



# GRIFFIN

“This creature was sacred to the sun, and kept  
watch over the hidden treasures.”

**RECORD, RECORD**

record record  
    record each dream  
        each pile of wood  
            each scrap of wind;

a scratch along  
    the corridor  
        of sun and moon,  
            the vanity

of fingernails  
    arched against  
        the empty room,  
            record record

record each war  
    each social choke  
        each broken stick  
            of tragedy;

a smile upon  
    the tyranny  
        of circles drawn  
            the flung shut door

revolving on  
    the rotten walls  
        of memory.  
            record record

the bone records  
    the soil that eats  
        the oldest cracks;  
            a bloodtick waits

upon the branch  
and leaps into  
the odor of  
the passing beast.

record record  
record each tremor  
of every tree  
earth yields to fall

back from the sky;  
each tongue that licks  
the water stream  
the drops of thirst

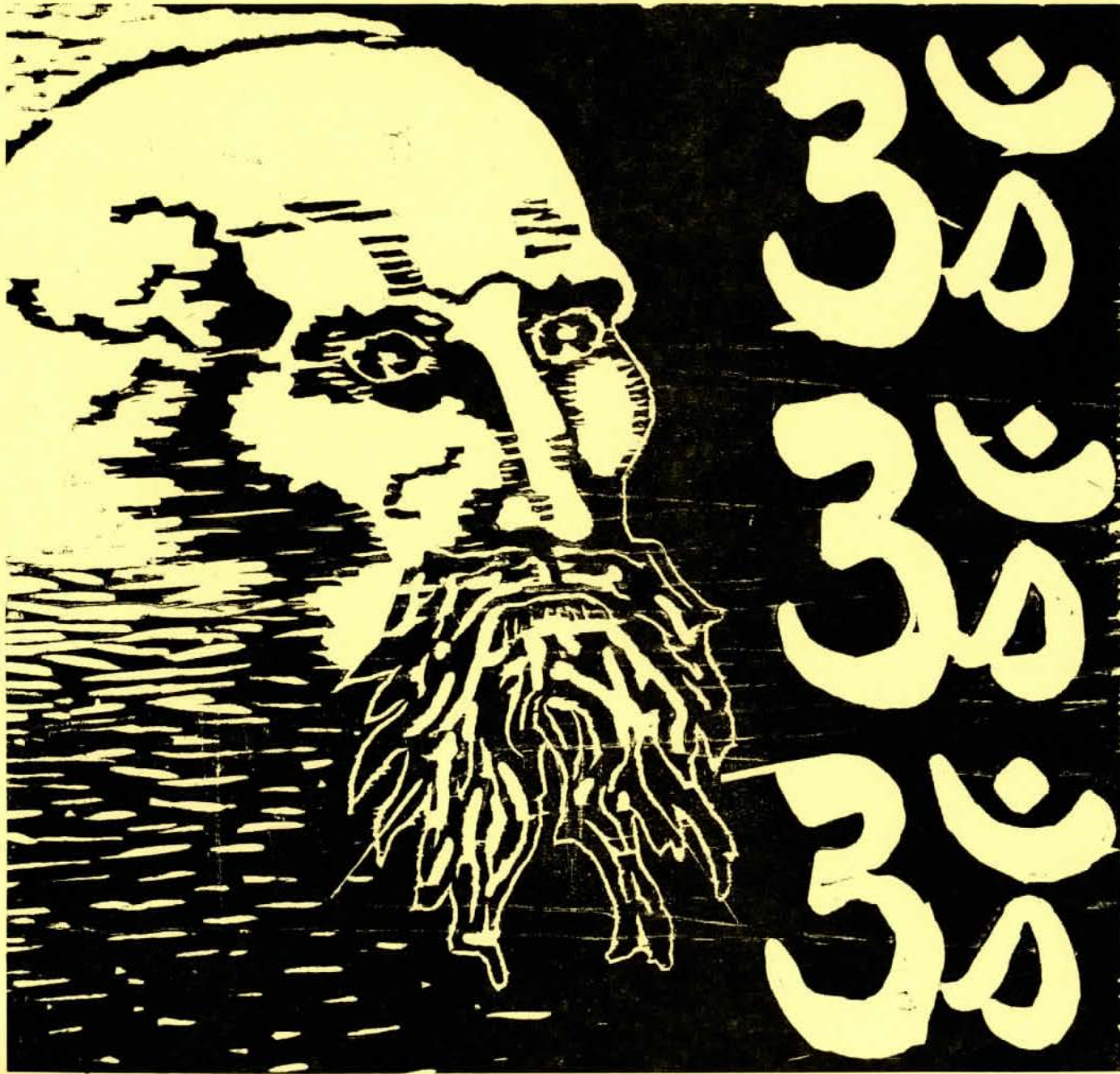
on hungry throats,  
each bravery  
of knees that love  
the crash of past.

record record  
record each fire  
for warmth or food  
or poem's friend

this day will end.  
this history  
will die alone.  
each tone will lose

its way.  
each fire  
will find  
its wind.

*John R. Mueller*



## NOT SO SUDDENLY LAWRENCE

True, Venus was flying high  
and the red trail of tail-lights  
painted a technological sunset  
against the horizon

but the scarlet explosion was plastic,  
and Venus, merely an astronomical delight.

True, the hour was aglow with dawn and dusk  
and the rich, green winds of March  
swirled in and out of eager ears.

but the crackling spectacle was only  
twilight's antics,  
and the wind, an exercise in frontal  
contradictions.

— Martha Ackmann

## DAVIDS STAND

### I

When David stands,  
Half insane,  
Twixt the Good and the Bad;  
Upheld by one  
With a steadying hand;  
Persued in shame  
In dark and in sun,  
Regularly,  
By the other one;

### II

Tis then the man  
Envisions retreat.  
A shaking head  
On a quivering frame;  
Words incoherently said  
Through paralyzed lips,  
Expressions replete  
In perplexities name;  
Emotional Eclipse

### III

Once a silent dread  
Resides now  
In the maniacs brain  
Fate hiding purpose,  
Shadow over shadow,  
Weaving in sick paradox  
A Devils Circus:  
We all cry out for Truth,  
Only David sees the flaw.

— Peter Bekker

**Y' SEE THE OLDCHILD SAYS, IT**

y' see, the oldchild says, it  
 jes it jes might be that  
 we me man (us) child wheee  
 died a  
 long long times ago

how come, I said, then don't we know?

we do, says he, we do we  
 mow dem lawns whee  
 shines doze cah zwhee reeds  
 dat papertime lifelook canned cronkite every see b s sans  
 whens da las styme  
 you jes loved  
 some (gently) body else sand  
 dint enny care of manner ghostie jest  
 dint care no ways sat all jest  
 nowadays. when? las styme?  
 las stmever, member now, you  
 empty filling fostered you  
 quickly brimful leyes oh  
 loves dem ee why ease oh yeah dem  
 finger toe nose eye lip teef touch dem tears  
 jest streamin alla downada lin uh  
 alla dat flesh all goosedybumped up  
 fum sum one touch whos watt, daddy, says he,  
 lissen

allada word sday  
fall down day  
done tumbled on why lie  
waited on dat big ol watt  
wha twatt somes wheres swhee  
fills stew many hole whiff  
wordser whatnot  
oney waitin baby sieze sand  
fillin up alla dem hotdam holes oh  
fillin up all dem holes  
don't nosebody sees no fing don'  
know buddies see no nuff in oney  
jes we talks sab out it tsall in  
fillin up  
jest fillin uppa de yesses yes  
wit hose dem holes and hoes.

so howsa comes, I says, den don' I no?  
you no's, says he, you nose.

— *Lou Florimonte*



## LOVE PIGEON TAXI

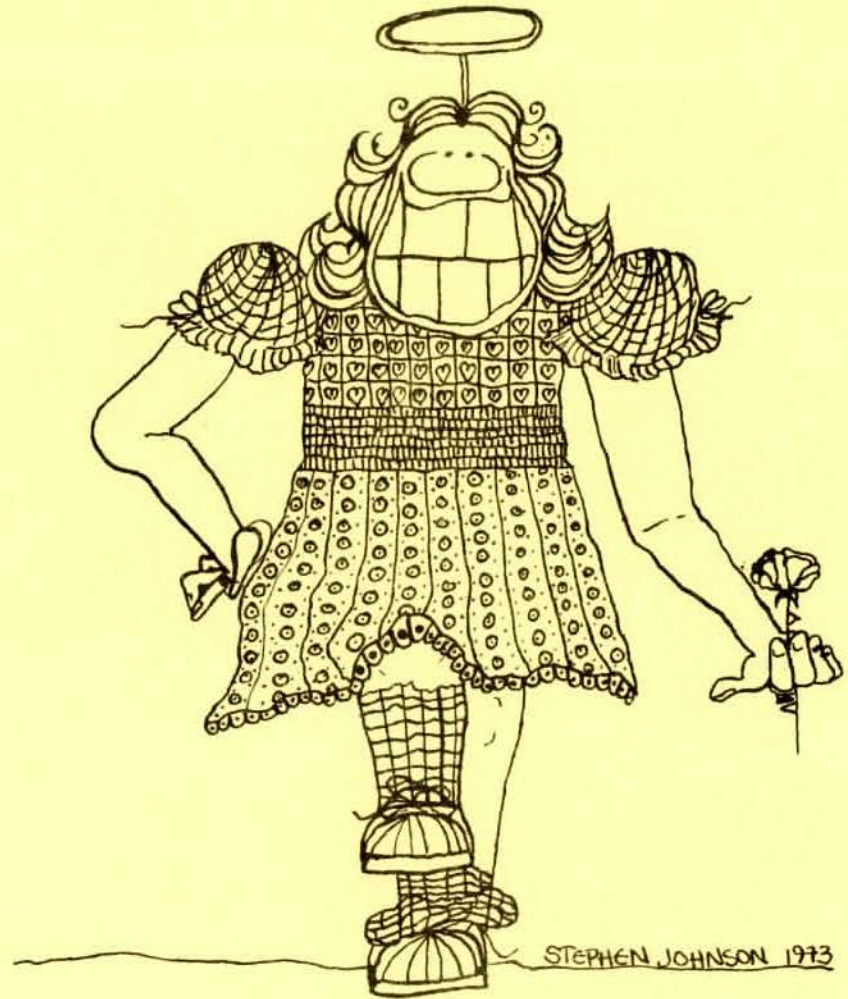
in the park no one home apple pie  
pigeon fly ping pong balls cats inside  
pigeon dead ping pong balls lovers in  
the park kiss.

—Dick Ford

## SNOW ARRIVES

The snow arrives  
like little girls;  
It giggles and turns

— Tony Perrone



Time what a magazine  
    what a line  
Agnew is in Nixon is  
    out  
McGovern is helping  
    the hard hats  
calm down  
    while Wallace is  
wheelin' and dealin'  
    with song  
You'll read Ted Kennedy  
    cried to John and Bobby  
    "how is it up there, you  
        are up there  
        aren't you?"

And Look takes the picture  
while the hope of the nation  
lies in the cover of the Saturday  
Evening Post. Norman Rockwell  
if you can't paint pictures  
anymore get a brownie and  
    snap pictures of your name  
    to honor a special cover  
        by Picasso.

— Dick Ford

**CRUISING**

Supported by the wall, I stood;  
a hardwood ocean separated me from you,  
whose elbows pressed into the bar.

Eyes and moustache, when fired in my  
direction, stunned me as a harpoon would  
when thrust into a whale.

Perservering strength freed me  
as I turned away;  
causing you to want, to beg my beauty.

Weapon loaded, you aimed, fired.  
But your spears pierced thin air  
(to be sure, I grinned).

"Yes, he is cute," I thought, smiling  
and drawn to your wanting arms.  
We talked triviality: of weather,

names, and age, which soothed our  
momentary lust.

Touching, your finger disturbed my limpness,  
but because you played so carefully  
I nodded yes to your request to leave.  
Brandy, bourbon, beer, all left behind,

You led me through a sun garden  
and relaxed me with delight.

— *Richard Cash*

**DURING THE POETRY READING  
IN THE COFFEE HOUSE**

Heated by my probing hands,  
Cubes of frozen water slip  
Through the light of oil-fed lamps.  
Stained-glass sculptures melt, revealing  
Fused designs of shifting patterns:  
Bubbles trapped in shining crystal forms.

— *Cindy Essenpreis*

— *By Joanne Stuhr*



**THE PEACE DISTURBERS**

On Sunday afternoon I like to rest

In my mellow room

Rich with mingled silence of November gloom

And golden light.

I will be comforted and at peace.

Then faintly I hear them approach,

Children coming to play next door,

Their voices piercing through the dim light.

They run and shout, playing soccer with an old tin can

Cli-unk-k. It hits and rolls away.

Cli-unk-k. They kick it again and again.

I hear them when they ride

Their bicycles around the poles,

Around and around, a hundred times or more

In circles or in figure-eights.

Was I like that?

Could I have been that circling child?

I see her skating around a lily pond

Determinedly around the smooth and satisfying contour,

Trudging successions of hills, sled in hand,

Down, down, up to down, in a vertigo of cycles.

These days the way I travel is even, straight and has an end.

In my adulthood a disease of order?

— Virginia B. Jellech

**SUICIDE**

Look at the expanse of glass, metal, and stone  
And the gray purple clouds rolling in

And the shadow drains are activating.

A body falls  
The scanning sensors detect  
And the grisly display is gone

And the rain begins  
Falling with giant rectangular precision without deviation.

— *John Stokes*

**RAIN**

Rain, and it did rain that still night--  
cool wet drops  
beat a rhythm new,  
that even the children of store-front churches  
have not quite got.  
Cold drops rolled from the slanted roof  
to silvered gutter  
and down the rigid spout.  
Gushed from its rusted edge  
to diffuse over a concrete slab.  
A stream of rain--a rainstream  
trickled along a crack in the hard gray pavement.  
Was sucked into the ground beneath.

— *Linda Newman*

I drank wine with the ocean  
and we laughed together;  
but that night  
when I returned  
he laid a still fish  
coldly at my feet;  
and I apologized  
and left.

—*Lou Florimonte*

## REMEMBRANCE

Widow's tears don't come

They remain sealed to  
eyes that speak only in shadows.

Casting visions to rock and grass.  
I want so much to remember.

Moist, raw and turbulent  
Within the limits of  
private muses.

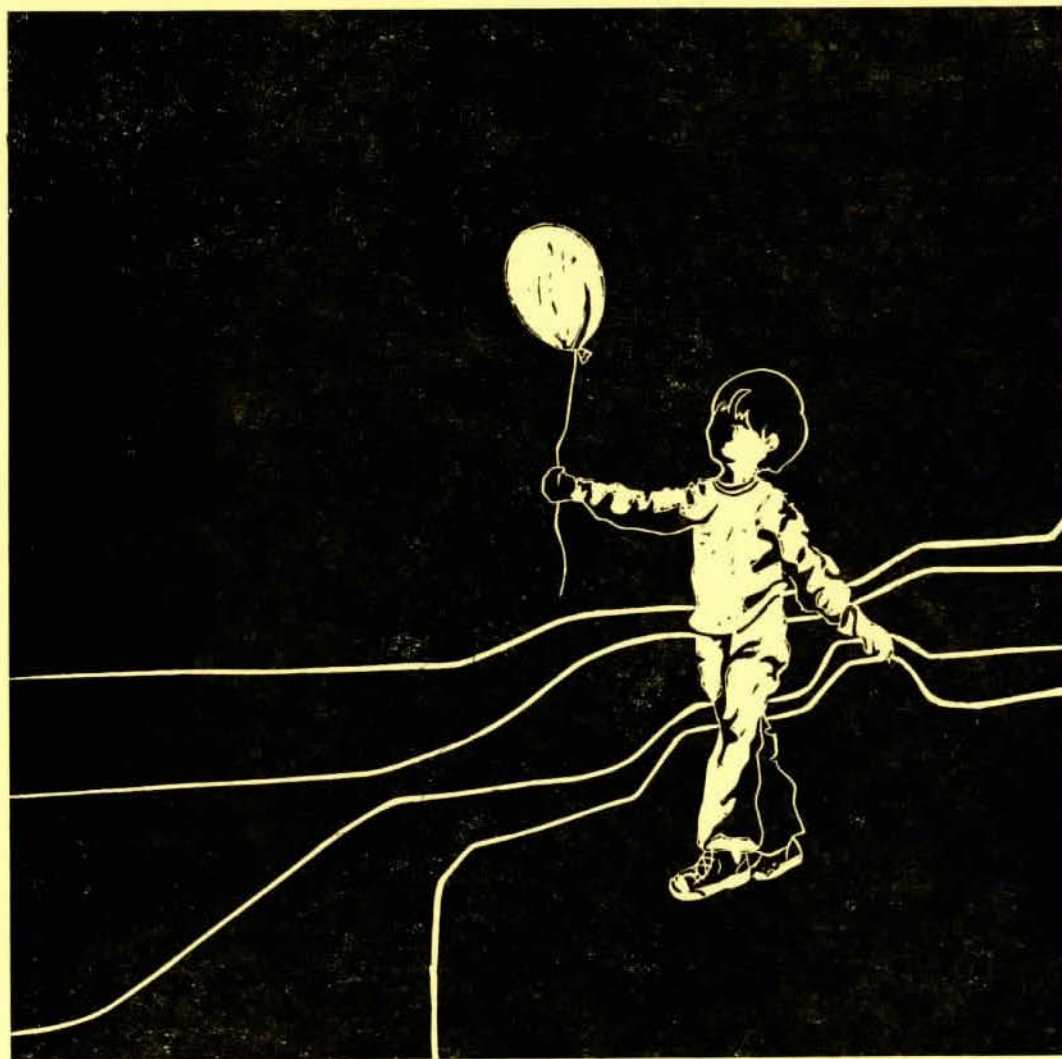
Walking stiffly  
in search of alternate paths.

— *Martha Ackmann*



— *By Steve Johnson*





*"Dreams Are Like That" – By Andrea Enthal*

## QUIETUS

we pause  
 between conversing --  
 thoughts pace  
 through our minds,  
 and we are tired.

you need not speak loudly,  
 your voice should not echo—  
 through the room,  
 i am close enough.

if i could just hold you—  
 feel you in my arms  
 like steam against window panes—  
 yet we pause.

if you would just kiss me  
 once and lightly,  
 we could be close  
 yet we talk;  
 no pauses,  
 now.

— Tommy Buell

## STARCASTLE

My wings grow dusty along the Missouri  
In temples with gingerbread shrines

I want to dance with seagulls softly  
In time to the wind bobbling  
With seals who praise me

Buds are bursting in my hips  
Caterpillars soften my toes.

Spring runs fast to cold music

Send me sandcastles glued on time

— *Christine Carlson*

## SEASONAL DICTATION

April minds  
Sailing through calico mist  
Move easily  
Through these vacant days.

They laugh and call for dance and music

While October minds  
Crowd darkly in corners,  
Stretching out long, black thoughts  
                                  poised  
Waiting for the mist to rise.

— *Martha Ackmann*

**JANUARY BIRDS**

Venice pigeons—  
 are nothing like their cousins  
 in St. Charles;  
 they gather in groups,  
 play tourist,  
 they prance,  
 fly in circles—  
 and sit on statue heads.

here,  
 in St. Charles  
 they coo.  
 are quiet in the park,  
 like us—  
 they rarely get excited.

— Tommy Buell

**I FEEL SO SWEET OH**

When I heard your voice

I was

behind the door,

my arms with oranges.

The May silting its soft morning

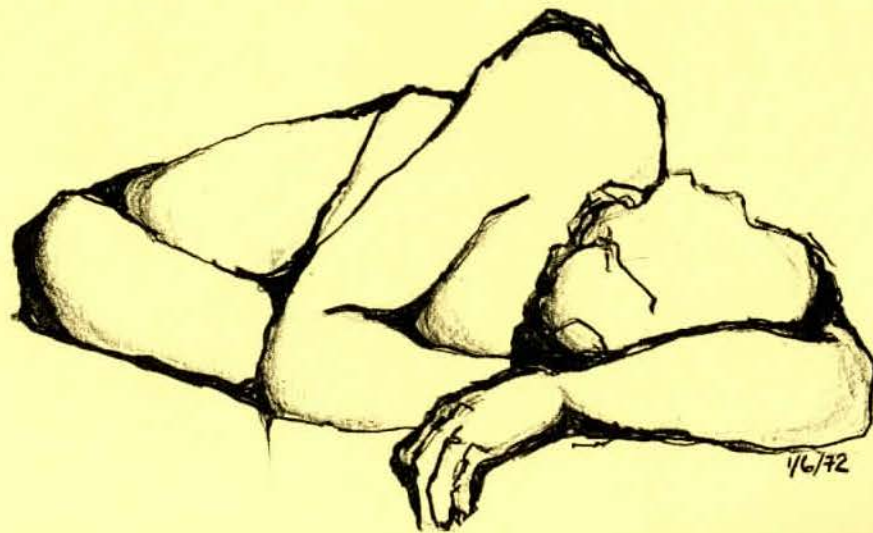
on my

feet barely with golden

dust

Dust on the oranges

ruffle dust on my dust dress



And darkness shining  
under the doorsill  
where you stand  
and have called.

— *Alexandra Florimonte*

### **THE GREEN THING**

The green thing  
growing in the ice  
Is like the man  
who thinks at dawn

— *Tony Perrone*

### **WILDFLOWER IN YOUR HAND**

Most days  
I flower muted  
in tender garden crowds  
. . . sown in the arrangements of things.

You come  
plucking,  
planting me alone on some mountain  
. . . a single, transparent wildness.

— *Cathleen Klohr*

### **INSIGHT**

But who has seen Orion in the sky  
And held the slender shaft of starry beams?  
And who has watched the yearling filly die  
And followed halting steps with freezing dreams?  
The child who wore the baggy jeans, has he?  
He looked for turtles hiding in his bed.  
The man who crossed the concrete walk, has he?  
He counted cracks and did not lift his head.  
Then who has touched the strips of peeling paint  
On dusty plaster walls in summer heat?  
And who has smelled the spreading salty taint  
Of crumbling stairways trod by winter feet?  
I saw one caterpillar tightly curled  
Upon a corn chip in a granite world.

— *Cindy Essenpreis*

**ERNESTLY SPOKEN**

How much will you pay to live in the attic,  
amid the swirling dust of October twilights.

To whistle across the rooms and out the window  
into tempra landscapes,

Your call diffused  
and melting  
into  
inky canopies.

How much will you pay to live in the attic,  
where echoes are you only companion,  
and even Carlo is gone.

— *Martha Ackmann*

**IN THE SPRING**

In the field  
I loved her.

Beneath the tree  
by the fence  
I loved her.

In the wind,  
with a kiss  
on the lips  
I loved her.

**I FEEL AS FAT**

I feel as fat  
in a rain  
barrel  
not wanting  
to be touched  
by the  
clear  
wet  
wanting to  
be drenched  
but  
repelled want  
ing to

Every day,  
with a flower  
from the field  
beneath the tree  
by the fence  
in the wind  
with a kiss  
on the lips  
I loved her.

— *Tony Perrone*

## I ABANDON MY POETRY

i abandon my poetry like clothing  
and then again i try it on:  
seeing which words  
look better with what,  
whether the sweater goes  
with the pants  
i have  
  
walking around  
i look to mirrors,  
for reflections of my words.  
to discover  
a rumpled sweater,  
and pants too long,  
anyway.  
disgusted,  
i go back  
and try again.

— *Tommy Buell*

be melted just  
to have  
a chance  
but  
the wa-  
ter is  
cool and  
sometimes  
cold  
like  
frigid  
people.  
— *Dick Ford*

## SISTER CARRIE

"Goddamn you son of a bitch! Ah'll kill ya! Ah swear ah'll kill ya!"

Bob swayed and it appeared as if he tried to dodge the bottle Carrie just threw. Actually, he swayed because he was drunk – too drunk to even know that she was throwing things. She was just as drunk as he was. The bottle soared over the dusty yard and crashed on the sidewalk below just short of its mark.

Bob staggered to the curb and leaned against his old car. Carrie came after him. She slumped down the wooden porch steps carefully. Carrie was a big woman but she moved fast and Bob knew it. He had to get away. He dug in his pocket for the car keys. Both pockets were empty!

"Ah gots yo' keys nigger! You ain't goin' no where!" Carrie tramped down the walk to the cement steps.

Bob edged around to the street side of the car and leaned against it. The car was blue – an odd sort of blue much like the cloudless, late-summer sky but without the softness. It was instead a harsh blue that could not be looked at very long. Bob had painted the car himself. It was that color not because he was particularly fond of ultramarine blue but because that was the only color the secondhand store had two canisters of.

The day he painted his car was just like this day – hot, humid, with no breeze. Carrie had sat on the very steps she now approached, smiling, saying how pretty the color was, not seeming to mind the gagging fumes that rose with the heat (though she hacked and spit a few times). She even made him stop for a while when she began to swoon from the paint fumes. And when the car was finished Carrie thought it was so pretty! She just had to go for a ride right then.

Bob took her around the block but was followed by a cop because he'd forgotten to put the license plate back on. The cop asked for his driver's license. Bob had been driving for forty-five years and he never had a license. He'd never needed it – not when as a young man he drove a beer truck from St. Peters to Wentzville delivering his goods to small backroad taverns and cafes, not even when he bought this car from a grinning white man who charged him ten dollars more for letting him have it without a license. The cop told Bob he didn't want to see him again without a license and then he let him go. Perhaps it was the bright blue. Perhaps it was just too hot to bother.

"You no good nigger! You ain't gettin' away!" Carrie was at the top of the cement steps now. She grabbed the iron rail with both hands.

Bob had made that rail himself out of rusted pipes he'd found in a junk yard. The rail was for Carrie because her legs were bad. They had swelled into heavy cylinders from the knees down and it was hard to lift them very high.

Carrie put all her weight on the rail. She took the first step laboriously. "Ah'm goin' to kill yo skinny ass nigger!" She took the second step.

"You better run Bob. She's gonna get you!" This was shouted from across the street. A loud laugh followed. Bob looked up. His eyes were bad and he could only see a blurred form, pinkish, clad in white, against a grey background. It was Warfield – the only white man on the block.

Warfield wasn't the only one watching the fight. Others looked. They were the same people that had watched Bob paint his car. Some had been annoyed by the fumes. Others had been amused at the sight of the thin man repainting an old yellow cab with ultramarine blue spray paint. They were in much the same positions now as they were then. They stood at screen doors and sat on porches and steps. Some had come outdoors to escape the heat of their houses. Others, who perhaps had fans in their houses, were drawn outdoors by the noise Carrie made. They were all as blurs to Bob as his eyes passed over them. He looked back again at Warfield then lowered his head.



His eyes focused on a row of children who sat on the curb in front of Warfield's house. They were much closer to him and he could see them very clearly.

There were seven of them – four boys, two girls, and a baby. All wore cut-off pants. Some wore ragged tennis shoes. Only one of them had on a shirt. She looked the oldest. She was very dark and skinny and her hair was freshly corn-rolled in a simple pattern. She held a fat caramel-colored baby in dingy diapers who clasped its legs about her waist. The baby sucked a grape popsicle that dripped down the front of the girl's white shirt. Where the cold liquid soaked in, the cloth lay flat and the beginnings of a breast were visible.

Bob knew who these kids were. They lived directly across from him and Carrie, next door to Warfield. Often, in the afternoon when Bob and Warfield sat on the gray steps smoking and drinking ice water, those kids would run by. They laughed, screamed, chased each other and threw things. Warfield would remark how fast those kids were growing and how good their mother (whose bedroom window was across from his own) still looked after having all of them, and how it was too bad that their father got sent to prison because wives need husbands and children need fathers.

The kids stared at Bob now not bothering to wipe tiny beads of sweat off their noses or slap at the flies that settled in their hair and crawled up their bare legs. They sat, staring, almost totally motionless, with a seriousness that somehow disturbed Bob. They stared as if their very lives depended on taking in all that was to happen now.

Carrie took the last step. "Ah'm a kill ya nigger! Ah'm a kill ya!" She was headed for the car. Her walk was more like a shuffle for she couldn't lift her heavy legs very high. As she walked her huge buttocks humped up and down and the bottom of her tight-fitting flower-print dress swished with each movement. She didn't seem to have any stomach- only breasts – breasts still fat despite her age that seemed to fill the front of her from waist to armpit. She bent forward slightly from the waist as if those breasts weighed her down.

Carrie reached the car. With her left hand on the window of the back door she grasped the front door handle with her right hand. After several tries she finally got her thumb on the button and pushed it in. She tugged at the door but it wouldn't open. The door was locked but this didn't occur to her. She thought the door was stuck or just being stubborn as Bob so often was. She kept pulling causing the car to rock violently.

Bob turned and grabbed the door handle with one hand and the outside mirror with the other hand. Standing with his legs spread apart for support he desperately tried to steady the car. He pushed against it as hard as he could but because the worn soles of his shoes could not grip the smooth pavement his feet began to slide backward and outward. He let go of the car and repositioned himself to try again. This time he slipped to his knees hitting his chin on the door handle as he went down.

Warfield laughed loudly. "Hey, hey Bob! you better get out of the way! She's gonna tip it over on you!"

Bob pulled himself up slowly. His chin ached and his knees throbbed painfully. The car rocked as if it would soon be disjointed from its base. Carrie could hurt his car. He had to make her stop.

"Stop it woman!"

"Fuck you!"

"Goddamnit I said stop!" Bob walked around the front of his car to where Carrie stood. With both hands he grabbed her right wrist and jerked her hand from the door handle.

"Get away from ma car!"

"Get yo black hands off me you no good son of a bitch!"

"Gimme ma keys!" Bob reached in the pocket of Carrie's dress and grabbed the keys but before he could get his hand out she grabbed the skin of his wrist between her fingers and pinched hard. It hurt but Bob held on to the keys and tried to pull his hand out.

Then with a quick jerk Bob got his hand out. He had his keys but Carrie's dress was ripped. The underarm seam split down just past her waist and the shoulder seam that was

already ripped hung down. She raised her arm to strike Bob and the dark, beady underarm hair showed. Sweat streamed from it.

Bob caught her fat arm and saved his chin from additional pain. He held the arm with both hands and she struck him with her free hand. Bob managed to catch this wrist and he held both arms high above him. Carrie twisted trying to get free but Bob had the advantage for he was leaning against the car. The torn part of Carrie's dress folded back and much of her teakwood colored breast was exposed. Only the black nipple remained covered.

The people that watched shifted their positions now. Those that stood behind doors opened them. Those that sat stood up. Even Warfield hoisted his heavy body from the steps he sat on. With his hands stuck in his hip pockets he walked to the edge of his yard. He stood there squinting. His mouth hung open and his fat tongue lay on his bottom lip.

Carrie jerked her arms back and forth trying to get loose. Bob held on to her wrists. He had to. If he let go she'd beat him. Maybe this time she would kill him. His eyes followed the beads of sweat that rolled from her neck down between her breasts.

Then he was aware of a hot wetness on his own skin. Carrie had spit on his face. The hot spital rolled down the smooth skin of his forehead, over the bridge of his nose, down the side of his nose and was absorbed in his thin moustache. Some of it dribbled over his thick pink upper lip. It smelled of the pineapple wine they'd been drinking.

Bob tried to wipe his mouth on the sleeve of his shirt but just as he got his arm to his mouth Carrie banged it hard against the lower lip. Blood seeped to the corner of his mouth and rolled down his chin.

Bob's lip stung, his chin and knees still throbbed. He was hot and could feel the mid-afternoon sun on his bald head. The hot fumes from Carrie's body nauseated him. He took short quick breaths to avoid smelling her but the air was too still, too hot for that.

The liquor, the heat, the odor all made his head spin. He closed his eyes but jerked them open quickly. He had to stay strong and hold on.

Maybe Carrie would get tired. She never tired out before but maybe this time . . .

“Hold on there Bob, hold on!” Warfield shouted this just as loud as he’d shouted before but Bob vaguely heard him now.

Bob’s arms ached – even more so now than they did the day he painted his car. He was very tired and suddenly he wished Carrie would get it over with. She was right, he couldn’t do anything for her anymore. He couldn’t take care of her like he used to do.

Carrie waved her arms back and forth. Her whole body rocked. Bob began to rock with her but he held on. Then Carrie jerked her arms up. Bob’s arms were snapped up high. He felt a pain in the muscles under his armpits. Then he felt her knee on the inside of his thigh. She was aiming for his groin. Bob dropped her arms and instinctively reached to protect himself. She struck him in the stomach and he sank to his knees. She kicked at his hands and he turned from her dropping his head between his knees to protect his face. She kicked at his side.

“Git up you no good nigger! You lazy motherfuckin’ son of a bitch! Git up before ah kick the shit out of you!” She kicked again.

Bob didn’t get up. He fell over. His head hit the hot metal of his car. He half opened his eyes catching a bit of orange-yellow that he had missed. He opened his eyes wider and saw skinny black legs and bare toes. The girl holding the baby stood staring down at him. The last thing he saw was the drops of grape popsicle on her white shirt.

– *Linda Newman*

Why Mr Jones?!  
Not you too?!!



A poor Damsel  
(liberated of course)  
in which she discovers  
"The Honeymoon is Over!"



My Compliments to "MS."

My Compliments to Ms. — by Jeff Kleiman

## THE ARTIST

"I like your comedy stuff but haven't you ever wanted to do anything meaningful?" the hip young relevant filmmaker asked me. "You mean films of great symbolic meaning and cosmic truth?" I asked. "Whatever's your thing, man," he said. "Maybe comedy's my 'thing' then," I replied. "I notice an incredible undercurrent of violence in everything you do." "Naw," I replied. "True revolutionaries are motivated by great love," his woman, walking three steps behind him (as is custom among the people-spoke. "And artists too." "Everybody but comedians?" I questioned. "You can do it, you've got what it takes," said the hip young relevant filmmaker. "You should be a white blues guitarist," I said. He asked me if I still played the trumpet. "Maybe we can do something together someday," said the hip young relevant filmmaker.

— Scott Boncie

Hey Miss America  
What do you  
see  
out side your  
window?  
barefoot boy with a  
broken toy  
whose mother  
ran away with another  
man.  
Hey Miss America  
What do you see  
when you drive  
your  
car?  
rows of houses  
suffocating the  
life of City-Man  
running  
for  
apartment  
manager.  
Say Miss America  
what is it  
I see in your eye  
is that a twinkle  
or a formation of  
a tear  
made by  
flashing camera  
lights  
"smile please"  
Hey Miss America  
I'm not a fake  
but  
kiss me anyhow.

— Dick Ford

**SONG MY**

Song My  
 someone said hey  
 what where's  
 Song My and  
 who died there  
 some gooks they say some  
 enemies see lived there they  
 wiped it hot damn out they  
 lined them up they  
 mowed them down some  
 guy took pictures and  
 that rascal's rich now some  
 guy lost a land mined foot to god  
 the next day and  
 his mama see she  
 said they said they  
 took away my well raised son and gave me back a  
 murderer she said they gave her back and  
 now some say 190 some  
 say 570 some  
 say 300 or so some  
 say can you all to  
 gether now all one  
 two three togethernowand  
 mea culpa  
 mea culpa  
 mea maxima culpa-

- Lou Florimonte

**WE WERE LOVERS ONCE**

We were overs once . . .

not in the sense of linen freeways  
 or nocturnal journeys into each other,

but we were lovers nonetheless,

embracing on parchment beds  
 and touching eyes;

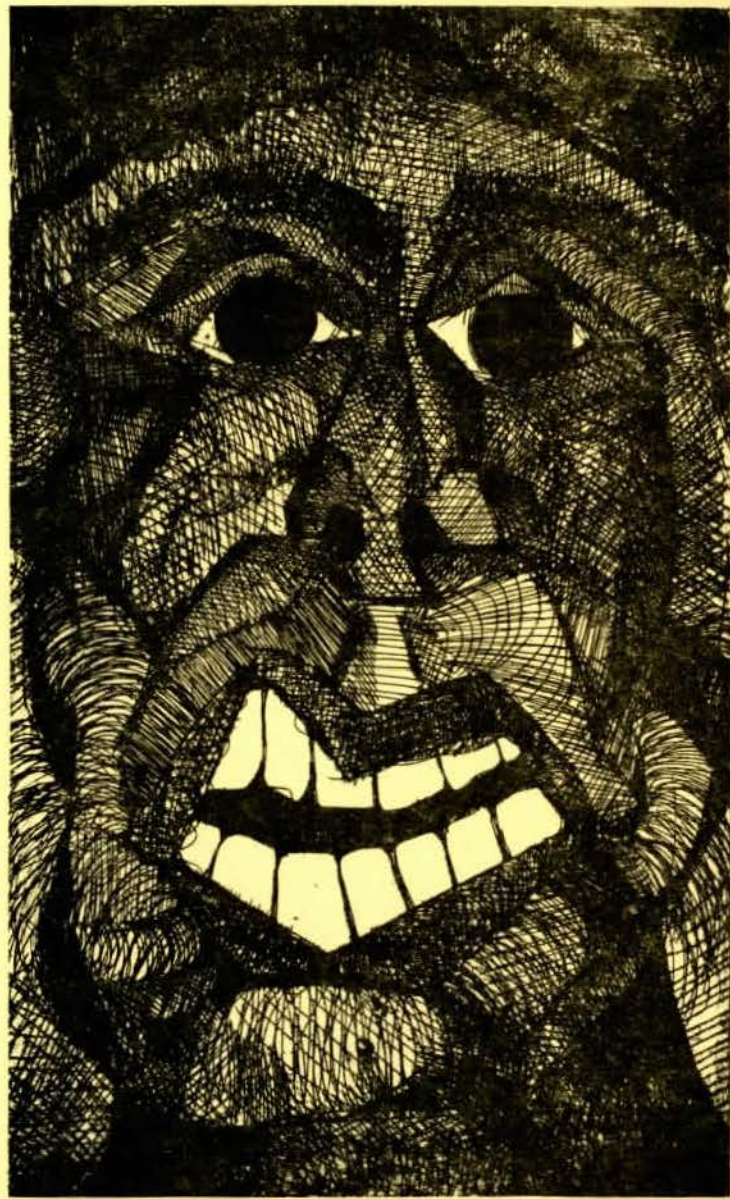
we traveled each other.

- Cathleen Klohr

**ONO POEM**

Ride a subway  
Pick twelve people for your jury  
Commit a crime

— *Scott Boncie*



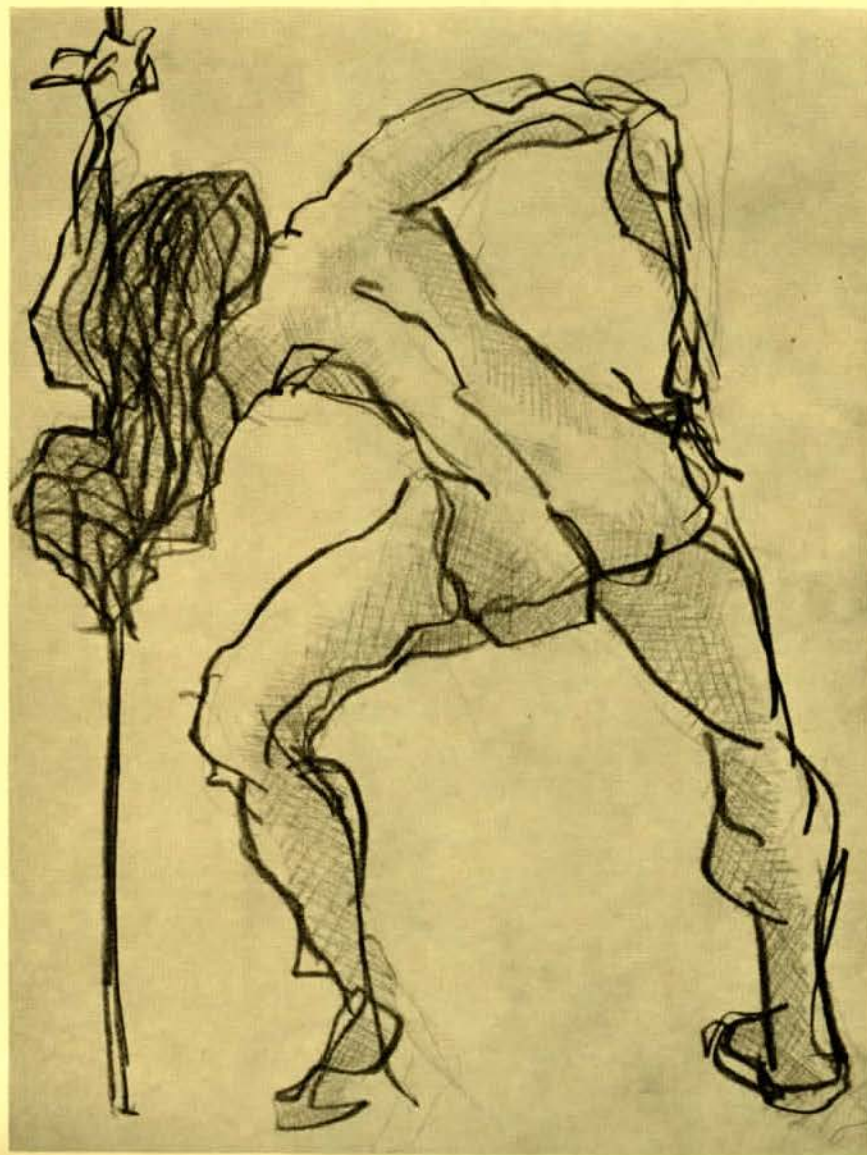
*'Thackery' — By Stephen Johnson*



**A LEAF TREMBLES**

The leaf trembles  
away from the bough  
As a child  
who is alone.

— *Tony Perrone*



*By  
Stephen  
Johnson*

## THE JUDGEMENT

Little toad with crooked leg  
Open up the door I beg  
and see who stands without  
TOAD CROSSES STAGE LEFT, ENTER DARK ANGEL

I have come for you, old woman.  
You have lived here too long, and worse,  
largely untouched by the lives of others.  
You, old woman, are irrelevant, you with  
your dolls and animals.  
You touch no one and no one has touched you  
now I come to take you away.

TOAD APPEARS CONFUSED AND LOOKS TO OLD WOMAN

No. You hate me because I do not live by  
your rules, because I cannot live  
that which I know to be a lie, because  
I do not pretend to love that which I  
despise. I do not believe in what you  
say, nor do I believe in those you claim  
have sent you. Be gone.

TOAD IS FRIGHTENED, AND LOOKS FROM WOMAN TO ANGEL

Do not waste my time,  
you matter not to me.  
For you merely delay my work  
And I am immortal.

— *Scott Boncie*



— By Joanne Stuhr

### WOUND OF GREEN

Stunned naked am I tragic  
in a wasteland stung

faint in wonder and dismay  
with your logic stratagem.

## POEM

She strips for sleep, quickly  
with her arms crossed, pulls off cotton  
to reveal dune smooth geographies, skin  
above the roll of hidden ribs, nipples  
charged by the passage of pure cloth.  
She leans forward to bring silk  
over waterfall of silver hair,  
lets it drop to rugs,  
moonlight breathing in the angle of her legs.  
She falls onto the bed  
completely forward, brown shoulders down  
on pillows that are bunched below the ear,  
stretched out legs, midsection narrow  
curves to perfect rest.  
Head loose, lips open for the vehicle,  
she courts the careless mystery of sleep.  
In a moment, past one  
restless turn, her particles surrender,  
separate, feel the loose grip of the night,  
Open. Sleep easily rides in.

— John R. Mueller

No rock nor breath of green  
to hide these bombard wounds;

glanced small I curl dry weeping bare  
into this desert swoon.

What battlecry emotion  
boxed by wisdom words

whose arrowedge in flight destroys  
the sound of heart unheard?

Eclipsed I coil into retreat  
contempt of flag or shroud

and breathe with quiet, pulsing life—  
a still, undying sound.

I wait the passage of your mind  
and hope a touch of green

wound of your fabric eyes,  
unshadowed and redeemed,

Newdyed threads to have entwined  
their dressing over me,

so light my injured flesh unfolds  
to wet green weeping free.

— Cathleen Klohr

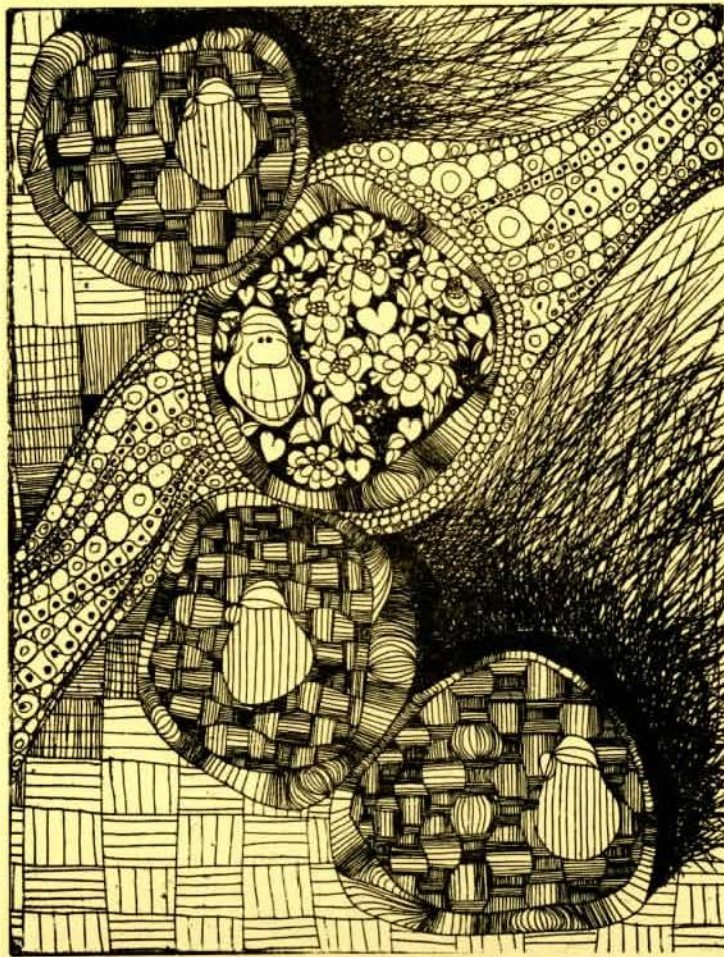
In the almost before  
I see the sicle moon  
of your coming, waiting to pour  
Out on me—tears to melt as  
long as I can see—down the cheekbones  
of my fallow body—  
Collecting salty and wry  
in my hollows and furrows.

When finally you shed the last  
Stinging drop into the earth of us,  
And we have ground all stones  
to dust with our bodies,

And I have stretched among your drops  
In the midst of it all, brown  
and twiney, offering  
tart fruits to the ground of you,

Let them be my thanks  
for your search of me, for digging out  
earthy lumps of Diana  
from her wild fields.

— *Alexandra Florimonte*

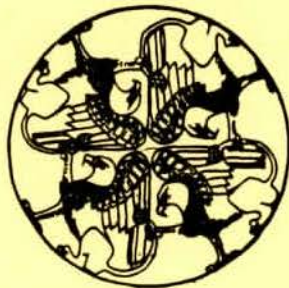


— *By Steve Johnson*

All artists and writers, whose works have appeared on the previous pages, are students at The Lindenwood Colleges, with the exception of:

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