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NOTICE

Wheatsprout



Wheatsprout

Spring 1978

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*Staff submissions were submitted under pseudonyms.



How Not to Shake Hands

In my hand is a bug.
I would like to show it to you,
juxtapose it across a nice prairie
or yellow day.

But if I open my hand
anything could happen.
I'll just say that in my hand
are two or more eyes
that see as well as any others.

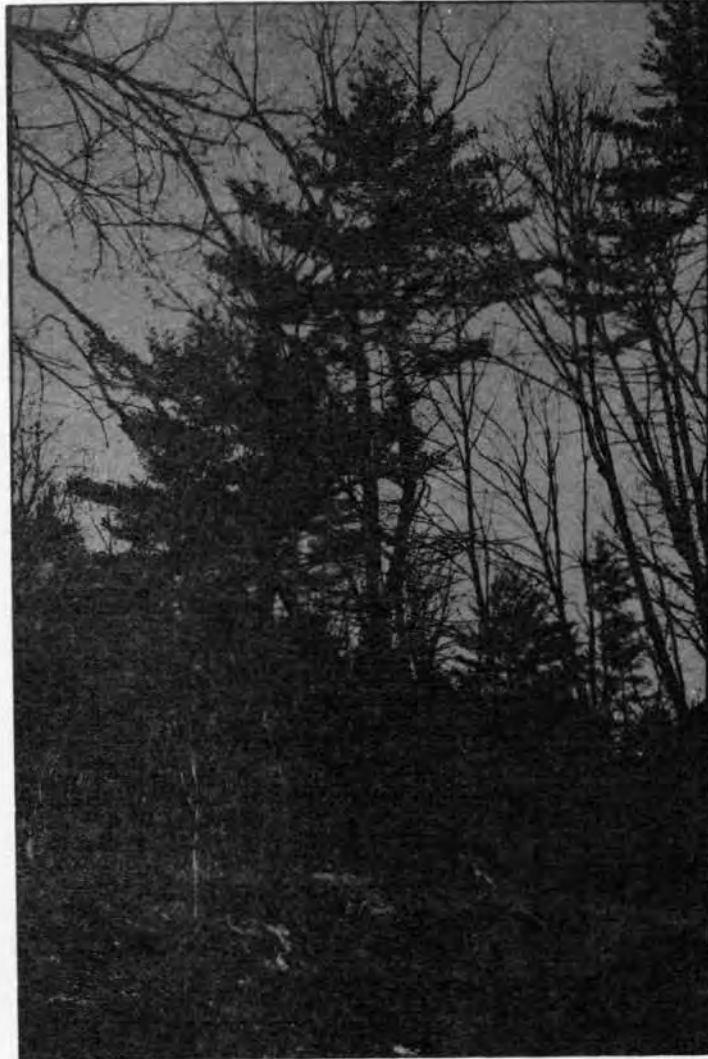
Looking

There's a hole
in the kitchen wall,
behind the dog food,
where the phantom cat
crawls through
spraying along the walls
and on the oven.

Sometimes I think
its the old tom cat
I lost to you
when we separated
coming to claim
his visitation rights.

Windows

photograph



Looking At Jack Through Windows

Under my eyelids, I believe he still walks beside me. His after shave mingles with a whiff of whiskey and cigarette smoke creating a soothing aroma. The waxy black hair shines, tinted with owl grey, yet still curly and handsome for a man in his late forties. Before the grey crept in, I used to sit on his belly while he played the harmonica and comb his hair for hours . . .

"Uncle Jack, I'm here—I love you." I imagine the impish prankster of St. Helena's Grade School who still lives behind his now toothless grin. (He never did get to break in those new dentures.)

"How's my favorite niece? Still tall, lean, and mean I see." he releases a laugh that falls warmly upon my ears, not unlike the sound of rain on a snow covered lake. "Ya remember sittin' on the dock in your underpants fishin' with that bamboo pole? Your fat old uncle taught you how to clean and scale those little sunnies too."

As he reminisces, I recall his almost selfish pride when he'd bring me into the little town of Pierz and show me off to all the farmers and fishermen. I think he used to pretend I was his daughter . . . at times I guess I was.

"Jackson, pick me up in your arms again, so I can feel your rib bruising hug and rub my face against your bristly chin."

"Honey, just move closer—you always were slower'n molasses in January."

But just as the times before, when I reach out to him—I feel nothing but the smoothness of glass. Windows appear to block our embrace. Stacked in multiple rows and encasing him, they become a barrier to my world of touch. I peer at Jack now as if at a newborn infant, through nursery hospital windows.

I stutter, "I want to tell you why . . . did you know I wasn't at the hospital when you . . . I visited the day before, but you were in a coma. Can you still hear me?"

The windows distort his voice, "Spittin' image of your Auntie Al—that's what you are."

"Jack, Alma's still asleep on the sofa—she can't bear to lay in that bed without your warmth. It's so empty without your uneven snoring."

I fling tears at the windows, but the glass will not break. I want to hold him, but behind those panes he seems so distant—like a teller at a drive-in bank.

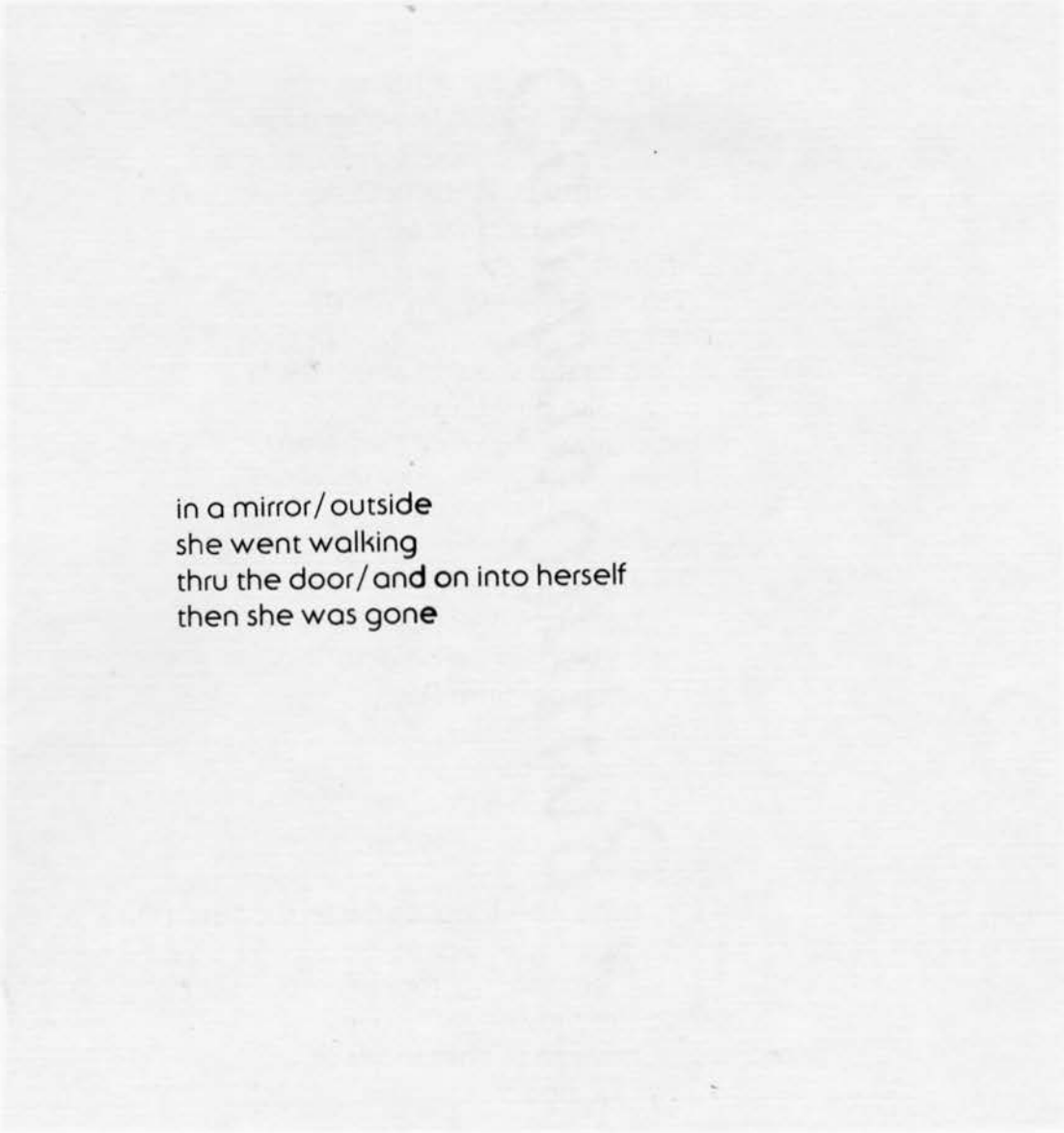
Spontaneously, the windows crackle into dust, shattering with them my uncle's face which falls onto the floor like pieces of an old brittle mirror. Jack's voice begins ringing through me like a phone call in the middle of the night, "Don't forget your fat old Uncle Jack."

Reflections of the dead man slowly in the creases of the window shade.

Child's Comparison

jester man
little impromptu clown.
A child sees
nose pressed upon the glass
painted
 harlequin
 patches
twinkling eyes
relentlessly the same
he (the child) watches
 waiting
for a flicker,
turns to mob at his back
clowns
 all
 clowns.

Entropy/Anti-Entropy



in a mirror/outside
she went walking
thru the door/and on into herself
then she was gone

An Actor On Daytime TV

Whenever he came home
she was waiting like a limp fox
on the pullout couch.

He wanted to sneak past her
without stopping

Without having
to squeeze out any words.

He knew
that she would just eat them
like a TV snack.

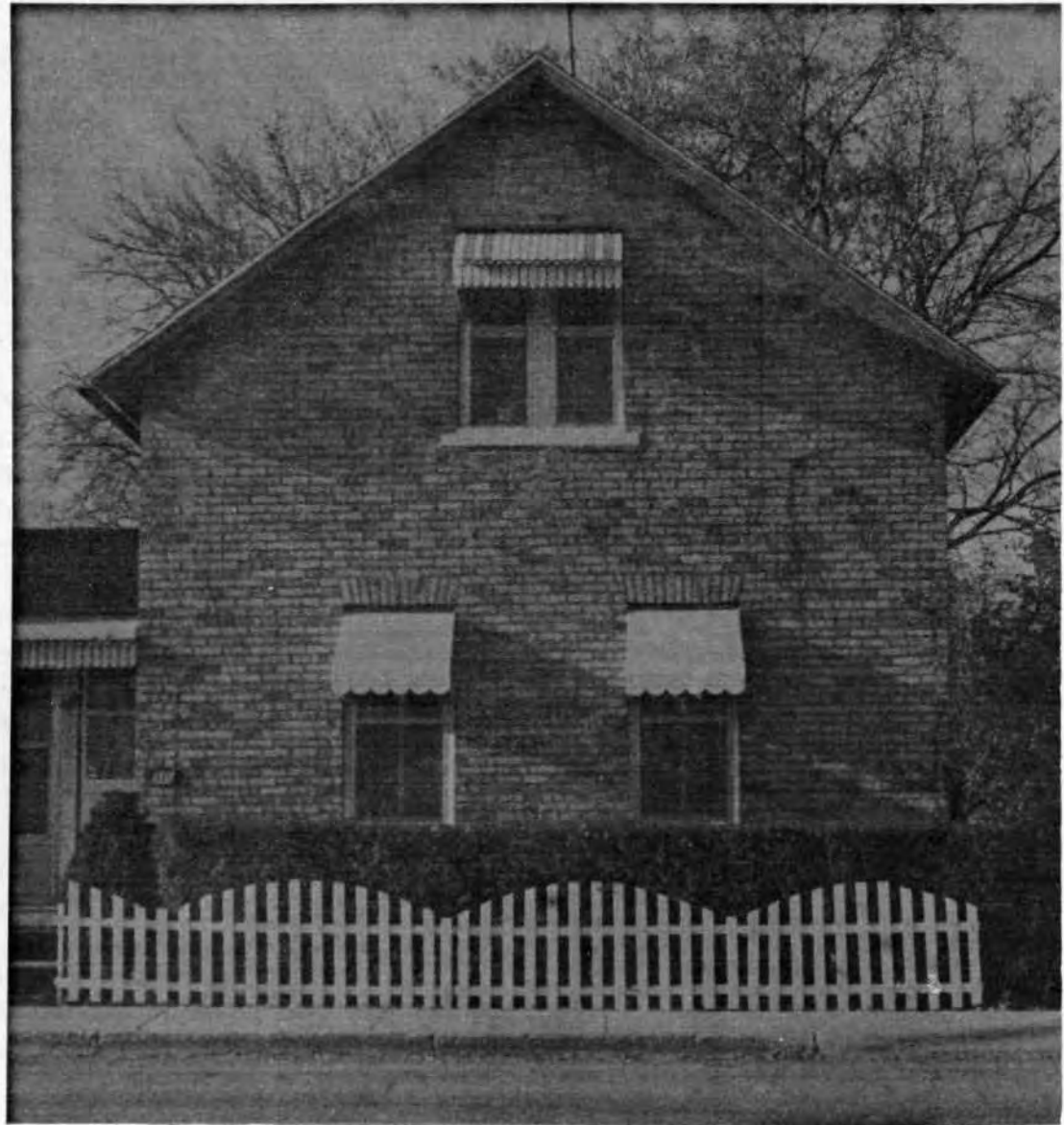
Never knowing what they were.
Never feeling how they taste.

And
if she caught him
before he got past the TV set,
then he must be an actor
on daytime TV.

The friend
of millions
of stagnant people
just like her.

Soon
he will be taught how to change channels
by telepathic waves
emanating from her metal curlers

And she may never
have to put her shoes on
again.



Truck Stop Waitress

Her breasts might be squirting hot coffee
into cracked porcelain cups in formation along the counter
saluting with their thick handles
the way the truck driver stares at
the way her pink poly-blend uniform
gaps
between the second and third buttons

This truckstop waitress.
At The Coffee Cup she's the Main Attraction

He'd love to lick the blue eyeshadow off her lids
"That blueberry?"

He's had others.
That July night in '69
while dozing in his cab
a goddess with yellow hair had climbed in
and without a word
hooked her legs around his neck
Afterward
he's slept 'til eleven
pulled into Long Prairie four hours late
with his load of bleeding beef
the waitress slides his check onto the counter
dismissing him for another week
Settling into the cab of Emmy Lou with FM stereo
Dolly and Patsy
Tammy and Loretta
are tonguing his ear

He drives with one hand
his legs locked wide apart
the engine shuddering through homeless thighs

It Was to Have Been an Easy Trip

I have sliced the night sky
stretched its thin skin
across my face for this drive
down Minnesota, home.
Moths, steamed in wet air,
are suicidal sacrifices
blurring my vision.
Behind safe glass
I carry flowers
inside me,
brought too late
to prevent
the chipping of my soul.

Between Cedars

Could I fly if this air turned like water?
As cicadas rake the moon, light drops in spores—
What could keep me here?
Thick teeth between cedars hold this night together.
Trees are not deaf;
they practice a hand alphabet while we sleep,
touching our faces to see if we are blind.

Laquer Storm

print



His wrinkled corduroy jacket
stared back at me from the chair.
The stale air of the winter room
exhaled—leaving pressure.
I sat on the bed crosslegged,
queen sheets, cold and impersonal, wrapped round
my thin ankles and calves.
Smoking my last cigarette, I whispered slowly
"Come back Joe,"
making a smoke ring between each word.
I knew, even then,
the jacket would be forever staring,
not letting me forget.

Edison

He found his name near the bottom of an old love letter, and he snipped it out with his wife's toenail clipper. Then he tucked his name between the electrodes of his invention, turned on the power, and saw a brilliant rainbow flicker on and off for three and one-half seconds. It was so strange he wasn't quite sure if he was dreaming. So he found another old love letter. Again he tied his name to the same electrodes, and this time there was six seconds of bright orange with green shadow. He was happy with the improvement but it wasn't good enough. He lifted an old cat from his old cat box, and he plucked an eyelid from its eye. He pushed the electrodes closer together, tied the eyelid securely, then pulled the switch. The power came on with strange inconsistency. The eyelid lit up and then quieted, lit up and then quieted, lit up and then quieted, red like a heartbeat. He was disgusted, this would not do. He turned off the power and squeezed a pimple from his forehead. He was fascinated. He removed the eyelid from his machine and fastened the ooze from his pimple to the electrodes. The electricity made the ooze explode like a cattail (the common marsh plant) but that was all it did. He wanted a mirror to find another pimple, but on the way to the bathroom he discovered a silk stocking hanging from the banister. The stocking was nicely textured and had a different odor. He went to the kitchen and dipped part of the stocking in honey and part of it in sour cream, then he crushed the whole thing on the floor with the heel of his shoe as if the stocking were a dying cigarette. He was getting tired. He moved to what he considered the center of the house and wondered what he should do. He yawned. He sat on the floor. The floor was cold and he remembered the silk stocking. He wondered if he could stretch the electrodes far enough so they would take the full measure of the stocking. His wife had long legs. He was tired. The stocking was hanging from the handle of the old ice box in the kitchen. He began to sleep. Tomorrow he might do something with the silk stocking hanging from the old ice box in the kitchen.

The Musician

At night
when she's asleep,
maybe dreaming
of her garden
or Walt Whitman,
I like to place my hands
between her legs
and stroke the fur
inside her thighs
until she spreads her legs
like two slow turtles,
spreads them just enough
that my hands can
part her lips.

She is silent.
Dreaming.
Like a scared virgin
or a bored whore.

I perform great masterpieces
in her silence.
I am the composer,
the performer,
the audience.
I please only myself,
and in that
I find great joy.

Rotating Poem

She drops her seeds in furrowed sheets,
her mother and father, solid as fir
lie twisted as roots beneath hot soil
with evening shadows as epitaphs

Her mother and father, solid as fir
their limbs, lambswool dims their eyes
with evening shadows as epitaphs
screeching birds broom the smoking sky

With evening shadows as epitaphs,
her prairie hut sighs with each storm
Trees creak and fall, her heart and arms
lie twisted as roots beneath hot soil

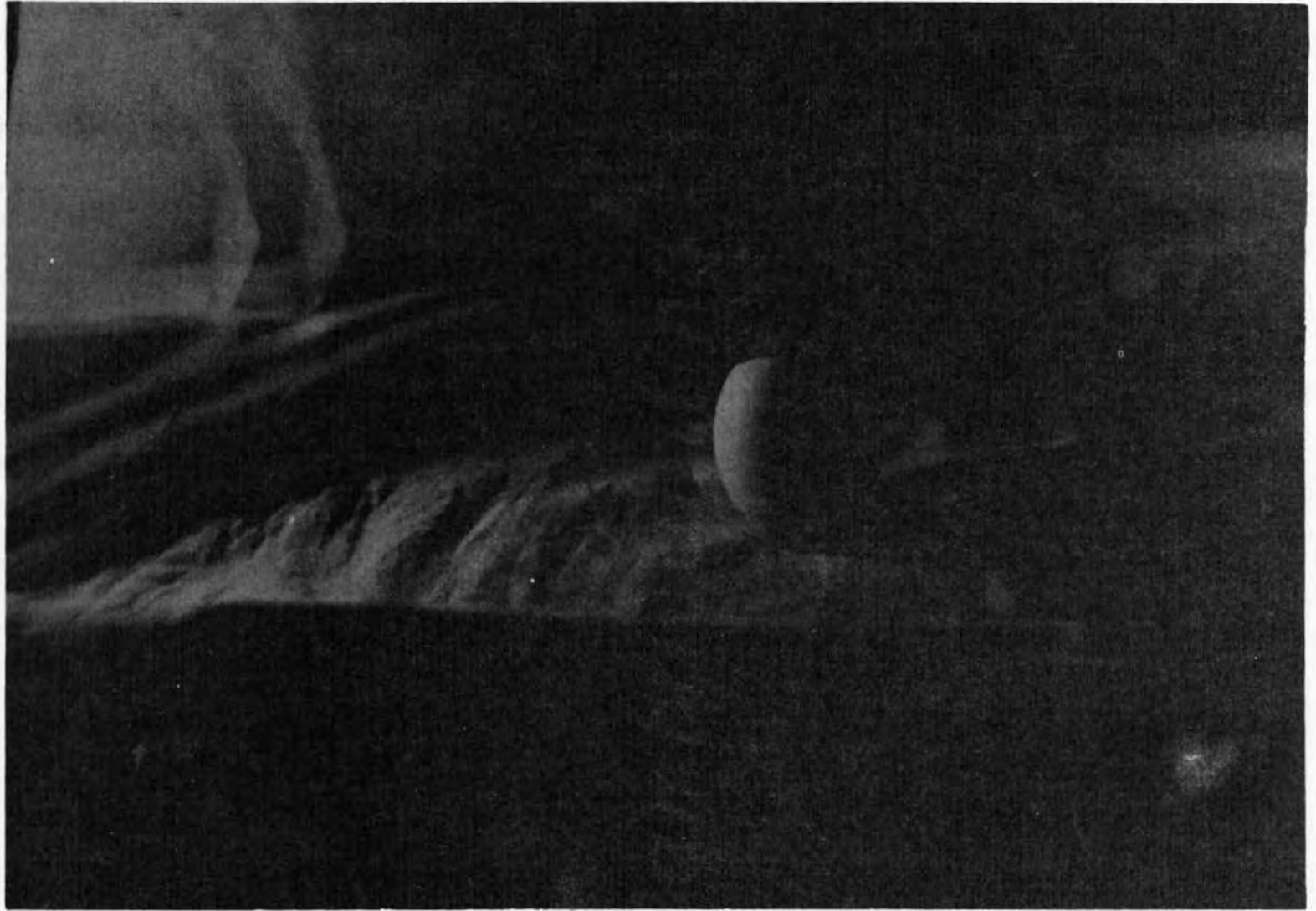
Nora in the Poppies

I didn't plant the creek poppies
that stay shut in late afternoon.
Dusk swells in them, hiding in twisted shirts,
while a snake slides in the creek that cannot shut its eyes.

Nora's prayers crawled in like pets
grew old and clawed the window open.
A fool would shut the door, and rake bread mold from the rug.
She holds the light from a turtle raining behind her mouth.

Egg Doing Something it Can't

photograph



He turned clumsily
and spilled his shampoo
on the wet, concrete shower room floor.
Bodies, young, strong, sore, white.
Sections of slimy hair,
scattered between bloodshot eyes.

He had a prominent nose
and dark hair that always fell in his eyes.
When he spoke he scraped his words
and left them hanging.
He responded appropriately.
He played with the team.

There was barbed wire
clutched around a rusted stadium fence.
The stench smell of locker room fever
hung in the swamp mosses of his memory.
He turned clumsily,
fired and dropped his arms,
on the wet grass of the cool, green field.

My Father's Lover

Before my father went away
he fell in love with the marble statue
in our backyard.

My mother always said
that I was too young
to go back there,
so I never realized
why he was gone all the time.

On humid summer nights
when a heavy gloom
descended upon our house
he would excuse himself
from that old black and white Zenith TV set
and go outside
to polish her skin
until the streetlights
glistened off it.

Everytime he'd go out there
Mother would push us off to bed,
rush into her own room,
and slam the door so damn hard
that my nerves
would rattle in my stomach.

From my top bunk
I watched my father
at a distance.

The orange glow of his cigarette
lit up the pain
in his face.

One day
my father left us for good.
I knew it was so,
because Mother
was smashing the marble statue
into such small pieces
I couldn't ever
put them back together
for myself.

A Nymphomaniac's Food for Thought

Lie there, O young nymph,
reclining in the back seat of an automobile parked in
black and white leafless park.

You don't notice - nor do you care to - the two vaguely seen
young men leaving the scene, as they casually
pathway between two grey trees of leafless bark.

Fly there, O youthful and precious nymph,
your erotic smile, eyelids resting on your high cheeks, eyeballs
caressing bright foreign colors not to be seen through the automobile
windows.

For the seashell white on the roof shall capture your
astronomically celestial beauty, a clamshell of pearls.

Glide there, still-deep, O refined child of the depths,
Your swan soul gracefully rides on a black eagle embedded in an
embryo of a crimson Sagittarius nebulae
travelling through nocturnal amorphous matter-
a white—speckled smatter of starlit energies

Light year into the Abyss Garden of Eden, O daughter of Eve,
For evening gives way to bright new environments and
bright blue eyes opens wide to gaze awesomely into your
crimson milieu of a new millennium.

Dwell happily in the Garden, O metamorphosed nymph,
wearing a coat of purple leaves illuminating your bark,
And let the starlit nebulae rays photosynthesize
your grand-canyon-wide life.

But be ye, O fragile nymph with helpless defense,
ever gusty on your wind.

For I, moss-green Amphibious Swampus,
bulge out my slimy brown and black pupils from my eyesockets,
So as to admire you in my lustful perspective.

I haunch patiently on four webbed-feet
and wait for the chance to lightning launch my adhesive suction-cupped
tongue in your naively unsuspecting though carefree direction.

So as to transform you, O Princess Leaf-Lady of the Garden
into Food for Digestable Thought!

Tub Chum

print



Pam Smith

A Certain Likeness

Intensely he watched the tiny spider, seeing it scuttle quickly from leaf to leaf to blade of grass to a nobby branch. It was really an ordinary black spider, except for the occasional jump in its running.

Yes, it was the jump that kept his interest.

The spider slipped stealthily between the bark of a large tree and disappeared.

So, you got away from me. He chuckled as he hoisted his lean body up from the moist, grassy meadow. He sauntered down the one-lane dirt road, occasionally kicking a stone with the toe of his hard boots. He knew he shouldn't have stopped in the field again after school, but he always felt that pang under his ribs when he thought of home.

He shoved his hands into the tight pockets of his worn jeans and wandered on until the lane ended in his father's bruised farmhouse, looming up grey before his deceptively lazy-looking eyes.

He never missed a detail. His mind picked and sorted, then stored all the separate pieces of nature around him, like the jumpy-black spider in the meadow. He stared

eagerly like a child in a candy store. He saw it all as a whole first and then focused in on the specialties greedily.

His mind raced with elm, oak, maple, poplar; on yellow, red, orange, brown leaves; the shabby house; the dirt path; and the dazzling red mass low on the horizon to his left.

The breeze gusted once, pushing its fingers up his back. He shivered and realized he'd seen it all before, a million times before, all around him for 15 years. How could it all change, be so new?

He shook his head to rid himself of all he'd wondered about, like a dog shakes the water off his fur. It didn't matter if he'd seen it a hundred times or never before, these were the things that reassured him.

As he approached the hazardous wooden porch steps, the women's crackly voice shattered the silence, his silence, as he opened the storm door.

"Shut that door Monkey, it's freezing out there. So, where've you been? You should've been home an hour ago. Your father will hear about this, you just wait and see. . ."

Her voice faded with familiarity into the background as he sighed and left the room. He didn't want to argue with the woman today. He wondered again what hole she'd crawled out of. How could his father have married her? A shiver warned him off the subject.

The senile wooden stairs creaked threateningly as he mounted slowly, his legs taking step by step. He echoed

down the hall on the planks, ending in a small, empty room, his own.

Sighing, he flopped down on his bed, feeling himself being swallowed up by the mattress. Jonah and the whale, he thought. He stared at the simple bulb over his bed.

A vague excitement bit a ragged hole through his loneliness as thoughts of the coming winter played in his mind—snow-covered trees like a million coat racks planted in the white carpeting, his breath turning to crazy smoke and dissipating only to return in a second or two, the cold nights warmed by the remembrance of a smile. Where did that smile go?

His eyes slowly dropped as he pulled the mangy bedding over himself and curled into a ball.

Clouds roll thickly through his mind, clearing to a slender figure with long curls of black hair flying in a slow-motion breeze. Then the blackness turns and fades into bloneness. The sandy hair blends perfectly with the cloud fluffs beneath the bare feet. The girl smiles, much like the faded smile of the black-haired women before, the far-off voice resounding as she speaks to him. . . . "Monkey, say how pretty I am, tell them all how pretty I am. . . ." teasing, making fun of him. . . . "C'mon Monkey, come closer."

Then her eyes open wide, and her mouth opens slowly once before she floats down to the clouds under her, seemingly to melt like ice-cream in ninety degree weather.

He was lifted in a whirlwind and his eyes flicked open; his hands clenched to his blanket.

He breathed deeply and coughed with the sudden intake as his fingers pulled the matted hair off his forehead. The extra-bright half-moon shone through the window over his bed along with a zillion stars.

He blinked at the stars, as if expecting an answer from them. They're gone, both of them. Black hair and blonde.

He moved to the window on legs that seemed too long. The stars did talk to him.

His heart, louder than his foot-steps, echoed from one ear to the other as he hesitated outside the other bedroom door. I wonder why they let me sleep through dinner? No matter. The stairs screeched in protest as usual, but he wasn't worried. He knew they wouldn't hear.

The ground in the ditch was wet from the morning dew as he lay stretched out in it, his face pressed close in the damp dirt. He listened, straining to hear the crunching footsteps on the road above him. Why doesn't he hurry?

It was a game, but somehow very real. Mustn't be seen! The enemy, the solitary stranger, the kids playing on the road, the nosey neighbors. They're all the enemy. I mustn't be seen because I don't belong here. I'm different. They say I'm like my mother, but she's not here anymore.

Black hair and blonde. They're both gone. My mother, and . . . but he didn't want to remember. She was so much like his mother. Oh, not in looks, but inside. His mind whirled with her, on the playground, in the fields, walking to church, blonde hair whipping in the wind as they ran together. But she's gone too.

I'm not like my mother. I'm like my father.

The footsteps sounded far in the distance, so he permitted his head to rise far enough for his brown eyes to peer over the edge, to the road. Warily he took in a little at a time, first the gravel, tiny stones forced together, then the trees across the way, colorful and half-bare, then the tiny dot of a person down the road, moving slowly, shrinking.

Suddenly everything seemed extremely funny, ridiculous. He wanted to laugh so loud. The snickers became desperate and tears sparkled his eyes. The tears, flooded with laughter, carried the joke into the dirt and clear to the center of the earth.

He rolled over to his back and studied the rosy morning sky. With every breath of the chill air, it came back visible, blocking his view for a few seconds. Funny, he hadn't noticed the cold, had not even shivered.

A smile took over his whole face, exposing his perfect teeth and wrinkling his eyes shut to slits, the dots of brown barely visible. But the brightening sky slid back into his mind. Such a clear sky! One thin cloud floated past straight above him, thin, like the air itself, a mist only. Floating, moving on.

Bits of grass and dirt sticking to his back, he climbed up to the road and took up his trek in the opposite direction of the past stranger.

The car moved slowly. The ambulance driver was no longer in a hurry. His mind was alive, seeing it over and over again as he reached the emergency entrance. . . . The alarm bell, the gripping feeling of excitement-and-fear as the car sped incredibly fast under his power. The red police flashers playing with the night air showed him the right house. He had helped his partner with the limp body, and then was in the car again.

The driver raced through the parting traffic, his heart expanding, pushing against his chest. The Cooper girl. Who'd have thought it? She never did anybody any harm. She was always playing and laughing, she and that strange little farm boy. They were inseparable.

Then his partner had shouted for him to turn off the siren. He turned the siren off, the girl and that boy still nagging at him, running and laughing.

He angrily shoved down the gas pedal and outran the whole mess in his head, his companion in the back grabbing for the falling child as he took a sharp turn.

The fist hit the table with force and finality. "He's just like his mother. He doesn't care who he runs around with." He unclenched his fingers and smoothed his hair from his face, sighing as if he'd lost all energy. His body sagged. "Monkey. My son."

"Well," he seemed to draw energy from the word, and he rose, the chair grating backward across the scuffed floor. "Well, the little snip of a girl is gone now."

His wife looked up at him from her seat across the aging table, her eyes glistening with curiosity. He threw the morning paper her way, and the picture of blonde hair

around 15 year old features stared in innocence back at her. "Shari," she whispered.

"Did you see him leave this morning?" It was a demand, yet phrased in the usual form of a request.

"I heard him go out, and I saw him sneakin' off down the old church road," she whined.

The door slammed fast, echoing the fist from before.

He could see the church steeple now, not so far, about a mile or so, but he was tiring from the long walk. His feet burned in his big boots. He glued his eyes on the pointed steeple growing unnoticeably closer with every step. He only saw the steeple, in a foggy mist, and his mind filled with that day. . . .

A glaring, sunny, summer day, green and fresh, and all the people. They had come from every direction, girls all black with lace, and boys in ties and black coats, old men and women with canes and shawls, Black. Her hair was black.

But the sun had been so bright! It seemed to glare and reflect on everything. The stained glass windows of the church had thrown colors in every direction like a jumbled-up rainbow, all control lost. . . .

He remembered the priest, sad. He wondered why the priest had been sad.

He slammed his eyes shut and squeezed them. He heard the music, chilling the hairs on his body, but all he saw then was a brilliant burst of yellow, a sunburst as his eyes had remembered it that day.

He opened his eyes in a jerk, and the steeple was there, closer. It won't be long now. Forcefully he slid a sleeve across his wet eyes, and pursed his lips with determination as he quickened his pace.

Faster and faster he went, his determination turning into anger. Now the steeple bounced and blurred before his eyes as if it was loose and going insane.

The bushes again. So many times he'd hugged those church bushes and spent an hour in hiding, escaping a sermon or boring words of worship.

Now the bushes were something different. The tangled branches pulled at him, and he breathed through the tiny, browning leaves, seeming to draw his life from them.

Don't worry, they won't think of you. You're only a boy, they all say it. Only a boy.

His eyes closed, but his mind stayed wide awake. . . "Sleep, Monkey, sleep." The crooning of a woman stung his mind, someone familiar. "I love you, don't forget that. Everything will be fine." He shook, and he remembered the black hair. He felt thick inside and he wanted to forget, to put it all away.

A spider crawled from the earth onto his arm. Hey, you're like me! but it scuttled off just as quickly as it had come. Oh, my bushes! He opened his eyes and touched a leaf. It crumbled, the brown pieces fluttering to the ground. He hears a soft sound, a humming, something familiar. His eyes grew in wonder and pleasure, and he was somewhere else. He didn't know where. He touched another brown leaf and smiled, his face wrinkling to a raisin. The humming faded.

Hey, you shouldn't waste your time like this. He got up from his bushes and walked hesitantly towards the huge wooden doors of the old church. He stopped in front of them as an unfamiliar hissing rushed through his head, sounding in his ears like an air pump slipping off a tire. He pulled the door open with effort, and slowly stepped inside the gloomy darkness. The door closed behind him with a muffled thud and echoed through the whole church.

His eyes grew wide as he stared, seeing only the illuminated cross wavering before him high up on the front wall. He'd not been in this church for a long time. He couldn't remember the last time he'd attended a service.

He shrank suddenly back as a tiny light flicked on by the altar and a tall black figure walked up to it from the side room. The figure walked to the front of the altar and knelt down, bowing his head.

He slowly moved out of his shadow, and started silently up the long aisle. The priest didn't seem to see him until he stood behind him. He didn't seem startled, he just looked up at the boy and smiled.

"Well, young man. It's awfully early for anyone to be visiting today. Did you want something?"

He didn't like to be treated in that polite manner. The strangers, the enemies, talked like that.

"Monkey—you don't mind if I call you Monkey? Your mother always called you that."

He scowled disgustingly at the priest, but the priest kept his smooth smile. Eyebrows still furrowed, he sat down in the very front pew, staring straight in front of himself, the bright cross blurring his vision. And his mind blurred too, the humming blowing up around him.

"You must be here for a reason, Monkey. Tell me."

He was shaking. Why was he shaking? Black hair and blonde. The humming, all around him. His eyes overflowed, slowly wetting his cheeks.

"It's the Cooper girl, isn't it? Isn't it Shari?"

He flinched at the name and jerked up off the pew. He stopped by the altar, and he couldn't speak. The priest walked up to him and put an arm about his shoulders, whispering for him to be quiet. Again the women's crooning blew through his brain as the priest softly hushed him. . . "Everything will be alright. Don't forget, Monkey, don't forget."

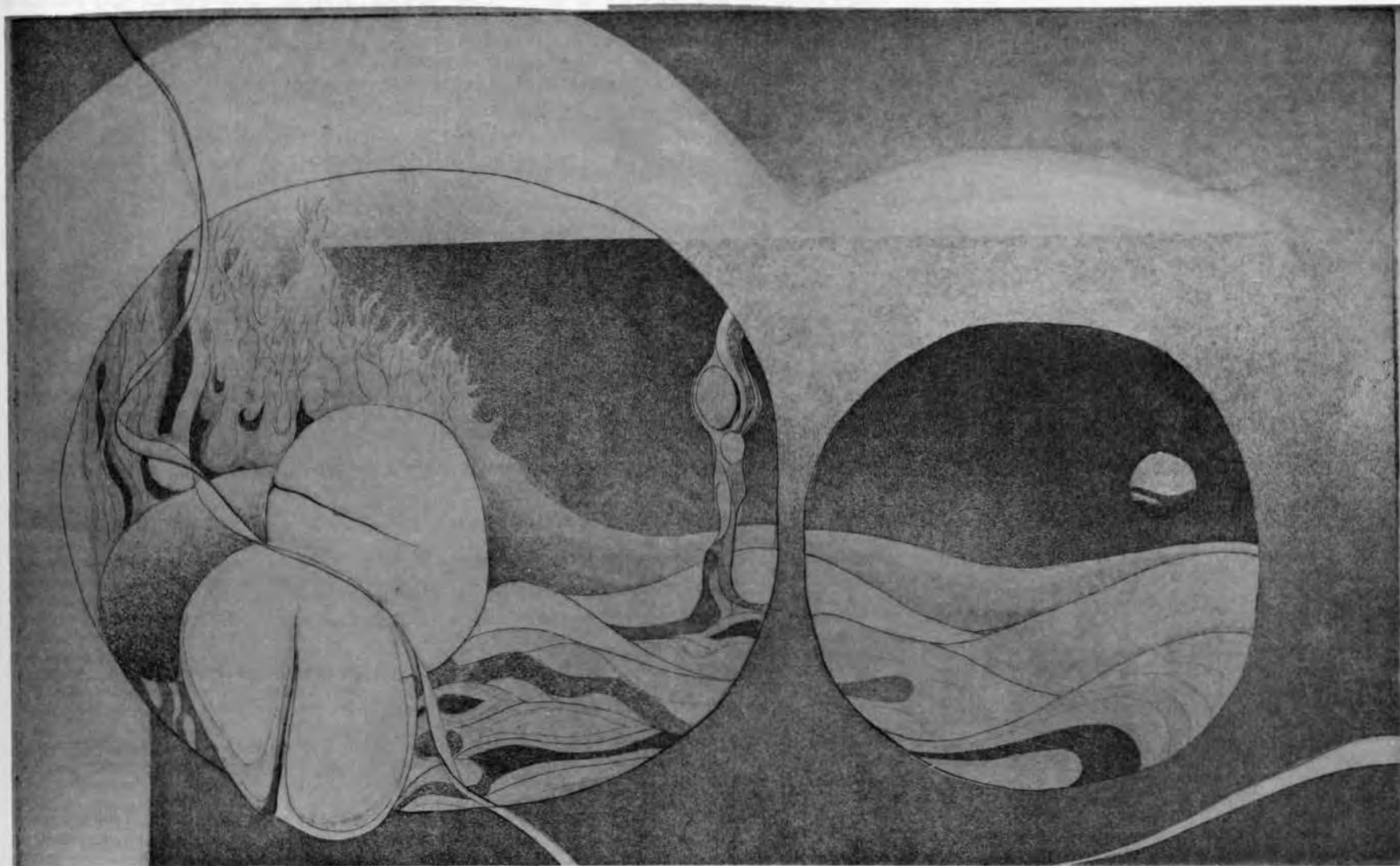
He covered his ears, but the voice was inside of him, and he shook in frustration, grinding his teeth.

When he opened his eyes, the voice died, and the priest was standing above him.

"You know," he said, "I'm not like my mother, I'm like my father." His eyes were round, and he wasn't really there. "I made her sick, just like my father did to my mother. He said it was so nobody else could have her. So, that's what I wanted too," and he frowned. "Only now I can't have her either. I'm like my father."

The priest stared at the young man, and neither one noticed the farmer, until he grabbed the boy and, after fixing his eyes on his son's, slapped him across the face with all the strength he could find in his tall frame. The boy was still, curled in a tight knot under the bright cross, staring at his father's strong strides down the main aisle.

Egg Shell Perspective print



The Miscarriage

It took so long
for the last drops of blood
to come.
It took days.
Each one seemed to measure
an hour.
Each one seemed to softly whisper
goodbye.
I wanted it to end,
to wrap those last drops in plastic
and put them out with the garbage,
out with the trash,
out with those things that are useless,
and best forgotten.

a painted expression faced man on the ground with three round objects in the air (clown, juggling)

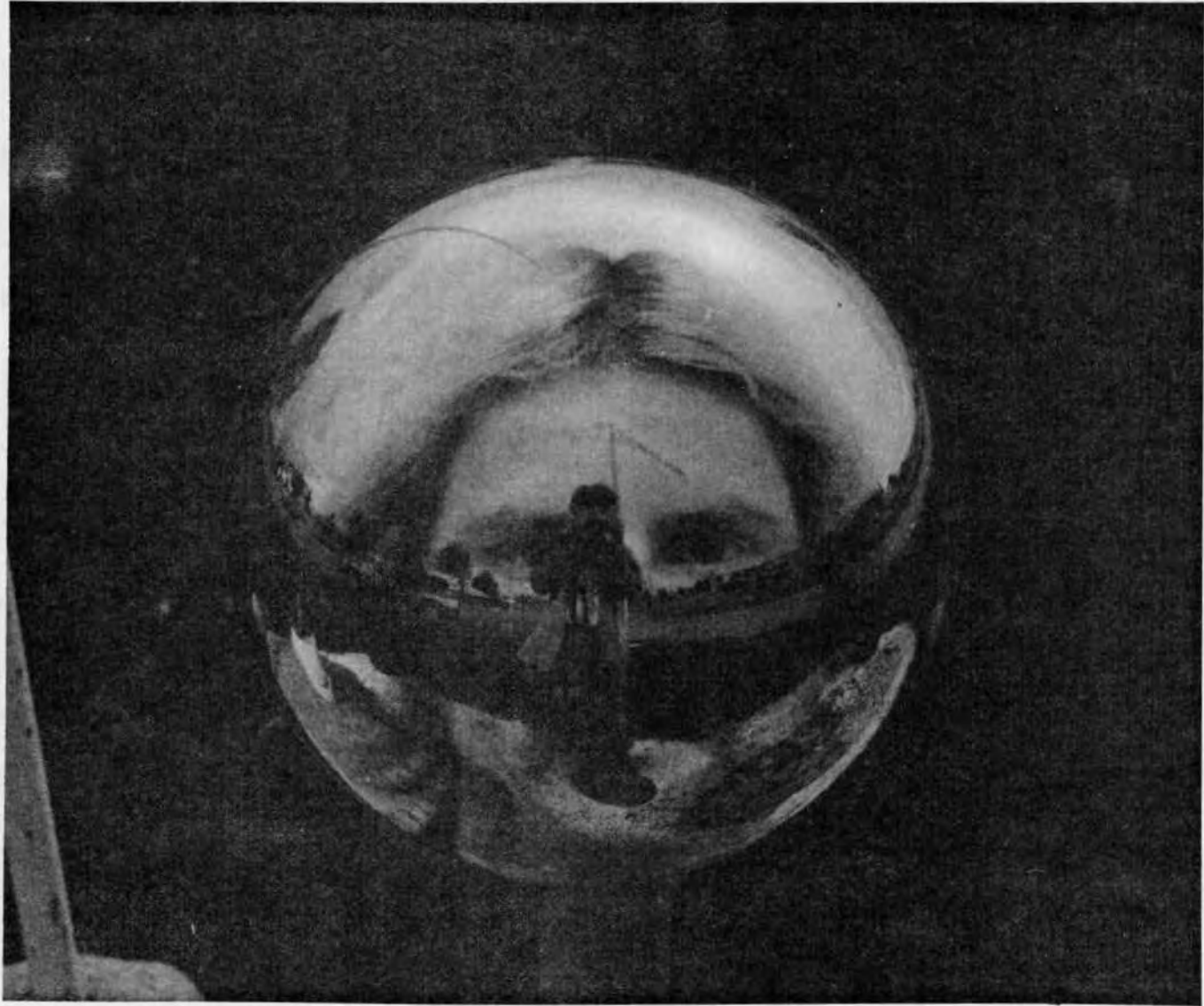
a painted-expression faced man on the ground with
three round objects in the air
is a man with many things he can do
he can allow one round object to impede with the ground
or he can allow all three round objects to impede with the ground
but balancing plain air is much harder and tastes bad
perhaps the painted-expression faced man will continue with
the three round objects in the air
and if he is a clever balancer
he will balance the three round objects in the air and
one imaginary round object in the air
a quick and clever balancer might balance as many as fifteen
imaginary round objects in the air
along with the original three

i have not yet mentioned the many things the round objects can
do to the painted-expression faced man on the ground
i am not sure of what they can do
i'd ask the man but he is busy
i'd like to ask him how many imaginary round objects he is
now balancing in the air
i'd like to ask him if a cat can purr while running from a dog
but the man is busy right now

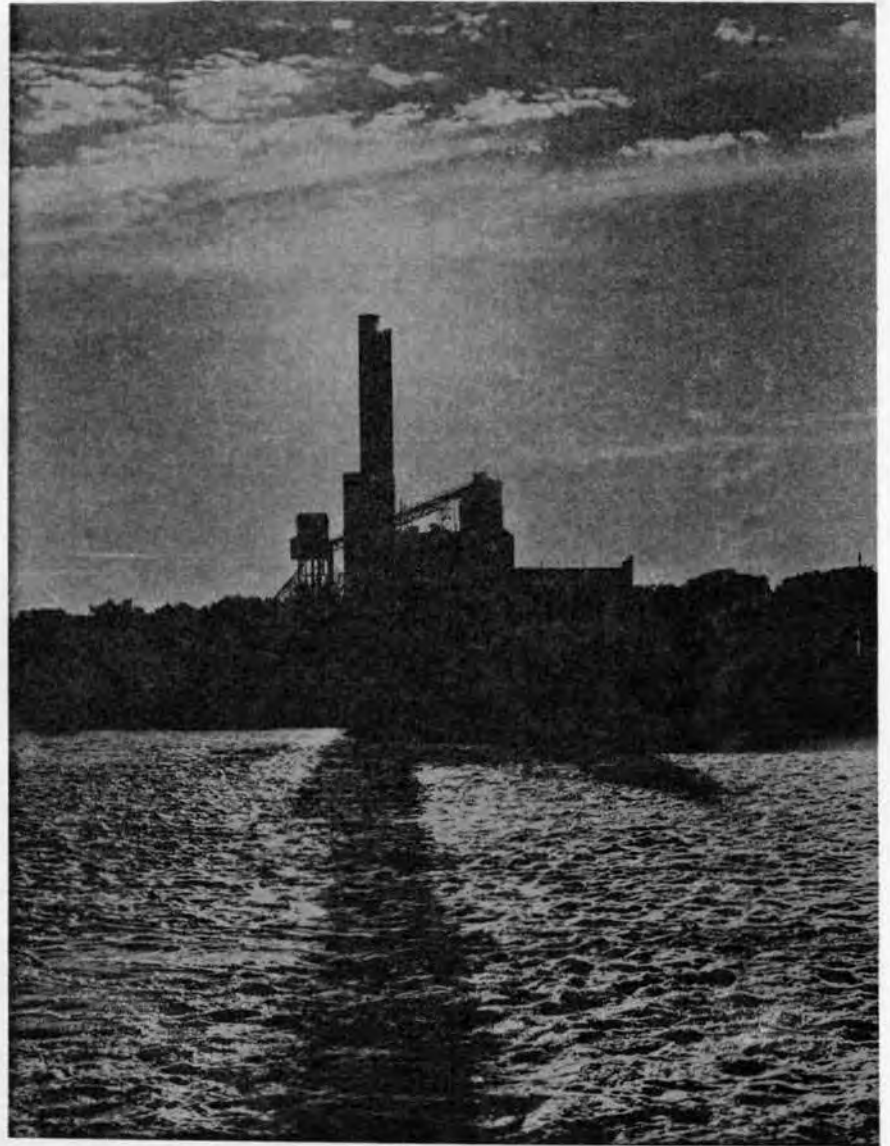


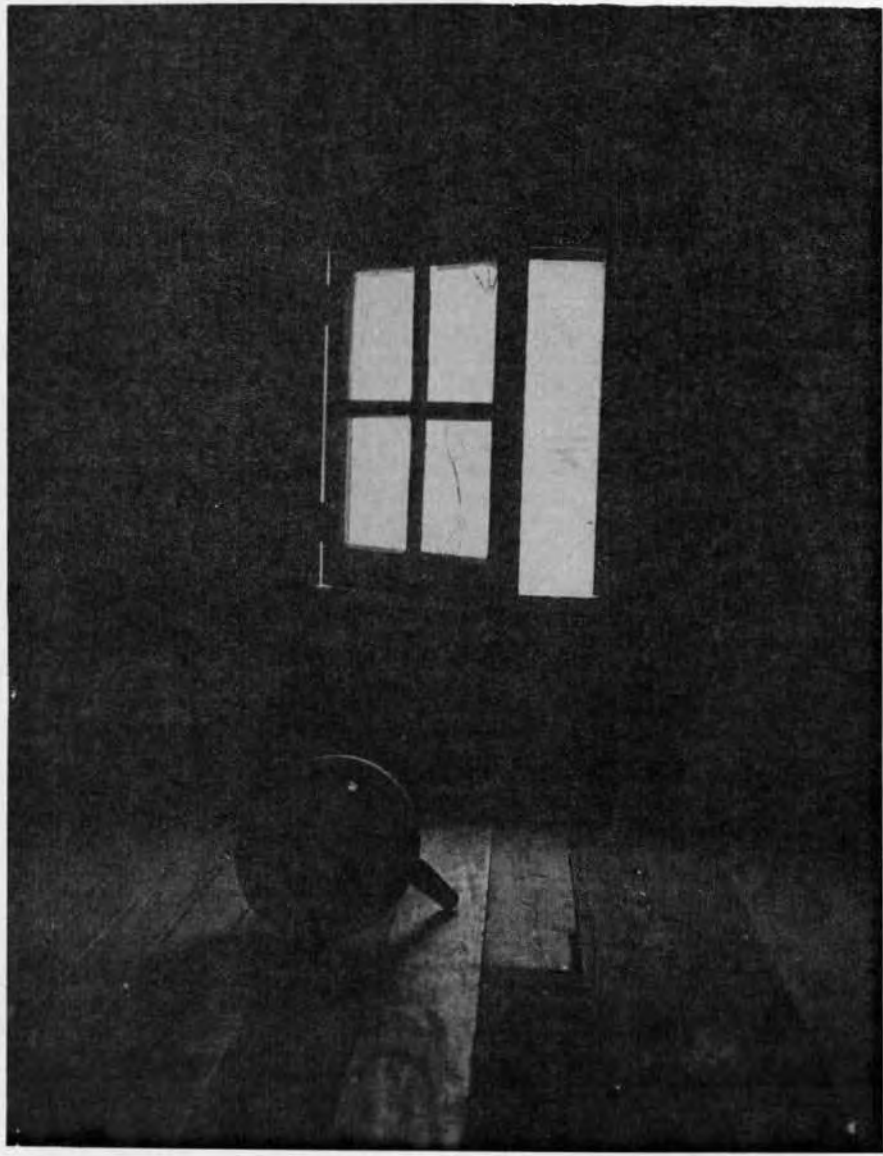
The apostate

The apostate
Glancing backward
into the inky universe
I find
I've dropped no pebbles
to mark my way.
Yet taunting voices call
that the place I've left
is better
than the one
to which I go.
I wear the rags of a pilgrim now
and slap irritably
at the pesky flies
of illusion.
Once I followed
the siren call of a star
and now
there's no way back.



photograph





Anti-Fantasy Number 1

To supper
 she asked me
the lady that said
 she was curly in the rain.

I said
 that I was slightly twisted
myself,
 but tonight
 I'm fasting alone
 feeding logs into an oak fire.
Wondering why
 I refuse to eat.

Final Invention

Rhythmically (♩ = 96)

The image displays a musical score for the 'Final Invention' by Johann Sebastian Bach, measures 1 through 12. The score is written in G minor (one flat) and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system (measures 1-3) begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second system (measures 4-6) features a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The third system (measures 7-9) returns to a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fourth system (measures 10-12) concludes with a crescendo. The music is characterized by intricate sixteenth-note patterns in both hands, with frequent rests in the right hand and active bass lines.

Handwritten musical score for piano, consisting of four systems of staves. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes dynamic markings: *mp*, *mf*, *f*, and *ff*, as well as a *rit.....* marking. The notation includes treble and bass clefs, notes, rests, and slurs. The first system starts with a *mp* marking. The second system has a *mf* marking. The third system has a *f* marking. The fourth system has a *ff* marking and ends with a *rit.....* marking. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

First invention

