

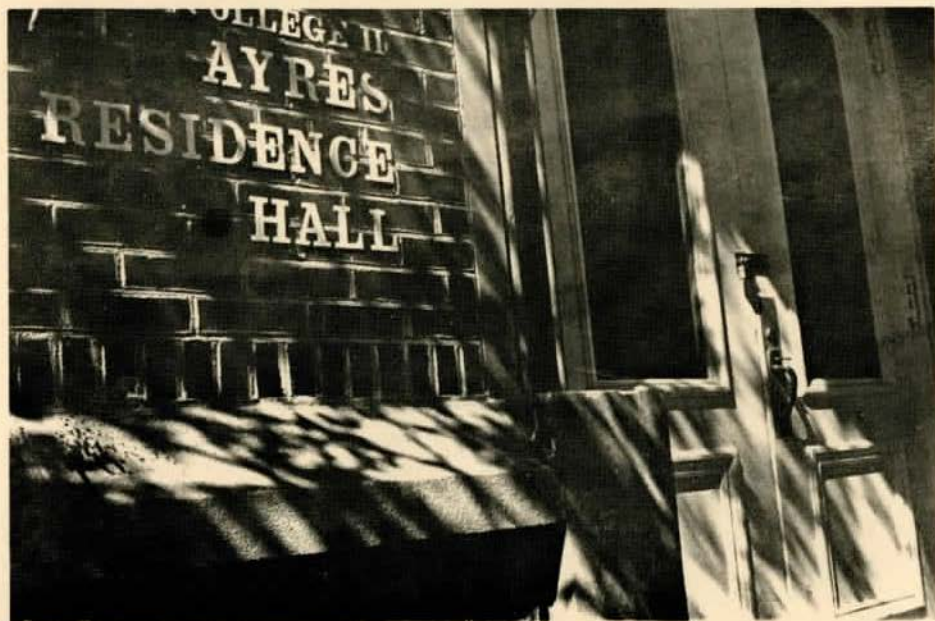
The

Griffin

the GRIFIN

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

Progress at Lindenwood



Photograph by Mary Evelyn Martin

## TIME

While man has come to recent birth  
And crawled and fought across the Earth,  
Beyond in the enormous sky  
The nebulae wheel slowly by.

In the black, eternal space  
Stars pulse and the comets race;  
Uncounted suns catch fire and burn  
As captive planets round them turn.

The stars throw lances, blue and white,  
To bridge the universe with light,  
And eyes of men in wonder stare  
At suns that are no longer there,

So vast the distance light has run!  
We turn about our little sun,  
And blossoms on the Earth's frail crust  
Bloom but an instant - then are dust.

—Dixie Curkeet—

THE END

I drowned  
one misty night.

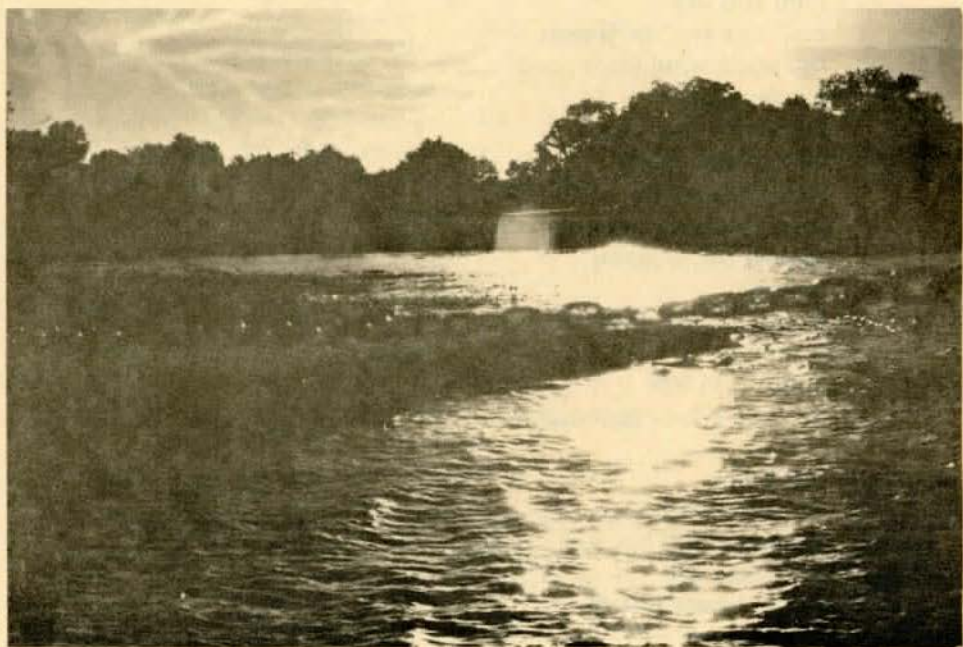
It was around midnight.  
On a coastline shore

Of the Manhattan Sea.

The clouds were  
big and fluffy.  
With the full moon shining  
through.

The water was cool and  
had a blue-  
green sparkle.

-Susan Rendlen-



Photograph by Ethan Hoskin

I walked  
in winter's first warm day  
and heard spring  
whisper through dead grass -  
a long  
deeply hushed hum,  
dry blade against dry blade.  
Nobody wept for me;  
the newly blue sky  
refused to cloud and cry  
loud and cry  
tears for my loneliness;  
the wind would not push  
my fears away,  
gave only cool caress  
on my hot cheek.  
And from a hill  
grew a church of God  
against the horizon;  
in hope,  
I touched the door -  
locked,  
only a window  
to show a bear sanctuary.  
So  
I sit alone  
on church steps,  
closer to God but not  
close enough -  
and I choose poetry  
over prayer.

Robin Ragsdale-

### Gone with the Wind

I watched her leave my house like bellowed wind;  
And followed the fellows who zigzagged like a drunken rabies victim;  
    A weeping willow in full bloom  
    Waved greeting and goodbye at once,  
    Ripping heart and mind apart;  
    Left together, but ripped alone.  
The moon's burnt out by the son's dulled flint;  
Gone again, and my head was spent.

*This poem was composed at a Poetry Reading in May of 1980  
After a little wine and a lot of poetry (or is it the other way  
around?)... It is a group effort, with each line composed by a  
different person. The poets involved are:*

*Celia Baker  
Paul Butts  
John Coffman  
Susan Djavaherian  
John Feely  
Nancy Kenkel-Koenig  
Mary Evelyn Martin  
Sandi Means*



XYZ  
ANTI – THEATRE CREATION MYTH

by

Mary Evelyn Martin

CHARACTERS

GODFREY - an elderly artisan

MANFRED - HIS CREATION

TIME: in the beginning

PLACE: anywhere

DURATION OF ACTION: five minutes

Enter GODFREY, in a rowboat, whistling "Row, row, row your boat". He is wearing an artist's smock and is rowing very nervously across the stage. He stops about center stage, looks at his watch, wipes his brow, and stops the boat.

GODFREY: Only five till seven. My, my how times flies when you're a nervous wreck. (He sees the audience, and addresses himself to them.) Oh, I see you've found my secret spot. It's nice and peaceful here, isn't it? I love to come here and relax, forget about Sunday for an all-day nap. I work a long six-day week, you know, and it's really nice to have a place to come to and just relax. Well, usually it's nice. Today I just can't seem to get to sleep. I don't know why - I'm exhausted, but my nerves are so on edge that every time I shut my eyes, all my problems seem to scream at me from out of the darkness "You can't get rid of US that easily". So I stay awake and brood. (He yawns again) You know, you look like a really sympathetic group. Could I tell you about my problem? Would you mind? Maybe if I get it off my chest I'll be able to get a little rest.

The problem is, I'm worried that I'm gonna lose my job. You see, yesterday, I was commissioned to make my patrons a piece of art. Their only instructions were that it had to be in my own image. In my own image?? Now I ask you, what kind of an order is that? Where do they come off asking for something without first giving me the proper proportions and specifications? I told them I needed more specific orders, and they told me to use my creative instincts.. So I gave it my best shot.(In a lowered voice, as if he doesn't want anyone else to hear.)

A creation in my own image... First, I thought, I'd better get a good idea of what that image is. So I got out my old mirror and took a look. Well, I'm sure you can see how I came up with a such a cute little critter- in view of the smashing raw materials, I mean. But they didn't like it. Told me it was unsuitable! And the managed to prove their point, too, with a small technicality. Who would have guessed that spelling would be my nemesis? I always thought that all creatures were the same regardless of how you spelled their names. But evidently I was wrong. My mirror image turned out to be this - (He waves his hand, and out form the bottom of the rowboat pops a dog.) Meet Mighty Manfred, my canine catastrophe. Do you get it? Put me in the mirror and what do you get but D - O - G. (He sighs)

Well, my patrons didn't think a whole lot of that, so they decided to fire me. I did my best to make this boo - boo look good.(points to Manfred, who sighs, picks up an ABC book and starts to read it) I reminded them of the time that I'd goofed in their eyes. That time the mistake and I use the word sarcastically was Harry Belafonte. They didn't like him at all, that is till they found I'd trained him to sing their praises (we hear Harry's recording of "Deo,deo....") So naturally they accepted him. So when I tried to tell them that this one wasn't really a mistake either, they told me that Harry was a once in a lifetime miracle, and gave me one day to whip this baby into shape - one day, or I lose my job.

So I decided to try to make him literate first - but he's not even past his ABCs yet! (He sighs) Hey you - it's your cue. (nudges Manfred) Do you know your alphabet yet? (Manfred nods slowly, grinning) Then let's test how well you know it. (Manfred nods nervous, and opens his book to practices to himself, turning the pages so the audience can see — A,B,C,D...) Look at that, will you? He learned them from A to Z , the ordinary way. And he's gonna give you one last chance to redeem yourself You'll impress the hell out of them if you can do this right.(points upward) Show'em your stuff, baby ! (This is a pep talk, shades of "Win one for the gipper")

Show'em you know the alphabet - show'em your XYZs (Manfred looks puzzled, and a bit upset, and tries hard to understand, but cannot. He rests his head in his paws) Try it - Z is for Zipper. (Godfrey shows his zipper on his smock. Suddenly, lights flash on really brightly, and Manfred moves his hand under his chin, as if inspired, and finds a zipper. He undoes his dog suit, and is revealed as a beautiful young woman.)

MANFRED: Z is for Zipper. Is that right, Boss? (In a sexy woman's voice)

GODFREY: Manfred!

MANFRED: Godfrey!

(They touch each other's hands as in Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel "Creation of Adam", and the lights flash to green, and then fade up to a very bright white as a chorus of angels sings the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's Messiah.)

CURTAIN

-Mary Evelyn Martin-

" History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awaken."

—James Joyce—

### SEA-STICK

Plunged in the sea,  
My soul; His stick.  
Needing to be:  
Death's passionate lick.

Forget the air,  
His lie; My dream.  
Our slumber rare,  
My light; His beam.

Flight held by bars,  
We've lost the dare.  
Securing the stars;  
I've jailed his air.

\*\*\*\*\*

### PASSION ASH

Life in vain and life of doubt;  
This gift that shows I am.  
Why have you burned me inside out?  
You've judged and now condemn.

Who gave to you this mighty power;  
you've scorched and branded me.  
Burdened mind and body sour;  
My ashes blow to be.

Wandering roads map new goals;  
I've got not heart nor brain.  
Just ashes floating as life's souls;  
We'll mutilate the pain.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Jeffie Feely won the  
1980 Griffin Poetry Contest  
for these companion poems*

—Jeffie L. Feely—



Photograph by Mary Evelyn Martin

## ASHES FROM THE PAST

People walk briskly by me, oblivious to everything but themselves. One person comes into the store, and spies me on the shelf. He picks me up, flips through a couple of my pages, but decides on another book. I can feel that things are changing by the way people hold me and touch me. Their hands are sweaty and they tremble. I wouldn't know why, except that the other day some person came in to buy a book, and almost bought me. He said that the reason he didn't was because I wasn't safe. In other words, he could get into trouble reading me; my author, Peter Cohen, is Jewish, as is my store owner, Mr. Weinberg. From bits of conversation I've heard in the store, a man named Hitler is taking over the country's government. I wonder what he has to do with people not buying and reading me? I am about the hope for the equality of all races and religions. I can see nothing the matter with myself, but people obviously do. Humans are certainly a strange lot.

My store owner, Mr. Weinberg, is a nice man, but I've noticed that lately he has a hunted look in his eyes, and he acts as though he is nervous. Before he closes up at night to go home, he looks at his shelves, his eyes resting momentarily on each book. Sometimes he touches one of us, feeling the hard, cool smoothness of our covers, and tracing the indentation of our bindings with his fingers. Before he walks out the door, he glances back at us one more time, sighs, and jams his hands into his pockets, fists tightly clenched. Yes, something is definitely going on.

It is peaceful here at night; there are no noises, and no people. I wonder what that was? It sounds like a mob of men. They are making a lot of noise, and they have started throwing rocks through store windows, and smashing things. Oh, God, that's Mr. Weinberg. Men are hitting him, and yelling at him, calling him "Jew." I can see from my place in the bookstore window, that he has fallen to the ground. He does not move, and men walk by him periodically, kicking him. There are many other people in the same plight as he is. I don't understand this at all! Why are those humans behaving so violently? They act wildly, as if they are driven by a force they cannot control. A fire has been made in the middle of the street, and the mob of men are burning the things they've stolen from the stores. A rock has just crashed through our window, hitting and smashing a book of poetry. Men have come into our store, and are carrying out my friends by the dozen. They are burning us. Why? We are nothing more than words on paper, meaning nothing to anyone but the author and the reader. What pleasure or purpose can be found in burning books? Mr. Weinberg stirs from the ground, and sees the men burning us. He gets up from the ground crying, and tries to stop them. This time he is silenced by a hit on the back of his head. He stirs no more.



In my shock at the brutal treatment of my owner, I don't notice a man collecting the books around me. He starts to turn around to walk out of the store, but notices me, and picks me up. He walks into the street, his arms full of books, with me on the top of the pile, and all I see is destruction. There are broken windows, humans lying unmoving on the street, and a fire. I am thrown onto the fire, along with my comrades. My pages catch fire quickly, and my leather cover smokes, and slowly burns, my words fading into oblivion as the fire takes over. The men move away, letting the fire burn itself out. I am nothing but ashes now, the charred remains of one man's feelings, thoughts, and hopes for the future.

The wind blows gently, carrying my ashes in the breeze. I eventually rest on the body of Mr. Weinberg, whose eyes stare unseeing up at the sky, reflecting in them his last futile moments on earth. I don't suppose any of this really matters at all. In twenty years, this will be a thing of the past, something to be forgotten. After all, they only burned books.

—Linda Westerfeld—

## **In The Beginning**

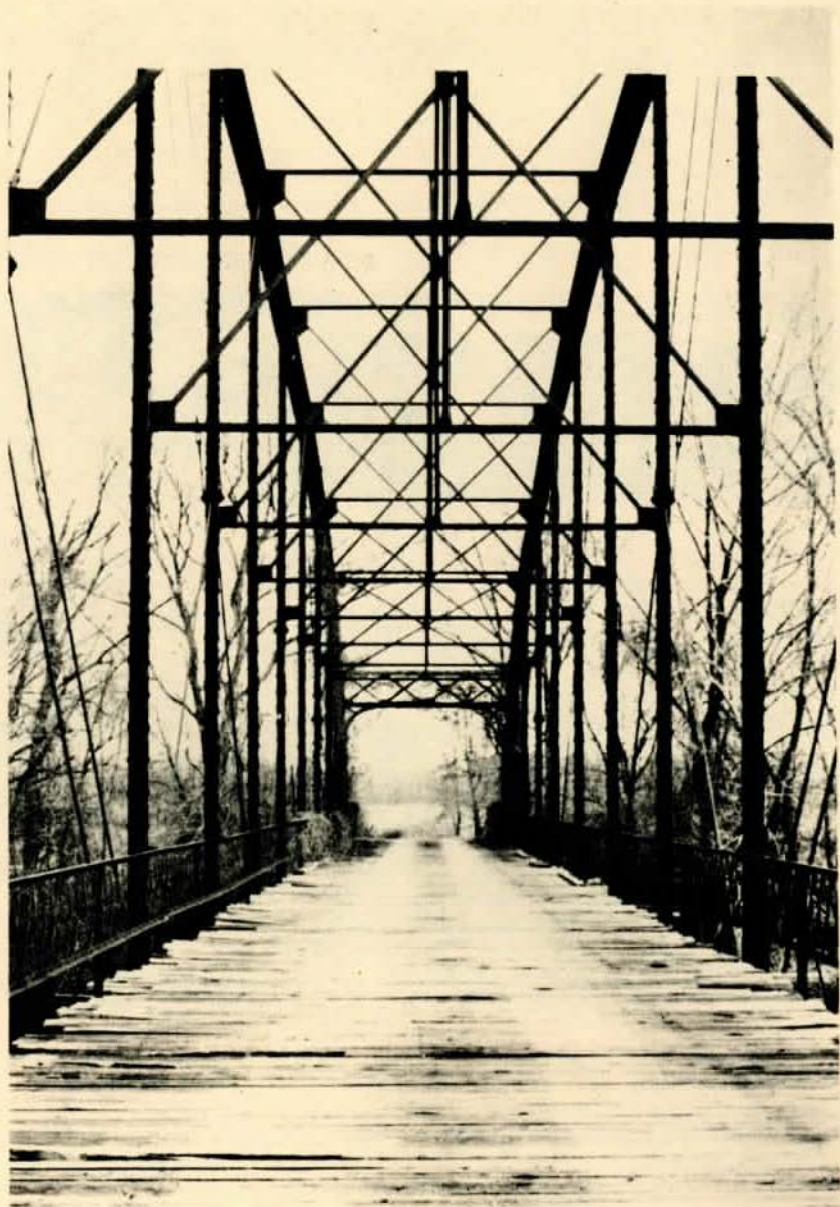
**The Creator  
and He Who Destroys  
stared into  
the White and Black,  
Alpha and Omega,  
Yin and Yang -  
and they knew Eternity  
for their battlefield,  
and The End  
for their final referee.  
Lamb and Dragon  
walked in step  
across a bleak horizon;  
the Lamb cried  
for those who were blind,  
and the Dragon tried  
to trap those who could see.  
Destruction saw  
power in black,  
Creation found freedom  
in white -  
and each backed  
into opposite corners  
of Time's barrier.  
In the beginning....**

**—Robin Ragsdale—**

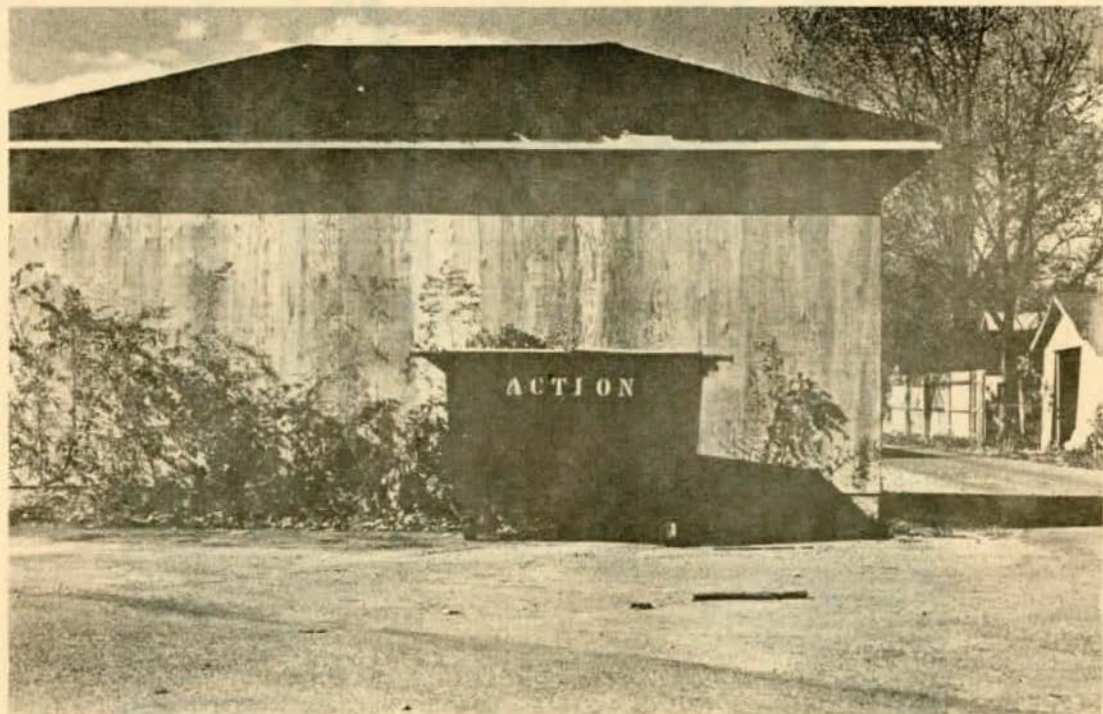
## THE FOX

The red fox runs- a firey streak-  
Across the snow on sable feet,  
But faster yet the bullet flies,  
And pain and shock dim amber eyes-  
Again, again, again God dies.

-Dixie Curkeet-



Photograph by Susan Rendlen



Photograph by Ethan Hoskin

## The Hitch - Hiker

As I roared down Interstate 75, all I could think about was getting home. Little did I know that I was going to meet a girl. A girl who would turn my life into a Hellish Nightmare.

July 23, 1965, 8:00 a.m.. It was a very hot and muggy day. I was rolling down the Highway, jamming some of my mowtown sounds on the tape. I was feeling pretty good, 'cause I had just finished a joint. When I looked to the side of the road, there stood a girl thumbing a ride. She was laid out, I mean the girl was stacked in the right places. She stood about five feet six and one - half or seven inches tall. Weighed about 135 or 140 pounds. She had very fair skin. She was a beautiful golden blonde, and she had dimples. A pretty good looker, If you ask me.. The girl was wearing some brown hip - hugger pants, a thin brown tee - shirt with no bra. I know, because I could see her nipples. She also was wearing some brown sandals.

I almost had an accident trying to switch lanes so I could pick her up. I didn't know if it was the dope or if I was being drawn to her. All I knew, was that I had to pick this girl up. My windows were already rolled down. I pulled over and said, "Hop in, how far are you going?" She said, "As far as you'll take me." I pulled off, and we were back on the highway. I wanted to ask her if she got high, but I was very reluctant. When out of the blue, Ingrid asked me if I had a joint. We fired up, and got pretty high. It was about 12:00 p.m. we had been on the highway for four hours. I was feeling damn good now. We drove on for about another three hours, before we stopped to eat. Ingrid and I stopped at this place called Pete and Lil's Grill. We sat around there until 6:00 p.m.. When we hit the highway again, Ingrid didn't say very much.

We had not been on the highway a good hour yet, when Ingrid started searching as though she had lost something. As I began to help her look, I turned to her and she pulled a gun. She told me to turn off on the next road. I didn't argue, I did what I was told. I asked her if she wanted my money she answered, "No, I want you." Well, I thought to myself this is alright. If she wanted me she could have me. Just me and her, I thought to myself. Ingrid took me to some little backwoods place. I thought it was just going to be me and her, but to my surprise there were fifteen other girls. I had heard of this kind of thing happening, but I never thought it could happen to me. They all ran towards me, and started ripping my clothes off. They all took liberty with me. One by one they ravished me, and they all licked my body, like a cat would lick it self. Ingrid, and few others, beat me with whips. I was helpless. I could do nothing, but scream, yell, and take everything they dished out.

After awhile, I couldn't have run even if I wanted to. They all had some type of weapon and Ingrid said that they were going to ravished me until I was raw. I screamed, and screamed, but it was all for naught.

I must have passed out because the next morning, I woke up in a hospital. I was very happy to be alive, and all I could think about was that I would never pick up another Hitch - Hiker.

## CHRISTMAS

She is an angel  
who sits high  
upon the tree.

Colorful lights twinkle  
under her so brightly...  
like a giant halo.

She's waiting for the  
year to end,  
to close her eyes to sleep.

We, the hand-made ornaments  
dangle down amidst the  
greenery; waiting  
for her to step down.

-Susan Rendlen-



Photograph by Susan Rendlen



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