's education, and Conrad's expression of mature morality.



DOOROTHEA ARROLL



CINCY POLLENS

DOOROTHEA ARROLL



CONSCIOUSNESS AND ELIOT

John Hawkins

"Consciousness," Jung tells us, "does not create itself—it wells up from unknown depths."¹ These depths include the whole range of shared and individual experiences recorded in the psychic history of the collective unconscious. These experiences, stored as symbols, become the leitmotifs of human history as it extends from the past into the future along the ever-present, but not always apparent, continuum of space and time. But access to the leitmotifs of this continuum is restricted to the nebulous condition we call consciousness, which seems to be, if not the result, the condition of man's peculiarly bifurcated nature—the subject/object schism which makes us both rational (i.e. conceptual, having the ability to posit a hypothetical event, based upon information contained in the past and extended into the future) and empirical (i.e. perceptual, having a sensory dialectic with the natural world). But access to anything approaching full consciousness is itself limited to a small group of geniuses who are the real leaders of a given generation, since the actions of most people seem to be driven by half-instinctual, half-conscious motives. It is the extra-consciousness of these geniuses (artists, scientists, philosophers, theologians, etc.) as manifested in their creative works, that is the basis of culture and the foundation of what we call civilization.

Now of the various forms of genius, art is the purest manifestation of genius because, unlike other works, it is the least guilty of manipulating the context out of which symbols and leitmotifs surge from the 'unknown depths' of the collective unconscious, and since such symbols and leitmotifs are representations of the eternally present truths of existence, art is the most faithful agent of reality, in fact, it is "a means of learning to experience reality."² But all of this is just so much talk *about* consciousness without really saying what it is...which brings us to the purpose of this essay.

Far from attempting to construct a definition of consciousness in an essay that is to be necessarily brief, my more 'modest' goal is to look at consciousness as it is presented in the poetry of T.S. Eliot. His poetry is a good place to get an idea of what consciousness is about, because it has the unique characteristic of directly addressing the consequences of consciousness within the historical context of the revolutionary time in which he lived. Regardless of the somewhat diminished esteem with which Eliot's poetry is viewed today, the spirit of his conscious revolt against the unconscious manipulations of his time is loudly echoed in the various genres of contemporary literature.

And so, first I will discuss the historical context in which Eliot wrote and its crucial significance not only to Eliot the poetic medium of consciousness but also to Eliot the man; second I will discuss consciousness as it is manifested in poetry in general; and third, I will consider whether Eliot's poetry is faithful to that consciousness and what we can tell about consciousness as a result of his poetry. My discussion of Eliot's poetry will primarily concern itself with what seems to be four distinct phases in the development of his poetic consciousness. These phases are manifested in

Eliot's four most important poems: *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, *The Waste Land*, *Ash Wednesday*, and *Four Quartets*. Since the purpose of my discussion of these poems is to elucidate the four phases of Eliot's poetic consciousness, rather than an attempt to discover their 'meaning,' line for line analysis of imagery, irony, symbol, etc., will be limited to the focus of this discussion.

After the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, the publication of Einstein's *Special Theory of Relativity* in 1905 is the single most important event of the last century. The implications and consequences of these two theoretical works, in conjunction with the senility of the Christian ethic and the disillusioning effects of the Industrial Revolution, were staggering to a degree that we can hardly imagine today, for Darwin's theory repudiated the primeval and deeply-felt spirituality with which man had hitherto regarded himself—far from bearing the special favor of some God, in whose image he was supposed to have been created, man was simply more highly evolved, more highly adapted than other animals with whom he shared the Earth; and Einstein's theory repudiated the wonder with which man looked at the stars and the awesome, incomprehensible cosmos in which they shone—and along with this loss of wonder at himself and the universe went all meaning, purpose, and moral culpability. At stake was the total abandonment of spiritual continuity and the repudiation of historical consciousness. But, as Karl Lowith points out in his explanation of the great Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt,

Conscious historical continuity constitutes tradition and frees us in relation to it. The only people who renounce this privilege of historical consciousness are primitive and civilized barbarians. Spiritual continuity, as constituted by historical consciousness, is "a prime concern of man's existence," because it is only proof of the significance of the duration of our existence. Hence we must urgently desire that the awareness of this continuity should remain alive in our minds.³

The derision with which Nietzsche's Madman was greeted when he shouted "God is dead" in the marketplace of 1890 became nothing less than a prophetic self-caricature. 'Spiritual continuity' would become the nihilism of 'civilized barbarians.' Darwin's theory would help provide justification of the Holocaust of World War II and Einstein's theory would be painted on the bombs that levelled Nagasaki and Hiroshima. In between would come the ghoulishly primitive trench battles of World War I, followed by a global economic Depression. No one would ask the obvious question: "Does the workability of an equation mean that we should accept the metaphysical implication of its structure?"⁴ No one would listen to Einstein's gentle remonstrances ("As far as the mathematical theorems refer to reality, they are not sure, and as far as they are sure, they do not refer to reality.")⁵ But it was exactly reality that was trampled on by the 'civilized barbarians' in their rush for unlimited power that Einstein's theory

promised. Gone was all spiritual 'continuity' and 'historical consciousness' of the eternally present truths of existence. Philosophers abandoned metaphysics for logical positivism and existentialism, artists turned to the abstract, psychologists bent their knees to Freud, and the people were pacified into unconsciousness with cars, telephones, televisions, machine guns, and all the other products of an assembly line oblivious to consciousness.

The poetic consciousness—the leitmotifs of human history—were repressed or perverted in the new orgiastic feast of materialism. Man was becoming a thing, more an object than a subject, and this change was more and more reflected in the products of his creativity, which are the symbolic representations of man's self-image. He had lost his poetic conscience, by which he had caught glimpses of the fleeting reality of the eternal present contained in and yet outside of the continuum of the past's extension into the future, and, as a result, he had lost his 'supernatural' identity contained in the faith of poetry which is

that everything in life is an expression of the fundamental condition in life, and thus it becomes a thread, a clue through the labyrinth of phenomena, which are only the products of man's dreams, though they are so much more enduring than any dream, so much more imposing than any man or generation of men.⁶

It is man's consciousness of this "labyrinth of phenomena" that provides his wax-winged transcendence of that phenomena, that is the source of his supernatural image of himself. And that is why Eliot has said: "I am convinced that if this 'supernatural' is suppressed..., the *dualism* of man and nature collapses at once. Man is man because he can recognize supernatural realities, not because he can invent them."⁷

Man's poetic consciousness is the means by which he comes to recognize and express his perception of the 'supernatural realities' that well up from 'the unknown depths' of not only human history but, because man is also an atomic being, universal history as well. It is the duality of his nature that allows him to both gaze into the deep depths of his organic past and to extend his sight into the far future of human potential. But this duality would amount to nothing more than a dim intuitive apprehension of a world of appearances if not for the poetic consciousness that allows him to recognize and find expression for the supernatural realities, the leitmotifs and symbols of his history. Indeed, the poetic consciousness *is* the supernatural reality, for it steps outside the past-future continuum (which can tell us everything about appearance and nothing about reality), and expresses its recognition of the eternally present moment, the moment of meaning 'at the still point of the turning world,' through metaphor. But this is not to say that a metaphor expressed by the poetic consciousness *stands for* another reality, but rather that, in the moment it is expressed and experienced, it *is* reality. As such, the poetic consciousness is "a direct and total experience, 'the experience both of a moment and of a lifetime.'"⁸

Now it is precisely the suppression of the supernatural, which would result in the collapse of man's duality, that T.S. Eliot rebelled against, both in his poetry and in his essays. With his Unitarian upbringing in Missouri, his natural timidity and acuity, his poetic gift, and his Harvard education in

philosophy, Eliot was well aware of the metaphysical implications of Darwinism and Einstein's theory of relativity. While those who supported these theories regarded them optimistically as freedom from man's barbaric past, Eliot saw no such optimism in releasing man from the historical consciousness by which he had come to define himself:

The World is trying the experiment of attempting to form a civilized but non-Christian mentality. The experiment will fail; but we must be very patient in awaiting its collapse; meanwhile redeeming the time: so that the Faith may be preserved alive through the dark ages before us, to renew and rebuild civilization, and save the World from suicide.⁹

Eliot's is a bleak view, indeed. And he most certainly would have agreed with Jacob Burckhardt that "the only people who renounce this privilege of historical consciousness are primitive and civilized barbarians." (Indeed, one might justifiably regard *The Waste Land* as just such a renunciation). But Eliot's view is also problematical because it is circumscribed by an almost pathetic submission to Christian ethics that would only grow stronger as he grew older, imbuing some of his later works and words (especially *Ash Wednesday*) with a rather repellant dogmatism ("As only the Catholic and the communist know, *all* education must be ultimately religious education."¹⁰). One gets the feeling in reading Eliot that had the theories of evolution and relativity not come to pass, his bleak view of human nature would not have been significantly altered, since in man's original sin lay the judgement that was to be his burden until the coming of a new heaven and a new earth. Eliot saw the expanding determinism of his time as a fatal step away from the saving grace of Christianity, rather than as a danger in itself. And yet, "paradoxically," as Rosemary Dinnage points out in her review of a recent biography of Eliot, "though he so hated and distrusted the modern world, the virtue of his poetry was to milk beauty out of modern desolation."¹¹ But then, Dinnage adds, Eliot was full of curious paradoxes:

He stood for impersonality in poetry, yet imprinted his own personality indelibly on his work; argued the need for tradition, yet was an innovator; urged order and coherence, yet had a central vision, death-in-life; his voice is unmistakable, yet he put it together from the voices of others.¹²

But perhaps the most curious paradox of all is the dispassionate intellectualism that tinges almost all of Eliot's highly subjective work. The voice never changes throughout his poetry (from "Prufrock" to "Journey of the Magi" to "Ash Wednesday"—it is the same voice), the voice is Eliot's, and as a result one never comes away with a sympathy for any of the characters he introduces us to. Stephen Spender rightly criticizes this paradox—and shortcoming:

His ladies, his bank clerks, his Sweeneys, his Mrs. Porters, his pub conversationalists, are all part of the world of *things*...One of the most astonishing things about Eliot is that a poet with such a strong dramatic style should seem so blinded to the existence of people outside himself. Yet the effect of his poetry depends very largely on this blindness.¹³

Essentially, of course, the source of these paradoxes is to be discovered in Eliot's beliefs. We've already discussed his strong Christian focus, but perhaps more influential on his poetic consciousness than the Christian system of faith was the philosophy of F. H. Bradley, which was the subject of Eliot's doctoral thesis. Bradley's idealist philosophy included, in part, a rejection of the belief in individual immortality and the strong conviction that individuality is only a passing phase of the final Reality or Absolute. The influence of Bradley's philosophy in general, and of his *Appearance and Reality* in particular, on Eliot's beliefs was deep. Northrup Frye's discussion of Bradley's seminal work is elucidating:

In Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*, "appearance" is a mass of logically impossible and self-contradictory impressions of time, space, change, causation and the like, where there is a huge fission between subject and object, "mine" and "this." We have to go on to a reality which is an "Absolute," where all contradictions of appearances are reconciled. The Absolute can only be reached by an "immediate experience" in which reason, will and feeling all fulfill themselves.¹⁴

The effect of Bradley's mysticism was to lead Eliot to advocate the "extinction of personality in Art."¹⁵ This, of course, parallels the Christian (but ultimately Eastern) dogma of the extinction of personality in life. In both cases, personality is seen as disreputable because it easily gets lost in the confusion of appearances and leads one away from the 'immediate experience' of Absolute reality.

The extinction of personality, and the movement of the self from confusion (appearance) to fusion (reality), would lead Eliot to the formulation of two important concepts in his philosophy of art: *unified sensibility* and the *objective correlative*. What makes the work of a poet of unified sensibility so magnificent, says Eliot, is that the poet "can make no distinction between the intellectual and the emotional: all is utterly fused."¹⁶ The poet achieves this unified sensibility by expunging his personality from the creative process and relying on the objective correlative:

in other words, a set of objects, in a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must not terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately invoked.¹⁷

Now, as we have seen, Eliot's notions of unified sensibility and the objective correlative are largely derived from Bradley's mystical differentiation between "appearance" and "reality," as well as from Christian prayer and Eastern incantation — both of which stress the suppression of the persona and fusion with the Absolute. The unified sensibility and the objective correlative are also the means by which the poet comes to recognize 'supernatural' realities and to express his recognition of them. Indeed, Eliot's concepts are little more than a description of the machinations of the poetic consciousness described in some detail earlier. But what Eliot does in his work, and by his work, is to turn that consciousness into a philosophy of life.

"To formulate [a poem or poems] as a philosophy," says C. S. Lewis, "even if it were a rational philosophy, and regard the actual [poem or poems] as primarily a vehicle for that philosophy, is an outrage to the thing

the poet has made for us."¹⁸ As a rule, of course, Lewis is right because the poetic consciousness, by its creations, transcends all philosophies, expressing the eternity of a moment in a metaphor that is itself reality. But Eliot is the exception to Lewis' rule, for his work progresses more and more away from the immediate experience of reality in the poetic consciousness to an abstraction of that reality which culminates in the lyrical and mystical philosophising of *Four Quartets*.

Turning to Eliot's four major poems, we discover a movement away from pure poetic consciousness, beginning with "Prufrock," to a kind of processed rationalization of that consciousness; a consciousness of consciousness, as it were. This is a paradox with bizarre metaphysical overtones. For on the one hand, there is Eliot's conscious and immediate experience of reality, and on the other hand an attempt to purge his subjectivity of that experience, an attempt to merge with the objectivity of the experience, and attempt to *be* his consciousness of what is. Yet the poetic consciousness is an expression of the subject-object relationship in man's dual nature. Thus, any attempt to merge with that reality would result in the collapse of man's duality and the loss of his recognition of the supernatural which, ironically, is exactly what Eliot feared would result from the godless determinism of his time. But now, let's look at the four phases of Eliot's development, as represented by his four major poetical works.

In phase one of Eliot's development, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," we find the poet subdued by the despair and melancholy of an over-developed self-consciousness. Prufrock's vision of the world (and of himself) is summed up by the succession of adjectives that litter the first ten lines of the poem: etherised, half-deserted, muttering, restless, cheap, tedious, insidious, and overwhelming. The "you and I" of line one is apparently Prufrock addressing himself in a mirror (symbolically, his self-consciousness). The "overwhelming question" Prufrock seems to be wrestling with, like a caricatured Hamlet without an objective correlative to justify the chaos of his emotions, seems to concern a marriage proposal. This question is lost in the general shuffle of Prufrock's thoughts because his timidity, isolation, and high-strung self-consciousness prevent him from facing up to the question in his life that he has some control over. He mistakes his inability to even decide whether or not should 'pop the question' with metaphysical questions the answers to which he already half-suspects but cannot absolutely know.

Thus, in his anxiety, he thinks "there will be a time/To wonder do I dare?" and, "Do I dare?/Time to turn back and descend the stair,/With a bald spot in the middle of my hair—" But instead of localizing the source of this anxiety ('Do I dare ask her hand in marriage?'), Prufrock, unable to candidly admit his cowardice, instead universalizes his anxiety: "Do I dare/Disturb the universe?" And so, though it is beyond his power to disturb the universe, even if he were inclined to try, Prufrock elevates the uncertainty regarding his marriage proposal to the metaphysical dimension — and thus escapes the necessity of resolving it.

From here Prufrock begins a long series of rationalizations. Since the marriage proposal has taken on metaphysical significance, Prufrock now sums up why he should not ask for more trouble (marriage): "For I have known them all already, known them all," he mutters, "the evenings,...the eyes,...the arms..." And besides, he seems to ask, "would it have been worth it, after all," if after ...squeezing the universe into a ball/To roll it

toward some overwhelming question,... if after a profound discussion of metaphysical matters with his wife-to-be, she should one night say, while turning her back on him, "That is not it at all/That is not what I meant, at all"—thus, imprisoning Prufrock in an empty relationship and intensifying his isolation—would popping the question have been worth it, if it resulted in this? Prufrock doesn't think so. Consequently, he will walk along the beach alone, listening to the mermaids sing (but not to him), and wait for human voices to wake him, so that he may drown in his self-consciousness.

This, of course, is not a full interpretation of "Prufrock." Instead, it was meant to illustrate a certain line of consciousness that is developed in the poem—Prufrock is dead inside; he no longer has the life in him to make marriage proposals, the end results of which he has 'known already'; he no longer has the life in him to disturb the universe; he would like to be Lazarus, 'come back from the dead,' but instead he is doomed to drown in his own consciousness. This death-in-life consciousness, by which Prufrock is obsessed, is, in the larger scheme, Eliot's own vision of man in which the 'supernatural' has been suppressed and the duality of his nature has begun to collapse. This weariness, deathliness, and consciousness of despair in a faithless life, plays Echo to the Narcissistic consciousness that is developed in the minor poems leading up to *The Waste Land*.

In *The Waste Land*, phase two of Eliot's development, his focus changes from the conscious despair of the faithless subject to the absurdity of the unconsciously driven objective world. *The Waste Land* is Eliot's vision of 'the dark age before us,' again, due to the suppression of the supernatural which would lead to the collapse of man's dual and humanizing nature. Written in a kind of controlled stream of consciousness, full of personas that melt into other personas, with deaths and resurrections, and teaming with literary and historical allusions, it would be a mistake to try to discover the 'meaning' of the poem, since its incomprehensibility *is* its meaning. In other words, *The Waste Land* is a vision of a world in which subject and object, time and space, history and myth are indistinguishable, a world without meaning; but the poem is no more than an exposition of that meaninglessness. That Eliot couched *The Waste Land* in obscure allusions is one of the shortcomings of the poem, and as Stephen Spender points out,

In *The Waste Land* Eliot seems, more than in any other poem, and more than any other artist, to describe the contemporary post-war situation of a certain very small class of intellectuals in Europe and in America.¹⁹

The Waste Land is important because it is a movement from the subjective despair of his "Prufrock" stage to a more intellectualist dismissal of the absurd objective world. But since man cannot live by consciousness alone, nor long take pleasure in the ironies and absurdities that affect his existence, Eliot made the leap of faith.

In the third phase of his development, "Ash Wednesday," we find Eliot grovelling for forgiveness and salvation from his redeeming god. Torn apart by his subjective despair in the face of the absurdity and barbarity of the objective world, Eliot resorts to typical Prufrockian rhetoric: "(Why should the aged eagle stretch its wings?)" For Eliot, the choice has become clear: either one accepts the death-in-life existence that consciousness swallows one up in, or one takes the leap of faith to Christianity (and preferably

Catholicism). Eliot's is a bleak vision—and no matter what one chooses—death-in-life or Christianity—there is no hope, no meaning to man's existence other than its being a long purgatorial preparation for death. The death-in-life choice renounces meaning by definition, Christianity by design. This is a rather appalling view of things and, what's more,

It is difficult to feel that Eliot's view of Western culture is anything more than a heresy in his own sense of the word, a partial insight with "a seductive simplicity" which is "altogether more plausible than the truth."²⁰

Four Quartets is Eliot's meditative, philosophical phase. he has been driven half-mad by the overwhelming questions of his subjective consciousness, bowled over by the objective world's meaningless replies, and has sought refuge and forgetfulness in Catholic penitence. There is nothing left to do but to groom himself and tidy up his affairs before meeting his Maker.

With *Four Quartets*, Eliot seems finally to have achieved his desire to purge his art of all personality. The result is a fusion of his reason, will, and feeling into a unified vision that, for once, is not loudly troubled by the world of appearances. The serenity and poise of *Four Quartets* is unmatched in any of Eliot's other writings. It is as though he had to first bring his feelings to full consciousness ("Prufrock"), followed by all of the connections of his reason (*The Waste Land*), only to purge them, along with his will in *Ash Wednesday*, and thus, finally presenting his true self in *Four Quartets*. But, alas, when this true self emerges from the closet of his cloistered anxieties, it is not a poet that stands before us but a philosopher. And with a smile that passes all understanding he says to us,

Men's curiosity searches past and future
And clings to that dimension
And,

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

Four Quartets, like *The Waste Land* to which it bears a thematic resemblance, tells the story of man's Fall, his fledgling attempts to find his way back Home, and the hope of redemption he may receive if he lets go of the desire that binds him to the world of appearance and which is the source of all his suffering. The influences of Bradley, Catholicism, and Eastern mysticism are clearly evident in this work. And these influences are the limits to Eliot's poetic consciousness. That in the end he continues to point to the Church as the only hope of saving man from his own self-destruction tempts one to concur with some of the criticism that has been levelled at Eliot's depth:

Eliot became prone to enunciating "great truths"—or crackerbarrel saws, if you see it that way—and very often saved himself only by a hair's breadth of irony or imagery from being pathetic.²¹

But perhaps the most glaring irony of Eliot's poetic consciousness is his attempt to escape from his personality in his art. In fact, however, what he does is dive head-long into his personality and it swallows him whole, so that he ends up mistaking pure subjectivity for objectivity—that is, at the end of all his exploration, he arrives at the place he started (Christianity,

Bradley's idealism, and Eastern mysticism) and mistakes them for the first time. The mechanization of man that he so keenly saw coming was, to a great extent, made possible by the low self-esteem that Christianity had imbued man with for two millennia. And as far as Eliot points to the Church as man's salvation, that is where his poetic consciousness flickers, for he is no longer showing us glimpses of reality; and instead of giving us an extinguished personality in his poetry, that is where his personality becomes most evident.

Notes:

1. Carl G. Jung, "Psychology and Religion: East and West" in *The Portable Jung* (London, 1971), p. 569.
2. Northrup Frye, *T.S. Eliot: An Introduction* (Chicago, 1963), p. 45.
3. Karl Lowith, *Meaning in History* (Chicago, 1949), p. 22.
4. The Smith, "The Simple-Mindedness of Albert Einstein or Modern Creation Myths," *The Smith*, 21 (July 1979), p. 6.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

6. Stephen Spender, *Life and the Poet* (New York, 1974), pp. 41-42.
7. T. S. Eliot, "Second Thoughts about Humanism," in *Selected Essays* (London, 1932), p. 485.
8. Frye, p. 44.
9. T.S. Eliot, "Thoughts after Lambeth," in *Selected Essays*, p. 387.
10. T.S. Eliot, "Modern Education and the Classics," in *Ibid.*, p. 515.
11. Rosemary Dinnage, "T.S. Eliot: A Life by Peter Ackroyd," *The New York Review of Books*, 31:20 (20 December 1984), p. 31.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
13. Stephen Spender, *The Destructive Element* (Philadelphia, 1953), p. 146.
14. Frye, pp. 43-44.
15. H. L. Sharma, *The Essential T. S. Eliot* (New Delhi, ND), p. 33.
16. Murray Krieger, *The New Apologists for Poetry* (Minneapolis, 1956), p. 4.
17. T. S. Eliot, "Hamlet," *Selected Essays*, p. 145.
18. C. S. Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism* (London, 1961), p. 82.
19. Spender, *The Destructive Element*, p. 133.
20. Frye, p. 24.
21. Dinnage, p. 32.

THOMAS PAINE'S SOCIAL RADICALISM RECONSIDERED

Joan Vazserra Hoffman

Thomas Paine's radicalism seems to draw from conflicting ideas which render him in some cases a social radical, while in others just an unwitting ideologue for the rising middle sectors in British, French and North American society. Paine's perception of evil within the political system lies in its monarchist and aristocratic nature, yet he was unwilling to break sufficiently with the system (as his more radical stand on social issues might demand) to assume a coherent political stance compatible with his ideas.

The key to understanding Paine's confused 'radicalism' lies in his admiration, yet erroneous conception of, both the French and American Revolutions. His endorsement of the right-wing Girondin constitutionalist (and not the 'revolutionary' Jacobin) faction, and his belief in the feasibility of the principles of the American Revolution (when in fact they were the conduit for the liberation and prosperity of a few) stemmed more from his misconstruction of the times and the forces behind them than from outright support of the newly emerging elites or a shared vision of the populace they were so rapidly rising above. Paine's continued defense of the workers, the poor and the children, went well beyond the boundaries of reform outlined by the Girondins, North American oligarchs, and the rising British middle class his ideas helped to establish. However, his inconsistent yet nevertheless appealing vision of rational man, equality and national prosperity was an integral part of the mass mobilization that shook the political fibre as it stood and allowed these groups to emerge as actors in the first place. Paine notionally understood the social convulsions that were taking place, and the anxieties and revolt of the people, yet misinterpreted and

harnessed his conclusions into a method for action inconsistent with the revolutionary measures needed to implement radical social change.

Whether or not Paine was a social radical depends on the definition and contextualization the term is given. If measured by the middle-class representative and *laissez-faire* system standards, Paine's proposals for deliberate and systematic state intervention in the welfare of its citizens are indeed 'radical.' However, if measured against a radicalism that extends beyond a simple commitment to social welfare, but seeks political and economic leverage in shaping the social identity of the population, as the mass upheaval of the French Revolution initially expressed, Paine as radical does not fare so well.

Whereas Paine's social ideas were deemed extremist in Britain and North America, they came across as harmlessly 'moderate' in France. In fact, despite continual and bitter criticism of the aristocratic British system, citing as paradigmatic revolutions the 'ideal' French (Girondin in practice) and North American examples, Paine's radical-democratic aspirations are more compatible with, and a direct reflection of, the changes taking place in Britain. Paine's 'rational man,' believer in 'democracy, nationalism, and a state of small independents with equal distribution of property and some welfare activities'¹ finds his place later on in British history, for his is the predominant ideology of modern craft unionism and contemporary British labor movements. Paine's radicalism, then, could also be described as one of an interim-period sort. Formulated before their time, yet erroneously attributed to foreign examples, Paine's ideas are radical insofar as social for-

mations and "commerce" had not evolved sufficiently in Britain to accommodate the demands for social welfare and political equality, and universal in that they constitute a reaction to structural changes occurring with different expressions throughout Western Europe and North America.

The main precept and moderating factor in Paine's radicalism is his belief in parliamentary reform, contending that "it is better to obey a bad law than to forcibly violate it,"² and it is this tenet that hampers him from understanding and supporting the more radical stances and expressions of the mass social upheavals of the times. His reaction to the French Revolution's 'excesses' and continual endorsement of Girondin France shows his political distance from the single event that most clearly and violently depicted the cleavages of a society in transition. It was in France that the underlying political crisis of the old regime (a crisis taking place to a less dramatic extent in other Western European absolutist states) was the most accentuated since the expression of absolutism was the most inflexible. The ousting of the monarch and the downfall of the nobility created a historically unprecedented void in which stop-gap bourgeois measures sometimes had to go beyond the mild-mannered dictates of the 'rational, democratic man' in order to safeguard the very institutions they had generated. 'Revolutionary' institutions and concepts - such as the secular state with civil liberties, guarantees for private enterprise, and a government by taxpayers and property owners - were threatened, and a massive national effort mobilizing the French laboring masses was undertaken. A seemingly 'leftist' Jacobin move, it was invariably interpreted as an irrational and belligerent action, anti-democratic, by men like Paine unable to understand the need for the king's death, for war, and for revolutionary mobilization against counterinsurgency both domestically and abroad.

Paine's reformism was a direct expression of the contradictory fusion of the old and the new so characteristic of the British social fabric and state, and as such did not understand the need for or political reality of such violent measures. Moreover, the British constitution and state that Paine so vehemently criticized was no longer that bastion of aristocratic particularism it had once been - the French *ancien regime* would better fit that description. The strands of *laissez-faire* doctrine that were haphazardly stated in *The Rights of Man* did not evolve completely outside of aristocratic circles, for the British nobility and state organs such as the navy had to a certain extent laid and assimilated the social and economic groundwork for the era of industrialism and commerce to transform itself into one of Industrial Revolution.

Paine, writing in the 1790s, was perhaps unable to foresee the changes that would come about in the nineteenth century, or was impatient to see the arrival of a time when "the greedy hand of government" would no longer retard industry, "grasping the spoils of the multitude,"³ and heavy taxation would cease, ushering in a period of national prosperity and a representative government. Yet he did not see that it was to be under Britain's influence (with its faulty and aristocratic government) that the world economy of the nineteenth century would be formed. Neither did Paine see that foreign dominion and the British war machinery, and the taxes (combined with a host of other circumstances) so bitterly criticized in his writings, were the other side of the commercial and social coin of British (and then, American and French) industrial advance, and would remain an integral part thereof.

These 'ills' could only be extirpated at the cost of doing away with the political and social institutions advocated in his treatise. Sustained economic growth could not be kept up without naval policing and foreign dominion, nor could sufficient capital accumulate for further expansion without the mechanisms of inequality that favored the manufacturing rather than the supplying facet of production. Paine's belief that "London does not get rich out of Newcastle, any more than Newcastle gets rich from London" is erroneous, as is his belief that "it is impossible to engross commerce by dominion."⁴

Dominion and war, taxes, government coercion, and treacherous devices that were "putting the means of destruction for the ends of production," as Paine so eloquently stated, were indeed the order of the day and truer than ever he supposed. "Protection" in Paine's view was the defense of that

"reciprocal interest which every nation feels in supporting it - its common stake - it exists by a balance of advantages to all, and the only interruption it meets is from the present uncivilized state of governments, and which it is in common interest to reform."⁵

However, "protection" invariably meant the defense of British supremacy militarily and economically, and the maintenance of a social system that repressed the population in order for that dynamic growth process to commence. Depressed wages and the pauperization of skilled artisans amounted to savings that could be reinvested in industrial progress, and may well have been crucial in generating the impetus of industrialization since relatively little investment came from non-middle sector patrons. "Production," in short, of the interests of a burgeoning new class of entrepreneurs and middlemen was indeed achieved by the "means of destruction." The age of nationalism, the 'nation,' independent commercial banks, equality, the British navy, the 'rational man,' unspoiled by the particularisms of the elites, 'mental levelling' and parliamentary reform only occurred for a few in the early nineteenth century. Admittedly, at the date of Paine's writing, the great Reform Act or other 'nation-minded' legislation had not yet been enacted, but the seeds had already been sown, and the more endowed and astute middle sectors were already beginning to emerge.

The eventual abandonment of the subsistence wage was due not so much to the benevolence of politically egalitarian principles as to the economic 'rationality' of the new entrepreneurs - that an internal mass market had to be established. Since foreign production was not expanding fast enough, accelerated demand at home - better-paid workers - inevitably meant more money circulating and more purchases of a diversified kind.

The abandonment of the 'wage fund' theory, and the improved social conditions that took place, would seem to superficially fulfill (in an updated version) Paine's dream. Over time, increased benefit and eventual state welfare intercession came about, progressive income tax and all; yet, structural deficiencies and contradictions continued to characterize this advance. Incrementalism and procedural (process) politics remained the axioms for 'change,' whereas the more 'radical' questioning of the system, and politics of political alternatives, were hardly addressed. Paine's version of "government as a trust" survived through time as did a constitution based on a system of representation. Once again, the metaphor of government

as a trust took on deeper meaning than Paine had intended - the cash nexus inevitably led to the state as overseer of a 'social contract' whose base and power lay in primarily economic distribution. The mechanisms that regulated economic and political distribution were questioned along incremental but never structural lines.

Paine's eclectic radicalism - based on a belief in democracy, nationalism and welfare - appealed directly to the radical-democratic aspirations of small artisans and pauperized craftsmen. These men had mixed feelings about capitalist advance. They welcomed the progress that science and technology brought yet rejected the capitalist character of that advance. The incongruence of this stance seems inherited from Paine and his reaction to commerce; grateful for the advances of the rational-national age, he did not support the state and politics that brought them about. Moreover, this dislike, stated so systemically and erroneously throughout *The Rights of Man*, could only have stemmed from a sincere though instinctive rejection of the force and brutality that lay behind this national age, which he was unable to decipher as such, interpreting it instead with radical political language. Nevertheless, it was this language, and welfare reforms, that were the most appealing and appropriate expressions of British artisans.

Paine's belief in the 'rational man' and in the self-regulating mechanisms of society appealed to this artisan group, the body of which overlapped the frontier between the middle and working classes. Accordingly, their discontent fused with the demand for parliamentary reform in the early nineteenth century - erroneously, though, for they intrinsically relied on the perpetuation of a system of 'national' benefits, the bonuses of which would (with the increased bargaining position of this trade union-like sector and its power to marshal working-class opinion) increase, incrementally through a 'collective bargaining' of sorts within the 'government trust,' but

which would never radically alter the subordinate position of this sector.

Paine's welfare state materialized a century or so later, thereby (if judged in terms of a linear progression of historical events) making him a 'radical' only inasmuch as he was a visionary within the confines of the present system. Yet to judge Paine so would be to do an injustice to his hopes (however ill-founded) and 'radical' aspirations. After all, he did elaborate an intricate plan for social welfare and demand the supervision and intercession of the state, as a centralized organ to oversee the interests of the young, old, sick and poor, in the 1780s and 1790s. Moreover, he was an 'international man' of sorts and although he never really ceased to think like a British artisan, misunderstanding political events in France and North America as well as at home, he did fight for the consolidation of a new order, however much he may have adulterated (consciously or otherwise) and misinterpreted the social convulsions of the age. Using the French language of political conflict without understanding the political developments that rendered him a harmless and anachronistic moderate in France, he grafted it onto the British reality, although the idealized political state first developed and engendered by the political schisms under French absolutism was incompatible with the essentially economic reality of eighteenth century Britain.

Notes:

1. E.J. Hobsbawm, *The Age Of Revolution* (London 1962), p. 302.
2. Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man* (Citadel Edition; Secaucus, NJ, 1974), p. 39.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 207.

THE WORLD OF CORNELL WOOLRICH

Paul Sherman

Pulp fiction—the disposable thrill-a-minute stories of the 1930s, 40s, and 50s produced some authors of lasting value, whose literature remains as evidence of the possible heights of this distinctly American genre. Among the best of the pulp writers, along with Raymond Chandler, Jim Thompson, Dashiell Hammett, and a few select others, is Cornell Woolrich. When written by an author such as Woolrich, the pulp novel becomes more than just escapist literature. At its best, it is not essentially a whodunit but instead a moody and emotional story in which crime and violence result from the desperation and frailty of its characters in a cruel, fast-moving, and impersonal world. It is this type of thriller that the French have labelled the *roman noir*.

Whether written under his real name or the pseudonyms William Irish and George Hopley, Woolrich did not write in the "hard-boiled" style usually associated with the pulp novel. You won't find any save-the-day detectives, knights-errant in trenchcoats rushing to the aid of damsels-in-distress with a fifth of gin in one hand and a smoking revolver in the other.

For Woolrich, the emphasis is on the victims—extremely ordinary people, like you or I—those whose five-and-dime existences are threatened by the intrusion of the extraordinary.

Like many other pulp writers, Woolrich graduated to the pulp novel after years of churning out penny-a-word stories for magazines such as *Black Mask* and *Dime Detective*. Before that, he had written a few Fitzgerald-inspired "jazz age" novels. Though he continued to write until his death in 1968, the bulk of his best work was written during the 1940s, when he wrote his "Black Series," a group of six novels whose titles each contain the word black. It was also during this time that Woolrich's novels were eagerly snapped up for film adaptations. Woolrich's scenarios were essential to the development of another distinctly American genre, *film noir*, the cinema of the dark and foreboding. His stories have been filmed by such diverse and notable filmmakers as Alfred Hitchcock, Robert Siodmark, Jacques Tourneur, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, and Francois Truffaut.

If there is one consistent motif that lifts Woolrich's work above the reams

of pulp literature, it is his unique vision of a malicious world, a predator out to get you. His is an ominous, threatening world in which there are no "sure things," in which every source of security can quickly turn into an agent of fear, in which the most seemingly trivial incident can change a life, and in which no one—no one—is safe from arbitrary fate. A man can discover that his lover has been stabbed while dancing next to him or come home to find his wife dead and himself accused of her murder. One can even be brutally killed by a bottle thrown from a passing airplane. The Woolrich protagonists, if they survive, leave their stories with a much altered view of their world than that which they held at the story's start. They have wised up to their world, they have been beaten by it, or they have gained a temporary respite from it, but never again will they turn a street corner without realizing that a single step, even a single glance, might disastrously change their lives forever.

Woolrich uses a protagonist to emphasize a oneness, a single point-of-view of the world. The usual Woolrich protagonist is young, innocent, and ordinary, neither a troublemaker nor a glory-seeker. Woolrich uses both male and female protagonists, one about as frequently as the other. With the male protagonist, the emphasis is on "John Doe-ness," with the female, on innocence. The archetypal description of the Woolrich male protagonist comes in perhaps his best-written novel, *Rendezvous in Black* (1948), in which a man vengefully murders the loved ones of the killers of his fiancée, one by one (a reworking of his earlier novel, *The Bride Wore Black* (1940), in which a woman systematically murders the men who killed her husband on their wedding day):

His name was Johnny Marr, and he looked like-Johnny Marr. Like his name sounded. Like any Johnny, anywhere, any time. Even people who had seen him hundreds of times couldn't have described him very clearly, he looked so much like the average, he ran so true to form...He was a thousand other young fellows his own age, all over, everywhere. You see them everywhere. You look at them and you don't see them. That is, not to describe afterwards. "Sort of sandy hair," they might have said. "Brown eyes." And then they would have given up, slipped unnoticeably over the line away from strictly physical description. "Nice clean-cut young fellow; never has much to say; can't tell much about him." And then they would have run out of material on that plane too.¹

There you have him. Could be anyone. Could be you.

The Woolrich female protagonist also runs "true to form": she is innocent, vulnerable, and, ultimately, resourceful. She is found at her most definitive in *Phantom Lady* (1942), *The Black Angel* (1943), and *I Married a Dead Man* (1948). In the first two novels, an innocent, pretty young woman must shed her naivete in order to go undercover and find the man who is guilty of the murder for which the man she loves is awaiting execution. Each meeting with a potential suspect or reticent witness brings new dangers, eroding their notion of a benevolent world. In *Phantom Lady*, the female protagonist is usually referred to as simply "The Girl." This has nothing to do with the novel's title—she is never intended to be the Phantom Lady—but rather reinforces her "everywoman" quality; she could be many "girls."

The change of the Woolrich protagonist from the everyman—the passer-by—into the bizarre vengeance seeker of the unlikely amateur detective requires a cataclysmic stimulus. This usually means the intrusion of the Woolrichian world into the protagonist's life, through accident or tragedy, often squelching the protagonist's hopes. These are not grand hopes, just ordinary hopes for ordinary people, like Johnny Marr's in *Rendezvous in Black*:

They had a date at eight every night. If it was raining, if it was snowing; if there was a moon, or if there was none. It wasn't new, it hadn't just come up. Last year it had been that way, the year before, the year before that. But it wasn't going to keep on that way much longer; just hello at eight, good-bye at twelve. In a little while, in just a week or two, their date was going to be a permanent one; twenty-four hours a day. In just a little while from now, in June. And boy, they both agreed, June was sure slow in getting around this year. It never seemed to get here.

Sometimes it seemed that they'd been waiting all their lives. Well, they had. Literally, no figure of speech. Because they'd first met, you see, when she was seven and he was eight. And they'd first fallen in love when he was eight and she was seven. Sometimes it does happen that way....²

Though such a change of situation does not have to be so violent and sudden, most Woolrich protagonists undergo traumas that are similar, traumas which, no matter how much they are overcome, always leave a scar. The novel which best deals with the irreparability of such a change is *I Married a Dead Man* (the most recent Woolrich novel to be adapted for film, as *J'ai Espouse une Ombre (I Married a Shadow)* (1982) by French director Robin Davis), in which the heroine, Helen Georgesson, desperate and vulnerable after being deserted by her lover, allows herself to be taken for a wealthier, more secure woman who died in an accident on the train in which they were both riding. As Helen gets inextricably wound up in a series of deceptions necessary to keep her new identity, it is clear that her voluntary change has not improved her circumstances at all. Her lies and subsequent guilt have diminished her self-respect, and the love relationship she is locked into at the end of the story (married to a possible murderer) is in every bit as doomed as the one she entered it with. Even when the individual has some control over these dramatic changes, the ruinous effects are still beyond control.

This vain struggle between the protagonist and his or her malevolent world, along with this emphasis on a single interpretation of the world. Links Woolrich's works to many other *romans noirs*, especially the great existential novels (and is one reason for their continued popularity in France). In a significant way, the violent events occurring in Woolrich's novels—the murders and bizarre tragedies—are not so important as acts as they are as proof of the harsh world at work. The initially orderly and passive protagonists respond to these tragedies, these dirty tricks, and start to fight their world, which has sucker-punched them by slyly letting them believe it was on their side for so long. The ominous quality of this world which can do you in is detailed best in *Deadline at Dawn* (1944) and *Night Has a Thousand Eyes* (1945).

In *Deadline at Dawn*, the agent of fear is the big city, a New York City that can lull and trap an individual by promising fame and fortune but rarely providing, thereby sapping him or her of all energy, hope, and ambition. Woolrich's New York City is a gloomy, suffocating cell, a nocturnal prowler dishing out hard knocks and overpowering poor saps like his simple protagonists. As Brick, the female protagonist, explains to Quinn, the fellow from her lowa hometown whom she meets by chance in Manhattan:

...I only know that there's an intelligence of its own hanging over this place, coming up from it. It's mean and bad and evil, and when you breathe too much of it for too long, it gets under your skin, it gets into you- -and you're sunk, the city's got you. Then all you've got to do is sit and wait, and in a little while it's finished the job, it's turned you into something that you never wanted to be or thought you'd be. Then it's too late. Then you can go anywhere -and you just keep on being what it made you from then on...I say the city's bad, and if it's good for everyone else, I'm me, and that still makes it bad for me. I hate it. It's my enemy. It won't let me go- -and that's how I know.³

Brick had come to New York with hopes of becoming a professional dancer only to meet with shady producers and lecherous agents. Stuck in her cramped and lonely tenement, she now works in a dime-a-dance dance hall, and has seen the dirty, crime-ridden city turn her humble small-town optimism into ice-cold cynicism. This passage nicely emphasizes the subjective point-of-view of the protagonist (so what if the city is good for everyone else?), and her realization that her world (in this case, the big city) is not passive, but destructive.

In *Night Has A Thousand Eyes*, the lives of a father and daughter are thrown into dismay when a clairvoyant old man predicts the father's imminent death from the jaws of a lion. Jean, the daughter, soon holds the nighttime sky and its stars with the same contempt and fear that Brick has for the city (interestingly enough, Brick complains that the city has "a thousand eyes" at one point). Jean and her father cower beneath the stars, as the universe they once took for granted becomes an inescapable source of fear.

Whether it be the city or the stars, what comforts one may torment another. Or, more importantly, what comforts you today may torment you tomorrow. Woolrich locks his protagonists in a futile, Sisyphus-like struggle against the larger-than-life, the "great whatsit."

The malevolence of the Woolrich world is persistent, whether it bludgeons or gradually weakens the protagonist into submission. Woolrich accentuates this persistence through stylish tricks of repetition. His protagonists repeatedly struggle with their world; at each clash, the aggressive world jabs at them. There are successive layers of perception to this world. In *The Black Curtain* (1941), Woolrich actually shapes his prose at one point, in order to show deeper layers of perception and deeper layers of misery, when Frank Townsend first sees a woman who knew him when he was an amnesiac:

Brown eyes.
Bright brown eyes.
Tearfully bright brown eyes.
Overflowing tearfully bright brown eyes.⁴

Though Frank's deepening perception is in this case rather harmless, *Rendezvous in Black* is filled with repetitive devices that emphasize the increasing maliciousness of the world. Most obviously, there is not merely one rendezvous, there are five. As Johnny Marr carries out these five rendezvous, murdering loved ones of those who killed his fiancée, each subsequent rendezvous becomes longer and more involved. The more elaborate his murderous schemes become, the more threatening both he and his world become. Woolrich's use of repetition in *Rendezvous* creates not only some of his best descriptive passages but also marvelous sadistic effects. When the description and sadism combine, the result is scorching prose that wallops the reader with both its cleaver construction and its gritty directness. In what is perhaps the best passage Woolrich ever wrote, he digs to the core of a particularly foul Army officer:

He hated soldiers with woebegone faces. In fact he hated soldiers with faces. In fact he hated soldiers. In fact he hated.⁵

Each of these four sentences is a fact, but each digs deeper than its predecessor. What is remarkable is that Woolrich tells us more by taking away words than adding them. Each time he gives us the same sentence, he strips away words in order to strip away the surface of the officer he is describing. But by repeatedly giving us variations of the same sentence, he is also dwelling on the sadism and viciousness that can thrive in a malevolent world.

Though Woolrich worked in a medium that stressed the speed and volume of the writer's output - the low pay was enough of an incentive for that - he was able to resist the clichés of pulp literature (the flashy detective, the dreamboat blonde, the excessive use of slang), yet perhaps more than anyone else capture the *noir* milieu. His prose reads extremely well - he was adept at brief, economical description as well as long passages of suspense - enriching situations that would be banal if handled by most any other writer.

Woolrich's best works are not only *roman noirs*, but also *romans bleus*, literary torch songs drenched in melancholy and forlornness. He does not try to overwhelm us with the intrigue of whodunit in his works, but rather with the desperation of his protagonists who have no clue what their malevolent world holds for them next. It is this human vulnerability which is at the heart of Cornell Woolrich's works. If there is one theme that links all of his works, it can be found in the quote by Pauline Havard that he included in the frontispiece of *Deadline at Dawn*: "...each hour, each minute / Can hold all Hell or Heaven in it -."⁶

NOTES

1. Cornell Woolrich, *Rendezvous in Black* (New York, 1948; reprint New York, 1982), p. 2.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
3. Cornell Woolrich, *Deadline at Dawn* (New York, 1944; reprint New York, 1983), pp. 34-35.
4. Cornell Woolrich, *The Black Curtain* (New York, 1941; reprint New York, 1982), p. 62.
5. Woolrich, *Rendezvous in Black*, p. 79.
6. Woolrich, *Deadline at Dawn*, frontispiece.



STEVE CYRURINA

ROY MEDVEDEV AND THE "COURT OF HISTORY:" *An Analysis of Let History Judge*

Elliot Spieler

The Stalinist epoch in Soviet history has been studied from a great many perspectives. Scholars of all persuasions have written numerous books on the subject. Most of these have been by and for westerners. Those Soviet dissident and emigre scholars who approach the subject, such as Solzhenitsyn, tend to do so with a strong bias against Marxism and socialism.

Roy A. Medvedev stands out as a unique figure in Soviet historiography. He is renowned as a maverick among Soviet dissidents, one who has not jettisoned Marxism, but instead uses it as his *modus operandi*. *Let History Judge*, written in the 1960s and rejected by Soviet publishers, is an examination of Stalinism from the inside, by one who remains deeply committed to both the Soviet people and the cause of humanistic socialism. From this commitment comes the fundamental purpose of Medvedev's work: to advance the "process of purifying the Communist movement, of washing out all the layers of Stalinist filth."¹

Medvedev's Marxist outlook necessarily clings to a middle ground between strict determinism and individual will theory; he cannot deny the major, often decisive roles played by individuals, but he sees them as intertwined with historical forces rather than superseding them. He explains:

I proceed from the assumption that different possibilities of development exist in almost every political system and situation. The triumph of one of these possibilities depends not only on objective factors and conditions, but also on many subjective ones, and some of these factors are clearly accidental.²

Medvedev's approach stands in contrast to that of another Marxist historian, Isaac Deutscher, who proclaims, in the introduction to his *Stalin: A Political Biography*, that

The partisan deals with fluid circumstances: on all sides men still exercise conflicting wills, marshal forces, use weapons, and achieve or reverse decisions. The historian deals with fixed and irreversible patterns of events: all weapons have already been fired; all wills have been spent; all decisions have been achieved; and what is irreversible has assumed the aspect of the inevitable.³

This 'historical objectivity' in which Deutscher prides himself has an unfortunate effect on his conclusions. After nearly six hundred pages of detailed descriptions of Stalin's savagery, he is compelled to decide that Stalin played an objective role which was, though brutal and contradictory, historically progressive.⁴

Deutscher's surrender to the behemoth of history is diametrically opposed to the essence of Medvedev's work. Medvedev is, to his very core, both historian and partisan, and unabashedly so. Originally, *Let History Judge*

was to have been titled *Before the Court of History*.⁵ Medvedev the partisan, the seeker of justice, is certain that history, as judge and jury, will render a correct, that is, guilty verdict in regard to the accused, Stalin and accomplices — provided that all the facts are on the table, plainly laid out by Medvedev the historian. In this courtroom scenario Medvedev himself plays a role not unlike that of a determined and astute prosecuting attorney.

It should be apparent that the 'history' before which Medvedev seeks to present his case is neither an illusory, abstract force nor a determinist steamroller, but rather, the Soviet people, and especially the future leaders of the Communist Party, making decisions for the future based on an accurate assessment of the past.

Following the courtroom metaphor further, we see the prosecution listing, describing and detailing the alleged crimes of Stalin and his cohorts. Throughout the book/trial, the author/prosecutor summons a host of witnesses who testify to the evil perpetrated by the accused against them as individuals, and against the party, the Soviet people, and the development of socialism. The source/witnesses include previously unpublished or long unavailable party and state documents as well as personal reminiscences of many individual victims, especially Old Bolsheviks, and their families. The case that Medvedev presents, as partisan and historian, is at once a condemnation of Stalin and Stalinism, and an affirmation of October.

It is important for Medvedev to show Stalinism as a great betrayal of the revolution while at the same time affirming that socialism, though weakened, could and did survive Stalin. Hence he must not only show the criminality of Stalinism; he must fully dissociate Stalinism from socialism and Leninism:

In many respects he [Stalin] and his accomplices turned the revolution backward, forcing the Soviet Union to diverge far from the principles of socialism proclaimed by the October Revolution. In these respects he can properly be called a counterrevolutionary.⁶

Dissociating Stalin from socialism, besides answering a Marxist determinist such as Deutscher, can also stand against the near-fatalism of anti-Marxists such as Solzhenitsyn and Grigory Tartakovsky, whom Medvedev quotes in *On Stalin and Stalinism* (written in the 1970s):

Objectively-his existence has been a blessing. Stalin's contribution to the exposure of communism will not be equalled by all the dissidents together for many decades.⁷

It should be added that by quoting an anticommunist view at its most extreme and absurd, Medvedev is clearly giving his own view a sizable moral edge.

The organization of *Let History Judge* is well-suited to the case Medvedev is making. The first half of the book is basically a chronological narrative. Drawing on Soviet and western, published and unpublished, Marxist and 'bourgeois' sources, Medvedev describes Stalin's usurpation of power in the 1920s, the barbaric nature of forced collectivization, and finally the great purge.

Beginning with the period of collectivization, Medvedev spices his text with numerous reminiscences, which highlight the tragedy of the events. He quotes one A. E. Kosterin, who writes of meeting a peasant en route to prison in 1933, sentenced to ten years for resisting collectivization: "On the surface the man was indifferent to his fate, but he also had his muzhik shrewdness: in prison he would be saved from starvation."⁸

In his description of the purges, Medvedev is dealing with material that has been tossed around in the west for many years but which remains under a cloak of mystery in his own country, although this cloak was substantially lifted during the Khrushchev years. He is aware of the contradiction that the Soviet people, who themselves suffered the horrors of Stalin's purges, are still not in a position to study them objectively, if at all, while those in the west, for whom the brutality of the epoch remains remote and divorced from personal experience, are the ones with the access to more information. Thus, when Medvedev rattles off hundreds of names of purge victims, in the party and out, from all walks of Soviet life, he is trying to impress upon the reader the sheer enormity of the terror.

Here Medvedev is doing for the Soviet reader what Robert Conquest does for the western reader in *The Great Terror*. Conquest's book is awash in detail, giving long lists of purge victims, showing how the machinery of the purges operated and how far into the structure of Soviet society it reached.

While Conquest's book tends to be rather technocratic, lacking both the partisan spirit and emotional subtext of Medvedev, he himself realizes this. Conquest does not go to great lengths to dissociate Stalinism from Leninism, as Medvedev does; it must be remembered that he has no partisan reason to. At the end of *The Great Terror*, Conquest virtually dares Medvedev and other Soviet historians to publish works such as *Let History Judge*, and the regime to allow them to publish:

The Soviet Union can best be described as not fully cured...It is to be hoped that in one way or another a complete cure might be effected. One sign of it would be a frank confrontation with the past; so that Russians could freely and fully investigate the events of which some account has meanwhile been given in these pages.⁹

Medvedev has taken up Conquest's dare; the Soviet government has yet to fulfill its part.

When Medvedev announces, for example, that "In the RSFSR around 90 percent of all *obkomy* (*oblast* Party committee) and the majority of city, *okrug*, and *raion* committees were ravaged," and then proceeds to name each individual involved,¹⁰ he is hitting the reader over the head with the enormity of the purge, using a heavy hammer to awaken the memory of the Soviet people.

In addition to the heaviness of detail and brutality of sheer numbers, Medvedev uses victims' anecdotes to drive home the absurdity as well as the magnitude of the terror. When he quotes the unpublished memoir of

the Belorussian official Drobinsky, he is trying to render the victims as human, as accessible as possible:

...The old man denied it; his conscience would not let him lie. No beatings or tortures could shake him. He went to the confrontation with his son with the firm intention to stick to the truth. But when he saw his tortured son, with marks of beatings on him, something snapped in the old man's spirit, and turning to the interrogator and his son, he said: 'It's true; I confirm it...'¹¹

'History' can't help but be moved by such stories. We are frequently given appeals to the intellect:

It is *ridiculous* [italics R. M.'s] for Soviet historical scholarship to keep its notorious mask of silence, to pretend that there were no political trials in the mid-thirties; that Trotsky, Bukharin, Rykov, Tomskii, Piatakov, Kamenev, and Zinoviev were not outstanding leaders; that they did not, despite their mistakes, do great and useful work in our party. 12

Just as often, however, we are given emotional stories such as Yevgenia Ginzburg's tale of the elderly peasant woman, accused of being a Trotskyist (*trotskistka*), who denied the charge, saying she had never been a tractor driver (*traktoristka*). 13

Objectively, this combined intellectual and emotional attack must have a much deeper reaching effect on its projected audience than, for example, Khrushchev's dry and incomplete (not to mention self-serving) statement, "In those years repressions on a mass scale were applied which were based on nothing tangible and which resulted in heavy cadre losses to the party."¹⁴

Half way through *Let History Judge* the chronological narrative is replaced by deeper analysis. Medvedev, having demonstrated that countless crimes were committed, now seeks to ascertain the motives and the methods-to determine to what extent Stalin was the cause and executor, what enabled those around him to participate, often at the ultimate cost of their own lives-and to examine the material base of Soviet society, examining those factors that abetted, or in some cases, inhibited Stalin.

In the course of the book, Medvedev refers to Stalinism several times as a "serious disease" from which the Soviet Union has only partially recovered.¹⁵ The medical metaphor becomes very apt in the latter half of the book, which could be compared to a medical article in which the author describes the symptoms of a disease as they occur, and then proceeds to step aside, examine the causes, and prescribe a set of remedies.

As he probes the origins of Stalinism, Medvedev runs into a few tricky problems. Having established that heinous crimes were committed he has to show that Stalin was responsible for them while also demonstrating historical forces at work. He has to explain why Stalinism developed-and why it was not inevitable.

Robert Tucker, in his psychobiography *Stalin as Revolutionary*, has an easier time with this apparent paradox. A non-Marxist, Tucker attributes the greatest historical influence to decisive individual personalities. By seeking the major causes of Stalinism in the development of Stalin's psyche, he is able to construct a scenario of how Stalin developed, from a Freudian childhood to self-aggrandizement and Lenin-identification to imposition of his will on other, less powerful personalities.¹⁶

Conversely, Deutscher's preference for impersonal historical forces, which to him renders such speculation almost pointless, does not have to confront this problem as Medvedev does.

Medvedev examines several theories of responsibility for the purges. He briefly discusses the 'leader deceived by evil aids' theory, which may sound ludicrous to western ears but which has a long tradition in the tsarist past.¹⁷

Medvedev also poses the question of mental illness, asking whether Stalin was a victim of pathological paranoia that caused him to imagine enemies everywhere and to be unaware of the criminal nature of his actions. He answers the question in the negative by citing examples of Stalin's controlled and calculating methods, showing that:

After he chose a victim, he almost never struck without preparations. His were not the actions of an abnormal man, driven only by a persecution mania. Before taking vengeance, he organized vilification of his victim, entangling him in a web of slander.¹⁸

Medvedev's recent book, *Nikolai Bukharin: The Last Years* is a detailed account of Stalin's gradual and planned assault on Bukharin leading up to his execution in 1938.¹⁹

Returning to the courtroom of history, we find the defendant Stalin ruled competent to stand trial. In Medvedev's words, "Every despot is suspicious, but suspicion alone does not explain despotism."²⁰

Having established that Stalin was a conscious perpetrator of massive crimes, Medvedev begins to echo Tucker, sans Oedipal allusions, in seeking Stalin's motives. He states that

The contradiction between Stalin's limitless ambition and his limited abilities...drove Stalin into conflict not only with those he saw as his present or future opponents but also with many old Bolsheviks who were personally devoted to him...He wanted not only unlimited power but also unlimited glory; no one must upstage him in the historical drama. Thus many people became his enemies not because they were opposed to the regime but because they performed great services for it.²¹

If Medvedev's view of Stalin's personal nature in some way resembles Tucker's, when he discusses the cult of that personality he basically takes Khrushchev one step further. While some degree of glorification of leaders is a natural "expression of the masses' great enthusiasm, pride in their revolution,"²² the wrong kind of leaders, such as Stalin, have a great tendency to exploit this. Furthermore, Medvedev argues,

[Stalin] did not commit them [crimes] by himself. Taking advantage of the people's revolutionary enthusiasm and trustfulness, the enormous power of Party and state discipline, and the low educational level of the proletariat and the peasantry, Stalin involved millions of people in his crimes.²³

An enormous moral tragedy for Medvedev (if less so for Khrushchev) lies in the fact that thousands of Soviet citizens were transformed into barbarous criminals as well as victims.

Medvedev also refers to bureaucratic degeneration as one partial cause of Stalinism. In this regard he superficially echoes Trotsky, who based his whole latter career on this issue. Medvedev says that

After Lenin's death, barriers against bureaucratic degeneration were not erected. On the contrary, Stalin skillfully used the incompleteness, both in theory and practice, of the proletarian state...to strengthen his own position and gradually to usurp all power.²⁴

Medvedev attributes much more personal responsibility to Stalin than does Trotsky, for whom Stalin is simply the bureaucracy personified, the "reliable arbiter" who "revealed himself as the indubitable leader of the Thermidorian bureaucracy, as first in its midst."²⁵ It must, of course, be noted that *The Revolution Betrayed* was written before the "arbiter" had murdered and replaced this bureaucracy.

One theme which Medvedev repeatedly stresses is the distinction between Lenin and Stalin, and between Leninism and Stalinism. When he describes Stalin's suspicion and cruelty, his inadequacy as an intellectual and theorist, his never-ending thirst for power, and his lack of morality, Medvedev usually uses the figure of Lenin as a backdrop for comparison. This can be quite forceful, as an essential element in the condemnation of Stalin is to deny the legitimacy of his political and moral successorship. Thus, Medvedev tells us that Stalin, in the 1920s,

...was not in the least concerned with changing his opponents' minds or drawing them into the common work. He only sought to break them, to bend them to his will; if this failed, he rudely threw them aside.²⁶

In contrast to this, Lenin, Medvedev tells us, was "when necessary...tough on his opponents, including Party members. But Lenin's toughness did not strike at people's self-respect or insult them."²⁷

Medvedev allows several of Lenin's comrades, including his widow, Nadezhda Krupskaya, to bestow lavish praise on Lenin:

His heart beat with ardent love for all toilers, for all the oppressed. He never said this himself...He never approached Marx as a bookworm. He approached Marx as a man seeking answers to questions which tormented him.²⁸

In several places Medvedev himself falls quite close to Lenin-adulation. Though this may seem a weakness, it is also effective for the argument of *Let History Judge*. The figure of a partially idealized Lenin serves to highlight the negativity of Stalin that the author stresses.

In the subsequent *On Stalin and Stalinism*, Medvedev drops much of the idealized Lenin-imagery. He strives for a more realistic depiction of Lenin, including some severe faults:

It is certainly not my intention here to portray Lenin as some kind of saint...Many letters and instructions from the civil war period show that Lenin sanctioned the use of terror on a scale that was entirely unjustified.²⁹

Medvedev also objects to Lenin's concept of "communist morality" as "that which unites the workers against every kind of exploitation, against every kind of petty property...."³⁰

Even with his acknowledgement of Lenin's shortcomings, Medvedev's fundamental view of Leninism remains unchanged. Leninism, despite problems, is an ideology that made the October Revolution possible, that set the Russian people down the road to socialism. Stalinism was a force that nearly destroyed the revolution, that was criminal and excessive in its essence. In the words of an anonymous Old Bolshevik with whom Medvedev expresses agreement:

Stalinism is not just a bureaucratic perversion of Marxism-Leninism in general or the theory and practice of socialist construction in particular. It is a total system of social, political, and economic organization. It is pseudo-socialism.³¹

Finally, there remains in Medvedev's work a deep emotional subtext, which he does not allow his Marxism to obscure. He grew up under Stalinism, lived through the period of the 'personality cult,' was stifled by the counterrevolution in culture, art and science. Furthermore, his father, a Marxist intellectual, perished in the great purge.

Behind Medvedev's writing there is a deep commitment to his cause, the complete elimination of the Stalinist legacy from Soviet life and the education of the people to prevent any resurgence. Medvedev is no dispassionate academic; as mentioned above, he is both a historian and a partisan, both for the same reasons. If this occasionally leads him to contradictions, it also serves to make his case the more eloquent and powerful.

It should be added that there is a great irony in the fact that *Let History Judge* was suppressed by the Soviet authorities. That suppression stands as a great tribute to the book, proof of its essentiality.

Notes:

1. Roy A. Medvedev, *Let History Judge* (New York, 1971), p. 566.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 359.
3. Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin: A Political Biography*, 2nd. ed. (London, 1966), p. xi.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 568-570.
5. Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, p. xxxv.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 375.
7. G. Tartakovsky, "Paradoxes of the Archipelago," quoted in Medvedev, *On Stalin and Stalinism* (Oxford, 1979), p. 183.
8. A.E. Kosterin, *Memoirs*, quoted in Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, pp. 95-96.
9. Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror* (London, 1968), p. 522.
10. Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, pp. 202-203.
11. Y.I. Drobinsky, *Memoirs*, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 235.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 185-186.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 235.

14. Nikita S. Krushchev, *The Crimes of Stalin Era* (New York, 1962), p. 32.
15. Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, p. 566.
16. Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary* (New York, 1973).
17. Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, pp. 289-290.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 306.
19. Medvedev, *Nikolai Bukharin: The Last Years* (New York, 1980).
20. Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, p. 313.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 326.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 365.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 365.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 424.
25. Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed* (New York, 1937), p. 93.
26. Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, p. 34.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
28. N. Krupskaya, *O Lenine*, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 336.
29. Medvedev, *On Stalin and Stalinism*, p. 190.
30. V.I. Lenin, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 190.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 194.



COLLEEN O'RORK



TRICIA KANE



CINDY POLLENS



TRICIA KANE



COLLEEN O RORK



HALLIE SALKY



RICHARD KELLER

RIVERRUN, PAST EVE AND AOAM'S, FROM SWERVE OF SHORE TO BEND OF BAY, BRINGS US BY A COMMOIOUS VICUS OF RECIRCULATION BACK TO HOWTH CASTLE AND ENVIRONS.

-PP. 3, FIRST PAGE OF
FINNEGANS WAKE

"A note on the name 'Howth Castle': Howth Castle is borrowed from 'Howth Castle and Environs,' which is mentioned in the beginning of James Joyce's book, *Finnegans Wake*. In *Finnegans Wake* (a labyrinth of portmanteaus and polyglottal words fused together by way of pun, prefix, and suffix from which multiple meanings are implied) the initials H.C.E.-Howth Castle and Environs-also stand for the sleeping protagonist of *Finnegans Wake*, HUMPHREY CHIMPEN EARWICKER. H.C.E. is also intended to mean 'HERE COMES EVERYBODY,' that is, from AOAM and EVE onward, culminating in the entire race of humanity. Moreover, there is in Ireland a medieval edifice known as 'Howth Castle.'

-THE EDITORS

