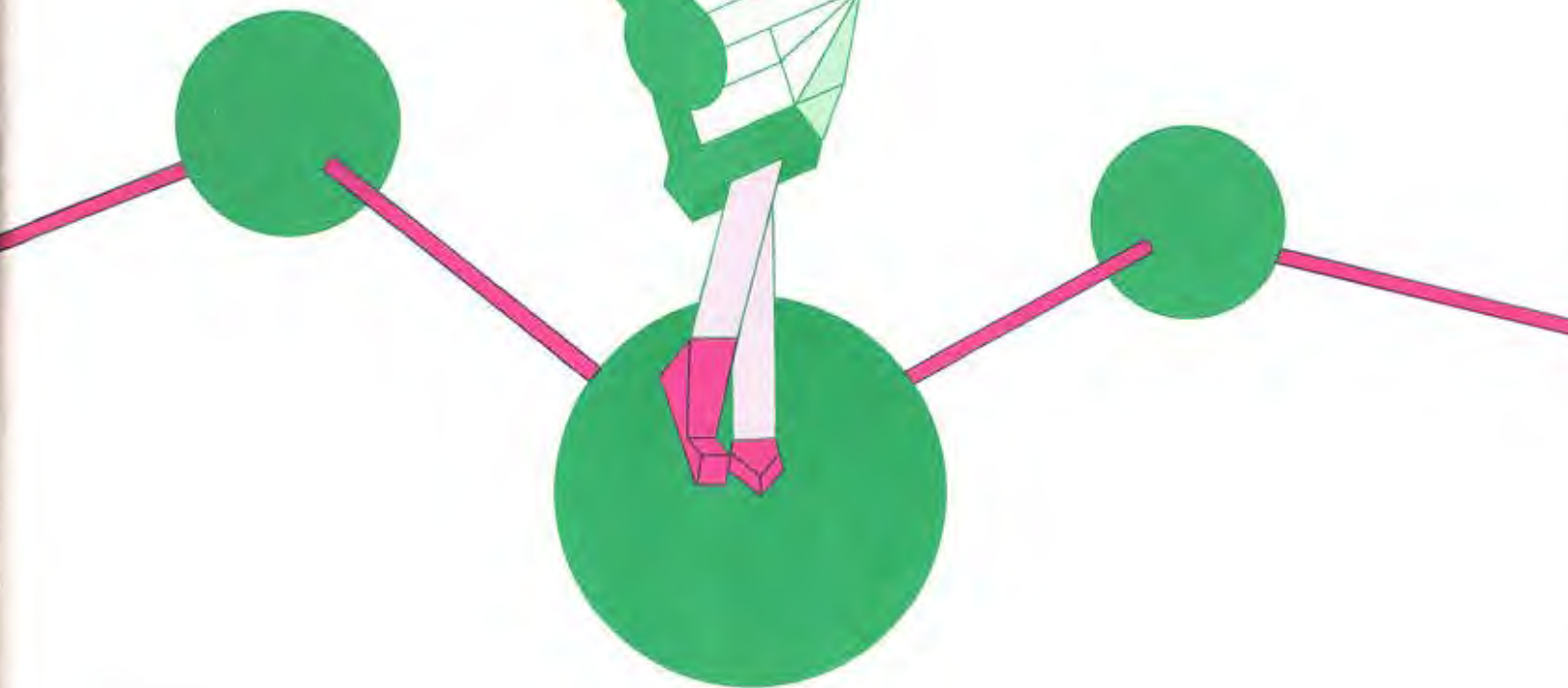
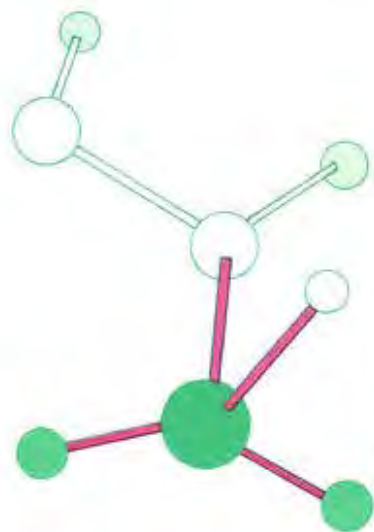


# NIMC

*Magazine*

*Creative Accomplishments in the Arts*



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# EDITORIAL

Since the advent of the Mechanical Age, there has been a certain despair permeating our thinking. This hopelessness has been reflected in our culture, our literature and art. Western Civilization has been more concerned with dissecting what we were than experiencing growth or change. After all, our universe could be defined by the sum of its parts. As we marched through time the mystery disappeared. Our method of defining life had reached a plateau when we entered the nuclear age.

Now the truth was whittled down to a two dimensional plane. The terror of self-annihilation isolated us, made us cautious and distrustful. We moved in a linear fashion, without benefit of intuition and emotion. One angry, irrational moment in one leader's life could level our civilization. Deductive reasoning was everything—feelings were to be controlled at all costs.

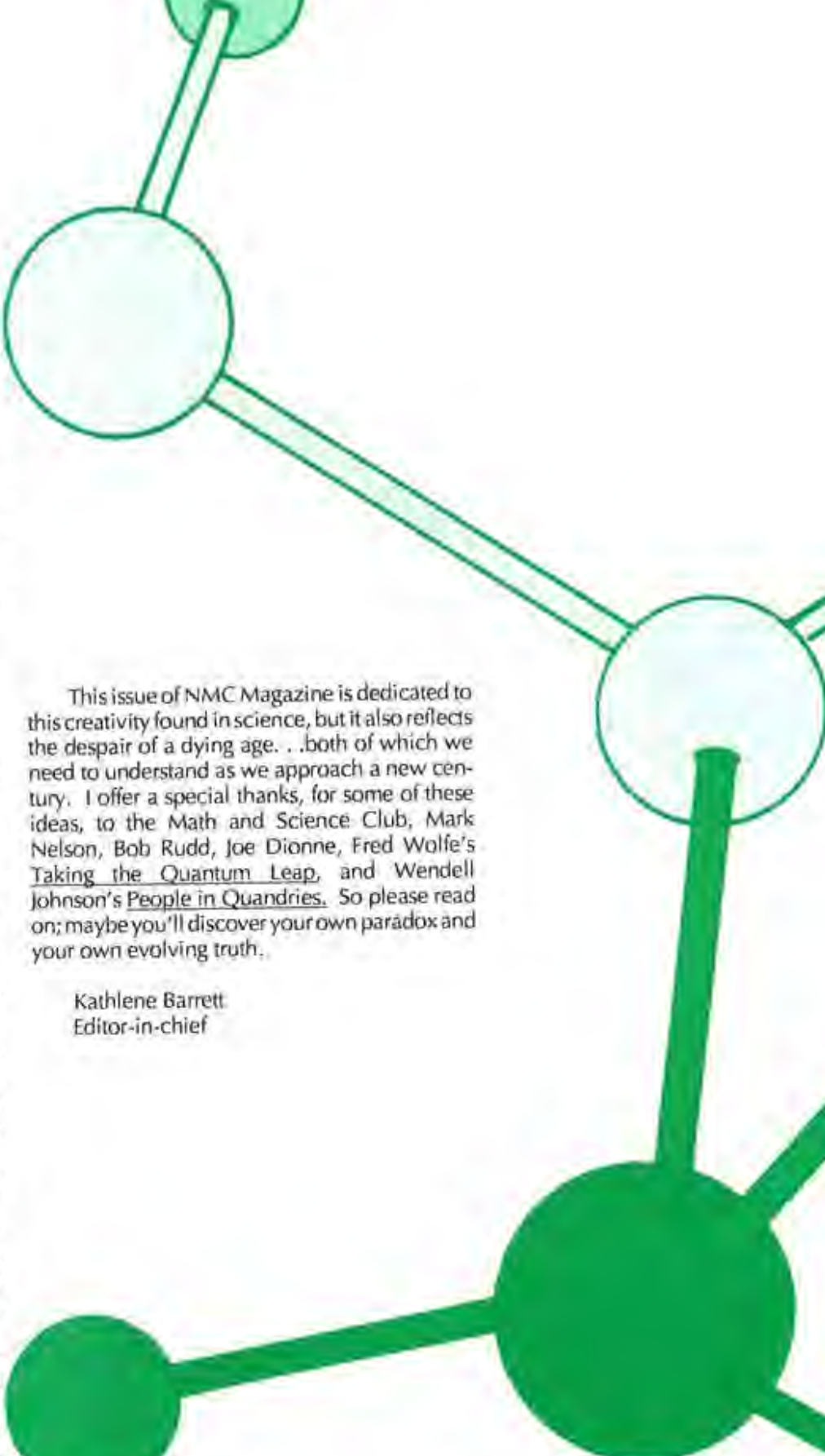
To make matters even worse, we couldn't seem to find God. Philosophers screamed "God is dead"; human logic prevailed. Others screamed "a savior is coming"; he'd save us from ourselves if we were good and didn't move until he got here.

Many of us couldn't buy into either of these extremes. We were caught in a dualistic system that seemed to limit our choices to black and white—to an either/or proposition. So some of us bellied up to the bar to drown our sorrow. Some used food, drugs, sex, or work instead of booze. Others of us found momentary release and meaning in possessions. We became collectors, shopping freaks with mottoes like, "Shop 'til you drop; the person with the most toys wins". Still others chose cynicism, caustically proclaiming there was no future, then sitting down to die in emptiness. And others of us became crusaders and saviors, focusing all our attention on fixing those who drank, or gave up, or ate too much. None of these feverish activities seemed to dissolve the despair. When we looked truth square in the eye, we knew life looked pretty hopeless.

But another age was being born amid all of this despair, brought to light by some of the same men who invented the A-bomb. These men plodded past their own fear, past their own doubt, into a deeper reality. Yes, "the universe followed well defined order. Yes, it was predictable. And yes, we did resemble machines. But we were not necessarily only the sum total of our parts" (Wolfe). As scientists dissected the atom they found a mystery that couldn't be defined with telescopic linear logic: The Quantum Leap.

John A. Wheeler, an American physicist who worked on the development of the atomic bomb stated: "There may be no such thing as the glittering central mechanism of the universe. Not machinery but magic may be the better description of the treasure that is waiting." Science had discovered a paradox; science approached this dilemma with an intense creativity.





Of course, historically, scientific thought has been saturated with creative ideas, but we rarely associated intuitive imagination with Isaac Newton. Beethoven yes, Newton no. Physicist Victor Weisskoff stated: "What's beautiful in science is the same thing that's beautiful in Beethoven. There's a fog of events and suddenly you see a connection. It connects things that were always in you that were never put together before." How many of us knew that Isaac Newton was fascinated with the spiritual or mystical aspects of alchemy? Most of us have been taught that religious mysticism and scientific theory were contradictory.

The discovery of the quantum leap created much controversy in the scientific community, but it also opened a new window to how we perceived ourselves. It was no longer what we observed that determined our answer; it was how we as humans observed it that mattered. Paradox couldn't be understood by linear logic alone. We needed to create a new philosophy, a new language based not only on intellectual creativity, but intuition, instinct, and emotion.

No longer did we need to define our world with either/or terminology. Either I'm a creationist or an evolutionist. Either I am a success or failure. Either I'm crooked or honest. Each of these statements hinged on a well sculpted, but assumed truth based on deductive reasoning. To allow truth to become a creative process, these physicists began to approach the answers from both sides, many times arguing, sometimes admitting errors, other times blending what they found, then leaving room for uncertainty and future discovery.

This creativity allowed truth to grow, evolve. By looking at life as a paradox rather than a march through time, we began to hope again. Some of us have put away our bottles, pills, possessions, and looked instead at this evolution of truth.

Today modern scientists in all fields of study are challenging their own scientific deductions with creative questioning. One such scientist will be coming to NMC this April. The Math and Science Club has asked William Calvin, author of The River that Flows Uphill, to present his unique speculations on man, time, growth, process and survival.

This issue of NMC Magazine is dedicated to this creativity found in science, but it also reflects the despair of a dying age. . . both of which we need to understand as we approach a new century. I offer a special thanks, for some of these ideas, to the Math and Science Club, Mark Nelson, Bob Rudd, Joe Dionne, Fred Wolfe's Taking the Quantum Leap, and Wendell Johnson's People in Quandries. So please read on; maybe you'll discover your own paradox and your own evolving truth.

Kathlene Barrett  
Editor-in-chief

# I HEARD LAST NIGHT

I heard last night about a bigot's cross  
Burning hotly in the neighborhood,  
A symbol that could only end in loss  
Of peaceful ground once gained in brotherhood.  
Amidst the cries of Nigger, boy, and coon  
Two men converged to knock it to the ground.  
One black, one white, they stood and watched, and soon  
The snow had smothered out the hissing sound.  
No words could ever put this moment right,  
Nor could the passing of a thousand days.  
The white man screamed his outrage to the night,  
The black man only turned and walked away.

-CHRIS KMOTORKA-



# VOICES

Voices, voices in the air  
Sing her pain in song.  
They sing of wrong, they sing of shame.  
They make her dance along.

She cannot cry, she cannot stop  
The twirling in her soul.  
Her eyes say help, her voice does not.  
Can someone make her whole?

Hold her tight? Make her safe?  
Make them go away?  
Silence her pain? Silence their song?  
The terrible words they say?

She sits so still and all alone,  
She has no will to fight.  
"Bad!" they say, "Shame!" they scream.  
She blinks and says, "You're right."

-MARY STEELE-

# BILL LONG

# AN APPRECIATION



© Steve Battershell 1989

It has been suggested that the NMC greenhouse and its addition be dedicated to Mr. Bill Long, a retired instructor who has helped hundreds of NMC students learn and enjoy biology. Bill's remarkable life and career can hardly be recapped in these few columns, but perhaps these sparse words can rekindle fond memories in those who knew him and slight regret in those less fortunate.

Bill Long was born in the 1920's. He taught at NMC between 1959 and 1961 and again between 1965 and 1988, when he retired. Between the 1920's and now, many important things happened to Bill. He served in the Pacific during World War II, graduated from Michigan State University with a master's degree in plant pathology, taught 78 terms in the biology division of the Science and Math Department at NMC, and was the first instructor to receive the Imogene Wise Faculty Excellence Award.

It started for NMC in 1959 when Bill moved to Traverse City to teach part time and to work in the fruit industry. He later became a full time instructor. He has since taught Horticulture, Biology Foundations, Comparative Anatomy, and Microbiology.

It is Mr. Long's special style of teaching which will be most remembered by NMC students. His lectures to students were both educational and punctuated with personal examples. When, in Horticulture class, Bill explained the characteristics of crops grown to be made into ethanol, he stopped to give the class an example from his own experience. When he was in New Guinea, during WWII, he and his friends could make wine by punching a hole in a coconut, adding some yeast, corking the hole, and waiting until the cork popped out. They called it "Jungle Juice". This and many other examples added meaning to basic factual information. His lectures were never too exclusive for a question from the class. During Horticulture lectures,

ing some yeast, corking the hole, and waiting until the cork popped out. They called it "Jungle Juice". This and many other examples added meaning to basic factual information. His lectures were never too exclusive for a question from the class. During Horticulture lectures,

you could expect a student to bring up a question like: "What is the best way to preserve those red Christmas flowers?" You could also expect Mr. Long to parlay that question into a meaningful explanation of the life cycles of perennial plants like the poinsettia.

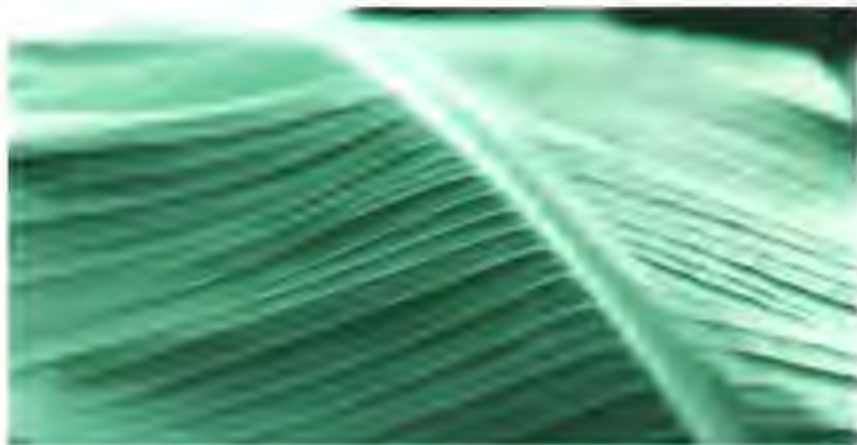
Labs with Mr. Long provided students with something to be interested in beyond factual learning. In Microbiology lab, students applied their lecture knowledge of food testing in an unique way. Frozen pies were brought into the lab and warmed up. Students quickly ate all but one piece from each pie. The uneaten pieces of pie were tested to find out how much bacteria was living in each. The results usually ran in the several thousand micro-organisms per gram. The students then considered the irony of their gluttony. In Comparative Anatomy lab, Mr. Long reportedly flipped a coin to determine if he or the class should order the pizzas which they would eat while doing dissections. In Horticulture lab, students grew flowers and vegetables to take home at the end of the term. His labs were anything but dull.

Looking at the many cartoons, anecdotes, and notes on the bulletin board in S112, Mr. Long's lab, shows that humor was not alien to his classes. It was not uncommon for him to stop in the middle of a lecture and tell a joke as a break for the class. Even on his exams, he included jokes like, "Did you hear about the instructor who couldn't eat pickles? He couldn't get his head in the jar." He owned many volumes of the blacklisted Truly Tasteless Jokes. He even handed out papers like, "How to Tan the Skin of Your Specimen", and the preface to

a book on urinalysis called Water on the Brain. Humorous student contributions to the class material were always welcome.

Mr. Long stimulated an interest in biology in many students who might never have had it without him. His technique for bringing students into biology and teaching them can be compared to that of the Army (sort of). In basic training, the Army teaches recruits what they need to know before they can go higher. Mr. Long took students in Horticulture and Biology Foundations and helped them to gain the knowledge and skills they would need to enter an advanced course like Microbiology, or Comparative Anatomy.

Bill Long is a tough act to follow for the instructors who have taken over his classes. He is also a great memory for former students. His dedication to his discipline can only be topped by his dedication to his students. Few who knew Bill can think of him without forming a smile.



# O In My PINION

- Colleen Smith -

Throughout the history of the western world, science and women have been at odds. The male-dominated scientific community has used its power and mystique to keep women out of the larger world and in the kitchen. All sorts of explanations have been given to justify this attitude. A partial listing of these would include:

1. Women's brains are too small to grasp the complexities of scientific thought.
2. Women are ruled by their emotions to such an extent that they are not capable of exercising the clear, rational, logical thought processes that are such an important part of the scientific method.
3. Working in a field so far removed from the domestic sphere would make a woman neurotic because she would be fighting against her natural disposition.

The last of these has been, by far, the most insidious and dangerous to the freedom of women. Using Freudian theory to label the dissatisfaction of women who are not satisfied in their traditional role as neurotic abnormalities, has perhaps done more to keep women under the patriarchal thumb than any other method.

There is a more recent school of scientific thought that carries with it the same potential for danger to women. In an effort to reconcile the nature/nurture debate, sociobiology sends us the message, "Genes Are Us". Our cultural structures and social behaviors are as much the product of genetic evolution as are our physical structures. And just as genetic development dictates differences between the male and female bodies, so does it dictate differences in the social standing and behavior of males and females. That's why big, strong men are leaders and small, soft women are passive followers. It's why men have the overpowering urge to fight and to "sow wild oats", while women are interested only in the narrow concerns of home and family. This type of reductive reasoning leads one to believe that, just because this has been the pattern of western culture for centuries, it is the only path open to us.

I have no problem with sociobiology in its

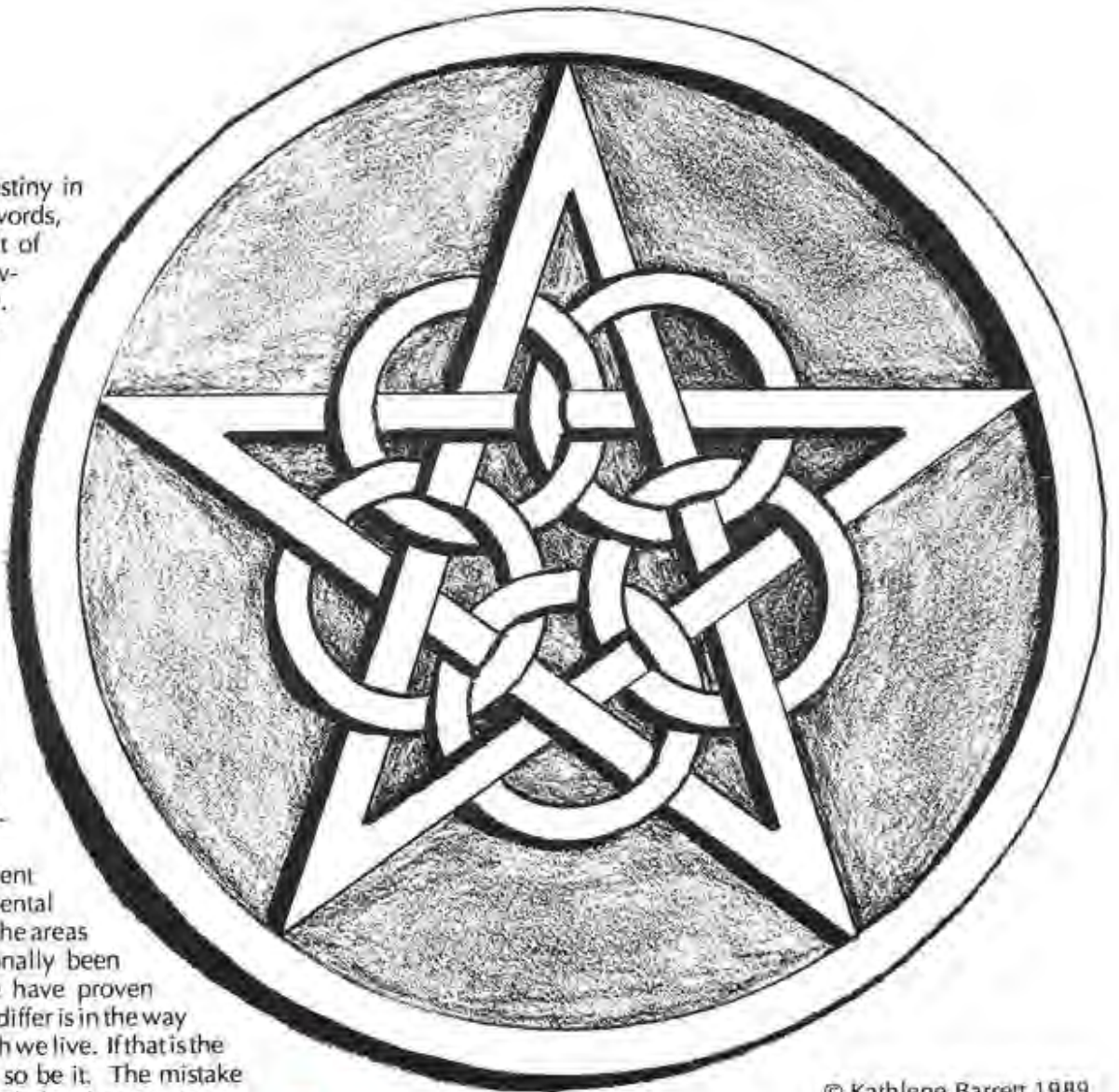
broadest sense. There are cultural structures (i.e. the family) and social behaviors (i.e. religious structures) which would seem to be universal. As the mother of both sons and a daughter, I know that there are innate differences between the two. The problem that I have with sociobiology lies in the fact that it can be so easily used to trivialize the fundamental concerns of women.

Sociobiological theory states that male/female sexual strategies are significantly different as the result of genetically advantageous behaviors on the part of our ancestors. A woman looks for a mate who will protect her and her children as well as provide a handsome living for them. Men are primarily interested in spreading as many of their genes around as possible, while at the same time being assured of the paternity of the children they are providing for. Like the naughty cuckoo who goes around depositing her eggs in everyone else's nest, the human male is genetically programmed to seduce every fertile female in sight, tricking other men into caring for his progeny while he goes to extreme lengths to ensure the chaste behavior of his own mate. Women have been forced to stay at home (pregnant, if possible), beaten into submission if a man thought it was necessary and if, by some chance, another male should happen to gain access to us, the blame and the shame was attached to the woman. At the same time, women were ridiculed because we used our bodies to "manipulate" and "control" these men who are the helpless victims of their biology. For centuries, women have endured this sexual double standard. The male obsession with power has put us in the position of being a mere commodity, one that can be bought and sold to further a man's ambition.

At a time when society is finally beginning to recognize rape as an act of male violence, along comes sociobiology. Some of those who use this theory to explain sexual behavior would have us believe that rapists are men who can't

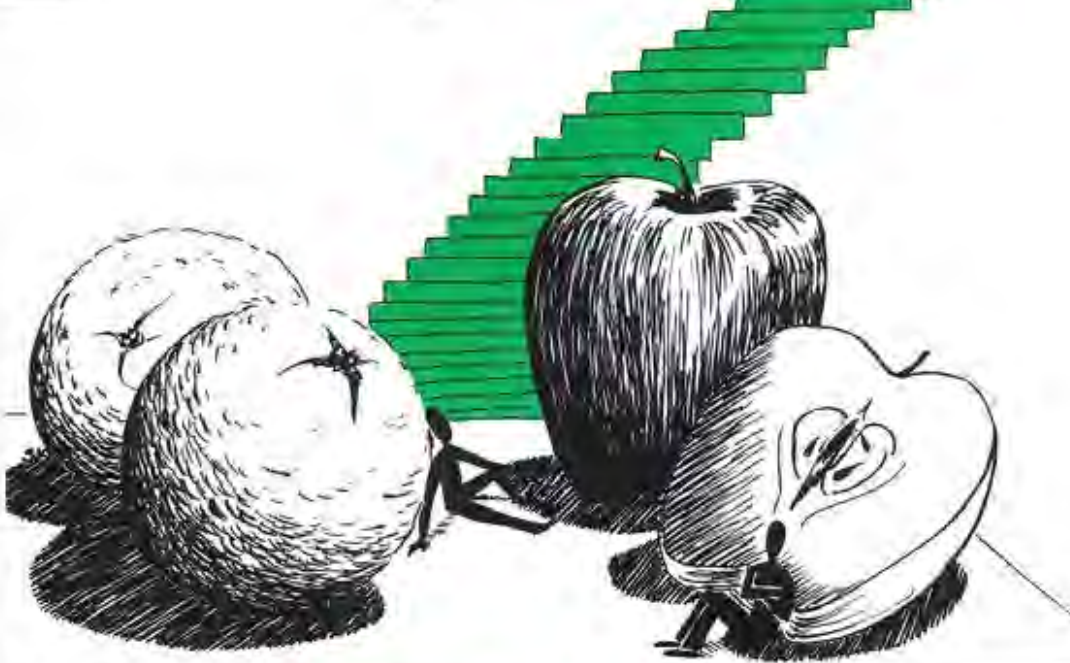
fulfill their biological destiny in any other way. In their words, rape is merely the result of normal male sexual behavior gone slightly astray. The poor guys can't help themselves--they need to spread their genes around to give themselves a shot at immortality. This argument, if popularly accepted, would serve to defuse rape of all its political implications and could even be considered a license to hunt. Most women already live with the omnipresent fear of rape; we cannot allow this most violent act to be given any justification.

Are women different from men in any fundamental way? Yes, we are. In all the areas where we have traditionally been considered inferior, we have proven our equality. Where we differ is in the way we see the world in which we live. If that is the product of our biology, so be it. The mistake some feminists have made has been trying to prove that we are just like men. It is time to admit that we are not like men and to declare that we don't want to be like men. As women, we will only be taken seriously when we take ourselves seriously. E. O. Wilson, the founder of sociobiology, denies its narrow, sexist interpretations and leaves the choice to us--whether to be the victims of our genetic heritage or to use our power of choice to create the kind of world we want to live in.



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**A** *t a time when society is finally beginning to recognize rape as an act of male violence, along comes sociobiology.*



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# SECURITY

Please understand  
if I herald  
your actions  
with hesitation.  
What they  
symbolize to you  
may be  
180 degrees from me.

Don't be startled  
if I hear your words  
with a different ear.  
I am programmed  
to see the universe  
in my language,  
which has shaped  
the way I perceive.

Forgive me if after  
visiting your world  
I return to mine.  
Yours may deviate,  
and although  
mine may too—  
at least I know  
the direction of change.

-KAREN PAWLOWICZ-



# EMPTY HOUSES

- Chris Olson -

He stood staring out the kitchen window at the falling snow. It was late afternoon and twilight was fast approaching. He had to stoop to see out the tiny window. Being that tall was more a nuisance than anything else. In his younger days in the Marines, he had been known as the "Nazi Giant". He almost laughed at that now.

"Hey, Joe! How long are you going to stand there!" A voice from outside yelled. Joe just stared out the window.

"As long as I damned well feel!" He yelled back. It was just too annoying. He wanted to be alone, and he knew he couldn't. The small, dirty kitchen seemed to shrink around him. It was an old house, one of the first built in the neighborhood. The white walls were cracked, with the paint peeling. The roof was leaky, and now he would have to condemn it.

"Joe, we got to get going. The workers are getting edgy."

He smiled to himself. He took one long, last look at the room. He had grown up here, now all he saw was decay and ruin. He turned and walked out of the house. His friend was waiting.

"Jesus, I thought you were going to stay in there forever."

Joe wanted to punch him in the face. "Just shut up and let's get the hell out of here," he snapped as he walked towards the car. He got in and stared at the house. He lit a cigarette and just sat there, staring.

"Hey, you want to get something to eat?" His friend asked as Joe got in the car. Joe looked at him. Marty, his friend, wasn't that bad of a person, but he could be a son of a bitch when he wanted to.

"Yeah, what the hell. I could use a free

meal," Joe said with a laugh. Marty laughed back, pushing his black hair up and away from the scar that ran along his face.

"I never said I was buying." He pulled out into traffic.

"Well, I sure as shit ain't going to buy it," he snorted. Marty just kept on driving.

"We'll each buy our own meal, like we always do," growled Marty. Joe laughed and shook his head. The lights of the city were flashing by them, like rain drops in a storm. He never really liked living in the city, but he had nowhere else to go.

"Sounds good." He threw his cigarette butt out the window, like a million times before. This time he watched it bounce off the asphalt and into the bushes on the side of the road. He watched the last glowing ember die out before the car was out of sight. He turned to see Marty looking at him. Joe shrugged his shoulders.

"What's the deal?" Marty asked. Joe looked at him.

"What do you mean?" He was trying not to sound nervous.

**H**e  
*climbed onto  
the unstable steps,  
grabbed the weathered  
rail and said,  
"Nice place, Marty,  
Come here often,  
do you?"*

"I mean, you've been acting like a fucking basket case ever since we heard your old house was being torn down." Joe knew this conversation had been coming; Marty fancied himself as some sort of shrink.

"Aw, man. Can't we talk about this some other time? I really don't feel like getting into it right now." He lit another cigarette. Marty looked at him again.

"Whatever, man. Just thought you might want to talk about it." Joe continued staring out the window, watching the lights go by. Streaks of white, blue and red streamed passed.

They pulled into an old diner. Joe looked up at the large red neon sign that said "EATS". He climbed onto the unstable steps, grabbed the weathered rail and said, "Nice place, Marty. Come here often, do you?"

Marty laughed, "It may not look like much, but it's got a great bowl of chili." He said with a grin. They walked in.

The decor was as bad inside as out. All the seats were done in red vinyl, most of them ripped open. The counter was filthy and the cook looked like something out of a culinary nightmare. They took a booth at the back. The lady behind the counter brought them menus.

"We'll have two bowls of chili and two beers." Marty handed the menus back to her. She smiled at him, then walked away. Joe lit another cigarette, inhaled a little, and let out a large cloud of smoke. Marty laughed.

"Man, the way you toke them cancer sticks, it's amazing you haven't croaked yet."

"Yeah, well they say that smoking is an unconscious attempt to commit suicide." Joe blew a cloud of smoke at Marty. Marty just waved it away.

"Well, that's your business. I'm just glad I quit when I did." It was going to be a long, dull night. He could almost make out the stars, but the smog and lights were too thick to see much of anything. The lights of the valley below glowed harshly in the night.

"I can't believe it's been five years since I was last in that house." Joe said absently.

Marty looked at him. "Well, there wasn't much use of you going back to see it since your folks passed away. I'd think you'd be glad to get rid of it, one way or another." Joe took another drag from his cigarette.

"No, not really. It's the only thing I can re-

member being any good in my life when I was younger. I can remember standing on the porch and watching the sunset with my folks." The night was getting deeper and darker. The haze now completely blocked out the stars.

Their chili and beer came and they ate in silence. Joe kept thinking about how much he was going to miss the house.

"You know," Marty said, "we could go back there and spend the night. It wouldn't be any big problem. Maybe a little drafty, but nothing too serious." Joe smiled at him.

"No, it would just bring back old memories. That won't do me any good." He took a sip of his beer. Marty stretched his arms out and made a loud hoot. The lady behind the counter looked at him like he was some wild animal. Marty just smiled back at her.

"Let's me and you go get us some brew, Partner," Marty said in a thick, southern drawl. Joe laughed, and they got up and paid their bill. They walked back to the car and got in.

"So, where are we going to get wasted?" Joe asked. Marty started the car and looked at him.

"I thought we'd just grab a couple of cases and sit on the top of your old house and see if the stars come out tonight!" Joe laughed and they took off to the nearest liquor store.



They got to the house and found it as empty as they had left it. It looked soulless, like a dead body. It was almost solemn, but the noises from the other houses on the block ruined the moment. They each grabbed a case and headed in. They climbed the stairs and were soon on the roof. The night seemed heavier, and the gloom closed in around them. They found the flat section of the roof that was supposed to have been a deck, and sat down. They had spent many nights on the roof together, but this would be their last.

"Hey, Joe, you remember the first time your dad caught us out here?" Marty laughed. Joe smiled.

"Yeah, boy was he pissed. He kicked you out of the house and beat my butt good. He told me that if he ever caught us doing that again he'd throw us both off the roof." They both laughed. A soft breeze was starting to blow and the branches in the trees swayed a little. It was getting colder, and the air was getting thinner.

"Yeah, then the next time he caught us, he joined us. Man, we sat up all night listening to his stories. We were all pretty drunk when the first light came. Boy, your mom was pissed." This made them both laugh even harder. The wind picked up and was now a steady breeze. They both pulled their coats a little tighter to keep warm.

"Well, that was then. This is now," Joe said. He took a long drink from his beer. The haze was beginning to lessen, and the stars were starting to shine through.

"Yeah, but it's worth remembering." Marty opened another can. The sky was clearing and they could now plainly see the stars.

"Man, just look at them all. It's hard to believe they're all up there. I always thought they would fall when I was a kid," Joe said. The neighborhood was quiet now, most of its residents were asleep for the night. You could only hear the occasional bottle breaking. They both lay back, and just stared at the stars.

"I could do this forever. Just fuck the real world and look at the stars forever," Marty said. Their beer was gone and their minds were numb from drinking.

"No, we're too damn old. We'd just get in the way of the real star gazers. We have to keep our positions in life," Joe said as he watched the tree branches sway. Marty looked at him.

"Maybe you're too damn old, but I'm not.

I'll watch the stars as long as I like. Anyone who doesn't like it can eat shit." He laughed as he said it. They both laughed that crazy, drunken laugh of people who have had too much to drink. Slowly the night crept on. The neighborhood was completely quiet, except for them.

"You're right, we're not too old. I'm just too set in my ways to change," Joe said. Marty looked at him.

"Oh, bullshit! You just don't want to change. You're just not willing to change your path," he said.

"My what?" Joe asked, looking at Marty from the corner of his eye.

"Your path, your road. I took the different road, the 'Road Less Traveled'." Joe laughed at him.

"You mean, 'The Road Not Taken', by Robert Frost," he said, looking at the stars. Marty looked back at him.

"What?"

"Frost's, 'The Road Not Taken'. It's a poem." Marty was still confused. Joe sighed.

"I shall be telling this with a sigh somewhere ages and ages hence: Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, and I--I took the one less traveled by, and that had made all the difference."

"I never knew you were a fucking poet!" Marty laughed.

"I'm not. Frost is." Joe said and laughed along with Marty.

The night was waning and the first light was approaching. They got down off the roof and headed for the car. Looking back at the house, it seemed to have shrunk some. It looked old and depleted of strength. They looked at it again, then got in the car.

Joe took one last look at the house and lit a cigarette.

"Well, did you find any answers?" Marty asked, starting up the car. Joe smiled, and looked out the windshield.

"No. Just take me home," he said. And they left, leaving the house to itself.

**T**he sky  
was clearing  
and they could now  
plainly see the stars.  
"Man, just look at  
them all. It's hard  
to believe they're  
all up there.  
I always thought  
they would fall  
when I was a kid."

# C ON WARM CANADIAN NIGHTS

On warm Canadian nights  
When the stars stood silent  
In a well-bottom sky  
And the hum from the smelter  
Was the breathing of the beast  
And the smoke from the stack  
Flowed out on the night  
Like the hair of a drowned woman  
On the skin of a midnight pond,  
The old man would take us  
To watch the slag pour

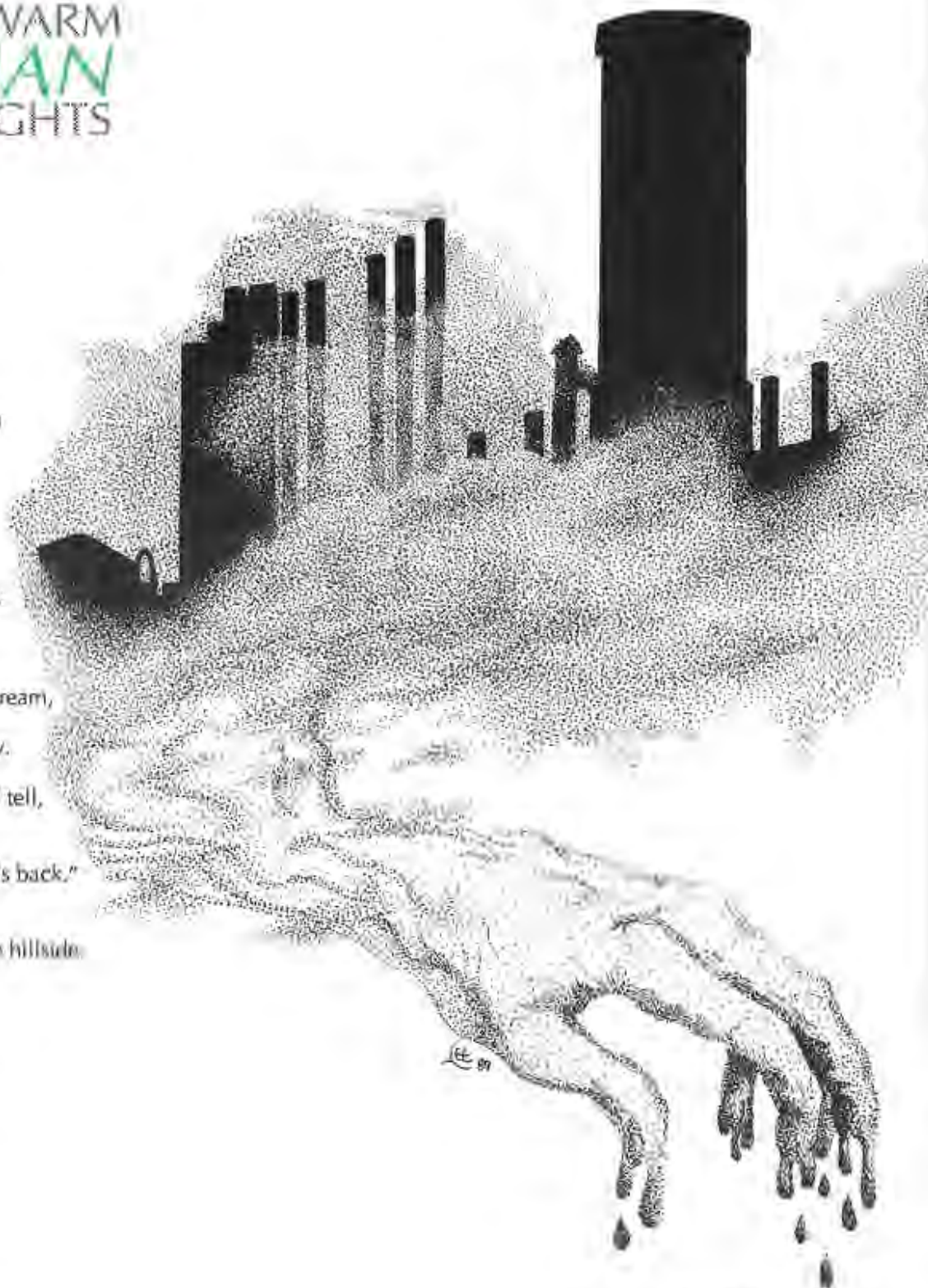
Wide-eyed in the back  
Of the old blue Pontiac  
We'd wait for the clink-clink-clink  
Of the creaking pots.  
Shackled round slaves,  
They'd creep their long way  
Across the rim of the world and scream,  
To a stop  
As if the wheels and rails were raw.

"Uncle Willy," the old man would tell,  
"He died, he did.  
Crushed between the pots.  
Old Willy should have watched his back."

And then they'd dump,  
Tip their sides and bleed down the hillside.  
Reach  
And drip fiery fingers  
Down toward children  
In the back seat of an old car.  
Leaning forward  
Fascinated  
Faces lit red from the glow.

So, this was death—  
Or a roller coaster taste of it  
Metallic in my mouth.

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© Deb Olson 1989

BOB RUDD:

# B THE MAN BEHIND THE SMOCK

-Chris Olson-



© Eric Norton 1989

One of the nice things about coming to college, even one as small as ours, is meeting different people. The sometimes strict guidelines of society fall to the side as we meet new people. The people who have the most effect on us are the instructors. These people guide us through the first years of our post high school education. If we're lucky, we get an instructor who is intelligent, and can explain the most mind boggling detail to us in simple terms. If we're extremely lucky, we get all that, and the instructor has a sense of humor as well. Robert Rudd is one of those instructors.

Bob Rudd was born and raised in Dryden, Michigan, a small town located in the thumb area of southern Michigan. He received a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Michigan State University, and received his master's from the University of South Dakota. He taught in the Huron public school system for two years, then moved up to Traverse City in 1959. Bob taught for two years at the high school here, and came to work at Northwestern Michigan College in 1961.

Bob Rudd is a man who radiates quiet authority. He isn't an imposing man, he is quiet and reserved. If you saw him on the street, you would probably think he was Amish, although he doesn't wear the style of clothes they wear. He is a thin man, who keeps himself in shape by walking, bicycling and cross-country skiing. Bob was in the Vasa once, but was so terrified that he never wanted to do it again. He said the crowd was too big, and that he prefers smaller events to race in. He is also a man of dry humor. He appreciates a good joke, especially if it has a twist in it. One of his favorite jokes is about a student he had in class. She was a very staunch feminist, so much so that she wanted to change the name of the opera Carmen to Carperson. If you didn't understand the joke, don't feel bad. Bob

feels slightly chagrined when he tells these jokes and they don't pan out, but that doesn't mean he won't tell another one just like it.

When asked about his jokes, and whether or not he should tell ones that people understand, he says that humor is cultural. Most of his students are eighteen to twenty years old, and they come from different backgrounds. Most of his students were raised with television, and they have seen it all. He finds that they are harder to reach sometimes because of their backgrounds, and feels that students ten to twenty years ago were easier to teach because

they hadn't seen it all. He tries to make his experiments exciting, but finds that students today are harder to impress.

When I asked him about how he could interest a new student in chemistry, he said that he would try to make the class as exciting as possible. He also said that the student has to be interested himself. "Teaching is like a performance, you have to have an interested audience in order for the performance to be interesting."

Bob Rudd is an adamant environmentalist. He belongs to the Sierra Club, and has helped form legislation to protect the environment. He has written many letters to local and state politicians to support environmental measures, but he doesn't push his views on other people. He feels that it's everyone's responsibility, and he just doesn't like to ask people. He feels that businesses, especially the older ones, are not doing their part. He thinks that a change won't happen until the economy grows stagnant and the population and standard of living start to decline. Bob feels that too many people think the environment can be fixed at any time. Acid rain, for example, has caused so much damage already, and changed different resistance levels, that by the time we get around to fixing it, we won't be able to repair the damage.

The obligation of Science is to instill a sense of responsibility in us for the changes we're making in the environment. It's our obligation to appreciate some of the long term effects of these changes. Bob Rudd doesn't think that always happens, and that some of these effects we won't know about until the future. He feels that after the atom bomb, the public grew suspicious of what science was doing. Now that some of the bad effects of early experiments are being exposed, that suspicion is growing. He also feels that there is going to be a lot of good to come because of science; and that people will be a little more cautious in the future with potentially dangerous scientific experiments.

Now that I've made Bob Rudd sound like a prophet of doom, let me tell of his collecting activities. If you've ever seen him grubbing through garbage to find pop cans, don't worry-- he isn't scrounging for his next meal. He collects those cans to raise money for worthy causes. He has collected in the funds for the observatory, and has purchased software for the chemistry department's computer. He is currently collecting

cans for the Madeliene, the clipper ship being built down at the NMC docks.

Bob Rudd can teach chemistry, and tell jokes that some people don't get. He is an environmentalist, and a can collector. I think that he would like to be remembered best as a man who told humorous stories. I'll end this piece with one of his favorites:

It seems that this guy and this girl had been dating for a long time. They went to the opera, the ballet, and the theater; always they had a good time. One night, the guy came to pick the girl up. He was met at the door by the girl's mother. She said that the girl didn't want to see him, that she thought that he was uncouth. He went away confused, but came back the next night. Again the mother said that she didn't want to see him, that she thought that he was uncouth. He went away and came back a third night, only to have the mother meet him at the door.

"I don't get it. I took her to the opera, we had a good time, right?" He said. The mother said yes, that she had a lovely time at the opera.

"I took her to the ballet, and we had a good time, correct?" Again the mother agreed.

"I took her to the theater, and we laughed all night. She had a good time, right?"

Once again the mother said that her daughter had enjoyed herself, but that she thought he was uncouth. The guy rolled his eyes.

"She had a good time at the opera, and at

***The obligation of Science is to instill a sense of responsibility in us for the changes we're making in the environment. It's our obligation to appreciate some of the long term effects of these changes.***

the ballet, and at the theater, right?" He asked. The mother agreed with him.

"So what the hell is this 'uncouth' shit?"

# H O M E T O W N

- Karen Burd-LeClair -

Croswell is a small farm community located in the Thumb Area of Michigan approximately twenty-five miles north of Port Huron and less than five miles from the Lake Huron shoreline. The population is approximately 2,000 people. All forms of agriculture are performed in this area, but the major crops are sugar beets, beans, peas, and pickles.

Large trucks overflowing with the harvests of the local crops pass through town on their way to the cannery. My friends and I would hitch rides on the back end of these trucks without the driver knowing we were there. Sometimes we would grab up huge bunches of peas still on the vines, then, sitting alongside the road, we would split open the pods and run the row of sweet, fresh peas over our teeth so they would pop into our mouths. With the large number of farms in the area and the variety of fruits and vegetables grown, it seems we were always eating. When these fruits and vegetables are taken and eaten at night, in the field, without the farmer's permission, it's called cooning. Like reivers, we would quietly slip with muffled giggles into one particular farmer's grape arbor. Under the moon's glow we would help ourselves to many of his purplish-black grapes. We'd squeeze the grape with our thumb and forefinger, squirt the insides into our mouth, and throw the skin on the ground. The evidence of the farmer's wrath was buckshot one night in our behinds. The town doctor happened to be the father of one of our companions, and with long pointed tweezers, he carefully removed each of the stinging, little pellets from our hides. The doctor chose to keep silent to our parents about the events of that evening. Therefore, only one of our little band was grounded for nearly a month.

Many of the local farmers would bring in pickers each year from Mexico to work in the fields. One year a farmer brought in about a dozen Jamaicans to work in his orchards. When these men piled out of the truck, seven feet tall

and blacker than a moonless night, every one of them, many a mouth dropped. I thought it very odd at the time how some of the town folks reacted to this situation. The very tall, dark Jamaicans were never asked to come back and work again.

In addition to farming, Croswell and the surrounding communities depended heavily, from an economic standpoint, on the tourist trade. Many resorters, as we referred to them, stayed in the thousands of cottages congesting Lake Huron's shoreline. During the summer months, Croswell's population expanded twofold. My father was thrilled over this population expansion because he owned his own business and anticipated his profit margins to expand also. Friday nights were the busiest of all because this was when everyone came to town. The sidewalks were all lit up and crowded with people. The street was filled with cars cruising slowly past. Most of these cars belonged to the local teenagers who had them shining like polished apples, and rumbling like thunder in a coffee can. Those Friday nights were very special to me and I looked forward to them all week. I think that's why now I can easily stay home on a Saturday evening and watch T.V., but not on a Friday. That night is still for going out and being with people.

It was on one of these wonderful Friday evenings that a very special event occurred, one that has been recited over and over by my father through the years since. My father, a gambling man at heart, won the toss that night. A local farmer, who was a



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frequent customer and eventually became a good friend to the family, loved to goad my father into accepting a bet, a flip of the coin to determine whether the farmer had to pay for the merchandise he was getting or not. Usually this was done over some small item and always my father called heads and lost. This evening, however, the farmer wanted to buy a lawn tractor and flip a coin for double or nothing. This being a richer than usual bet, it took some contemplation from my father, but he finally, with some beads of perspiration on his upper lip, agreed. The farmer flipped the coin and to his amazement my father called tails this time. The farmer paid double for the lawn tractor. The whole town knew of the event by Monday morning.

There is a swinging bridge in Croswell which has a sign naming it the "Mother-In-Law Bridge." This bridge is approximately three and one-half feet wide and approximately two hundred feet long. It is suspended across the Black River by steel cables running from one river bank to the other and attached to steel girders. Other than the cables and steel girders, the bridge is constructed of wooden planks and chicken wire. The unique aspect of this bridge is that it bounces and rolls like a wave, or swings from side to side and twists up and down so the floor planks are vertical in places instead of horizontal. The natives of Croswell had no fear of this bridge because it had been there for years and nothing ever happened, really. To the tourists, the resorters, this bridge was a very awesome thing. They displayed their awe as they picked their way across the bridge, board by board, never lifting both hands at once from the cable railing. We, the native children, had no mercy for these resorters, of course, and we took great joy and delight in bringing them to a prone position on the planks of the bridge. Their tight grip on the railing made their summer tanned knuckles turn lily white. We figured that's the way they looked most of the time anyway.

Another big event in Croswell, which eased us from summer into fall, was the annual fair. This fair was the kind of fair everyone wants to go to. At least it was to me then. My friends and I spent every day at the fairgrounds from morning until it closed at night. We were fascinated by the carnival atmosphere and, after the first

day, knew all the carnies by their first names. If our parents had known that we became so friendly with these "Gypsies," they would have forbidden us to go there. But these people had been around the world and had seen just about everything there was to see. Coy the Alligator Boy said he was a student at UCLA and just traveled with the carnival in the summer. He spread glue on his back to make his skin appear like reptile skin. I think he was my first love. Salina the Snake Lady was a carnival resident from birth. She came from a long line of carnival people. She loved her snakes so much she would lie in the sun with them slithering around her. The sight of this made my skin feel like it didn't fit my body anymore. She taught me that snakes aren't slimy as they appear, that they are beautiful, and should not be feared but respected. I do respect them, but she was unable to convince me that they're beautiful. There were always plenty of exciting amusement rides at our fair, and the scarier they were, the more we liked them. We'd scream and scream until no more sound came out, then we'd wink and smile at the ride attendant and off we'd go again. These days, it seems the rides have changed—or I have—because they're not as much fun as they used to be.

All the events, the people, the places and the time are my hometown as I remember them to be. This is a place that cannot be fully understood by visiting for a week or even a year. It must be lived and remembered and then relived over and over again. My hometown is ever changing and cannot in reality stay the same, but in my mind and in my stories it will never change.

**I** t was on one of these wonderful Friday evenings that a very special event occurred one that has been recited over and over by my father through the years since.





**I**  
was fast,  
deadly,  
and came  
from  
nowhere.

# THE ROGUE

# ROGUE

- Bob Brintnall -

It was my first cruise, my first storm. I watched the ocean rage through the ship's hanger bay doors. The huge doors would ordinarily have been closed during such violent seas, but there were still aircraft on the flight deck that needed to be brought down. The doors were sixty feet long by thirty feet high, and I saw the storm as though I were watching an oversized movie screen, with only the occasional spray from one of the larger waves to remind me the show was real.

The scene was grey upon grey as the waves battered against the ship's hull, and our aircraft carrier rocked and pitched as the storm grew stronger. The hanger bay was forty feet above the waterline, and the spray from waves that hoped to enter began to appear more often. Frequently, the show was interrupted as the aircraft elevator returned from the flight deck with three more jets seeking shelter. The aircraft elevators ran along the outside of the ship, and the plane captains who rode down with their jets clung to the chains that shackled their birds. The wind was up to fifty knots before the last jets were brought down.

I had watched the show intently and was almost hypnotized by the sea when it happened. The old salts called it a "rogue". I saw it as a grey, violent tower; a spike of water that reached thirty feet above the hanger bay and crashed down on the elevator like a sledge hammer on a tack. That's how it happened. It was fast, deadly, and came from nowhere. The men on the elevator never saw the tower of angry water before it crashed. They never saw it rise from the swells to tower above them. But I saw, and in my memory I still see.

My mind shows me the rogue in a broken shard of time. It stands before me like an inverted, frozen waterfall. I recall the white froth of its crest, and the salty taste of tears from the ocean's spray. I remember its tremendous height, and the dark shadow it cast on the elevator. I note the colors, from the soft grey base to the

blue arching peak and all the differing shades in between. Every observable detail of the rogue is etched in my mind, and all can be recalled as the rogue stays locked in position and time holds still.

Logic tries to console me and assures that there couldn't have been enough time to warn anyone; the rogue must have stood for only a brief moment. Yet, the mind still lies. I see the rogue standing there, almost challenging me to act. But I am as still as the rogue. My feet stay planted. My lips stay silent. The moment stretches on as if neither I, the rogue, nor time itself is willing to move first. Finally, the rogue grows impatient and crashes down on the elevator.

Then time flows again in my memory, but I still do not move. The hanger bay floods from the breaking wave. Men run and shout, and alarms pierce the ocean's roar. Yet, I still stare at the show of grey upon grey. My feet are under water before the flooding recedes, but they do not move. On the elevator, where three men once clung, only the jets remain.

# Rachael

© Laura McKenzie 1989



Black Widow  
came to my  
window  
one night before a snow  
and I caught her  
she was  
tangible evidence of the fear  
I've used to destroy me  
time and again.  
I kept her close  
like clinging to a darkened vine  
and let it wrap  
just wrap around me  
like the webs she wove.  
I needed to meet it  
the enemy I'd befriended  
for so long,  
needed to observe  
something concrete  
so it would speak to me  
and I could work it through.  
Today the sun shone  
I was able  
to let her go; give life  
back to her  
back to me.

-SUSANNE SANDE-

# HEAVY METAL

-Elaine Edstrom-



Christine Schopieray



1.

1. Ties that Bind "Turmoil seems to inspire me"

2. Sea Creature "This is my first large sculpture. It really excited me, and stirred me to go further."

3. Gut Feeling "They say that art reflects life and it sure did with this one. This is the ulcer I got when my boyfriend and I broke up."



2.



3.

Photography ©Elaine Edstrom 1989



Christine Schopieray and Joe Dasin are exceptional metal smith students at NMC. Both create sculptures and jewelry. Christine started at NMC in 1979. She studied under Diane Hubert here, and then went on to Northern Michigan University where she received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Metal Smithing in 1985. She is now a student assistant in the NMC Metal Smith Department. She sells her work at the Belstone Gallery and at the Traverse City Art Council Gallery.

"I prefer to do large sculpture and wall pieces, but jewelry sells."

When asked what got her into metal smithing, Christine said, "Thread gets tangled—weaving is not my hitch. Pottery isn't stable enough; it's there one minute and then it's gone. Metal is real stable and malleable. You can do so much with it to change its form. It's a means of expression. I don't like to do just pretty things, I want it to grab you—to leave an impression."

Joe Dasin is a part-time student who works full-time. He is also a student assistant in the Metal Smith Department.

When asked how he got started in metal smithing, Joe said, "I saw Diane's (Hubert) ad in the Fine Arts building. It sounded cool, so I took the class. I was still in high school...I've been here ever since."

Joe sells his jewelry at art shows around the area. He also sculpted the Stations of the Cross for St. Patrick's Catholic Church. Each of the fourteen stations depicts a different theme of the Church.

"It's my big glory job so far. This is my hopeful profession. I did a workshop in Charlevoix a year ago. It was a lot of fun, a real learning experience. I hope to do more workshops."

Both Christine and Joe would like to see NMC get a Sculpture class. Joe also wishes the Metal Smith department was bigger. "We're just a hole in the wall. It would be nice to have the facilities to do some large sculptures."



Joe Dasin





A Hero in

# WAITING

- Gregory Primeau -

The day started upon arrival in East Detroit at Officer O'Brien's home. Tom (as he will be referred to hereafter) has been an acquaintance for some years. We met in Daytona Beach, Florida on a couple spring breaks, so he had become a familiar face. Personal knowledge of him is limited to those one-week-a-year meetings and, therefore, objectivity is intact. It was 1:00 p.m. and his wife was meeting us at home for lunch before we went to work. Jennifer adores her husband. Part of this infatuation is due to the fact that he is a cop. When she is present and Tom is asked a question in reference to being a cop, she almost always answers for him. She knows all the stories and incorporates his input ever so gracefully as she worships him and the police force.

We arrived at the station at 2:20 p.m. and went through the ceremony of putting on the uniform, changing from a concealed snub nose pistol to a holstered one, and collecting all the garb. Then we met the lieutenant and I granted the necessary waiver to Clinton Township assuring them that I will not hold them responsible for whatever happens on the shift. The realization comes over me that at that juncture I have subordinated my rights as a citizen and my recourse is nil. Now that this is over we get our first two assignments.

First we are to take a prisoner named Alice, who has been picked up for passing illegal

prescriptions, to the county jail. The lieutenant gives us his account of her story. "She says that it (prescription) was not for her, but for her girlfriend. She says that her girlfriend's mother drove her all the way across town to the drug-store where she tried to pass the paper, but her girlfriend's mother could not wait, and so she was going to hitchhike back... the more she talked the sicker I got listening to her." We go back to the holding cell and get Alice to put her in the car. She is very upset and crying. "Where are you taking me?" Alice asks Tom. Tom tells her she is going to spend the night in County lock-up. Alice says, "I have never been in trouble before. How come I can't get arraigned today?" Tom tells her he doesn't make up the rules and she'll have to spend the night. Alice cries and sobs all the way to County lock-up and asks, "what about my baby? I have to get home to my baby." As she sobs she asks Tom if he has a Kleenex. Tom says he doesn't and then takes one out of his pocket and thoroughly enjoys blowing his nose in it.

The second assignment was an accident report without event.

From there we go to Dunkin' Donuts drive-thru for Diet Cokes. This is mentionable only because these refreshments, along with all the others of the night, including lunch, were free.

We spend the next hour cruising. During this time we see a school bus with its flashers on. Tom says, "we'll catch someone making a mistake here. If someone runs those flashers, it's a ticket. I don't care who they are, you don't fuck with kids." No one ran the flashers. Tom was disappointed.

At 4:30 p.m. we receive a call from dispatch to respond to a complaint about a family receiving obscene phone calls from the neighbors. Carlton, the father, told us he was tired of having his kids sworn at on the phone by the neighbors. Carlton said to his three year old daughter, "tell the policemen what she called you on the phone." The little tyke piped up and said, "she said the 'B' word." Tom's report reflected that the daughter had been called a bitch. After much discussion with Carlton and family we agree to go and talk with the neighbors.

The neighbor was a middle aged nurse. When we got there she was familiar with this whole scene all too well. She had many dealings with the neighbors. She babbled, "he's a

drug dealer. He was drunk and came into my house at 3:00 a.m. (apparently a couple of months ago) and busted down one of my bedroom doors because that was where his wife was. I didn't even call the cops about that." She rattled on the entire time Tom tried to explain the laws concerning phones. As we were leaving she said, "he has to quit calling the cops over every little thing. If kids have problems, the parents should solve them themselves [sic]."

*"After three months on the street, I began to realize that it's not what I expected. The big thing that hit me is I'm a social worker. I was looking for car chases and shoot 'em ups..." (Baker 29).*

We see two black females standing on the street corner. Tom says, "let's go hassle some hookers." We pull up and turn the lights on and ask them for their identification. Neither of the women have I.D. He takes their names and birth dates and has them checked for warrants and liens. One of the women, Verna Mae Dryfus, keeps shrilling, "can't even get out of the fuckin' house and their hasslin' ya. Damn!"

To the question, "are you prejudiced?" Tom responded, "Before I got this job I didn't think I was. Some of my best friends in school were black. Now all I deal with is the low end of the sector, I don't get a chance to meet any of the types that I could become friends with." Despite this explanation all night long it was nigger this and nigger that.

Around 6:15 p.m. the radio dispatched us to an audio alarm at a small factory. We drove like maniacs to get there and it was a false alarm. As we are sitting out in the street filling out the report, the new rookie shows up. He is obviously disgusted and says, "damn! I'm always getting beat to everything." This was followed by Tom and the rookie's partner going through their inventory of rookie jokes.

**A**s she sobs she asks Tom if he has a kleenex. Tom says he doesn't and then takes one out of his pocket and thoroughly enjoys blowing his nose in it.



**I'm no cowboy,  
I don't get out  
of my car  
in this neighborhood.  
Without backup,  
it's a good way  
to find yourself  
dead."**

*"Yet cops have an aura of adolescence about them, something youthful and slightly silly. They tease, bicker and pout, run in cliques and gossip behind each others' backs like high school kids" (Baker 15).*

We had the rove shift. This meant that we could be anywhere on the east side of Clinton Township, except the city of Mt. Clemens which it surrounds. Tom said he'd take me up north and show me a crack neighborhood. We enter a low income housing project of the type my generation grew up hearing Bill Cosby describe as "the projects" in his comedy records. As we pull into this area Tom says, "there's a crack seller, his name is Chauncey Van." Tom explains, "if he doesn't have any on him, he'll let us search him. If he does he'll evade us." Tom yells, "come here, Chauncey, you got some of that stuff?" Chauncey picks up his pace and tells us to meet him on the other side of the building. We drive around the back and when we get there Chauncey has disappeared. When I asked Tom why he didn't chase him on foot, he said, "I'm no cowboy, I don't get out of my car in this neighborhood. Without backup, it's a good way to find yourself dead." It seems that's the part about "the projects" Bill Cosby forgot to tell the world.

We pull through the project and come across several little black kids. Tom asks them if they want to play in a police car and he turns the lights on and opens the back doors. Of the 15-20 kids standing around, only three run through and giggle and play. The other kids stand by and are scared to go in the car. They shout out questions like, "are ya gonna kill

someone, are yuh?" I asked the kids their ages, and the one who asked Tom if he was going to kill someone was six. The oldest was eight. One little boy, not more than 3 or 4 years old, asked Tom if he had seen his uncle who was in jail. As we leave Tom says, "I try to make their first impression of the police a good one. Hopefully, their first memories of the cops will be good, I think it helps." It was obviously too late for some first impressions, but maybe the three who giggled....

We move around to the back of the housing project and park in an empty warehouse parking lot across the street. Tom says, "let's bust us a crack buyer." We sit for about three minutes. The cars coming by can see us for two blocks before they enter the project. We watch about half a dozen cars turn into the the project and then an old rusty Plymouth Horizon forgets to use his blinker. Tom throws the car into gear, turns the overhead lights on and says, "there's a mistake." I say to Tom, "that's mean, just because he didn't use his blinker?" The man's name is Robert. He is Caucasian, has long hair, and is wearing old clothes covered with paint. He is visibly shook up about being stopped. As Tom walks up to the car Robert asks, "why did you stop me, what did I do?" Almost yelling now, "What did I do?" Tom does not answer but only asks for the routine paper work for identification. Tom told me later that when he got to the window, he observed two things. First, a glass pipe in Robert's pocket. Second, a twenty dollar bill in his right hand (the common cost of crack cocaine rocks). After Tom got what he wanted in the way of identification he had Robert step out of the car and stand with his hands to his sides. Tom then rummaged through his pockets. When he pulled the glass pipe out of his shirt pocket, along with it came a cigarette cellophane wrapper containing little white "rocks". Tom, now having put Robert in the back of the car and proudly showing me his find says, "that, my friend, is crack."

Later, as Tom was searching Robert's car, the opportunity presented itself for me to question Robert. The glass pipe, considered illegal drug paraphernalia in Clinton Township, had steel wool packed in where one places the rocks of crack. Crack rocks, as Robert explained to me, are a distilled combination of baking soda and cocaine. It is smoked by placing the rocks

in the glass pipe and then in the other hand one holds a wire hanger with a cotton ball in it. The cotton ball is dipped in Bicardi 151 proof rum and set on fire. Then the burning cotton is placed over the pipe and it melts the rocks. The smoke from this gets the person "high". Interspersed in this explanation from Robert are mega denials of how he was not going to smoke the crack, and that he didn't do that anymore. It seems, according to Robert, that someone he gave a ride to left it in his car and he wished he would have just thrown it out the window. Like Alice and her prescriptions, it was a friend. Tom came back from Robert's car with an opened bottle of Bicardi 151 proof rum. The rum was also left in his car by his friend, according to Robert. At this point Robert became concerned that he was going to jail and said, "I got stuff to do tomorrow, I mean real stuff, paint and stuff." Tom gave Robert three citations: 1. failure to use a blinker, 2. possession of illegal drug paraphernalia, 3. open intoxicants in a motor vehicle. Additionally, the crack would be sent to the state police laboratory for chemical identification and, if positive, a warrant would be issued for Robert's arrest. Mark let Robert out of the patrol car and made him empty his pockets on the hood. Along with a significant amount of money came the little wire hanger he had earlier described. Although he didn't say, surely that belonged to the same friend as the crack, pipe, and rum.

*I had a kid just recently die on me. I got the call: "it looks like a guy's hurt in his car." I come up and it's a white kid from New Jersey and he's clutching his chest. He's still alive, but I can see that they got him right in the heart. The kid says to me--these are his last words at eighteen--"he stuck me, but he didn't get my dope, man." He's holding the dope with all the fucking blood there and he died. Life, right? How precious that shit is, man. So they kill for that (Baker).*

As we are sitting behind a warehouse eating our free lunch with another cop, a call comes in to respond to a fight involving twenty kids. Both cars squeal out of the lot as we hit speeds as high as 75 miles per hour through 25 mile an hour zones. At one point we were doing 70 down a narrow residential street with cars parked on both sides. When I asked why he didn't use his

lights, Tom said, "people do the strangest things when you flash lights, mostly they freeze in front of you." He went on to explain while driving and bouncing through a residential neighborhood, "if you just go around them, you're long gone before they figure out what's happening." When we arrive at the corner where the kids were fighting we see 10 or 20 young teens calmly walking away. One of them, maybe 12 to 13 years old, says, "it's all over." Was it really worth the risk of hitting some young child or even a dog or cat playing in the street? This time, at least, it was not.

It is now dark and about 8:30 p.m. After spending some time filling out reports from the crack bust and, while in the station, looking for a headlight, we are sent running out of the station to go to another low income housing project. This time a woman called in and said there were four men fighting in her house. When we get to the project, after waiting for the other car, the two officers go to find the house. After a few minutes they come back and Tom says, "we found them, just a beatin' on each other. As soon as they seen us they all got in the same car and drove away, one big happy family." Tom encouraged the lady to file charges, but she didn't want to, so, in Tom's words, "we got the hell out of there." It's dark now and Tom doesn't care to be in the "jungle" if he doesn't have to be.

You go to a domestic fight and the guy is beating his old lady up. Her teeth are busted out and her eyes are all swollen. You ask her, "do you want to file charges?"

"No, I love him."

"How many times has he done this to you?"

**T**om,  
now having  
put Robert in  
the back of the car  
and proudly  
showing  
me his find says,  
"That my friend  
is crack."



"Ten or twelve."  
"Do you want to file charges?"  
"No, I love him."

*You can't do anything for these people. There's nothing in the world you can do. A month or so later you go back and he's blown her away. If she could say it she'd say, "no, I love him." But she can't. She's dead (Baker).*

About 9:45 p.m. we were dispatched to yet another domestic violence call. This time a mother's kids are beating on her. Tom went into the home with another officer. He said he asked the woman if she needed help and she yelled, "you God damned right, these kids are beating the shit out of me!" He said he sent the kids to their rooms and told them to stay there the night. He said, "that should take care of them until the shift ends, maybe the rest of the night."

It's now 10:30 p.m. We go to take a report of a hit and run committed by a vehicle against a parked car. This would have been just a standard report, but someone followed the car long enough to get the license plate of the assaulting vehicle. We went to the vehicle's address. A seventeen year old girl answered the door. She was obviously very shook. Tom asked her if she owned the car and if she knew anything about a car that was hit over on the other block. She said, "you mean King Street, I don't know anything." It was clear that she did know something since Tom said nothing about which street. Since no evidence was found on the car, paint scrapings or the like, we just left.

That ended the shift. Now, it was to the bar for a couple of hours. The bar, the old police station, was now the hangout for off-duty cops. Tom had planned for a selection of his buddies to meet us there. Two of the guys that joined us worked at the jail. There was considerable exchange back and forth between the road cops and the jail cops. The jail cops revelled in the time they had bounced a "dirt bag" (prisoner) off the wall, which they were being sued for, and the street cops boasted of their arrests for the night. Several of the veterans took the opportunity to respond to the rookie's stories and his naivety with "this is the real world" speeches. "There's one thing you got to understand, Rook. Forget all that bullshit from the academy, this is the real thing, it's either you or them," one

veteran expounded.

*You have all the instructors (in the police academy) up there teaching you the penal law, the study of minority groups. You dabble in a little psychology, a little sociology. Then you got the guys downstairs in the gym who are telling you, "That's all bullshit. It's either you or him out in the street. Go for the eyes. Kick them in the groin" (Baker 19).*

The facts and the trivia of the night were not spoken of; rather, just the violence and the hard times. All the people around the table drank very hard, except one recovering alcoholic. Except for this one guy, none would have passed the breath-a-lizer they had all just put in their locker.

On the way home, a slightly intoxicated Tom, one whom I am more familiar with, apologizes for what he perceived to be a boring night. He encouraged me to come back again during the hot summer months to see some real action.

*In the back of the young cop's mind is the big arrest that's going to transform him immediately to a suit of clothes and a gold shield. That's first and foremost--The Big Arrest (Baker 62).*

On the way home we run two red lights without even completely stopping, just sort of drifting through.

*Off duty, a cop's greatest joy is the freedom he has to live above the law in minor ways--ignoring red lights when no one is coming, never having to look at his speedometer, getting away with all kinds of trivial offenses by flashing his badge (Baker 15).*

The next morning as Tom is getting ready to leave on vacation to Washington, D.C., I suggest that he go out through Ontario and stay in Toronto over night. He says he can't take his gun into Canada so he'll go around. When asked why he would even want his gun on vacation he explained, "I feel better with it right there (patting the back of his hip); that way nobody can fuck with me or my wife."

**H**e said  
he asked  
the woman if  
she needed help  
and she yelled,  
"Your god  
damned right,  
these kids are  
beating the shit  
out of me!"

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# The

# SHOT

- Chris Kmotorka -



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He sat with the gun pointed at his face, his right thumb in the trigger guard, staring straight faced and tight-lipped into the barrel--which was getting bigger and blacker with each second that ticked thunderously by. He wondered if he would be able to put that barrel into his mouth, if it would fit, if he would be able to bring himself to pull the trigger. If he would hear the shot...if he would hear the shot...suddenly, it was a very important question. A very, very important question.

He knew that from a half mile away he'd be

tired eyes. The gun quivered in his hands; he shook like a man with the D.T.'s. He was sitting cross-legged on the twin bed, wrinkling the white and blue (soon to be a more patriotic red, white, and blue) bedspread, the gun in his hands resting in his lap. He slouched forward, deep in his final thoughts.

*Will you hear the shot, Pete?*

The gun was a Colt Python .357 Magnum. He didn't want to wake up as a vegetable in a hospital bed, no sirree, this was gonna be final. He started remembering stories about guys who

lying dead in the gutter before the sound reached his lifeless body--but at a distance of less than an inch?

"Which is faster in a race like that?" The Tortoise asked the Hare, "A hot chunk of molten lead, or the report of exploding gunpowder?"

*What do you think, Petey? The squish or the bang?*

And that barrel just got bigger. He swallowed hard, hurting his constricted throat, and fought back his tears, barely containing them behind the rims of his

shot themselves in the head, only to have the bullet spin around inside their skulls like a ball on a roulette wheel

*Put it all on red, double or nothin'*

only to have it come out with their eyeball, never touching their brains at all.

*Seven black...sorry, Pal, must not be your day...vegetables to the rear of the bus...*

The .357 would take care of that, of that he was sure. Hell, they'd be scraping brains and hair and skull fragments out of the walls and carpet for weeks. In fact, he figured about the only thing left of his head they wouldn't be scraping would be his face. It would be a bit *altered*, sure, but it would be there. It would be the entire *backside* of his head that would be gone. Well, not gone, just...everywhere.

The Colt was a monster of a gun: huge, shiny, and terribly forboding. The ivory handle grip was slick with sweat, his fingers interlaced along its backside, his right thumb in the trigger guard and his left thumb resting on the last knuckle of his right thumb. It was actually a quite comfortable way of holding the gun. He wondered why more people didn't try it, and almost

laughed at the thought. *I'm dying to see how well it works...and at that he did laugh.* A dry, choking grunt, it was more of a tortured snicker than a laugh. This was all so crazy, but then, things had been crazy for a long time now, hadn't they?

*Will you hear the shot, Petey?*

He opened his mouth a little and realized how tight he'd been clenching his jaw. He moved it around a little--back and forth, side to side--trying to work some of the stiffness out of it.

*The squish or the bang, Pete? Which will it be?*

He brought the gun slowly up to his mouth and felt the barrel click painfully into his teeth when he recoiled from the cold, acerbic, oily taste of the barrel. Oh, man, that was bad. What a horrible thing to have to die giving head to something that tastes that dreadful. He uncurled his lips, peeled his tongue from the roof of his mouth and swallowed again. He opened his mouth once more and tried to resign himself to the taste that would soon follow, and soon after that, be gone forever.

*Will you hear the shot?*

He figured the best thing would be to rest the barrel on his bottom front teeth, angling up over his tongue and touching only the smallest portion of the roof of his mouth. It worked fairly well, actually. He couldn't taste it, but having his mouth open like that was making it water something crazy. He had to take the gun out of his mouth to swallow and then go through the trauma of putting the barrel back in all over again.

*Will you hear the shot?*

He tried to compose himself a little bit, get his breathing under control. He wanted the bullet to go where he wanted it to go; he didn't need to be making any stupid mistakes...not now. He kept his eyes closed, trying to prevent any visual distractions--be it a photograph on the endtable, or a fly on the wall, or...Oh, shit, a book on the floor. *Can't die yet, Folks, house is a mess. Boy, oh, boy, better get cleaning.* No, he didn't want that. He didn't want that at all.

He squeezed the trigger while taking his final, calming breath, silencing his final, echoing thought...

*Will you hear the shot?*

*...hear the shot?*

*...the shot?*

*...the shot?*

**H**e knew that from a half mile away he'd be lying dead in the gutter before the sound reached his lifeless body-- but at a distance of less than an inch?

# The TREE of Life

- Michael Bellinger -

My first experience with death was almost casual. I was quite young, perhaps seven or eight, when my great-grandmother died. I can remember she was a very old woman who lived with my grandparents and who seemed to have trouble remembering my name. My parents told me one day that she had died, and from then on when I visited my grandparents home she was not there. It seemed quite simple and I felt no sense of loss or sorrow.

Over the next few years I had two more deaths to deal with; a maternal grandfather and a paternal great-grandfather. Both of these men, unlike my great-grandmother, were an active presence in my life. Always when I returned to the environment where I might have encountered one or the other of them I felt a sense of loss. It was the loss of a friend or pal, not the loss of a close family member. Of course I knew they were members of my family tree, but "Grampa" was just a title to me.

I felt no real sorrow at their passing. I didn't attend either funeral so their absence maintained an almost abstract quality. The last time I had seen either of them they were (seemingly) healthy and vibrant, that was and is my memory of them.

For as long as I could remember my younger brother had been sick; off and on, and often. Not just ill like he had a cold or flu, nor very sick as with, say, hepatitis or diabetes. It just seemed that he nearly always had something wrong with him. Because of this my sister, two other brothers and I always took special care of him. His health problems made him a little different, so he was special. We all accorded him the extra attention and patience that humanity in general could do better at, and we did it without, I'm sure, even realizing it. We loved him and wanted him to be better, and this is what we could do about it.



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I grew old enough to understand the mechanics of his illness, but as his situation worsened I saw different things happening. I saw my usually cheerful parents return from the hospital wearing very serious expressions. I can remember each of them individually urging us kids to behave a little better to make things easier for the other parent. Family friends were helping tend us as my parents spent increasing amounts of time at the hospital. We children were anxious and nervous about what was happening, but most of this was picked up from the adults and we didn't actually know how urgent the situation was.

His death was a terrible time for my family. I was stunned and shocked. This time my sense of loss was extremely intense and couldn't have been more personal or real. My brother was dead. How could this be? Why did it have to happen? I was confused and very, very angry. In my eyes he was the best of us kids. Through the extra love, protection and care we had given him he had developed as though this was actually the way all people were. He granted extra love, attention and care to everyone he encountered.

I also felt guilty. I felt it probably should have been me rather than him. I was the bad kid. I was the one who exerted the dominance of the eldest. I also directed a lot of anger I felt at myself. What other target did I have? My parents or family? Hardly. I felt and shared their anguish every day.

The funeral was an odd mixture of the familiar and the strange. It was held at the only funeral home in town, a place I considered a second home since my best friend's family owned and operated it. All of the people in attendance were known to me: family, friends, or townspeople. Yet, these people weren't as I knew them. They had come to express their own grief and to share mine, but how could they know how I felt? I

had been in every part of the funeral home, but today it was my brother's body in the small casket at the front of the parlor. I had played here many times and ordinarily this room seemed

quite large. On this day I felt as though I would suffocate, it was so small. I couldn't wait to get out of there. This ceremonial stuff was no consolation to me.

I didn't make the trip to the cemetery. I needed to be alone. What I felt I couldn't share and what others had to share did me no good. My father wanted me to come along, for us to be all together. Somehow my mother knew what I needed most was solitude and that I would be okay. I ran through the snow into the woods and spent the afternoon there crying and thinking before I finally went home.

It was autumn and I was home on a visit from my first year in college when my mother told me that my father was dying of cancer. I felt as though I had literally been struck in the chest with a sledge hammer. I couldn't breathe. "...Maybe as little as six months." She had said. Hold on! When did this happen? I went out onto the dock to be alone in the night, to try and figure this out. He's still so young, how could he be dying?

The tears that came to my eyes almost surprised me. I knew I loved my father. He was, after all, "Dad". But those were times of us vs. them, young vs. old, establishment vs. yuppies. I saw much wrong with the world and knew then that the establishment was totally to blame. And my father was, as a school administrator, firmly entrenched as part of the establishment. We argued constantly at the supper table or almost anyplace else we met. On the surface we were not close.

Still, he was so young—how could he be dying? Well, he was. Doctors said six months, but he fought hard and it was nearly six years before I finally received the news that he had died.

I watched him die in a sort of "time lapse" fashion. I lived in Arizona and only made it to Michigan once or twice a year. I watched him shrink physically due to the rigors of chemotherapy and radiation treatment. It must have been terrible for my mother and youngest brother, who was still living at home. They were there to deal with his pain and suffering daily for all those years.

I didn't feel the sudden jolt that so often accompanies news of a death. I knew it was coming, just not when. When I returned to

**I** didn't make the trip to the cemetery. I needed to be alone. What I felt I couldn't share and what others had to share did me no good.



Michigan for the funeral I was sad, of course, but not devastated. I had the luxury of having time to prepare mentally and spiritually for this day. My sister, brothers and I were all adults now and after the last guest had left my mother's house we were able to sit together and talk of my father. We shared stories and impressions and each helped the others know that whatever we were feeling, that was okay.

Over ten years has gone by since his death, yet I miss him more now than I did immediately following his death. I realize that, not only was he not solely responsible for all that I felt was wrong with the world, but we were very much alike and would be close friends. I'm more able to receive anything he would have to say to me. We had come to a truce prior to his death and the last couple of years we were even comfort-

able and casual in each other's company. I was fortunate enough to realize, before it was too late, how deeply I loved him and how much I valued his judgement, if not his opinion. But still I miss him, mostly not having him to turn to for guidance and direction, to sit down with to drink a beer, watch a football game and say, "Tell me, Dad, how have you been?"

My most recent experience with death was, in many respects, the most difficult. My wife and I both love children and would love to have many of our own. When we discovered that she was three months pregnant we could not have been more ecstatic. Nothing in the world could have made us happier. Because of several reoccurring and serious illnesses she has had, we understood that we could never hope to be parents. And yet she was pregnant. What a gift! What a blessing!

My wife is the most loving, giving person I have ever known. The first month after we knew of the pregnancy she was so happy, happier than I have ever seen anybody. The baby was all we could talk about or think about. We began to rearrange our lives around the pregnancy and birth date. We were the most content couple on earth.

Then the problems started. Initially the doctors told us that yes, it was serious, yet with careful monitoring and care all would still be well. It was not to be. Within two weeks the situation had gotten very bad. We found ourselves in a hospital room with the certain knowledge that we had lost our baby. Just the previous night we had seen him moving and active on an ultrasound screen; this morning there was no fetal heartbeat, no more life. It was the most crushing, punishing day of my life.

We held each other and sobbed for hour after hour. There were no words to be said, no way to make any of it easier. I felt as though my soul had been plowed under, never to see light again. Nothing was left inside me except aching and the intense sorrow I felt for my wife. I have never felt a greater loss or more despair.

Eventually, to insure the safety of my wife, labor was artificially induced and we were left alone to deliver our dead baby. Our initial feeling was that we would not want to see or touch him. But after delivery we both were emotionally in need of contact with our son. We realized it would be difficult, but also nec-

essary. It would be our only time with him.

Death and change. That's what we're told we can count on as constants. But the real constant is life. Nothing is more precious. All of my experiences with death have been difficult. I have dealt with each death on different levels both emotionally and metaphysically. In the final analysis though, they have taught me about life and living.

I can't hold out what I have learned for others to use. Besides being too personal, I just don't feel things work that way. I hold the lessons near to me and hope that I never forget them for they were learned a hard way.

I have watched the "Tree of Life" change in my family as the older generations died and the younger sprouts were born and are growing up. I am at a position to see both ways, the past and the future. I enjoy the perspective and both vistas appeal to me. I can't deny, however, that I'm drawn to look at the older part of the tree and remember.

I make a point of thinking of my grandfathers and how great they were to me when I was a young boy. I think of my brother and remember what his voice sounded like, of my father and all that he meant to me and wanted for me. I think often of my son and all the love I have for him, of what he might have been. I can't help feeling sad that these people aren't here with me now, yet mostly I'm happy and grateful that they were with me at all. I have grown because of my contact with each one of them. That's what I hold. That's what keeps on living, here, within me.

**J**ust the previous night we had seen him moving and active on an ultrasound screen; this morning there was no fetal heartbeat, no more life. It was the most crushing, punishing day of my life.

# Made of FIRE

- Kathlene Barrett-

Father Steve could hear the squeaking sounds of those swings again. Susan rocked back and forth, as if the noise the swings made was some sort of lullaby. He stood up from his desk, twisted his neck around while stretching back his shoulders, and walked toward the kitchen. He poured two inches of Scotch in a thick crystal glass, added some ice, then pushed open the screen door and sat down on the cement stoop that faced the old school playground.

The playground at St. Clare Church was on a narrow strip of asphalt squeezed between the gray tomb of the nunnery and the rigid lines of the flat roofed rectory. When Susan was five, her mother had bought a small shingled bungalow across from the parish. Back then, during the fifties, the nuns would come out and push her on these swings. No doubt telling her stories about Mary, rosaries, novenas, and other Catholic magic, Father Steve thought.

Silently staring, he watched her swing, swirling his Scotch, then sucking it through his tense lips. Father Steve was fascinated by her. She had the thick flat nose, protruding tongue, and shallow set eyes of Downs Syndrome. Her small shouldered frame rocked back and forth on the swing with slow, over-



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sized movements. And how she loved to swing. Every night she'd carry on for hours, laughing and giggling to herself. Her routine had not changed much in the sixteen years she had swung here. Sister Catherine used to baby her back then; the little girl was loved by everyone. But Sister Catherine and the other nuns had left long ago and just Susan remained, frozen in time, driven to pumping her legs through the silent air.

He liked her face the most. She seemed so untouched, innocent to the insanity of the world around her. The soft curl of her cheek was always curved up in a broad smile; her eyes, though vacant of understanding, were large, clear blue, and surrounded by thick black lashes. He also loved the smallness of her shoulders. Although rounded, and slightly misshapen, they had such a delicate line.

Tonight the swing's rhythm and flowing movement seemed to push back the muggy heat. He finished his drink and watched as she held her legs out tight against the sky. His stomach fluttered as she lurched out beyond the stretch of the chains, then fell back over and over again. She closed her eyes, giggled, opened her legs and leaned back, letting her head hang down behind her. The squeaking sounded like an ancient flute. Her body floated through the heat of the night as if she were in another dimension. She was in some sort of trance when she acted like this, he thought. He stood up, opened the screen door, glanced back, then went back in the rectory. The parish fiscal report still lay on his desk, unfinished. Watching Susan play her lullaby would have to wait.

But Father Steve couldn't concentrate on the report. The swaying sounds of those swings made him feel sleepy. He pulled out the bottle of Scotch he stored in his desk and refilled his glass, then walked back and sat down on the stoop. Tonight was so hot. Susan's hair floated like a flag through the night. Cool, continuous, the rhythm flowed like a song in a secret language.

He stood, put his empty glass down on the cement, and walked over to the last swing. His once handsome face was the color of the whiskey he drank, skin drawn tightly across his high cheek bones and wide set, black eyes. His lips pressed in a rigid line across his teeth. He sat down on the strapped seat, tensing his back

against the oppressive heat. The swing lurched forward as he jerked his head and neck up. He swung his arms around violently as the strap slid out from under him and circled in a half twist. The grainy sand absorbed the edge of his fall.

Susan turned down her toes, digging them in the sand, until the swing stopped. She stared at Father Steve sprawled on the ground. He rolled over, wiped off his lips with his knuckles, and stared up at the thick dust of the city's sky for a long time. Finally, she returned to pumping out a rhythm. Metal clamps grinding on metal cylinders...squeaking out a low tubular sound. Why the hell does she do this all the time? Steve thought. What kind of pleasure or satisfaction could it bring? He stood up and dusted off his black pants and shirt. His eyes burnt and his stomach rolled from watching her hypnotic movement.

He shook himself gently and walked closer to where she continued to rock. Sitting down on the strapped seat next to her, he pushed his legs back into the air and felt his head tip to the empty sky. Not bad. He watched her, then pulled his body forward, pushing with his feet, then tucking his legs down. The swing lurched; he heard the metal sound of his own rocking. He pumped harder, pulling his arms tight against the chains, until he felt the soft whisper of the wind on his ears. He smiled and laughed. Harder, higher, until his dizziness felt integrated into the moment. His body felt fluid, free from the tense constriction of gravity. And yet the constant pulling back of his arms on the chains gave him power over that uncontrollable sense of being removed from his body. He relaxed his arm muscles and joined Susan's paced tempo, keeping his body even with the back and forth rhythm of her swing.

And then Father Steve's body mingled with the heat of the night air. His flesh could no longer hold what belonged within. He was fire floating on water, burning with no apparent source of fuel. Existing with no apparent reason except to burn. Alive, empowered with the energy that flowed through him, in him, feeding an eternal cycle. Rhythmic, connecting to the flow of burning color--purple, blue, melted, yet nonconsuming.

He felt his spine poke into the muscles of his now limp neck. His arms tingled, so he tightened his grip on the metal chain. He smiled and

let his long legs dangle in the sand to interrupt the tempo. Susan had stopped swinging and sat staring at his relaxed face. She grinned and rolled her head back and forth in exaggerated gestures.

He smiled back and slowly reached out toward her face, gently touching the broad lips that had fascinated him so. He stood, reached back toward Susan again, took her arms in his hands and softly squeezed them. She smiled an open grin and wrapped her arms around his waist, and nuzzled her cheek into the thin hollow of his lower rib cage. She continued to hug him as she rubbed her face against the black cotton of his sweaty shirt.

Her hair smelt sweet, like apricots. He pushed his firm chin down past his collar and stroked it across her black wisps of hair. So soft. His lips touched the crown of her head.

She continued to hug him, her hands rubbing and patting his back. He reached down and touched her chin, pulling her face upward to see his. That smile, and those eyes--open, and without fear. He smiled down at her, then kissed the satin flesh of her cheek. She giggled and firmly pushed her lips on his making a loud smacking sound, then pulled her face away. She snuggled back down on his chest and continued to pat the back of his arms.

He rubbed his hands down the soft roundness of her shoulders. No strength here, he thought. He let his fingers play with the soft fold of skin he found under her arm, then he slid his hands down her sides, encircling her waist.

She pulled away from him, and grabbing his hands, yanked him toward the swing. He gently pushed her hands away, smiled, and walked back toward the rectory. He was too tired for anymore swinging, he thought.

The sun's color bled across the gray dawn, promising another day of scorching heat. Father Steve glanced at the now empty swing set as he drank his coffee. I must have really hung one on last night, he thought. He couldn't believe he had acted so foolishly. And my God, Susan. What about Susan? He had actually kissed and held her. What if someone had seen him out there swinging with her and holding her? God! She was the kind that always turned up pregnant, with everyone pointing fingers at everybody else. If someone saw them last night, he could be blamed. He held his forehead in his

hands, rubbed his eyes, drained the last swallow of coffee from his cup, then moved toward the bedroom to get dressed for daily mass.

She was there on the church steps when he came out after the service. She waved at him, and reached her arms out to his. Grabbing his black sleeve, she pulled him, and grinned the broad simple smile he had seen last night. She continued to pull his arm until he followed. She wanted him to go back to the swings and play with her. He whipped his arm out of her soft grasp and pulled his shoulder up. His lips tensed as he gasped, and shook his head no at her. Turning on his heels, he ran back into the church, and into the sacristy. She was going to be trouble, he thought. Damn it.

He sat for a long time in the sacristy, head in hands, before finally getting up and going to his office. He closed the door, went over to his desk and got out the phone book. He flipped to the beginning of the yellow pages, ran his finger down the column marked Attorneys, and finally finding the number he wanted, dialed.

"Is Mr. James in?" He cupped his hand over the back of the phone and waited.

"Harry, this is Father Steve. Yeah, I got the donation from the booster Club. Thanks. Always on top of it, aren't you? Listen, I have a question. I don't know if I should ask you or Social Services. You know that Downs Syndrome girl that's always swinging next to the rectory? Well, some of the mothers have been complaining about her. I know that kind is not supposed to get violent, but I'm wondering if she might need some kind of evaluation or something. Could you tell me what I should do here? I don't want the church held responsible for anything that might happen." Steve nodded his head, relaxed his shoulders, and let out a deep sigh.

"Thanks, Harry. I knew you could handle this discreetly. Until Thursday and golf. You owe me two at the nineteenth hole from last week, remember."

Father Steve sat back

**H**is once  
handsome face  
was the color  
of the whiskey  
he drank,  
skin drawn tightly  
across his high  
cheek bones and  
wide set, black eyes.

in his chair and sighed again. Harry would come through in a couple of days.

She was swinging the next morning as he crossed the yard on the way to mass. Her large circling arm movements beckoned him to join her. But he cast his eyes down and continued on into the church. He pulled at his tightening collar, genuflected in front of the altar, and prayed an Our Father. A couple of days... Harry had said, a couple of days. His stomach churned. It would be a good day to go back to bed, Father Steve thought. He felt lousy.

The church was silent. He had arrived before the regular rosary reciters. Today, he would sit in the back pew and listen to their mantra song. He liked the way "Hail Mary" sounded when a group recited it. "Hail Mary, full of grace...blessed are you among women...Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death," over and over, until the words lost their meaning and the sounds opened up into a melody.

The faithful filtered in one by one. Kneeling on the thin padded cushions, beads clicking, mouths moving silently until the leader arrived. She knelt in front of the Sanctuary facing the pews, and began the long chant to the Queen of Heaven.

Father Steve closed his eyes and listened to the rhythm. The second Our Father seemed distorted. His ears felt on fire. He rubbed them and tried to reimmerse himself in the flow of prayer. The sound of metal rubbing on

metal—he could not hear the words because of this grinding. He raised his head up and straightened his spine. No one else seemed distracted by this scraping, so he readjusted his knees and bent his head back down. Damn this heat in his ears. A high pitched squeaking filled his head. distant at first, yet increasing in volume and tempo. He pulled his hands up to his ears; the sound swelled in a loud pitch now, intense, like

some piece of uneven metal scraping a raw claw across cold steel. It sounded like Susan rocking on those swings. He pulled forward, body rigid from the searing heat in the right side of his brain. He tried to speak, but couldn't; the noise of the swings was all consuming.

He tried to pull himself up and out of the pew, but his legs wouldn't move. Finally, in desperation, he lurched forward, rolled out of the pew and into the aisle.

The leader stopped praying and ran over to where Father Steve had fallen. His neck was arched and he frantically rubbed his ears.

"Someone call an ambulance!" She screamed.

They wheeled Father Steve out on a thin stretcher through the sanctuary door. His black eyes open and staring, rigid arms strapped tightly down by his sides. The ambulance drivers rushed past the abandoned nunnery, through the playground, and past the swaying swings. The swings moved gently. Susan sat on the furthest one over, smiling that broad grin, and waving her arms quietly, beckoning through the yellow stillness of the morning air.

**F**ather Steve closed his eyes and listened to the rhythm. The second Our Father seemed distorted. His ears felt on fire.

## LOVE AT THE NO-TELL MOTEL

Stark beige walls  
surrounding the cheap gaiety  
of printed chintz curtains.  
Ruffled bedspreads and toilet bands  
that welcome you  
to the **LOVE MOTEL**.  
Life flashes there in neon lights.  
Lonely people meet for an afternoon, ...  
or a night...

Two hours of forgetting.  
What the hell?  
It's more than most of us get.

-COLLEEN SMITH-



# NMC MAGAZINE CONTEST - 1989

Prizes will be awarded in six categories! First, second, and third place prizes will be awarded in each category.

**FIRST PLACE:** \$25.00 and publication in the Spring 1989 issue

**SECOND PLACE:** \$15.00

**THIRD PLACE:** \$10.00

## RULES AND CATEGORIES

All manuscripts must be typed and be double spaced on one side of 8 1/2 X 11 white paper. Please label the category you are entering clearly in the upper left hand corner of the first page (or on each poem). There should be **NO** name, address, phone number, or other identifying feature on the manuscript itself. Anonymous manuscripts must be accompanied by a sealed envelope containing the following information: Name, address, and phone number. The title of the manuscript must be legibly marked on the outside of the envelope. All submissions not meeting these criteria will be considered for publication but will be ineligible for the contest. The *NMC MAGAZINE* reserves the right not to publish the winners if, in the opinion of the judges, the entries do not meet its usual standards for publication.

### LITERARY

**FICTION:** You may submit one story of up to 3000 words. The work must be original fiction. All characters and their names must be fictitious. Manuscripts will not be returned, so submit good quality photocopies. Keep the original of your manuscript. Entries must be stapled and pages numbered.

**POETRY:** You may submit up to three poems of no more than 20 lines each. Each poem must be typed, double spaced on one side of 8 1/2 X 11 white paper. Each poem must be on an individual page. Poems will not be returned, so submit good quality photocopies. Keep the original of your manuscript.

**FEATURE/ESSAY:** You may submit one manuscript of up to 3000 words. Entry must be original and unpublished at the time of submission.

#### MAIL LITERARY SUBMISSIONS TO:

NMC MAGAZINE  
COMMUNICATIONS BUILDING  
NORTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE  
TRAVERSE CITY, MICHIGAN 49684

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:

(616) 922-1152 OR (616) 922-1175

### ART

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** You may submit up to two pieces of either color or black and white photography of any size.

**TWO DIMENSIONAL:** You may submit up to two pieces. This category includes: Drawing, Illustration, Graphic, Lithograph, Screen Printing, Painting and Design.

**THREE DIMENSIONAL:** You may submit up to two pieces. This category includes: Metal Smithing, Pottery, Jewelry, and Sculpture.

#### SUBMIT ART ENTRIES TO:

TRICIA STEVENS IN THE FINE ARTS BUILDING, OR CALL TRICIA STEVENS AT 922-1325, OR JILL HINDS AT 922-1328 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

*You may enter as many as six categories, but each entry must be submitted individually, following the submission criteria.*

The deadline for submissions is  
**APRIL 5, 1989**



