

VOLUME XIV  
NUMBER 2

# Folio



*Folio* is not representative of student writing at Western. If the material published were to be selected democratically (the majority of the work submitted ruling), the magazine would consist entirely of poetry, divine inspiration and chest-beating. *Folio* would be a confessional for the tortured spirit and the formless mind. The editors, similarly pained and amorphous, have the deepest sympathy for the majority, but cling rather obstinately to aristocratic forms — the chief of which is Form. This is not to say we are sticky about the Art of Poetry or are championing a return to the heroic couplet. All we seek in the work submitted is a control of language. We want to be assured that the writer is serious, that he is conscious of his art, and that he is doing what he wants to do well.

So *Folio* doesn't give a fig for what the writer or artist is "trying to say"? The editors are so intent upon craft that form gobbles substance and only the artsy-craftsy survive? Art for art's sake and not for Western's? Of course not. Anyone who suggests that there is a Cult of Form on this campus doesn't know undergraduate writing.

But we think *Folio* should continue to be undemocratic and selective. If we want to publish a reasonably good magazine, a magazine that is relevant not only to Western but also to art, we will not accept the majority, of either contributors or readers, who will not concede that whatever is done must be done well.

You may see the results of our arbitration in this issue. We believe that we have selected the best of the graphics, prose and poetry contributed; but our decisions at best can only be relative. Perhaps the objection will be raised in the cafeterias that *Folio* is up to its old esoteric tricks again, that *Folio* has foregone communication for "artiness". But we hope that the magazine will be found "arty" in the best sense of the word — in that our contributors have some inkling of aesthetic control — and that some parts of it at least will not be meaningless. In fact, *Folio* tends towards simplicity rather than arcane-ness: no one is *trying* to be difficult.

This is our *Apology for Folio*. We believe that our measures of excellence are relatively sound and that, having applied them, this issue of *Folio* is worthwhile. We hope the majority agrees.

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prizes in  
writing  
and  
art

Alumni Award:

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Poetry:

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*Linda Browne*

Short Story:

*Kee Dewdney*

The Snowflake

*Peter Courchesne*

The Pointillistic

Essay:

*Michael Serveau*

Malarmé, Miller and Existentialism

Art:

*John Cairns*

cover design

*Jim Shuttleworth*

Three Angry Friends

sponsored by Folio, Hesperian Club, Department of  
English, Alumni Association.

# folio

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the university of western ontario

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*Peter Courchesne*

*Kee Dewdney*

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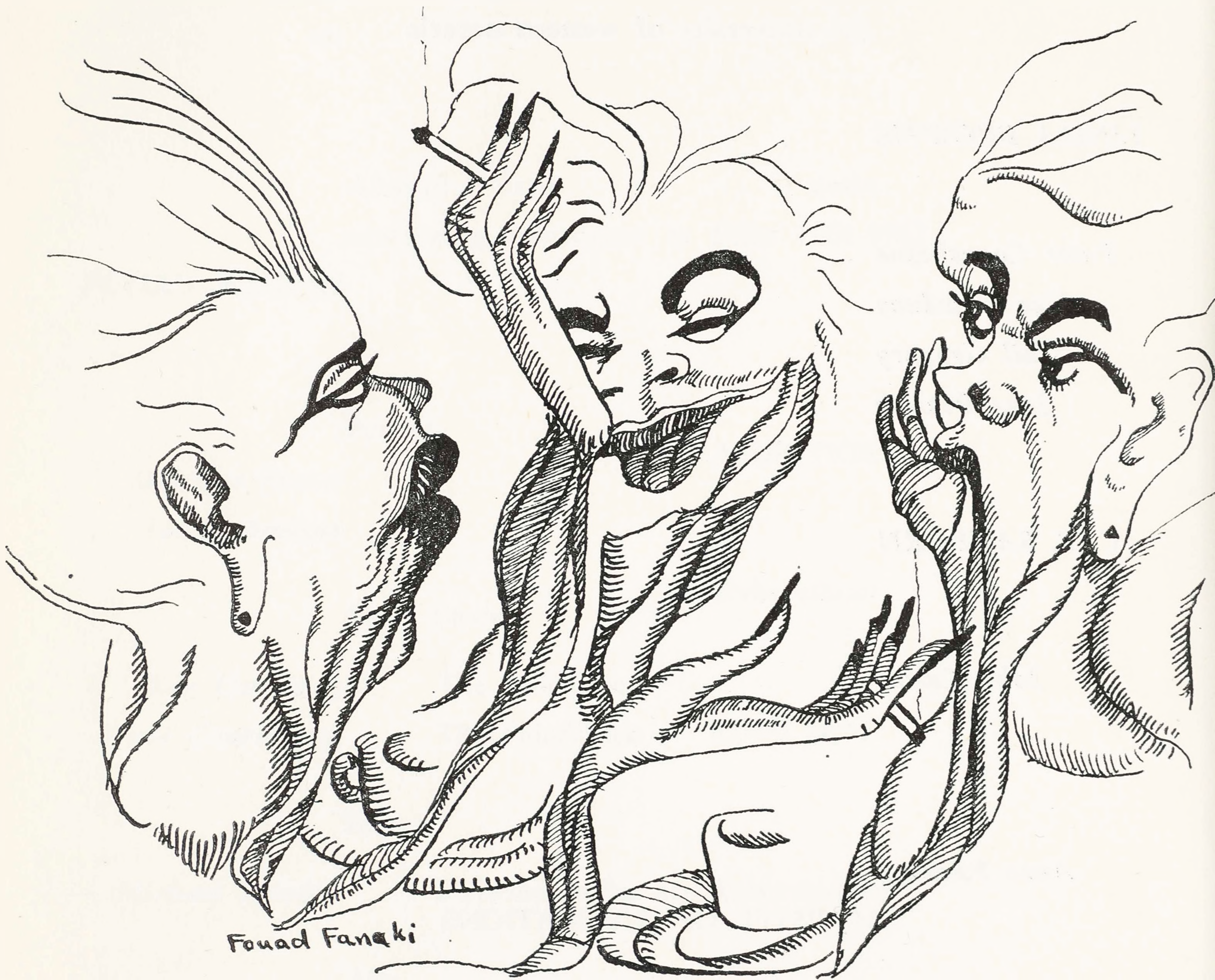
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BUSINESS MANAGER

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Fouad Fanaki

THE CO-EDS

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# PETER COURCHESNE

## *The Pointillistic*

I woke up, I don't usually wake so early — without an alarm — not when I've been up most of the night. I woke up, but I didn't get out of bed. I rolled over and forced my head into the pillow — into the darkness of the pillow. I remembered the bus.

. . . Only two days ago coming home on the bus and outside the snow falling strange how the snow fell prettily jocular yet somehow down — filtering sadly like it had once been so high great heights and had all the way fallen free all the way close to the earth now swirling and finally nuzzling among the other flakes burying and more flakes immediately covering and then lying still forever must be warm too keeping the earth warm I like it at Christmas time covering everything making the little town peaceful sleepy and the night is never sharp hard dark but suggestive shadowed like the telephone poles and the trees far off but near and going by the bus window like the snowflakes flashing there there again the window like a frame because the bus speeds they seem caught photographically standing still like a TV the whirring spots making a picture life is molecular the snow shows that dreamy retrospective the feeling is more in the stomach than the heart love the creek was a blur too it meant we were near and I thought 'Here we go' and I thought 'It's the last time'.

. . . But I got off the bus and just stood there put my bags down looking at the house it wasn't a shack but a house the hedge all littered with lights spasmodically flickering dashing little coloured pools in the snow and the blue haze that swam on the white porch a holly wreath on the door too it was cold and the smoke twisted up through



the sharp air I remember because even in the snow I could see it the house looked like a mushroom cottage from Hans Christian Andersen like a fairy tale it looked warm and maybe it was because it would probably be my last time home and that would be it walked in and the sidewalk was shovelled I wondered who shovelled the sidewalk my brother was too damn lazy.

. . . Then inside and all at once everything at once she came to me to give me one of those big momma hugs and I said 'Look, I'll put my bags away' and walked away from her into my old room it was very empty Harold made some coffee he does that makes coffee and we spoke at the kitchen table everybody wanting to know everything me seeing things one at a time I noticed the livingroom newly painted new drapes new table cloths big coloured candles she had made and santas and snowmen all over the place Christmas cards too and a tree already up the house every inch spic and span orderly for me I knew I should have said thanks I noticed but I did I think I did say about the tree and that I liked the drapes I said that much and asked Harold who had made the place so nice but mom had gone out of the room he hadn't done it I should have known and still not working she had done that herself Lord how the house was nice all those years upkeep and improvement the floors furnace porch even the foundations it was cozy now I was glad the will was settled and mother had got the house I wouldn't buy a damn thing for the cousins my aunt fighting for the house what did she want with it with all her money my mother's sister she had sold her soul that lady cause she had had one I could tell she was interested in things a silly word even would look it up right away in the dictionary the big library of books all leather bound never read they were crummy books anyway how could you get so many wrong books but she never got the house being subversive to get the will changed as if she had ever done anything for her father it was all mom's concern a raving senile spoiled old man for years they all took advantage of her like father who walked out Lord I don't know how long ago I remember him he was rustic so I liked him and Harold never working sponging except she gave him the grocery money sometimes to pay the bill he disappeared for six months and the bill not paid coming back finally when the money was gone and he pawned off her present the TV set and was gone half a year ladies groups dance groups her church she worked hard at everything still studying too at her age her father would mock her for that she shouldn't know more than him the older we get the more selfishly stupid they all took advantage of her Harold me.

. . . I was studying she was getting ready to go out she phoned the aunt how can she keep up like that to hell with them that's what to say but always she forgave as if nothing happened she forgave forty times four or whatever it is she forgave and asked since she was going downtown could she get a lift 'No' the aunt said it was too inconvenient and she asked me something some silly thing about cartons she wanted some cardboard cartons and I said no straight out I don't

know why any other time I would have done it most other times I would have done it but I was studying I don't know when she left kind of vague she was there and she wasn't I was studying she forgot something and came back that's what it was she was always forgetting something but soon the house was quiet and I knew she was gone I got up to wrap her present it was a good present I think hand-carved salad spoon and fork out of ebony I was pleased with it she would say she liked it even if she didn't she always said that the other day the twenty-third her birthday wasn't much I gave her and only at the end of the day earrings and brooch of copper if I had given them sooner she would have enjoyed them longer but she was at work all day it was a miserable present but the Christmas one would make up I thought and I had a good card too the house was so nice and I wrapped the salad things such an awkward shape so damned hard to wrap I put the card with it.

. . . Out the window for a while I watched a cat on the fence watching me I had never seen the snow so deep on Christmas not all fluff that deep it was good to be home for Christmas Eve even Harold was being nice he had bought presents for everyone and something she wanted very much for her things seemed to be going well maybe I'd have liked it better before if I believed in Christ's birthday maybe I should try but it was Christmas and the end of a year and the year seemed drawing to an end a good year a perfect piece of time and this Christmas it was good to be home I thought maybe I'd try to get home every Christmas I am the last one she will be all alone it will be nice for her at Christmas at least and I studied again time went fast I remember I looked at the clock it was Leacock I was reading I remember laughing and the phone rang it was dark out already still snowing it was mother she had missed the bus she was catching the next and was bringing some kentucky fried chicken and chips would I set the table so I could hurry out in time for my date 'Sure' I set the table put the kettle on I had been out every night but I promised to save one for her I wasn't sure which one I promised and I read again she would be home in fifteen minutes I read the kettle was boiling several chapters I read and was laughing and once got up to look at the time it was later than the bus should have been but it's often late.

. . . I was reading when they knocked at the door the neighbour who always gave her hell for letting her friends park in the driveway she paid to pave and the kid a few doors down the neighbour opened the door before I answered and the kid said 'C'mere' or something his voice I knew to hurry putting on my shoes 'You mother's had an accident out here on the road' he said that's exactly what he said I went past him out the door thinking about life in the hospital 'Is it bad?' the neighbour said something I should prepare, it's very bad.

. . . Just out past the driveway there was a few people ten maybe they were looking all together their heads down looking and a big cop I lept the ditch she was there by the ditch on the pavement the snow

falling on her face I only looked too thinking wait wait a minute this is no good let's go back a chapter and in a minute the cop took her feet someone her hands and slung her off the pavement somebody said 'Don't you'll hurt her back maybe' and the big blank-faced cop looked up and said 'She's dead' quietly he said it like 'Didn't you know' then I knelt on the road my clean pants still thinking wait a minute let's go back and I took her wrist under the thumb there was no pulse but her pulse had always been weak there was none I thought to cry but just held her wrist someone said something I forget and the people kept looking I wasn't crying I know I asked the cop 'Help me carry her in' they all looking her clothes were torn no shoes parcels all over a hundred feet clotted fur from her coat I don't know why I asked the cop he said 'No' 'It's her son' the neighbour said and the cop said 'OK' the neighbour helped me but he was only in the way there wasn't much blood I thought looking over her head hung backwards crazy limp I took my eyes away I didn't look I put her on the sofa the cop wouldn't leave like maybe I had killed her I wanted to be alone with her her nose was bruised but not bad she was still beautiful I thought and I thought no one else would think so I saw the blood now on the back of her head and I wiped it off a little some of it with my handkerchief but it was no good and then I cried.

. . . She was run down killed by a hit and run the way she had always been treated right in front of the house it had happened right at the door trying to come home I had been reading she was bringing the supper she was hurrying so I could get out for my date in time hurrying for me it was night on the highway dark carrying the parcels alone she was alone as the snow fell it was winter and the end of the year the only time of the year I could have been there and it would have been a good year though it was probably the last time for me coming home to her house now it had been the last time she could bring the supper she had died so much the way she had lived so perfectly the way she had lived so perfectly I didn't need to believe in Christmas.

Lying awake now I heard someone walk into the house. There was no knock; he just walked in. I put on a house jacket and went to see. My uncle stood there. He had been crying. He asked for a coffee and walked past me into the kitchen. I poured him the coffee and we talked. He said if I needed money he would see that I got it. It was my last year at school and I didn't need money. We said nothing then for slow minutes as we watched the cars pass.

Then: "It's probably best for her", I said, "She would have been more lonely every year."

"Yes, but she didn't deserve that! She didn't deserve that!" He was shaking his head, and he passed his fingers through his hair.

I stood up. "Oh! Yes she did. Yes!" I said, "It was so beautiful!"

# NEMOUBLIEZ . . .

## ii

The sea is on fire  
high-current-hot.  
The lobster escapes  
to the lobster pot.

Organic things  
swell up like balloons  
while high in the sky  
float twelve ether moons.

### **THE FIRST:**

'tis the end, 'tis the end  
(cried in despair)  
the eyeball is boiled  
with the broth of the hair.

### **THE SECOND:**

(doesn't say anything).

### **THE THIRD:**

'tis but a white moth's flutter  
upon a purple sea  
and matters not to anyone  
mostly you and me.

### **THE FOURTH:**

run north, run south,  
anywhere they go  
Finality shall find them  
and give the kiss of snow.

### **THE FIFTH:**

the children with the blight  
who ask for soothing balm  
receive but pain and sorrow  
outside the icy tomb.

### **THE SIXTH:**

how well do I remember  
my passage there below  
the seas and straits of torment  
until the kiss of snow.

**THE SEVENTH:**

perhaps this fire will end the fear  
the fear of being born  
and scorch away the dreaded thing,  
the coming of the morn.

**THE EIGHTH:**

take heed, take heed,  
the trilobite remember  
perished in the dust of June  
was reborn in December.

**THE NINTH:**

'tis but a tiny fragment  
a fragment of a dream  
and nothing ends that started is  
if starting's not a dream.

**THE TENTH:**

beneath the muddy veil of tears  
my clouded eye surveys  
the blackness of the nights  
and the blindness of the days.

**THE ELEVENTH:**

are you truly troubled  
at the sight you see?  
Then pierce your inner eye  
and nothing there will be.

**THE TWELFTH:**

there is a flaming monster  
who o'er the seas doth roam;  
the only place that he will seek  
is but a monster's home.

**THE SECOND** (Now speaks):

the moth will scream within the dream  
and receive the kiss of snow,  
but there will be no awakening  
and nowhere else to go.

The sea was on fire  
high-current-hot.  
The lobsters embraced  
in the lobster pot.

Organic things  
. . . deflated balloons,  
while high in the sky  
float twelve ether moons.

Let us fly  
absinthe-clean  
over the roof-tops  
hand in hand  
to cinnamon gate  
and lizard bridge.

And there  
to hang no longer  
by a thread of soul.

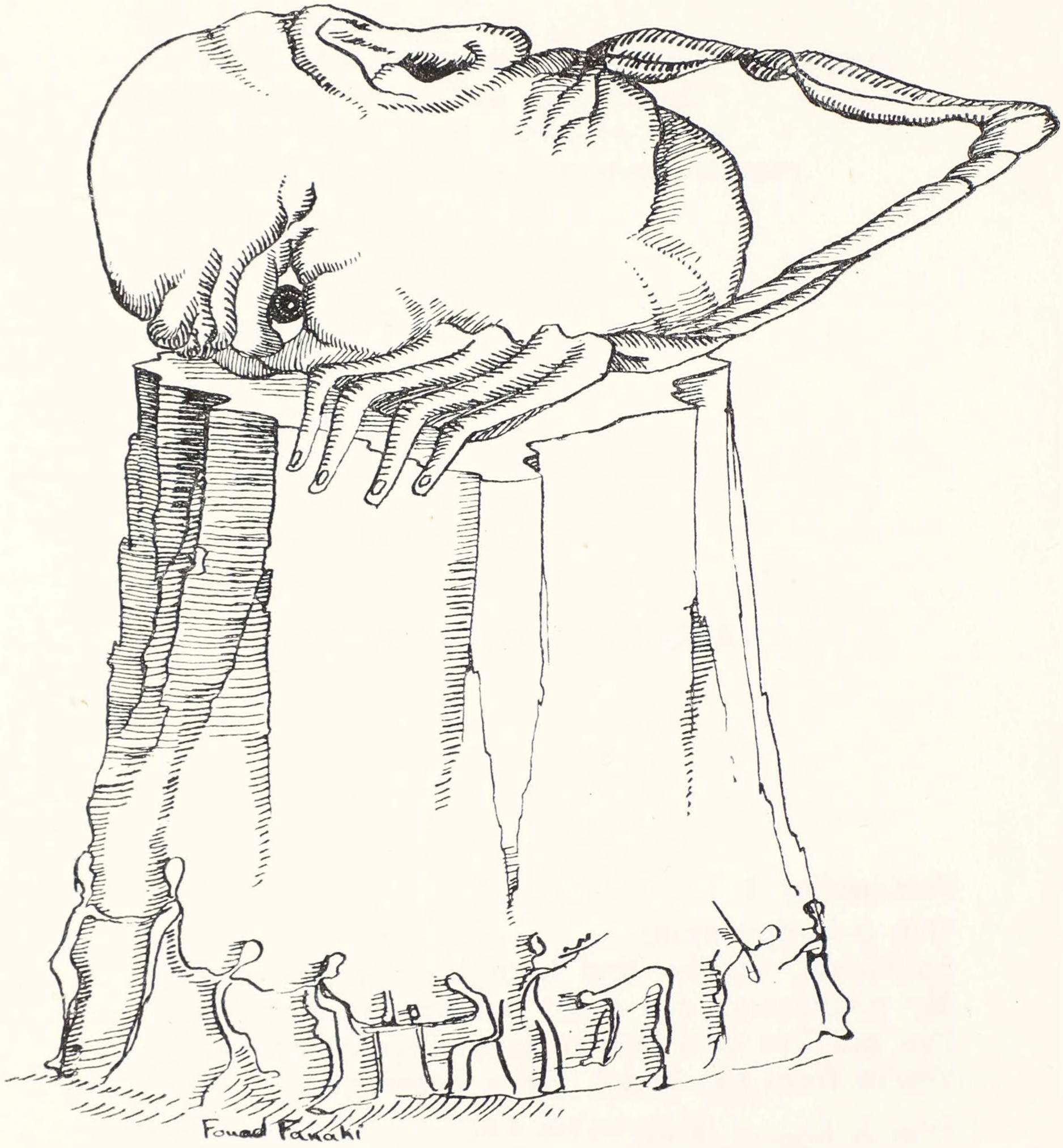
A net of mint,  
with children's heads  
and chimney pots,  
marks the way.

Chickory sweet  
and acacia wings  
Goodbye!

I shall be a melon  
and drug the garden  
and never die.

I, to the measure of the drum, race  
down the asylum of my mind  
where halls are dark and windswept  
and windowpanes of moths.

I feel the scraping of a pungent sound  
construed of light and lobster's claws,  
the flutter of the coloured moths  
which spiral down to dust.



**SUSPICION**

D. R. GRAY

**TALES FROM TWO COUCHES**

**Personality 1**

"I'm a happy man;  
Split-level, Caddy, and both brand-new;  
My neighbours are great (except for that Jew).  
I've got Rye and Scotch down in my bar —  
You're from the Club? Here, havacigar!

"I'm a happy man;  
I love this world for all it can give.  
What the hell, why else do we live?  
Isn't it fair to cut your throat  
If you monkey around with the big 'promote'?"

"I'm a happy man;  
I go to church once in a while;  
(It always makes my woman smile).  
But honesty doesn't make much sense;  
It doesn't pay for furs and rents."



## Personality 2

"I'm a lonely man;  
I love the world, but it despises;  
I've tried; it never compromises.  
I cannot let myself entomb  
In society's rotten festering womb.

"I'm a lonely man;  
I've been almost married and twice engaged,  
And through it all I've only aged.  
Here's to liquor that conquers fear;  
Not sweet as a kiss — but more sincere.

"I'm a lonely man;  
Unloved, thus self-respecting,  
Not happy, but reflecting.  
I'll never fit  
In your social kit.

"I'm a lonely man;  
Seeking, wandering, almost found,  
Yet ever wary of being bound.  
Conformity? Regimentation?  
I'm on your train, but it's not my station."

## Analysis

Life isn't quite like hell;  
It's just getting used to its sterile cell,  
Reality trapped in life's culture-gel,  
Conceived in apathy, borne with disdain,  
Synthetically nursed, then analy trained,  
Yields spongoid, sexless, detergent Brain.  
Childhood's change to youthful fire,  
Extinguished by culture, (and don't inquire),  
You say you're not like that? My friend, you're a liar!  
And after life when bodies release,  
Who can tell?

Heaven . . .

Or maybe even Peace?

KEE DEWDNEY

## *The Snowflake*

### *Marilyn*

On the day before Christmas, Marilyn lay in bed, and Kevin, tired of the snow which fell steadily outside, came into the shack and, discarding his ragged play-clothes, ran into Marilyn's bedroom. It was morning.

Marilyn had a cold. She lay under the worn covers and watched Kevin through half-closed eyes as he entered the room. She saw his silhouette pass the window as she squinted her eyes still more. She felt him bounce onto the bed by one of her legs, and his dirty white shirt faded in her vision until it was just the faintest discoloration in the flat darkness of the walls.

"Hey! Marilyn, are you going to tell me a story like before?" demanded Kevin, cocking his head to one side.

Marilyn tried to think of a story, as she opened her eyes a little, allowing Kevin more solidity. She thought about a story of winter — it was snowing so much outside! She remained silent for several minutes while Kevin waited solemnly.

"Huh, Marilyn?"

Finally a story began to come to her and at first she told it without knowing what was coming next, but as she expanded it, the plot smoothly revealed itself.

The grey winter light from the window cast her face in soft marble. Only her lips moved and it was as though a mysterious presence was hovering at her side, whispering the words in her ear and she merely repeating them.

"Once there was this little boy who lived far inside a huge forest in a little hut with his mom and dad. His mom and dad were awful mean to the little boy and they even beat him sometimes. In the morning, his dad would say to the little boy, 'Go chop some wood for the stove to keep us warm!' and the little boy would take his hatchet and go into the forest and chop some wood. He would carry all the wood he chopped back home and make a fire in the stove. His mom would say 'go and get some water for our soup' and she said she'd throw him in the stove and burn him if he didn't, so he did. He would go two miles to this creek and fill two pails of water and then he would carry them all the way home.

"Then his mom and dad would beat him up. They'd beat him until he cried. They got lots of fun out of it. The little boy had to make supper, and at supper, his mom and dad would eat real greedy and then they would go to bed and they'd never even say "goodnight" to him. If the little boy rattled the ladder a bit on his way to the attic, his mom would say she was going to throw him in the fire and this made him extra quiet. The little boy had to sleep in the cold attic and all he had there was a straw bed to sleep on.

"One night he was lying in his bed and shivering when he happened to feel something crawling in his bed under the covers. It was a big, long caterpillar. He picked it up and put it beside him on the floor. He watched it crawl around in the moonlight for awhile and then he took this piece of straw and began teasing it. He poked it to one side when it crawled toward the other, and he turned it over and poked its belly.

"Just then he happened to look up and he was scared out of his wits!

"Outside his window was the white, white face of a woman staring in at him! He forgot all about the caterpillar. The pale woman's face was as white as ice and her teeth were like hailstones, and her hair was like a blizzard.

" 'What do you want?' said the little boy. He was so scared he could hardly talk. The pale woman said,

" 'You shouldn't tease little caterpillars that can't protect themselves!'

" 'I didn't mean to', said the little boy sadly and he told the pale woman about his life and about how he never had any fun and had to work all the time.

" 'Do you know who I am?' said the pale woman.

" 'No' said the little boy.

" 'I'm the winter queen', said the woman. 'If you are sad and your life is hard, I will make things easy for you. I will make you happy!'

" 'How can you make me happy, Winter Queen?' the little boy asked.

"'I'll turn you into a snowflake!' she answered, and told him how nice it would be to become a snowflake. He wouldn't have to do any work and he would be happy all the time.

"As she spoke, she was drifting away from the window. She had on a long white dress that trailed almost to the ground below. The little boy was scared that maybe she was going to leave.

"'Take me with you, Winter Queen,' he yelled and she began coming closer to the window again.

"The Winter Queen looked at him closely for a while and then gave him some advice.

"'To escape you must burn a piece of your hair and take three smells of the smoke — then go through the window and follow me!'

"The little boy took these scissors and cut a piece of his hair off. He took a match and watched a yellow flame jump from the hair. He quickly took three sniffs of the smoke and before he knew it, he was floating through his window and flying up to where the Winter Queen waited for him above the trees.

"Up and up they flew and it got colder and colder. The little boy felt his arms grow stiff and numb. The tips of his fingers and toes tingled and he felt his skin harden and stretch into funny patterns. Finally, he couldn't move any more and the Winter Queen held him by one of his arms.

"The next thing the little snowflake could remember was falling with a whole bunch of other little snowflakes through the sky. It was day time and he landed finally, under a walnut tree by this little stream. The sun shone far away and his whole body of six points flashed like a bunch of diamonds and all around him were other little snowflakes, all white and shiny just like himself.

"Day after day he dreamed and rested in a heaven of snow and twinkling lights.

"Sometimes the little snowflake would see his mom go by with two pails of water in her hands and sometimes he would see his dad go by with a load of wood. He was glad that he got rid of his cruel parents even though sometimes they looked a little sad.

"One day came that seemed to be really beautiful to the little snowflake. The sun was a bit warmer than before and everything seemed to be coming alive. Off in the distance he could hear a dog barking and the stream beside him went faster and bubbled as it went. A blackbird flew to this branch over his head and started to sing. The little snowflake, happy for the company, turned once more to his body to see how beautiful it was . . ."

Kevin turned and putting both arms around Marilyn's knees which were doubled-up, hugged them and gazed sadly at her face.

"He was beginning to melt! The little snowflake began to cry, but the more he cried, the more he melted. He wished the Winter Queen would come and fix him. He yelled and screamed for help but no one came, not even the Winter Queen.

"Just when he was about to give up hope, he heard this rustling sound and looked up. There was a wrinkled old lady, all dressed in black. She had on a black dress and a black shawl over her head.

"'Help me!' yelled the snowflake to the old lady. He was really melting fast and the sweat came off his body in little rivers. The old lady looked at him for awhile and then cackled to herself.

"'Sure I'll help you!' she said and picked the snowflake up in her hands and cackled some more. The old lady's hands were as hot as coals and with a gasp, the snowflake melted into a little pool of tears and poured between the old lady's fingers into the stream below.

"The old lady cackled again and pulling her dress up a little, hobbled away through the sunny, dripping woods."

### *Mother*

The mother's face pinched as she looked out the window in front of her. Her hands swam in the warm dishwater like two fish. She stared out the window, watching the snow slanting in from the west.

The hands stopped searching for cutlery and rested, dripping on the rim of the pan. The mother leaned forward slightly and squinted into the snow as though gazing into the mysteries of a crystal ball.

"God f'give us — a little boy dancing in the snow! Not Kevin — surely — else Marilyn's crazy and talking to herself! No it's someone else's little kid — some parents don't give a damn what their kids do.

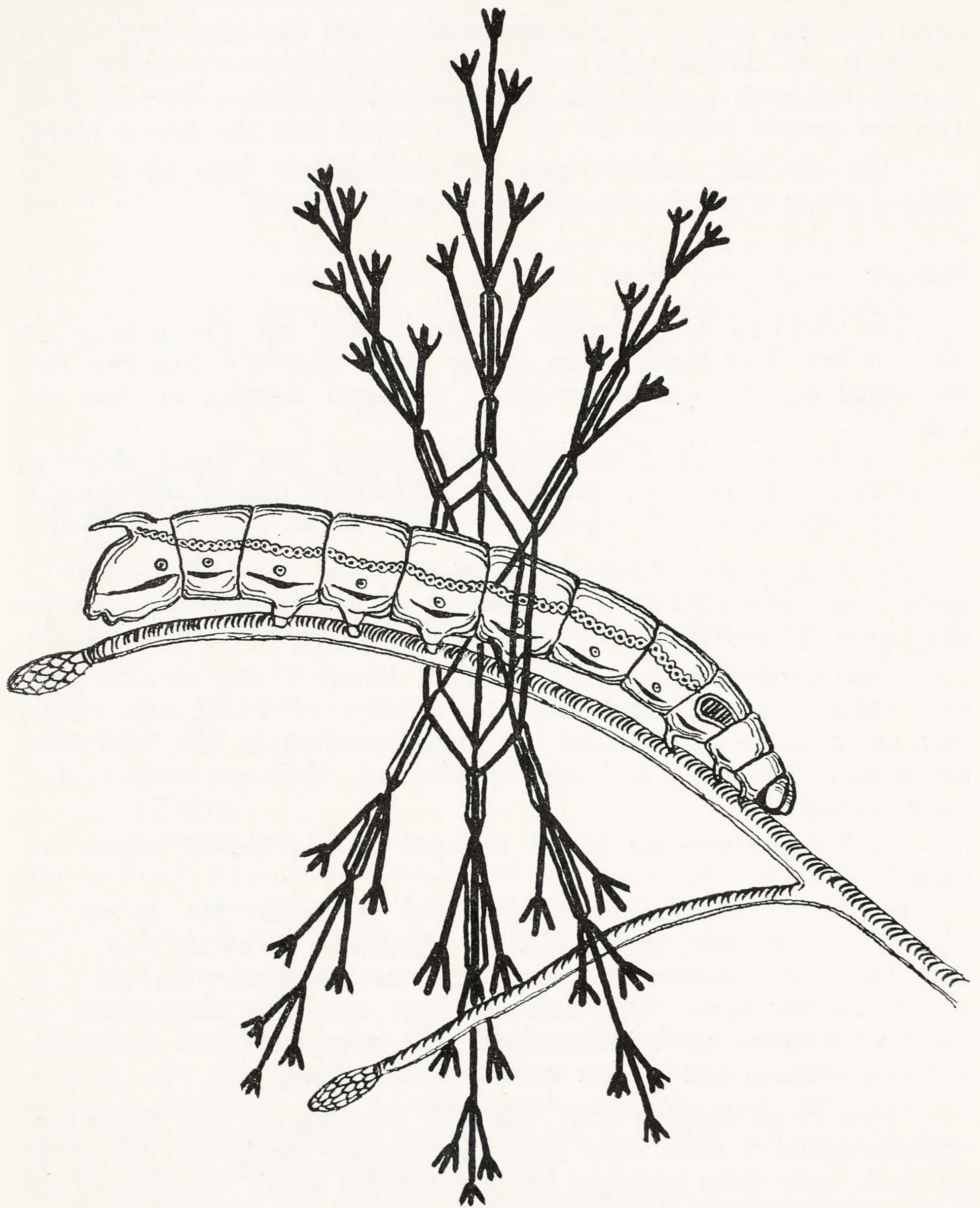
"Dear little Kevin! — and the Lord knows I was sensible with you. Marilyn was real jealous when you come. Lord! I said, what's come over the child! — and I didn't pay much attention to him after that. Kevin sure don't like me — but you'll see! He'll get older — he'll come around . . .

"God f'give us — it's just a tarpaper shingle blowin' across the snow!"

Marilyn opened her eyes and looked at Kevin. He sat on the edge of the bed now, staring out the window with vacant eyes. The story had made Marilyn very tired and she rolled over on one side and closed her eyes. She heard footsteps cross the front room of the shack towards her bedroom door. The steps were firm and quick. The door opened and mother came into the room.

"I got to go cleaning now," she said, "Marilyn, see that Kevin gets outdoors again. I don't want him cluttering up the house. I'll try to get back early from cleaning because the old man's drinking again. If he comes home and I'm not here, try and see that he don't get near Kevin again."

The mother never addressed Kevin directly but always through Marilyn, in the form of instructions. Kevin continued to stare out the window from his perch on the edge of the bed, ignoring his mother's presence.



*Kee Dewdney*

The mother left the room and Kevin, leaving the bed, marched over to the window and, pressing his nose against the glass, watched the snowflakes fall.

The mother returned a moment later, wearing boots and a threadbare black overcoat. She went to Marilyn's bedside and looked down at her, the lines of worry about her eyes melting temporarily, and, gazing sweetly at Marilyn, she bent down to kiss her but stopped just short of Marilyn's face, awkwardly recovered her balance and stood straight again. Marilyn glanced at her mother and questioned with her eyes.

"That cold makes you look older," said the mother, and left the room. Soon after, the front door of the shack banged, and the only noise left was the creaking of the shack in the wind.

When I was a little girl,  
Oh, I was taken up!  
A ribbon, A pot,  
And a dainty old tea cup.

Kevin suddenly turned from the window, the tip of his nose a livid red. He went over to Marilyn and looked at her with serious brown eyes.

"Do I have to go outside, Marilyn?"

"Not if you don't want to."

Kevin turned and left the room. In the front of the shack he saw the scissors lying on the large stove. He took the scissors and began looking for a piece of paper to cut. He inspected some soiled newspapers in one corner then threw them away.

He went to the large stove and, lifting one of the lids from its hole, he stood on his toes, and, crooking his elbow, reached inside the firebox. The firebox was full of kindling but there were some pieces of paper underneath. He felt around for a smooth piece, then pulled it out, much crumpled, and replaced the lid. The paper he had pulled out of the firebox proved to be one of Marilyn's notepapers from school.

When I was a little girl,  
Oh, I was folded close.  
An eye, a breast,  
And mother's heart—a rose!

Kevin knelt down in front of the large stove, the paper in his hand, and he swung down the large oven door and looked in. The mother never used the oven. It embarrassed her that she never had anything large to cook in it. An old bachelor farmer down the road had given her the stove and gruffly refused anything for it.

Kevin gazed into the oven for a minute and then slowly swung the door back into place. He took the piece of notepaper and the scissors and sat on the floor in a corner of the front room.

"I'll make a snowflake", he thought, and began wondering how he should fold the paper.

## *Father*

The father bent into the wind as he trudged up First Street. The snowflakes, driven by a relentless north-west wind, swirled into his face and stung his eyes. Everything around him was a uniform grey of snow and sky. He and the occasional patches of mud on the side of the road, thrown there by passing cars, constituted the only realities in the whirling world of light and fantasy.

"Well, I guess they'll treat me like a king when I get home; Marilyn will get me a chair ready and maybe fix me a nice bowl of hot soup. Kevin'll be my servant and do some errands for me — anything a-tall. Like I'll tell him to get a pillow for my chair and he'll run and get it for me by god. Mother will fix up a supper of lamb-chops and potatoes and lots of gravy — then — boy! Will I have a feed — eh?"

"So, Mr. Sanderson, I'm not a man am I, you cheap bum — what do you know? I got two red hot coals in my pocket. I'll buy me two whiskies for two red hot coals in the finest bar in town — eh? — ha ha!"

"So, Mr. Sanderson, I'm not a king am I? We'll give you the medal for the best goddamned comedian in town. It sure will be nice to get home and be treated the way a man deserves! Sanderson don't know that at home they treat me just like a king — eh?"

The driving snow blotted out the father, blotted out the mud by the roadside. A car swished by.

The father slammed the front door as hard as possible, simultaneously jumping up and down on the board floor to shake off the snow, almost losing his balance.

Kevin looked up startled from the corner, then forced his own attention back on the snowflake he was cutting out.

Father removed his overcoat and chuckled.

"It sure is nice to be home — yeah! It sure is nice, eh?"

The words echoed flatly and the shack squeaked at the violence of a sudden gust of wind. The father, wringing his hands for warmth and smiling to himself, strode across the front room to the door of Marilyn's bedroom. He entered slowly, almost timidly, and looked at her, a forced merriment in his manner. Marilyn looked steadily back at him, then slowly shifted her gaze to the window, her eyes drifting out of focus.

"Where's my soup, Marilyn?" asked the father gently.

"What soup?" asked Marilyn, abruptly shifting her gaze back to him, hostile.

"You little slut! What are you doin' in bed? Don't try to hide from your old man . . . So! you're not goin' to get me some soup. So where's my chair — eh? Okay, lie there, goddam you, I don't care — eh? You little slut!"

The father backed quickly from the bedroom and, pausing outside Marilyn's door, looked around the front room with an expansive air. He yawned, stretched both arms, beat his chest in mock good humour and suddenly laughed. He turned to Kevin in the corner.



"Well, well, Kevin! What are you doin'? Cuttin' something out. Well, well, yes . . . eh? Well, well, Why don't you give it to me? Why don't you let me look at it? Oh . . . no! no! I'm not goin' to hurt it. Why should your old daddy hurt it? C'mon, Kevin — give me a look at it!"

"You little bugger! That's what you get! . . . and that! Stupid games! Bunch of stupid teachers — teaching stupid games. And that's for your stupid school!"

The father held Kevin's shoulder and alternately shook him and hit him in the side of his head with his fist.

Marilyn shivered at the sounds and drew the covers higher. She heard Kevin's small cries. She looked out the window and saw the spikes of daylight dance in her tears.

The father tore up Kevin's snowflake and was about to hit him again, when gripped in a sudden wrenching agony of sorrow, he dropped to his knees in front of Kevin.

"It's okay, ain't it Kevin, — eh? You ain't really mad at your old dad are you — eh? — that was a pretty good snowflake you made, really! — eh?"

The father reached out, and taking Kevin's arm, stroked it. Kevin looked at the floor while the tears dried in little muddy rivers on his cheeks. About his knees lay the scattered pieces of the snowflake.

Father started suddenly. Something had moved in the front window. The mother stared in at him, her face extremely pale from her walk home. Her lips were drawn in a bitter line and her eyes gazed steadily through the window at the father, half angry, half sad.

The father didn't seem to recognize her. He backed away from Kevin.

"Oh God! I didn't hit him. I was goin' to, but I didn't — honest! — eh?"

The father backed to the door of his bedroom.

The mother suddenly glided from the window in the direction of the front door and disappeared from view. Seeing this, the father rushed into the bedroom and slammed the door.

Marilyn turned in her bed and made imaginary mountain ranges out of the coverlets. She could hear the father scuffle and sob in the next room.

The front door of the shack opened and the mother stepped in with a swirl of snowflakes, quickly and precisely removing her overcoat and boots. The mother strode with firm footsteps into the bedroom where father was hiding. Marilyn heard her . . .

"C'mon Jack!"

### *Kevin*

The driving snow blotted out the stars. The mother, the lapels of her coat drawn tightly about her neck, stumbled along the bank of the creek, searching for Kevin. She slipped several times on the bank and each time beat her bare fist on the hard snow-covered ground.

The father left the shack to search for Kevin. He called out for the mother. He screamed her name at the top of his voice, but no answer came over the groaning wind. Had he heard a voice from here? From over there? He stood in miserable confusion.

A strange feeling suffused his mind, a sense of being completely isolated from all that was tangible, as though he were adrift in the ocean with nothing to cling to. But there suddenly came as well, the strange certainty that his wife was over THERE. He walked through the slanting snow oblivious to it, being pulled toward his wife by the creek as though invisible strings connected them.

When winter legends all the land  
And when I see a snowflake small . . .

At last, Marilyn left the bed, and, dressing herself warmly, went into the front room. The fire in the small pot-bellied stove in the centre of the room was dying and the shack seemed chilly. She lit a match and, removing the lid from the firebox of the large cooking stove, lit the paper at the bottom and replaced the lid.

Shivering, she put on her winter coat and a pair of rubber boots. She coughed a few times, and, buttoning up her overcoat, opened the door and went outside to search for Kevin. A few snowflakes whirled in with her exit and melted on the floor.

I take it in my fiery hand  
And never do I let it fall.

Kevin sweated a little but was happy that everyone was out searching for him. Serve them right.

### *The Funeral*

Marilyn coughed gently and hummed little tunes to herself while the mother and father cried in their bedroom.

The odor of burnt flesh hung in the room like an evil presence. For Marilyn it was colored bright red, and little yellow and blue fish swam in and out of it. Black hair hung from the bottom of it in long silky curls.

Kevin, curled and blackened like a sacrificial lamb lay in a foetal position in the oven, the door hanging flat like the tongue of some drooling machine.

And Marilyn sang a rather tuneless song to herself:

"Am I the Winter Queen? I never wear white you know! There was this white woman with a long red tongue you know — like a snake's tongue. Then there was this little boy who didn't know nothing. The boy was always playing with caterpillars and he got what he deserved 'cause the white woman belonged to me and shouldn't even have looked at him.

"Ooooooh! Father! hiding under the red cloud! Shame on you! Stand up and smell it like a man!

"La La La — Better to chop wood and carry water little snowflake. If I can find a winter king — I'll be my mother in the spring!"

# WILLIAM G. SHANNON

## IMPRESSIONS OF SUMMER

Long days of sun,  
Sweet-breathed breeze,  
And warmth;

And water,  
Tepid in puddles,  
Or cool in cedar-rooted  
Cedar-shaded pools;

And days of dry brown twines  
Of dirt roads, with dusted grass fringes;

And insects wandering —  
On feet beneath,  
On wings above;

And the night is warm like the day,  
And still not quiet;  
And the spineless hay  
Still responds in any way,  
In impressions of the patterns of the touching air.

Now all the land  
Is growing and greening,  
Only slower than in May;  
Now sitting in the sun  
And dozing.

# Schicksalslied

(With apology to Handel and Brahms)

*Presto e con forza*

Voice

Piano - F - A piacere ma in stil d'Handel.

PRIMO

secondo, al recitativo, e fine.

Fine

Fine

Hi — cho-ry

dick'-ry, hich'-ry dick-o-ry dock.

hich 'ry dick-o-ry dock. Lit-tle mice were spor-ting

-ing on a clock — with buttons here —, and handles there-

with bot-tons here, — and handles there, with here and handles there

Buttons

*D.S. al fine al recit. || Recitativo - Esspressamente marcato. Lento.*

An old man came a-walking by, you

can't play there, he heaved a sigh, if you were to slip, mayhap the

"For

hands would strike you dead, old mousie slipped.

-chap. the

*D.S. al secondo e al fine.*

*Handwritten signature*

## *Deux Vignettes*

### *Québec*

The bell counts noon . . . children alike as acorns at the foot of the old Oak Church, these summer-brown gamins . . . and black-and-white cats growing on trees . . . washing decorating the flapping lines . . . every house, home, as white as the August day, and garlanded all with the flowering colour of a dry summer field . . . "Noiro", with his feline disdain, the only pretentiousness in the Laurentian village.

Noon for Claude Duquette who works at the paper mill and sings in a hearty bass every Saturday night at the Hôtel des Monts . . . the veranda bosom, lazy in the afternoon heat, nodding with mama alive to all the incidental life of the street . . . two blackeyed *p'tits* laugh and flaunt a stolen, ragged fistful of Madame Tourangeau's orange flowers . . . "*Méchants*"!

The quiet of a dozen Nicoles, Richards, admonishing in the same lilting provincial French . . . the quiet of so many things happening without changing, even disrupting the August noon . . . the bustle of yesterday and tomorrow, the habitual sounds of life that create an inner peace more tranquil than the silence of a January island.

And all around the knobby Laurentians, humped in the battle of time, young in the presence of the father-to-son village . . . puddles of cologne lakes . . . tradition in a faded plaid shirt in the very atmosphere.

Noon, commanded by the bell, a ritual of the people . . . A white-gold August day . . .

## *Ontario*

A factory whistle salutes the twelve o'clock sun . . . children, Pan's speckled delight, with sandlot dreams, a length of string, a collie and paradise . . . pink-poodle shoppers avoid the mutt's conceit . . . new, black asphalt leads to suburbia, an eternity of door-colour distinctions, on highway 27 through gingerbread towns, pinafore neat.

Noon for I.B.M.'s junior executive . . . obesity in the automat lunch . . . never quiet, beer and ulcers, cacaphony . . . a symphony of car discords . . . the afternoon bridge and teas topics blot up mothers, and sons and daughters skip to a juke-box tune — "People say we're too young" . . .

Everything is new in the city — new lamps for old — a linoleum facade for tradition, bigger fins, fluorescent colours, hybrid beets.

But in the country, noon runs barefoot . . . bits of cloud like mature dandelion stuck in a denim sky, and the hazy sizzle of frying bacon wiggles from a ripened patchwork of wheat, oats and corn . . . all is fatness and vitality . . . "criks" with a sandy bottom all alive with fish . . . cotton-lipped daisies . . . a crow disturber of the peace.

Noon, lunchtime for the worker and nature's pupil . . . a plea by the whistle but gladly obeyed . . . a mixture of soot and seed on A white-gold August day.

JANE PEEBLES

## KAYE KISHIBE

### *The Jellyfish: An Old Story Retold*

This is a story about the jelly-fish. You all know what a jelly-fish is: a boneless, ghost-like creature that floats like a cloud in the sea. If you take him in your hands, it feels sticky like the eggs of frogs. If you crush it in your hands, it squeezes out between your fingers like soft dough. That is the jelly-fish.

But is he a fish? Oh, yes, he can swim. But not all creatures that swim are fishes — beetles can, snakes can, frogs can, and yes, even people can.

Well, he is a fish. That is why he is called a "jelly-fish". He is a fish, or at least he *was*. This is his story.

Once upon a time, a long, long, time ago, the jelly-fish was an ordinary fish with bones and flesh and scales, fins and eyes and teeth. He was as beautiful as a salmon, as quick as a shark, as strong as a cod, and as large as any fish in the Fish-kingdom. Was he as large as a whale? Tut, tut — the whale is not a fish and is not allowed in the Fish-kingdom.

The Fish-kingdom under the blue sea was as beautiful a place as there ever was. And in the middle of the kingdom there was a huge splendid palace. In this palace reigned the Queen. She was beautiful, kind, and was a mother to all the fishes large and small. One day she fell ill.

The blue, blue sea became dark as night and the seaweeds wrapped around the palace. The fishes gathered in the court to cast sad eyes upon the floor.

You see, all the fishes loved the Queen, for she was kind and beautiful and a mother to them all.

And what was her illness? That, no one knew.

Then the Salmon, who was the prime minister said to the fishes: "We must get someone who is wise enough to tell us what is causing the Queen to sleep for many nights without stirring. Surely, someone must know. If any of you have something to say, speak, so that our kind and beautiful Queen, the mother of us all, will soon be well and smile on us again."



A blind fish, ugly with a squashed head and coal-black scales, came forward and said: "She must be given the stomach of a monkey within the next forty days and nights." When he said this, the blind black fish disappeared into the darkness. The whole court hushed as it heard these words spoken with a loud deep echoing voice. He was the wizard, that ugly fish, from the deep sea. The fishes started to whisper.

"Who will get us a monkey?"

"What is a monkey anyway?"

"What is a monkey?"

They all became silent for none of them knew what a monkey was.

"Does anyone know what a monkey is?" asked the Salmon, who was the prime minister.

"Do you know yourself?" So spoke a sleepy voice. It was the Octopus. The Salmon became red. He did not know himself, but he was the prime minister. "You may keep your mouth shut. I have asked, who knows what a monkey is?"

The ugly blind fish, the wizard from the deep sea, came again into the court and said: "A monkey is a brown creature with a long thin tail. It has four legs and climbs trees." And he was gone.

"What are tails and legs?" The Jelly-fish said, for he had never seen a land animal before. The other fishes were all silent. The Salmon grew angry and shouted: "It will not matter. I will send one of you from this palace to fetch me a monkey. You must now choose one among you who will go." The fishes decided to choose one among themselves by lot. The lot fell to the Jelly-fish, the biggest of them all. The others let out sighs of relief, glad that they did not have to go.

When the Jelly-fish came forward, the Salmon said to him: "Go. You must go at once, for we shall have no light or happiness until the Queen is awakened from her sleep. Go at once and fetch us a monkey with a stomach."

"May I see the Queen's face before I go?" the Jelly-fish asked, for he wanted to see his Queen before going on such a dangerous journey. The Salmon, who was the prime minister, nodded and led him up to the throne and drew the curtain.

She was sleeping peacefully, the Queen, so kind, so beautiful, the mother of them all. As she lay there, she did not seem living and yet she was not dead. The Jelly-fish stood still for a while.

"Go", the Salmon said. "Go, Go, Go, Go, Go!"

The Jelly-fish quickly left the court and palace, tearing a band of seaweed on his shoulder. A sigh of relief ran through the court. The Salmon was not so red now, and the Octopus was sleeping.

The Jelly-fish did not know what a monkey was. He did not know what a tail or a leg was. He swam through the blue sea whimpering aloud. The sun rose, the sun set, days came and went, nights passed one after another.

He could not find the monkey. He was tired, for he had not slept for a month. He could not swim any farther. He turned on his back

and fell down, down, down into the darkness of the deep deep sea, no longer blue.

*Are you looking for the monkey?*

Yes.

*And you want to catch that monkey?*

Oh, yes.

*You will kill that monkey.*

No, no.

*They will kill it if you don't.*

But they love the Queen.

*Kill for a Queen?*

But they love the Queen.

*Do you love the Queen?*

Yes, yes, yes.

*Is she the one, kind and beautiful, the mother of all?*

Yes. I have seen her.

*Then go to the Monkey Island. Go, follow the current.*

What current?

*Close your eyes. Do you feel it?*

Yes.

*Follow it. Go!*

Three days passed with three nights. On the fourth morning, the Jelly-fish came to an island. There were palm trees and wild tropical flowers. He swam up close to one of the palm trees and looked up. The sun was shining and the sky was blue. White ghost-like clouds were in the blue sky.

There was a noise in the leafy top of the palm tree — and, plop, a cocoanut fell right beside the Jelly-fish.

"Ha, ha, ha! Sorry, old fellow. Why, you're a stranger around here. What kind of fish are you?"

"A jelly-fish." The Jelly-fish blinked stupidly.

"Ha, ha, ha! A jelly-fish. Why do they call you that?"

"I don't know."

"You don't know? Ha, ha, ha." The creature slid down the trunk from the top of the tree and came close to the Jelly-fish. "I was taking my afternoon nap and as I stretched my legs to yawn, I kicked the nut and, plop! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Leg? Did you say a leg?"

"Queer fellow you are. What's wrong in talking about one's legs? Oh, I see. You don't have any yourself. Sorry, old boy; I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Are you a monkey?"

"Yep. A monkey every inch, live and jumping."

"Then I want to see you."

"See me? Ha, ha, ha. See all you want, it's free." The monkey did a jig, bouncing head over heels, kicking his legs in the air: "Watch my legs, ha, ha, ha!"

"I mean I have business with you."

"Business is busy-ness. Doesn't suit me at all. I sleep and eat and ha, ha, ha." He danced again before the eyes of the Jelly-fish.

"It's about the Queen, kind and beautiful and the mother of us all."

"A Queen, did you say? Is she a monkey?"

"No".

"Then what is she?"

"She's beautiful".

"If she's not a monkey, what business can I have with her?"

"You can save her life."

"If she's not a monkey —"

"She's more beautiful than anything you've ever seen."

"Well, beautiful queens are all right. You know, I once made love to a beautiful queen. And right under the king monkey's very nose. It was raining hard and he couldn't hear. Oh well, he was busy, too; the king monkey has fifty queens, all beautiful, ha, ha, ha." The Jelly-fish blinked. He did not understand.

"And can I see your queen?"

"Oh, yes; oh, yes. Come with me."

The monkey deftly jumped on the Jelly-fish's back.

"Don't go under the water. Keep me above. J-u-s-t about there, thanks."

The Jelly-fish was glad. It was so easy. It seemed such a hard task at the start, but now he had the monkey completely helpless on his back. All he needed to do now was to swim home. He was happy and his heart was filled with joy. We shall have light again, he thought. "We shall have light again!" This time he said it aloud. The monkey heard him. "What's that?" he asked, and the Jelly-fish in a sudden flash of cruel humour told him all. He said to the monkey when he finished his story: "Too bad it's too late now. I've got you!"

The monkey became quiet and did not speak a word for a long time. Tears came out of his eyes and he sniffled now and then. There was such a difference between the monkey he saw now and the monkey he had found in the morning, that the Jelly-fish started to feel pity for him.

"You mustn't cry. If you think about it, there is nothing to cry about."

The monkey sniffled again as if he did not hear. The Jelly-fish felt that he had to comfort him.

"You would die. That much is certain. But you will bring back the light. The beautiful Queen, the mother of us all will smile on us all, and there will be great happiness in the world. It is not a petty sacrifice. In fact, it is a great sacrifice. To give your life for all the world. I myself would give my own life for all the world. I would be happy if my death were to awaken the Queen.

"But you, you are the only one in the whole world that could do it. Your stomach alone can save us."

The monkey was still sniffing. He struggled to catch his breath. After a while, he was ready and said to the Jelly-fish. "It is not the sacrifice. It is not because I have to die that I am crying. You are right. Oh, how right you are. If I had a hundred lives and if every one of those hundred lives, not eighty, not ninety, not ninety-nine, but a full hundred of those hundred lives were needed to awaken the beautiful Queen, I would gladly give them up — all, all of those lives." He paused and Jelly-fish asked: "Then why are you crying?"

"Be patient, I'll get to that," said the monkey and began again. "It is because I can not save the Queen's life that I am crying. You will kill me and that would be an empty sacrifice. No, no, no, no, no! Not a sacrifice at all. A mockery! I shall be the laughing-stock of the world."

"I don't understand."

"Now you see, we monkeys are different from you fishes. While you have fins to move about with, we have legs. Now the point is this. We monkeys carry around our stomachs in our mouth." He swelled his cheeks to show his point.

"That is what our soft cheeks are for. But you see, when you are eating, the stomach gets in the way. So I hung my stomach on the palm tree while I was eating and forgot to put it back in my mouth during the nap. While I was talking with you, I forgot all about it. It's still hanging there on that palm tree.

"So you see, if you take me to your Queen and kill me, you won't find my stomach and your Queen will not be awakened and — and, oh, I'll die for nothing." The monkey wailed aloud.

"Then you must get your stomach", said the Jelly-fish. "I'll take you to the island at once." "Aren't you afraid I'll run away?" the monkey said. "No, I trust you. I'm sorry I tried to fool you before. But I knew you would understand. It's surprising where you find a noble soul these days. One doesn't trust others any more. After hearing you speak, I trust you absolutely."

So the Jelly-fish went back to the Monkey Island. As soon as he came close to the shore, the monkey sprang off his back and jumped onto the shore. "Ha, ha, ha!" The monkey turned a somersault. "Ha, ha, ha! You're the most stupid creature I've met so far." Then he disappeared into the woods.

"Come back!" The silly fish cried out, but, of course, the monkey did not come back.

Sadly, the Jelly-fish came back to the court. When he told the fishes his story, they were all angry.

"You stupid, stupid fish," they cried, "you shouldn't be a fish." Then they gathered around him and beat him and beat him, again and again, until his bones, teeth, flesh, and eyes became a thin, shapeless pulp of colorless jelly. Then they drove him out of the Fish-kingdom and threw him into the sea to float upon the waves.

That is how the Jelly-fish became what it is now, and that is why there still is no light under the deep blue sea.



THE FONT

## KEE DEWDNEY

### AT YOUR DOOR

What song should I sing  
At your door?  
What presents should I bring?  
This morning the bushes froze  
And rattled at my window,  
And the morning sun arose —  
A blushing face;  
And Philomela sang in the morning.

What song should I sing  
At your door?  
This morning the grass was stiff  
At my window;  
The trees were naked  
At my window.  
The morning sky was a woman's sigh;  
And Echo sang in the morning.

Shall I say:  
Your hair is like a flock of young ravens,  
Your eyes are like stained-glass windows  
While choirs sing in the sunlight?  
And shall I say:  
Your body is a mighty river  
That feeds the roots of young oaks?  
And the Rose of Sharon sang in the morning.

What song should I sing  
At your door?  
What presents should I bring?  
This morning the air was grey  
At my window;  
I thought I heard you say  
At my window,  
"My door is open!"  
But Sappho sang in the morning.

In the woman's ruby eyes  
The fury of a compromise.

What song should I sing  
At your door?  
Am I Hamon or Mordecai?  
And Esther sang in the morning.

In the woman's diamond finger  
Her mother's ancient sobs still linger.

What presents should I bring?  
This morning a cherub wept  
At my window.  
I heard him as I slept —  
A dripping tap;  
And my sister sang in the morning.

What song should I sing  
At your door?  
What presents should I bring?  
This morning the earth was rust  
At my window.  
And my lips were dust.  
And I had no song to sing  
At your door.

### AT TYRCONNEL

She wrapped a fish-net  
Round her loins.  
She placed a sea-shell  
On each breast.  
She smiled through  
Her sea-weed hair,  
And plunged a trident  
Through my chest.

# LINDA BROWNE

## VALENTINE FOR N.....

A love I have who knots his neck  
Artily with red;  
I'd love to pull that knot too tight  
And purplely match his head.

## PROVINCIALS IN THE PARK

Lake Erie smells of fishes  
And watermelon wishes.  
O the sandy tussles at Rondeau  
Where all the rocks and rookies go:  
Among that labelled flora  
They just wanna  
Uncatalogue the fauna.  
O the corn and smelts and beery  
Nights and fires on Lake Erie.

## THE SEA IS ALREADY SALTY

Stay, fisherman, but keep your net  
Out from the shafted sea,  
Nor let your lobster cages snatch  
The ulcered pearl from me.

Let me hear you hymn the moon  
Paining the restless sky,  
Cast on the sands your love-sick lay  
Bleached with a fossilled lie.

Place a starfish on my breast,  
Send me wine that's ten years old,  
Plant blue flowers in my eyes,  
Kiss me a deep frost Arctic cold.

Only keep your ship in harbour,  
Dip not for the silvery scale:  
You may seek a tasty morsel  
But you'll find a lubbery whale.



# WILLIAM G. SHANNON

## *Three Fish*

Charlie Drake and me went down,  
Uh hmm, hmm, hmm.  
Charlie Drake and me went down,  
Hmm, hmm.  
Charlie, Charlie Drake drowned,  
Hmm, hmm, hmm.  
I pushed Charlie and Charlie drowned.

"Hm, de, dum, dum." He hummed quietly to himself, pausing once in a while, humming, whistling, singing, in a squeaky voice. I watched him. I was just lying in the sun and he was whittling a stick. I was just lying there in the grass by the river. He was sitting on a log and whittling.

"What you whistling, Colly?"

"Just a wee folk-song," he said to me and, pa-tooey, he spit. But he sort of shut up after that.

I went home and boiled potatoes and fried sausage, ate them, listened to the radio, smoked the root, and then I went to sleep.

In the morning I went downtown. That's just up on the hill. I went to get some nails.

And I went to chatter a bit, at the mill, with the boys. And I went to see poor old Charlie Drake, who drowned day before yesterday. Then I sauntered over to the grave-yard. The bushes and hedges had just been trimmed and looked real good. I wanted to see wee Susy. She was right down by the big lilac bush which wasn't quite finished yet.

I went home about noon, fried those potatoes, sliced the ham and ate it.

About two months later — just the end of August — I was doing about the same thing, feeling 'bout as well. I was back down at the river, fishing. I didn't much care if I caught any. Fish, end of August, aren't much good around here.

"How you be?"

"I be fine, Colly," I yelled over the rocks.

Then, since it was getting to be about five-thirty, I picked the rod out of the river, reeled in the line, put on my jacket, turned and walked away.

Old Colly was humming and singing a bit in that funny wee voice, sort of stopping and starting as the mood hit him.

Poor old Ben,  
Poor old Ben, en,  
He fell in.  
Poor old Ben, he fell in.  
I rocked the boat and Ben fell in.  
Hum, de dum, dum, dum.

I went downtown after digging potatoes next morning. I had to get a few things. I sold a few bags to the general store and, besides, I wanted to see poor old Ben Black who fell out of his boat and drowned day before last. He looked just fine. I thought I'd go over to see wee Susy since it wasn't quite twelve yet. I did. My, the bushes and hedges were neat, though they hadn't taken much trimming, she told me, since it was nearly the end of summer.

I went home, had my dinner and lay for a rest. I thought about old Colly. Colly was all right. Or at least he wasn't a bad old soul. He was just about my age. We went to school together sixty years ago. We still talk about Cruikshank the teacher. Colly these days just sits and whistles by the river. But, hell, a man's got to do what's right.

I went and phoned the cops. They took Colly away next day. Too bad. I don't imagine Charlie and Ben . . . aw, hell.

It was a nice day so I chatted with the boys at the mill a bit. Then I spent the rest of the day with wee Susy at the grave-yard. As I was about to leave, she told me she was just about through and I said I was, too.

### *Year 1898*

"Harold".

"Yes, sir".

"Where is your sister, Harold?"

"I don't know, Mr. Cruikshank, sir."

"Humph".

"Where are Charles, Benjamin, and Colin MacIntosh?"

"Who knows where Charles, Benjamin, and Colin are this afternoon?" Mr. Cruikshank sternly asked the class. We said nothing. McGuire winked at me.

(Susan, the tom-boy, was down along the river playing sailor in the punt.)

When Mr. Cruikshank let us out I went down to the river. I'd better tell Susy and the boys to make up good excuses. Old Cruikshank was suspicious.

They buried wee Susy. Wee Susy. Poor wee Susy who couldn't swim. Poor, pretty little Susy.

Susy, my sister. Susy my only kin. Dear little Susy. I loved her.

And Ben and Charlie and Colly, they could swim real well.

And Ben and Charlie and Colly who were scared and swam to shore and let her down, crying for help, they went to the funeral.

I went down to the river next day and I fished. I sang and hummed a bit, 'cause I felt good.

Colly's gone,  
Colly's gone,  
Now Colly's gone too.  
Now I ain't blue,  
Cause Colly's gone too.

I turned around and Mrs. Jamison was looking at me. She's the lady who trims the bushes at the cemetery.

I kind of shut up then, even though I did feel good. And I fished, even though fish don't bite in October in this here river.

# CATHERINE McVICAR

## INTERLUDE

I stand upon the lonely shore  
To watch the ocean tide creep slowly out.  
It leaves me stranded there.  
Then as I linger —  
With a gentle finger  
The breeze stirs my hair.  
Some playing children give a distant shout  
And soon my peace comes flooding back once more.

# PATRICIA PEGG

## ART GALLERY

Four walls, two doors, a catalogue,  
Daily nine to five p.m.  
Critic, beatnik, Women's Art League  
View God on canvas, framed at cost.  
How beautiful, how masterly;  
How can they know that in one corner  
Small black spiders spinning webs  
Paint the artist crucified?

# GEORGE STACEY

## OWL, PUSSYCAT AND COMPANY

Oh, if I were a sailor,  
I know just where I'd sail —  
Beyond the bound of Ocean  
To the realm of the great white whale.

Or I'd course the blue Pacific  
To its end and come about  
Where slow seas surge and crumble  
On the reef a half mile out,

Where beaches gleam with silver  
And circle sweet lagoons,  
Where tropic nights are purple  
And filled with tropic moons.

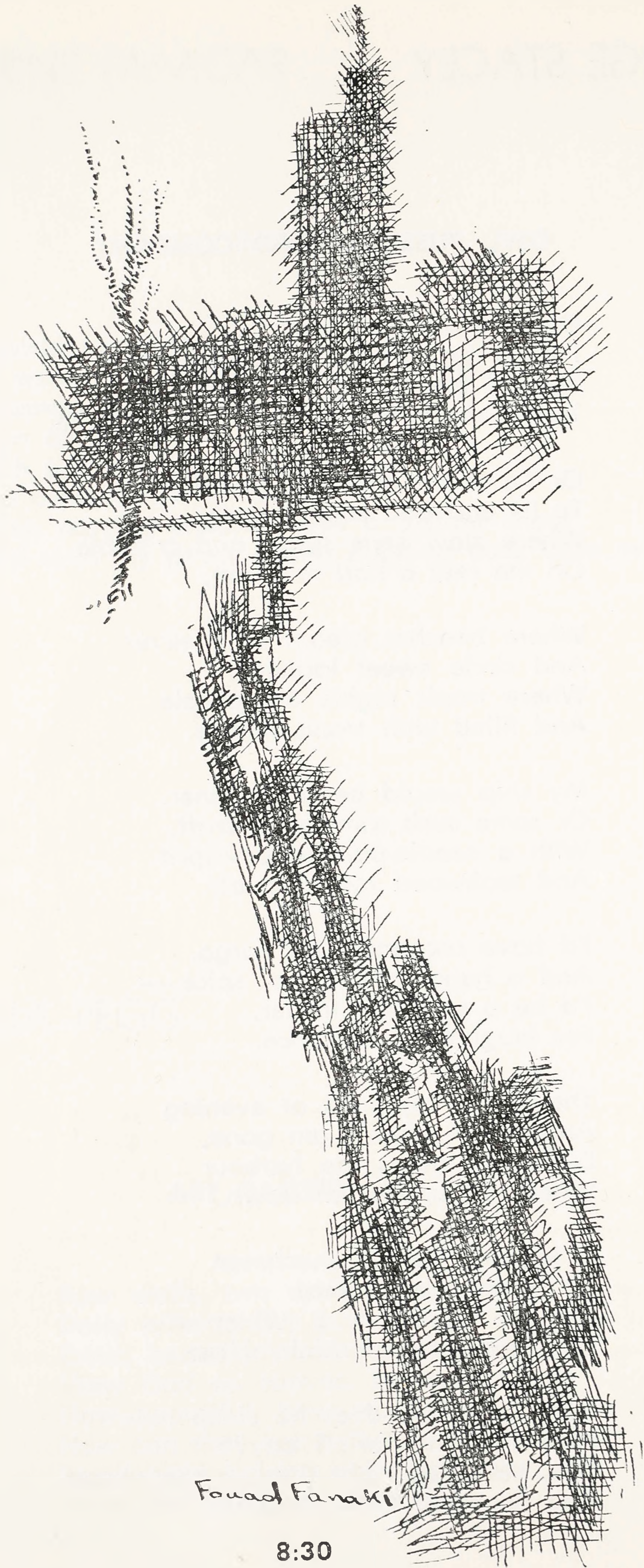
My ship would be a schooner,  
Or some such trim-sailed craft,  
With a needle-pointed bowsprit  
And teakwood fore and aft.

I'd have cocoanuts for cargo,  
And a hundred kinds of spice —  
I'd be a welcome trader,  
For laughter is my price.

They'd see my sails at evening  
And know when I am gone,  
But never guess the harbour  
Where I'd appear at dawn.

A legend like the Dutchman  
I'd forever be at sea;  
"It's the ha'nted S. S. Whimsy!"  
They'd gasp, and think of me.

"Her captain — does he sleep now  
Beneath some far-off bay?"  
"No, he sailed right through the sunset  
And dreamed himself away."



Fouad Fanaki

8:30

M. SERVEAU

*Mallarmé, Miller and Existentialism*

The finest poem of the nineteenth century and the best novel of the twentieth were written — I wonder if anyone will agree with me? — respectively by Stéphane Mallarmé and by Henry Miller. The poem is a tiny jewel (I use the cliché by intention) called the "*Cantique de St. Jean*", and the book is the vastly maligned masterpiece, *Tropic of Cancer*. When I am asked for my reasons for this judgment, or, as more usually is the case, why I prefer so 'obscure' and 'minor' a poet as Mallarmé to, say, Baudelaire, Wordsworth, Mathew Arnold, or why I should have the utter imbecility to set up Miller, the eroticist, against Proust, Joyce, Kafka, and Wolfe, it is very difficult to give an answer that will be intelligible to almost anyone who is not a Mallarméan or a Miller devotee. I could say, superficially, that it was a matter of vision, that the writers I speak of touched some essential nerve in our modern sensibility, a centre of feeling that even Kafka passes over,

and that D. H. Lawrence could not dream of. The answer means very little. Céline and Barbusse touch us, and no man, with the possible exception of an S. S. trooper or an Orvil Faubus, could read *L'Enfer* without at least a small shudder of recognition. There is no major writer who is removed from the centre of what is progressive in his culture. Why then should I select these two as preëminent? I give the following suggestion for what it is worth, reminding myself and the reader that to treat the least thing in a framework, even so broad a one as language and ideas, is to betray it. The reality of the poem, the potato, and the other man is always beyond our expression.

Let this be our first and last and only recognition here: that the Reality, the Being, or *Dasein*, or whatever label you choose to stick, is always beyond us and with us at once. We know through ready-made schemes, as we see through the lenses of the eye or any other additional lenses we choose to employ. To think is to categorize, to name is to tag, to abbreviate, to bring under framework of grammatical usage. This is why we find the Japanese *haiku* so hard to understand. As Gilbert Ryle would probably say, we do not usually employ 'New Year' and 'old horse' in the same linguistic category. This, I think, is the one and essential fault of contemporary Anglo-American philosophy. In examining what we say, it neglects what we cannot; and the result is analogous to a man who would examine his spectacles rather than the world before him.

What, precisely, constitutes for me the value of Mallarmé and Miller, is that they pass so completely through the barrier of language and into that essential Reality, that *je ne sais quoi*, 'on the other side'. I know that it is becoming very unfashionable to speak of 'higher Reality' (show it to me in a test tube!) and even modern aesthetic analysis tends to shy away from what cannot be expressed in stock phrases for perceptibles. Let me attempt to explain a little better. Rewriting the *cogito ergo sum* as 'there is a consciousness', what we get is, consciousness ('myself' — in the manner though, of Bergson, rather than of Descartes) and the Other. This Other is not a determinate thing; it is distinguished by the mere fact of its being not-me, and its 'being-there' (*Dasein*, concreteness). Ultimately, all solipsism reduces to the ridiculous, for, in denying the Other, I deny, not affirm, myself. The Other just is; and this is pretty well the sum total of all affirmations I can make about it in truth-functional discourse, and anyone who understands me can see at once that even this proposition is analogical, poetic, and reduces the ineffable to the paltry. The writers that I am discussing afford us a contact with this Other, this Reality, at a point much higher than we can go in everyday life or in reflective thought. I am also going to suggest that by no means all art is of this nature, but rather, this sensitivity lies at the root of all art.

Mallarmé and Henry Miller treat this Reality in what appear on the surface to be totally different approaches. Mallarmé is the formalist. His poems are kaleidoscopic patterns of infinite complexity, but the



total form is all-dominating. We are presented with cold, tinkling precious stones with edges and outlines as sharp as ice. Light is cold, almost supernatural. Miller is diffuse, wandering, flavourful. He writes without a centre except for the single vision that masters him. He pours himself out upon the page, whereas Mallarmé is withdrawn, not into his art, but beneath it. Miller, moreover, is erotic in a happy, earthy sort of way. When Mallarmé is erotic, it is in fantasy, as in "*L'Après-Midi d'un Faune*". What, then, is the essential point of contact?

Simply this: that the best work of both is merely a prolonged and intensely conscious encounter with the Otherness of Being, and the reconciliation with this. The mode of reconciliation is different, but not vastly. Mallarmé strives upwards for violent union with the "*froidure éternelle*", Miller watches the placid Seine flow, like the eternal Being, on and on in supreme calm. Miller's life has become one with the Seine, with time, with fate, with eternity. Mallarmé seeks the eternal stillness above the glaciers, a cold silence, where, one gets the impression, the world is hinged, and is lighted like a paper lantern. It is not going too far to say that almost everything in these writers that is art is really a prolonged 'encounter with nothingness', for nothingness is the only usable word for this still centre of reality.

For Miller, this centre is active, generative; "like an Arabic zero", it is the life-giving, swarming, sperming principle of life and creation. But it is still a zero. The Frenchman conceives of it as a Nirvana, for which sleep is a vain substitute. But both men find it in the total dissolution of their worlds, in misery, sordidness, hopelessness, self-alienation. Mallarmé - St. Jean awaits the shudder of the vertebrae under the executioner's scythe, sees it in the blue of the sky, in the cold of ice, in the whiteness of paper. It reveals itself to Miller in the grey, hungry Paris of the depressed thirties, in rows of sunless tenements, in urine-redolent latrines, restaurant breakfasts of coffee and roll, but most of all in the female organ. Sex is the unending attempt to fill a void. (Sartre has the same idea). Woman is the ultimate obscenity, the eternal symbol of the Otherness in our existence, of the need to return, of the love of the full, impossible in the face of personal identity, realizable in complete rejection of this our world.

Art is the product of such tensions. Only in gaining the absolute nadir of existence as a person, as an ambition, can the swan be freed from the ice. Only in Miller's complete acceptance can he be reconciled with the not-him; only then does he really learn peace. Art is always inspired by such tension, and sometimes it learns its parents. In such a case, 'art' is no longer a valid term. Instead we have the conflict of the individual with himself, and with the Other; and in efforts to realize this other lies the whole art of Miller and Mallarmé. Like Eliot's Phoenocion they enter the whirlpool, and are cast up alive and redeemed, united, by understanding, with the wholeness of reality.



THREE ANGRY FRIENDS

*Jim Shuttleworth*



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