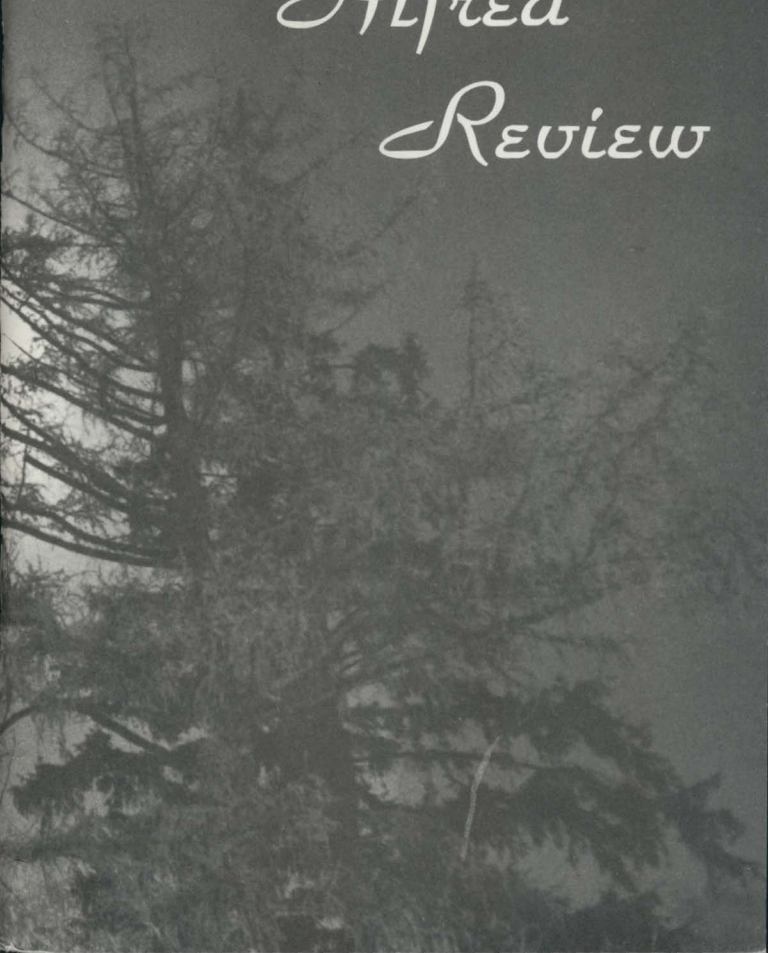


*The
Alfred
Review*



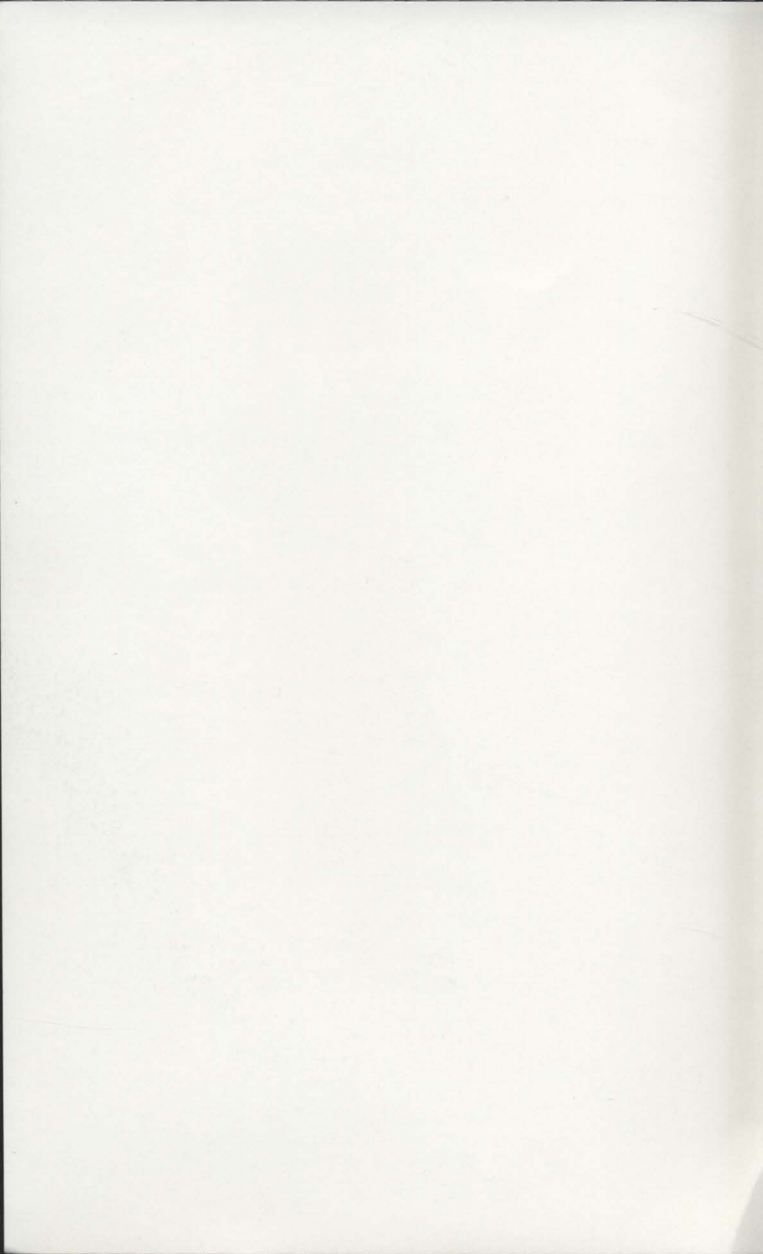


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1987-1988

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THE ALFRED REVIEW

1987-1988

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Cover by Mark Shelley *1st prize*

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Bob Everett

Andre

Andre
was a gentle, stupid man
who gave us shoes
he knew
we needed

workboots, loafers, leather shoes
he could only wear a few weeks

because, his foot was so deformed
he walked bowlegged
like his foot had been crushed in a vice

because, forty years ago
a French farmer
took advantage of the war
to enslave an orphan
and wouldn't give him shoes

Walter Mason

Footprints of Light

On a clear day,
The sun
Shines through the trees
And rests its weary feet
Upon the ground.

These "footprints of Light"
Are scattered —
Randomly,
Motionless,
Until a simple breeze
Makes them dance
To the rhythm of the wind.

Laurie O'Sullivan

Three Haiku Poems

I and the oak tree
Stand, rooted in the earth, arms spread
Shouldering sunlight

Frowning at the sun
Alone, I step through sheer air
Balance the silence

Sudden - I stumble
Shy eyes meet sky: we hold breath
Then exhale azure

Janice Germiller

The Last Bluebird

Behind the rectory
by a browning clump of weed
where neighbor girls used
to play nurse,
I saw the last bluebird
quietly hovering in a vacuum.

At the time there were
no nurses,
and he looked he
could've used one.
He wasn't singing—
not even Gershwin—
and had I been
just a couple of years older
I might've lent a
hand, maybe
struck up a whistle,
or blown a pitch pipe—
a b flat perhaps—but
I was too young to know.
I saw the last bluebird go.

With no nurses,
and the doctor in the house,
and two priests 'a tilling.

John Modaff

How is it Mother that we have day?

Kandye'kwe'i decided to go into the mountains for the night. She had been waiting long for the moment of the Mother's light. Kandye'kwe'i followed no trail this time. If she were tracked, the sun would not rise and day would not come.

Night fell as Kandye'kwe'i stepped carefully between the trees. The place was familiar to her night visions, although she had never walked there in daylight. Soon Kandye'kwe'i would run on the mountains beneath the lighted sky.

The darkness grew larger and Kandye'kwe'i more excited. She knew that day would reveal itself in the presence of calm spirits. Kandye'kwe'i stood quietly for a few moments and grounded herself again.

She pushed uphill toward what appeared to be a clearing many moon changes away. Refusing discouragement, Kandye'kwe'i kept moving. Time passed slowly and her body required a moment of rest. She leaned against the base of a tree and closed her eyes.

"Look at me!"

Kandye'kwe'i opened her eyes to find a spirit with a misshapen skull. A black band was painted across its vacant eyes. As the bony face inched closer to Kandye'kwe'i, she recognized the vision of Darkness. It was bald like wind, and its serrated teeth threatened the coming of morning.

A fit overtook Darkness and froth began to seep from between its broken, black teeth. It sang in a high voice that rang with madness.

Cut off your hand.

Cut off your foot.

Tie you to the floor.

Stake you to The Tree.

You will never leave me.

When Darkness finished, it lunged at Kandye'kwe'i. She quickly jumped behind a tree and closed her eyes to Darkness. Kandye'kwe'i felt weak, and fell to the ground.

What seemed like days, were only hours. The light was not visible as Kandye'kwe'i woke slowly and focused her eyes on streaks of many colors.

A bowl made of Kauri filled with brightly colored crystals sat beneath the Great Tree. Kandye'kwe'i buried both hands under the many smooth, wet shapes. She picked them up, and let them slide through her fingers. Kandye'kwe'i knew the light would come.

Soon the clearing was in sight, and then underfoot. She ran deliriously up the side of the mountain. Kandye'kwe'i reached the edge, and raised both arms in greeting to the waking day.

Tania Condon

Thank You God

Thank you for a world of beauty

and for the love of family

and for the joy of life

and for the peace of God

and for the love of God

and for the love of God



and for the love of God

and for the love of God

and for the love of God

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Mark Shelley

to Mr. Boswell

dear john,
here is a bicycle
the product of the great change of the planet Earth
today all may ride it
its design is such as to permit blacks, jews, gays, and women of all
nationalities, creeds, and sexual preferences
to execute its function
it will soon be upgraded:
in the future bicycle riders will ascend vertical planes with a
minimum of effort!
and we all may ride
women and men
gays, jews, blacks, orientals, hispanics, american indians, eskimos, buddhists
the islam nation!
all together
on bicycles

Michael Matheson

Thank You God

I have never seen a murder
never felt a cold war
never heard a child scream
got cigarette burns
had to eat dog
or shit in the street
I've never had to cheat
except once
and even then thank you because doing it was easy
and thanks I've never really been
really Hungry
decapitated
or comatose or
hemopheliac or even laid up for very long
Gosh thanks.

Never had a broken bone although
for three months I did have a disconnected phone
calls never came late in the night to report Sam or Nick
had died of snake bite
or something even worse like
the doctor that took out mother's tumor
was really a nurse
nothing like that ever happened, thank God
Gosh thanks
Thanks God
You're grand
Of course you know that.

However
you've never had a bad case of zits
a migraine headache
or conniption fits
You never saw a chicken get squashed
by a truck
a mandolin player weep as she plays
you've never loved or fucked
You're great, but damn
You've never spilled a beer
or cheered a grand slam!

Oh—thank you God—I know
I know
(You know I know)
I've never had to count my blessings
never got hit by a car
never had to do dishes at a chinese restaurant
never had to beg in Hell's Kitchen or stink
up a city morgue

But man I have been, and God
That's your fault.

John Modaff

Renaissance Revolution

Nope. Sorry.
Haven't got any.
No fake Picassos.

... he painted for the crowds.
(whatta fake, Picasso!)

(NOT sorry.)
... but ...

Wm.'s another tale.
My kindgom for a folio! (dreamers dream dreamy thoughts)
... It's a shame, ya know (sold him out)

I ...
... rogueish infant
(infant modernized)
(adult terrorized)

I've got ... ORIGINALS!
sketches ...
... essays ...
... poems ...
(yeah, all mine)
so?

I like them.
Nope. Sorry.
Haven't got any. ... not for sale.
No copies.

... well, maybe a few.
(I DO have to eat.)

LIMITED EDITIONS!
NOT AVAILABLE IN ANY STORES!
ORDER NOW!
(selling out our stocks of trashed ideals)

KJK

porno

the first movement

Brain
Heart
Genitalia

the heart feels like a liver,
the brain is too slow to respond:
it's too busy making the heart feel like a liver.

the second movement

the end of a fallopian tube resembles a flower
it has been dug out and observed
photographs circulate among us

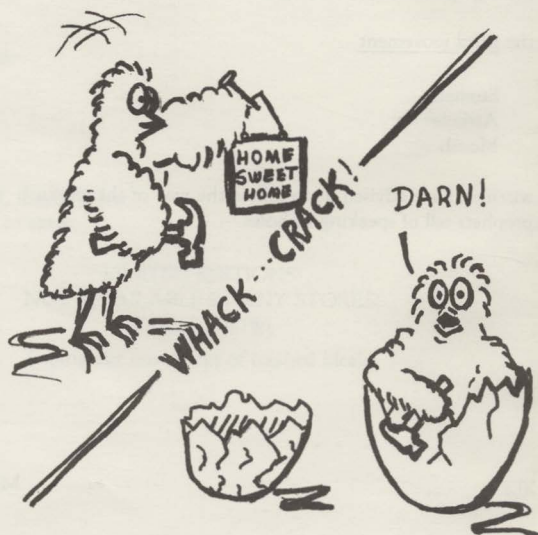
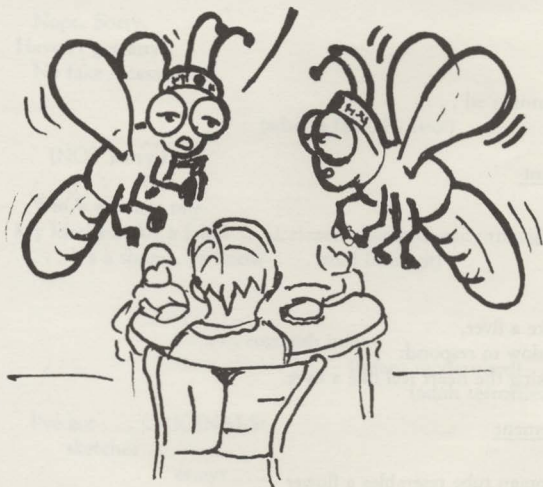
the third movement

Stomach
Asshole
Mouth

wisemen have advised us to follow the way of the stomach
prophets tell of speaking assholes

Michael Matheson

... AND REMEMBER - IF THEY HIT YOU
WITH BUG SPRAY, DIVE FOR THEIR DINNER



Tony, the truth is that you
cant go to college because
your dad just bought a new
B.M.W.



Heraldo Rivera tries to enter an
alternate universe...



Only to find his way blocked
by unpaired socks

Dan Swiler

Today The Wind Was Blowing And It Blew Me Clean Away

Today the wind was blowing and it blew me clean away.
I asked where we were going but the wind would only say,
"I've got not time for chatter - there's so much to do today!

I've got blizzards to blizz and snowdrifts to drift
In Moscow at quarter past ten,
A monsoon in Rangoon directly at noon
And a one o'clock sandstorm and then...

I'm due in Peru for a cyclone or two,
Then north for a Squam Lake squall,
Then a hurricane in western Spain,
And, goodness, that's not all!

I must rattle the hail in a Galeton gale,
Send thunderstorms to Paree,
Hit Laredo with a small tornado,
And breeze through a billion trees!

I'll whistle 'round alps
And whisper through grain,
I'll roar down the Rockies
And howl 'cross the plains!

I'll carry kites to dizzy heights
And push the ships at sea,
Make windmills spin and millers grin,
And set the eagles free!"

Around the world and back again we travelled on that day,
I landed, breathless, in my yard and heard my mother say,
"Your clothes are all be-tangled and your hair is all astray,
What rough-and-tumble playmate has made you look this way?"
I shook myself and rubbed my hands, but I could only say,
"TODAY THE WIND WAS BLOWING AND IT BLEW ME CLEAN AWAY!"

Susan Beckhorn

A Riddle

There's a little dog in our neighborhood—maybe you've seen him—about so high, dirty white fur, sniffing around the garbage cans? Real cute little guy. Lots of people like him. Housewives give him all their scraps when he begs at their doors. Men like to toss him a bone now and then, out in the driveways on a Saturday morning. I think he's kind of a nuisance myself. For one thing, he makes a lot of noise—yap, yap. You can hear him all over the neighborhood. Something else—you can't tell me he isn't dangerous; scruffy little beast like that is going to bite somebody one of these days. Do you know his name?

Donna Leach Tartaglia

it is true that i am not a black man
i am a white and middle class underdog
and not even an underdog
fate licks the side of my face
it claims to have much to offer
it whispers in my ear

fate sits complacently upon an opposing shore when i switch on a light
fate shows me the earth

fate is like a man selling imitation designer wear
and at the same time the real thing at the same price

fate is so fucking stupid

it should have never shown me those watches

Michael Matheson

A Dreamy Sleep

I see it.

A misty fog creeping over damp hillsides,
it's rolling slowly towards me,
like a disease taking control of the grass,
choking the life from each thin blade.

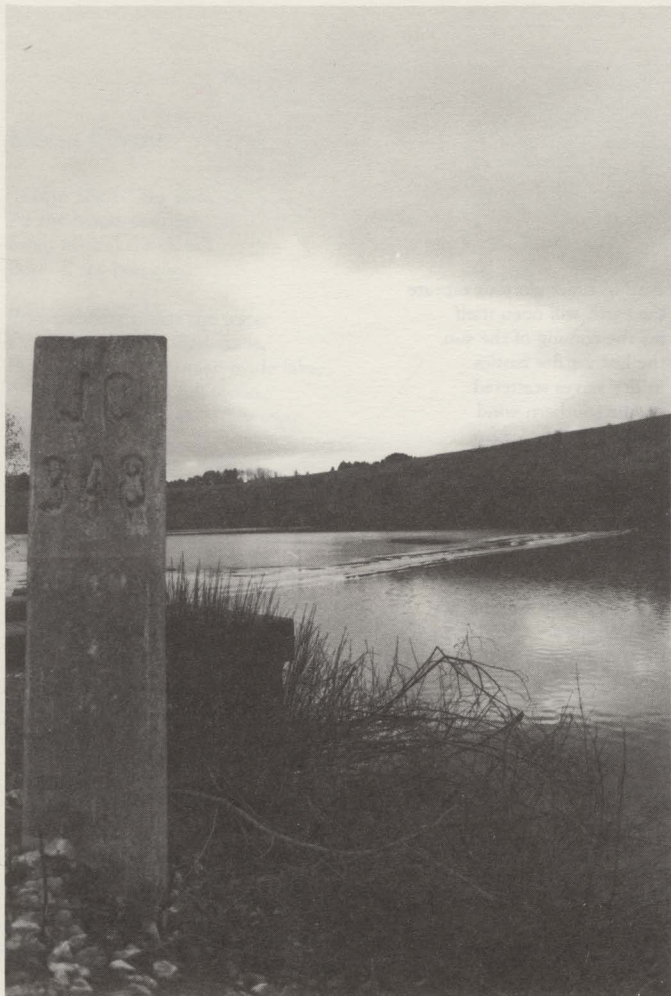
The villain swirls his cloudy white moustache
and leaves his eerie calling card
of droplets resembling a cold perspiration
on everything he touches.

Constantly formless, yet full of shape
he changes appearance like a chameleon stripped of his colors.

I try to capture it, to control it, to possess it,
but it eludes my grasp
squeezing through unseen spaces in my hands.

It is an eyelid closing over me,
singing the lullaby of Brigadoon.

Chris Shultz



Tania Condon

And in times glorious rapture
the earth will open itself
for the coming of the sun
the lust for fire rustles
in dry leaves scattered
on the southern wind
as whispers of pleasure
on a bed of earth.
The passion runs fast and wet
over smooth rocks
in raging rivers and gorges
and the earth quakes and trembles
in summer's burning touch
and readies for the rapture
to open itself
for the coming of the sun.

Ken Kelleher

Moon Chant

"There She is" she said,
As the moon emerged
From behind the clouds
Beyond the branches.

She; standing beside the water
Of the man-made, God-made,
But probably not woman-made lake;
Ovulating with the full moon,
Claimed the moon to be her own.

What then is mine?
The sun perhaps?
Rising every day
Regardless of mood.

She would give me the oak
And take the Earth also.
But oak is just a tree,
Only part of me, just as
Mother is only part of woman.

Anonymous



Bob Everett

Centralize Desire

You are cordially invited to comprehend movement,
We request that you assume a direction.

Ours is a chessboard with two squares,
one piece:

Imagine yourself at a dinner party with Marcel Duchamp.
he cracks jokes and there is laughter,
you fall in love with your companion,
this love flows over the table and onto the guests
Duchamp greets you with a smile

Michael Matheson

The inability to respond
positively to the morning hours
has extended itself
throughout the day.
What little enjoyment I garner
comes from a recognition
of the relationship between
Earth and Sun
and the affects of the sun
upon the earth
But as I am not consciously
participating in this interaction
I no longer care for the day

Michael Matheson

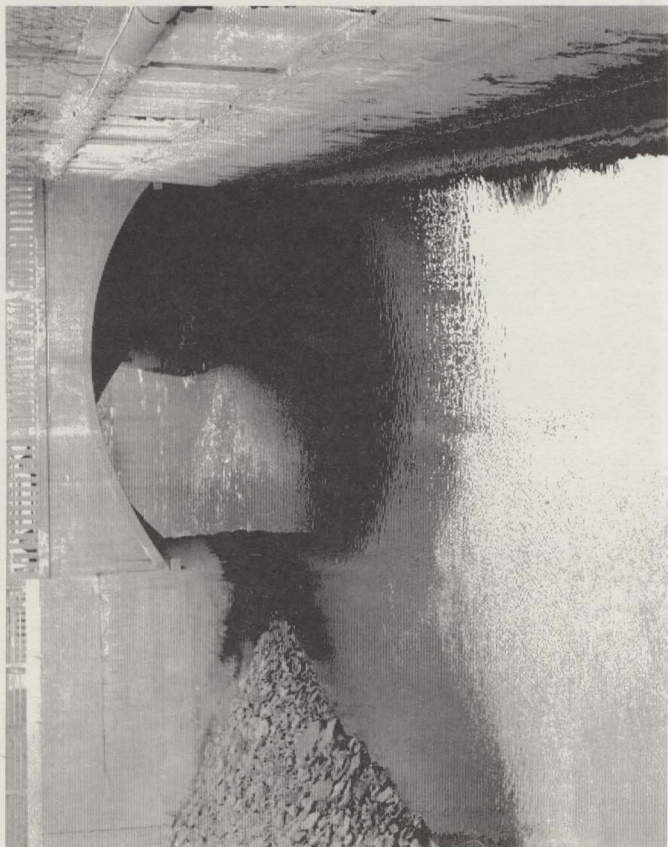
Myth

Upon entering the hotel where the Stress Management symposium was being held, Chantel noticed the large number of women standing around the bar. At first she said, "They must be relaxing after their trip." Chantel decided she would have a drink or two to relax also. After depositing her bags in the room, she returned to the bar and ordered a gin and tonic. She then proceeded to sit in the corner, out of the way of the other customers, and watch their behavior.

At first it was just your typical idle chit-chat. However as time went on, the evening became more interesting. More and more men started showing up. These same men began picking up the women who had been standing around. Chantel ordered another drink. Slowly the men and women coupled off and left the bar. At this time Chantel thought, I think something is wrong here, I'll wait and see. At this time Chantel ordered a cup of coffee and read the newspaper. While reading the news of local interest, she looked up and saw one of the women returning without her "date". After ordering a bourbon, the woman began talking with another woman about what had happened. She said the guy stiffed her. He had his fun and then only paid her half the agreed upon price. At this point she started crying. The other woman tried to reassure her that it happens from time to time and to get used to it. Then she asked the crying woman how old she was. "Fifteen," she replied. "I ran away from home and couldn't find a job. I need the money to survive."

At this point Chantel walked over and joined in the conversation. She asked the young woman why she had left home- if she had tried to get back in touch with her folks. The young woman said no, and that she could never go back. Chantel told her that nothing is so bad that it can't be worked out. "If you want, I'll give you the money to call home and I'll be there to support you." The young woman said no, and went to look for her next trick. Chantel returned to her table, picked up the newspaper and cried. (She had failed again in her attempt to help another confused and struggling individual.)

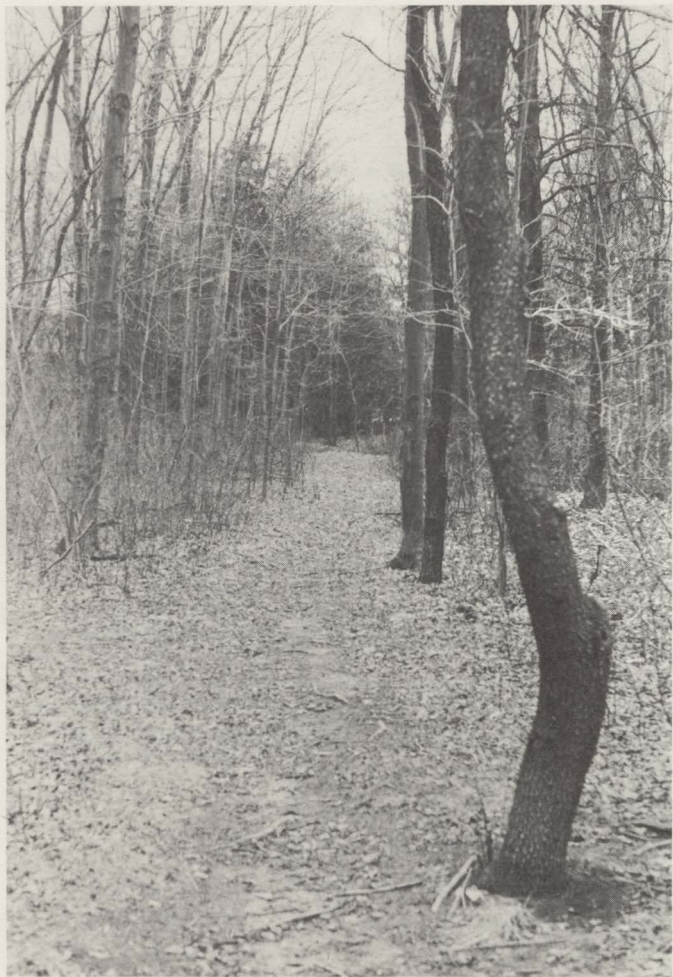
Jo Vermeulen



Daniel D. Miner



Tania Condon



Tania Condon

May 10, 1959

The relatives filed past
one by one
in silence, dark and heavy—
until it was my turn.
But I was too small.
My aunt peered down at me,
her eyes funny-looking and blurred.
“Would you like to see?”
I nodded.
She picked me up,
a hand beneath each arm,
and I dangled there—
my black patent shoes
scuffing the sides
of the polished walnut box.
Inside, the satin
was a soft shade of yellow—
the color of muted sunlight...
I don't remember my father.

Vickie Kaplan

Tripping

The jeep had developed a slight shimmy at eighty and, since we were trying to figure out why, we almost missed the sign.

ARIZONA STATE PENITENTIARY DO NOT PICK UP HITCHHIKERS

Noticing the cooler air all at once, I put my shirt back on. Then I held the wheel while John put his on. The desert floor stretched to the mountains, between here and there were the low gray buildings. Twisted loops of barbed wire gleamed redly against looming towers. This was the only sign of human life we had seen thus far, or expected to see until Morenci. Morenci was the last fuel up before the White Mountains. From the back, "Hey, let's stop and eat there too, at a burger joint or something."

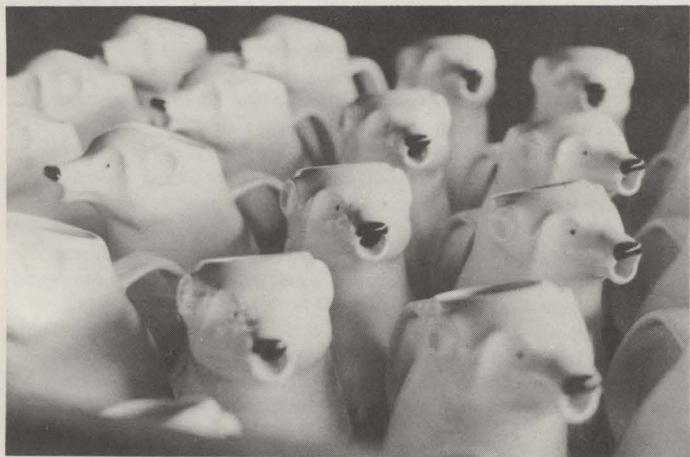
I shake my head. "This is supposed to be a camping trip, Greg." I am outvoted. We reach Morenci just as the sun drops behind the mountains. The shadows seem suddenly to descend like vultures. The two and three story buildings, backed up against the cliffs, crowd both sides of the road. All the first story windows are boarded. Higher up, wires crisscross the road from building to building but there are no cars, no lights, and nothing moves. There are no burger places. At the end of the stretch is the gas station with a self-serve, bill-operated pump. John has two five dollar bills crisp enough for the machine. We fill the car but are unable to fill the extra thirty-gallon can.

Out of Morenci, the road climbs steadily. There is a young guy trying to thumb a ride. He is barefoot but he has a pair of sneakers tied to the top of his backpack. Nobody says anything as we go by him. That night we passed up a lot of good campsites.

Animal Crackers

For breakfast she ate
a bowl of animal
crackers in milk.
She liked to
start the day
biting off their tiny heads
and chewing on their stubby legs.
She captured
the wee creature
with her spoon—
devouring lions,
bears,
giraffes
and camels.
It made her feel
good to swallow
the little animal shapes—
small herds roamed
around inside her
the rest of the day.

Vickie Kaplan



Bill Walker

Turtle and Beaver

One morning, the beaver was building an awning when he saw his old friend the turtle on the far bank. "Ah, Mr. Turtle, Have you come to your senses, and are you back to stay?"

"No, I'm only passing through. Farmer Todd's berries are ripe and I've not had any for a whole year."

The beaver did his best to convince the turtle to stay at least a day. He wanted to show the turtle all the new improvements on his lodge. It was a beautiful lodge with a view of the dam and the falls. The turtle promised to visit on his way back through.

As the turtle waddled away the beaver shook his head. He liked the turtle but could not understand why the turtle had never picked a permanent home. What kind of life could it be wandering from pond to pond? The beaver once asked the turtle why he never picked himself a nice place to build a lodge or dig a cave. The turtle had replied "I have my shell and that's all I need for a home." The beaver shook his head at the memory and swam to the sunny side of his lodge.

The turtle was eating when the rains came. It rained so hard the turtle was washed into an irrigation ditch. The turtle floated along, dry inside his shell. The torrents carried him until he floated right into a large swampy area. He recognized it as the place where the beaver's pond had been. Apparently the storm had washed away the dam. The turtle searched for his friend the beaver, but he was nowhere to be found. The next day the turtle started out for another pond, two days' journey away. He knew of a wonderful willow tree there. Dragging his shell with him, the turtle went his own way.

Big Farmer

He hears it before anyone;
And out the back door his little feet run,
And sure enough, up the road it comes!
Its wheels are round and fat and tall,
And look even bigger when you're small;
The boy likes to dream 'bout farmin' n' all.

He anxiously waits at the edge of the yard,
And expects a salute as tho standing guard;
If he were older, he might even be hired!
And the next trip around, he'll still be there,
The farmer will wave with familiar air,
The boy loves the face, all covered with hair.

He watches the farmer scatter his load,
As back n' forth across the field he goes;
Driving and looking over his shoulder,
Then turning around and starting all over;
And the little boy wishes he was the one,
Making sure the job gets done,
Without a shirt on out in the hot sun.

And I think to myself it's funny how some
Become so attached to the soil and the sun,
Like the earth has been branded right into their souls;
They take pride in themselves,
And in the things they make grow;
And I wonder if they realize,
How big they look in a little boy's eyes....

Well, I'll betcha in a few more years,
When the boy gets dry behind the ears,
He'll be sittin' on one and shiftin' the gears....
Yep, one of these days up the road he'll come,
On a big red tractor, in the hot summer sun;
And he'll remember when he was young,
As he smiles and waves
At somebody's son....

Barbara S. Baker



Bill Walker

Western Thought

I have no questions.
I need not take the fifth
or the quart.

Yeah, we Westerners out there
sittin' round the fire
spittin' hot meat
shootin' the shit,
Yeah
We ain't the bad guys.

Home on the range
is a pot-holder from Japan
a kettle for (surprise)
tea and some Russian
salt and pepper shaken
in a hurry—
Ready for the Western food.

Yeah
we don't sit on no floor.
We got dogs to pick up
what we drop.

Getting the Cripple out of Bed

In court
you must show
damages
So John's lawyers
hired a man
to make a movie of his morning routine

we showed
how John's body spasmed uncontrollably
when it was touched
the bed sore on his heel
I cleaned up his leftover stool from the night before
the machine that timed his heart
they talked about crips they both knew

when he was in his wheelchair
he typed a few words with a stick
he held in his mouth
and then

for the finale
John wanted, his picture taken
rolling into the lit doorway
like it was a sunset
like he was a hero

Walter Mason

A Lesson Relearned

Matthew was not pleased. He had no friends. He hated school. He was constantly surrounded by people he considered inferior. He hated his 48-hour-a-week job that paid only minimum wage. His present situation was not made any more bearable by the fact he had a pleasant childhood. He often contemplated the difference at the one place he did like, a bend in a high mountain road that overlooked a thousand-foot drop.

As a child he had been fairly happy. He didn't really have a lot of friends, but he was fortunate enough to have a small group of good friends that he could talk to. He was very bright. He had read all the classics, from sci-fi's "Dune" to mystery's "Hound of the Baskervilles" to "Hamlet" and so on. He went to the best public school in the state, and excelled both at sports and academics. But in senior year he watched his friends get caught up in drugs and what-not. His devil's advocate attitude turned to cynicism and pessimism. One by one, things started slipping out of his grasp. He couldn't grasp calculus. He didn't make first-string basketball. His girlfriend left him. Matt entered a vicious cycle, plunging down and down, with no end in sight.

"Now is the time to change things," he thought. He formed his plan. He was going to construct a mask persona for himself. One that didn't know anything, one that was completely new. Once again he would experience that child-like sense of wonder at the world. And inside he would still be himself. He formed that personality.

A newborn babe noticed the breeze on the ledge, the way the sun's rays bounced off the mountain. Clouds floated above him in beautiful formations. He watched in amazement the tenacity of an ant crossing the road. He actually didn't think in these words for the babe had no labels. Everything was new, untried and wonderful.

Deep inside the blank persona Matthew had formed, the kernel of his being laughed at this mask's sense of wonder about such unimportant things. He started to laugh. Harder and harder he laughed. It had been so long since he felt laughter like this, even if it was directed at himself.

Matthew was still laughing as he stepped over the cliff. If his mask didn't know what a blade of grass was, how could it be expected to know of gravity and the hard rock in the valley below.....

Wedding Ring

I am the eternity-wheel,
a polished surface reflecting time;
I swallow my own tail.
Once, uncoiled
I caused a garden's exodus.
Even now I am a trepan
for men and women.
Still. . . most
wish to be caught.
Proudly, they cherish me.
If it is a cage I am,
then I am a gilded one.

Stephen Hopkins

Grandma

Grandma—
sitting on the porch
in a spindle-back chair,
feet crossed
at the ankles,
plump hands
snapping beans
into the wide lap
of her calico apron—
whistling hymns
through her nose.

(For Irene Adams Voss, 1900-1969)

Vickie Kaplan



Bob Everett



Michael Matheson

Born of a Virgin

How to clue them in
God said
How to let them know
first thing right off
Good God pondered

An earthquake, that's it
cried God
But they would simply go
and build their houses again

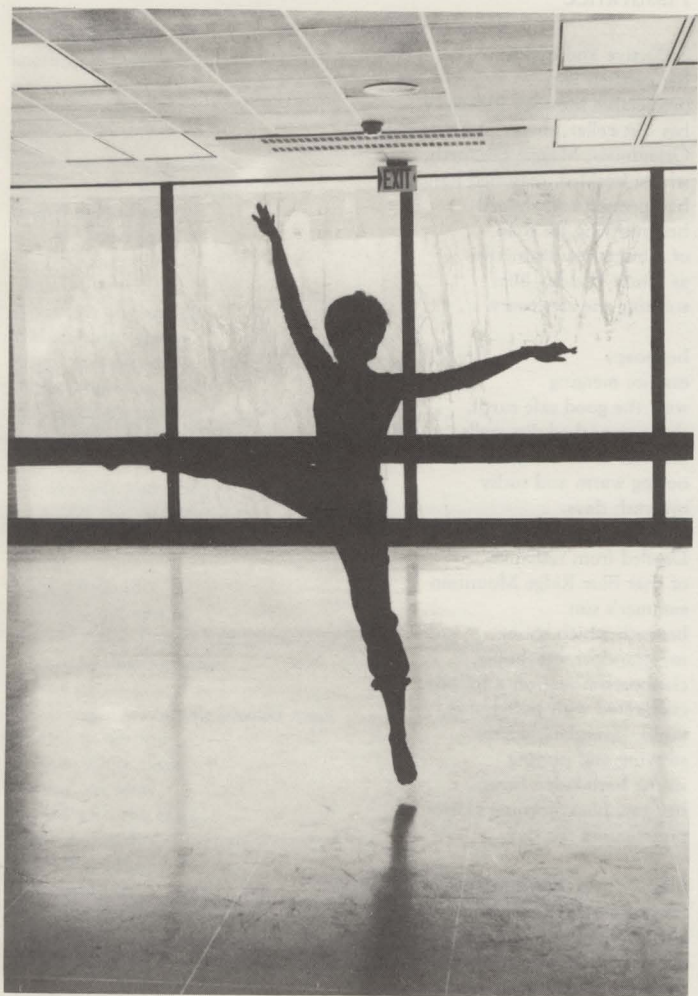
Can't rain this time
he recalled
then—He struck

Mary said
Ahem, Joseph—I'm with—
Jesus H. Christ! Joseph bellered
Amen, Mary said,
Amen

Knife

I remember
that straight-razor
better than anything else my thirteenth year
how it lay there
on the dresser
its work done
like you knew
by the rules of human nature
that once I looked at death
and you had my pants off
there wouldn't be any appeals
I should have sliced your head off

Anonymous



Tania Condon

Assurance

Seductive and inviting
her earthen lair,
predictable Monday hideaway,
her dirt cellar, there. . .
Grandma's, Maggie Elizabeth,
whose freckled, seasoned hands
had pressed and shaped
her purifying lye soap
of a fragrance distinctive
as Easter Sunday lilies
scenting the sanctuary. . .

her soap,
essence merging
with the good safe earth,
those smoothed-dirt walls
and her cement cellar floor
oozing warm and sudsy
on wash days.

Dazzled from radiance
of that Blue Ridge Mountain
summer's sun
beneath which shone
my grandparents' home,
clapboard house on a hillside,
enchanted with hollyhocks,
pinks, lavenders, whites
swaying and playing
in the herb-laden breeze,
her gay, blue morning glories
punctuating the day,

I'd peer into that inner place
framed by the under-house doorway,
shadows veiling Grandma's face—
a milky-white reflection,
her hair a silken halo, white ringlets
escaping the confining net,
soft tendrils unleashing mystery.

Yielding novice,
kneeling, I'd wait,
watching her
crank the wringer,
feeding it
those heavy-wet clothes
squashed into flat submission,
thunking purified
into her wash pail.

I was
squeamish and scared
of that musky shrine,
except on wash days,
and the ripening aura
of Grandma's task
soon lured me to her side,
circled within
her sure soft roundness,
assurance that would last.

Then,
peering beyond
her dress and apron,
plaincrafts her fingers had spun,
I spied the dug-out ledge,
saw
the staring rows of pale pressed soap
glowing in shadow
as Holy White Bibles
blessing her altar,
merged with the earth,
transcending dirt,
whose fragrance
was a promise.



Bill Walker

Her Call

The waves crack against a sandy shoreline.
Their pounding calls me to the sea,
But I must stay right here.
It is what's right
To me.

I was once a traveller of the sea.
I had mastered the wind and waves.
I'm at peace on the water,
And on the breeze;
yes, the breeze.

One day the sea called me into her arms.
Her waves conquered my body,
And time does not pass,
For I answered
Her call.

Love and the Praying Mantis

There was an aged and hoary mantis that was an enigma to the entire mantis population. One afternoon, a group of young males queried the ancient about his prolonged life. His age, though not unusual for one of the feminine persuasion, was nearly twice that of the average male's lifespan. The ancient one, placing his hands together, exclaimed, "Oh, have you not seen? Women, they eat everything smaller than themselves, everything that moves. Don't you understand?" He was answered with blank, uncomprehending looks. Thus, he began a tale that he had heard and heeded when he was but a lad:

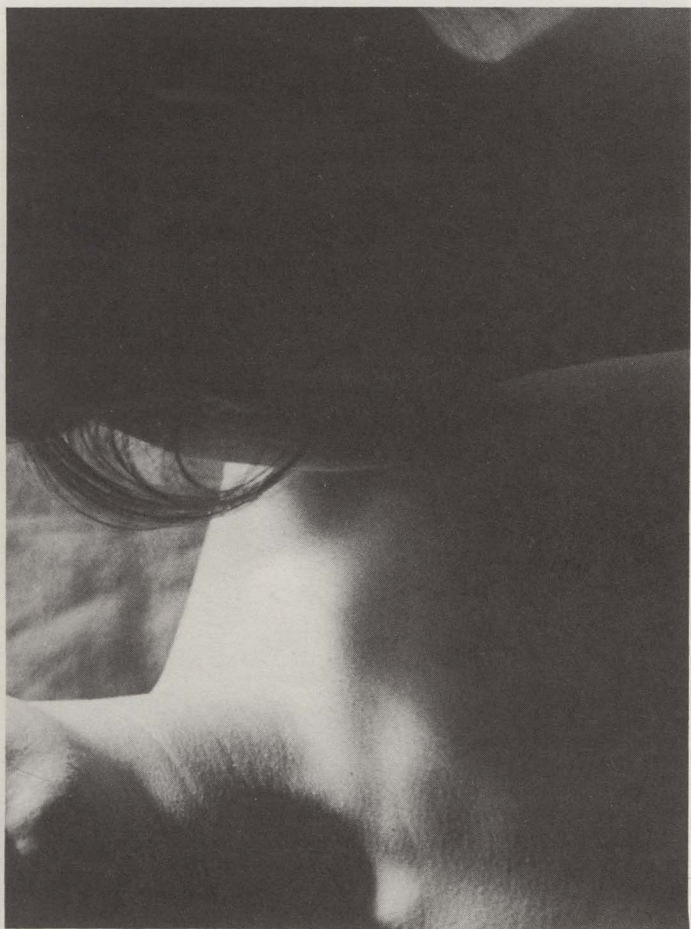
"Once upon a time there was a beautiful garden, where dwelled a lovely maiden mantis. Many came to win her love. To each she gave a task. If one could win his way to her private chambers without her notice, he would receive her favor. Many a gallant mantis accepted the challenge. Nary a one returned. Yet there was one that remained undaunted. He, a worldly wanderer, had yet to meet his equal.

Early one morning, he stole into the garden where the maiden was praying. Offering a prayer himself, he crept towards her. Whenever the maiden looked his way he, camouflaged in green as he was, would stay impossibly still. When she would return to her praying, he would again steal forward. Well, in all faith, he did succeed. The maiden was his. However, the next morning found her hungry. He, moved, offered her breakfast in bed. She, unmoved, fetched her own. No one knows what he thought as he died. Nor does anyone know what she still thinks. It seems she and he had prayed towards different ends all along. He achieved one, and then through her, received another.

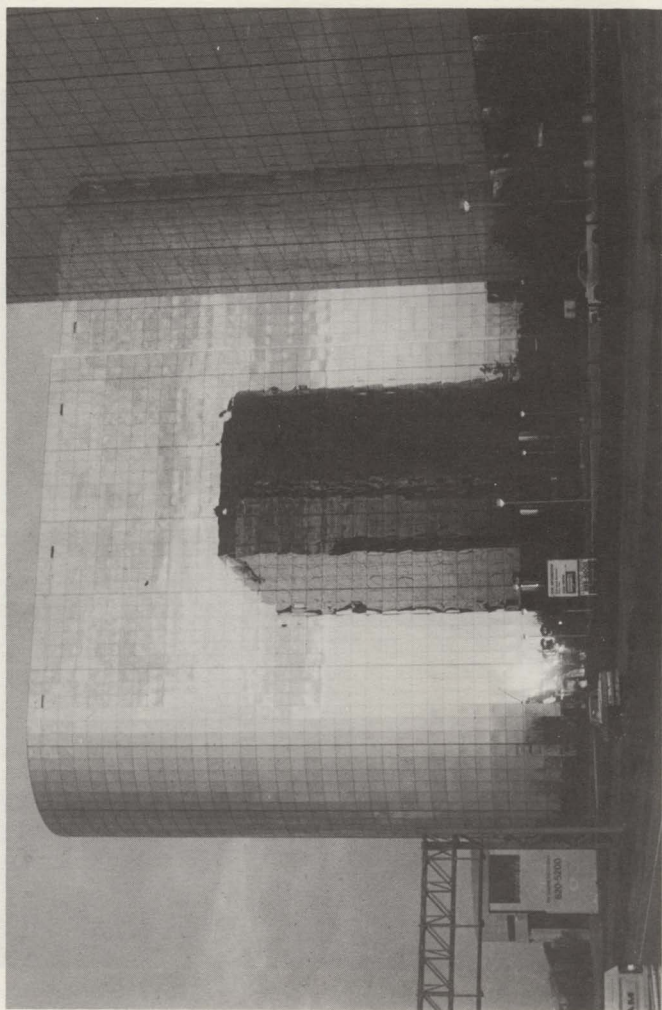
The old mantis finished his tale only to find that his audience had departed. In short, he outlived them all.

Yes, the tribulations of love are best learned secondhand.

Stephen Hopkins



Lillian Magnano



Mark Shelley

Tempe

Heat
sudden and intense.
Light
bright and blazing.
Everything is burnt, but...
still cooking.

More mirages
Images of Hell,
Yet
(and the pause should be as long as a hot summer day)
We all like it here.

Stephen Hopkins

The dampness left us like
little spits of fire crawling
from our nostrils.
The knife edge of the
elements cut into our
flesh and twisted our bodies
as only the darkness could
the three of us stood alone
under a slit of a moon
that revealed itself to us
in pieces as we knew it would

David E. Pruden



Bill Walker



