

the Promethean

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The Promethean

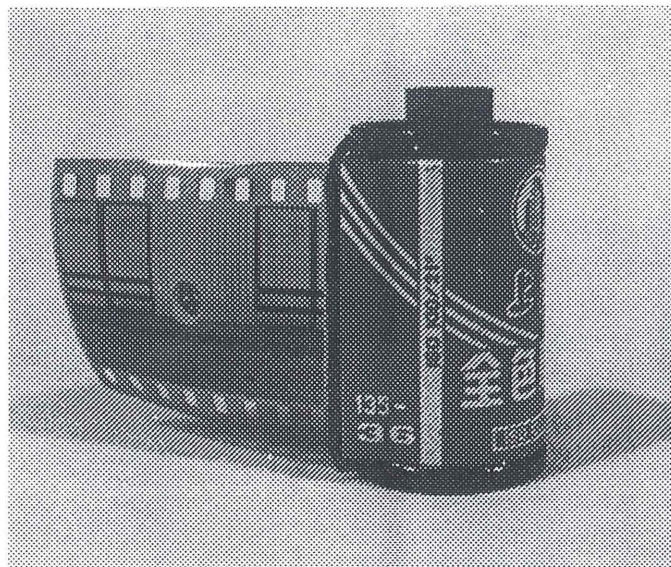
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--Erich S. Schneider

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The Promethean

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From the Wild Side...

... notes from the editor.

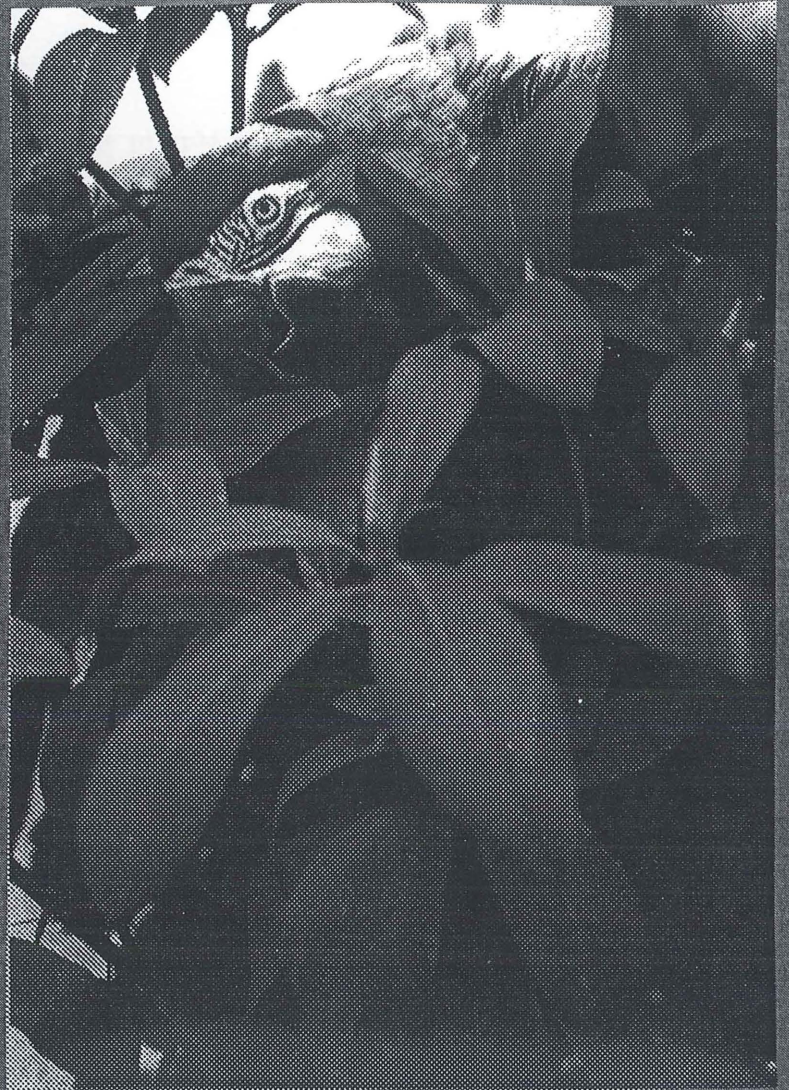
Well, I'm sure I'm not the only one that has had a crazy term. It has been full of excitement and deadlines, but through it all I have felt that the Promethean's outcome would reflect nothing but the excellence found on Concordia's campus. I hope that you will agree as you look through the pages of this term's issue.

I would like to take an opportunity to express my gratitude to all of those people who have helped me "learn the ropes" this term. First of all, thanks to my staff for accepting a new editor with no questions asked. I appreciate all the work that you have put in on this issue-it certainly shows. Also, thank you to those wonderfully, creative people that have put their hearts into their work and then decided to share it with the world. Your submissions are greatly valued. Next, a few personal thanks to those who supported me: Geramy, for your extra trips around town, Erich, for all the "brain-picking" that I did, and to my parents for the late nights on the computer (I promise to be more social now).

My congratulations to Randy Bush and Midge Kehoe for their \$25 prize winning visual art entry. The cover looks terrific! I did not realize that such artistic talent was found within the Bush family tree.

I hope all those readers who crack these pages find the joy that this journal has brought to me. Enjoy reading it!

Heidi R. Rapp
Editor-in-Chief



Milky Way

By Walter H. Crandall

Wilson cast a furtive look across the street, then glanced again at his watch. It was 12:35PM and Number 16 was already twelve minutes late. To clam himself, we wedged his hand into his pocket, fondling the crisp twenty dollar bill that his son Georgie had sent him for his seventy-fifth birthday. His passport to Birdie Lou's Cafe--the best ribs in town. Only eight minutes away.

Then, suddenly, he heard the unmistakable sound of grinding gears roaring up the hill. He let out a deep sigh of anticipation, as his mind took an unexpected U Turn into the past.

In picturesque detail he saw the rough-hewn table at his childhood church--Willow Creek Baptist--laden with a dizzying array of succulent dishes: golden brown fried chicken, honey baked hams, thick slabs of roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, butternut squash, turnips, string beans, and every imaginable variety of fresh baked pies. "Ah," he thought, as his mind drifted lazily along, like a sleepy creek.

A kid clattered by on his skateboard.

Then, for no apparent reason, his mind jumped into the future. Thanksgiving day. He saw his grown children with their families gathered around the Thanksgiving table, laughing and carrying on. But something was terribly wrong. He wasn't there at the head of the table, deftly carving the thirty-five pound turkey into ample portions for the Perry-Milton clan. In fact, he wasn't there at all!

"Hey mister, you gettin' on or what?" bellowed the bus driver.

Wilson peered into the shiny, bright interior of the bus, wondering who was the stranger driving his bus. Before he could point this out, the bus driver spoke again, this time much louder, "Mister are you gettin' on or what?"

"Oh," mumbled Wilson, as he jumbled up the steps. There he proudly presented his retired bus driver's pass.

The bus driver brusquely waved him back. Just as he was about to close the door, a muscular young man with his menacing expression of a Doberman Pincher lunged up the steps and grabbed Wilson by the arm. Behind him were two women. One was a teenager with stringy black hair, not a day older than 17. The other was much older, old enough to be the kid's grandmother. They both screamed: "Stop him! Stop him!"

The bus driver instinctively held up his hands. "What's going on?" he asked excitedly, his neck cords twanged with anxiety.

"He don't belong here!" growled the young man.

The teenager accusingly pointed her bony finger at Wilson. "He 'scaped again."

"From the nursing home," chimed in the older woman.

Wilson took refuge in a blank expression.

The bus driver looked out his side window at the low slung brick building across the street and winced. Then he swivelled his head toward the intruders and barked, "Get that clown off my bus!"

The door hissed shut. It charged down up the hill, leaving Wilson and his caretakers behind, standing by the curb in the pale November sunshine.

The male attendant grabbed hold of Wilson's left arm, and the older woman his other arm. Almost with childhood willingness Wilson allowed himself to be escorted into the street. The teenager, who had strategically positioned herself behind him, barked furiously at him, as if she were a wire hair terrier nipping at his heels.

Suddenly, without warning, Wilson dropped into a dead weight. Panic seized his captors, Wilson was built like a refrigerator and keeping him propped up, let alone entangling his arms which were tied into a Gorgon knot, required enormous strength and cunning.

A thin-necked woman in a royal blue Mercedes stuck her head out the window and started screeching like a stricken parrot.

"Aw, come on, Wilson," pleaded the older woman "you're holdin' up traffic."

"Cooperate, Wilson," begged the younger woman.

Wilson didn't answer.

"Do I need to get tough?" threatened the male attendant.

Wilson didn't budge.

"That's it!" he shouted, viciously yanking on Wilson's tightly-clasped hands.

In the ensuing tug of war a Milky Way wrapper fluttered to the ground. Wilson unlocked his hands, sending his caretakers sprawling to the pavement. Wilson unhitched his trousers, then squatted.

"Aw, Gawd no!" the younger woman kept repeating distressingly, "Aw, Gawd no!"

"Oh, Lord, he didn't!" shrieked the older woman.

"This shit sure ain't worth \$4.75 an hour," cursed the male attendant.

Later that afternoon the Director of Nursing notified the family of the incident, as well as the numerous other numerous infractions that Wilson had committed during the last two months.

Son Georgie and daughter Bea, along with their children and spouses, made a pilgrimage to the nursing home that night with a dinner offering of barbecued chicken and a freshly baked apple pie. Forming a circle around him, they watched in silence as Wilson ate their offering. Between bites, Wilson looked up and nodded with approval.

The next day the janitor chuckled to himself as he mopped the hallway outside Wilson's room. "I really got to hand it to the ole boy," he thought, He wrapped on Wilson's door and went inside.

"Up for company, Wilson?"

Wilson was sitting on the edge of his bed, tapping his left foot laconically on the shiny floor.

"I understand you had company last night," the janitor said.

Wilson nodded.

"A long time," said the janitor.

"Too long," whispered Wilson. Then he held out his hand and asked, "Where's my Milky Way?"

The janitor dug the candy bar out of his pocket. "No trouble," he said, giving it to him. "You dig?"

"No trouble," said Wilson, peeling off the wrapper.

Promises

Long ago a child was born
 Bringing a promise for all
 To know we do not stand alone
 That life is ours if only we ask
 And live as we were shown

So many seem to have forgotten
 The lessons taught that cost a life
 Bringing darkness where one was light
 Now the hope is replaced by despair
 Brotherly love swallowed by hate

From the darkness a shadow is cast
 A beam of light breaks through
 To find a heart so full of love
 Promises remembered by a young
 woman
 For unto her a child is born

Siprián

*Dedicated to Elvia
 And her son, Evan*



Respect for Power: Was Shakespeare a Machiavellian?

By Greg Bye

Essay Editor's Note: The following essay considers the question of William Shakespeare's view of power. This view, Bye argues, is evidenced in *Richard II*, *1 Henry IV*, and *2 Henry IV*. These loosely historical plays are built around the tale of King Richard II's weak reign, Henry IV's powerful usurpation of Richard and the slaying of rebel, Hotspur, by Henry IV's son—Prince Hal. Pointing to the plays found in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, Bye discusses two philosophical doctrines concerning power: "Divine Right" and Machiavellian "Right by Might."

Shakespeare's support of the doctrine of Machiavellian ability, over that of divine right, is quite evident in the plays in question. For example, once Bullingbrook (Henry IV) has taken power from Richard II, there is no sustained outcry, by any of the characters, against his presumably illegitimate occupation of the throne. What there is, instead, is a general acceptance of the fact by the characters. This is especially true in *1 Henry IV* and *2 Henry IV*.

While in power, Richard is shown to be quiet high-handed in his royal decrees, including the banishment of Bullingbrook for "[s]ix frozen winters" (*Richard II*, I.iii.211). The response to this and other decisions is compliance.

However, when Richard decides to finance his campaign to "[s]upplant those rough rug-headed kerns" (II.i.156) through the seizure of Bullingbrook's "plate, coin, revenues, and moveables" (II.i.161), he ignores warning by York that "[y]ou pluck a thousand dangers on your head,/ You lose a thousand well-disposed hearts" (II.i.205-206). The reply is an organized revolt. This includes "[t]he banish'd Bullingbrook [who] repeals himself" (II.ii.49) by returning to England.

Although it is not difficult to understand why Bullingbrook and his allies act as they do, they are, according to a strict interpretation of the Doctrine of Divine Right, traitors. Also, it would follow if Shakespeare were a disciple of this doctrine, his support of Richard would be abundantly clear.

However, while Richard is in Ireland, the only major character to oppose the traitors is York. For, as York tells Bullingbrook, "Thou art a banish'd man, and here art come,/ Before the expiration of thy time./ In braving arms against thy sovereign" (II.iii.108-112). But, despite York's being

"loath to break our country's laws" (II.iii.169), he admits that "my power is weak" (II.iii.154), and withdraws his opposition.

Furthermore, after being convinced of the power they wield, York goes as far as to invite Bullingbrook to "[a]scend his throne," and proclaims "[L]ong live Henry, fourth of that name!" (IV.i.111,112).

This capitulation by York leaves only Richard as the last true believer. Yet even he invites Bullingbrook to "seize the crown" (IV.i.181). If Shakespeare were committed to divine right, he would likely have had his characters put up a braver fight. This is not the case. Shakespeare's description of crown-seizing leads us to assume that he is a not a believer in divine right to power; Shakespeare is a follower of another, more Machiavellian doctrine.

According to the doctrine of divine right, Henry is an illegitimate usurper. But in *1 Henry IV*, no one seems upset that Henry has taken the crown from Richard. The revolt in this play occurs because Hotspur is angry at the King Henry's refusal to ransom "[h]is brother-in-law, the foolish Mortimer" (I.iii.80).

This refusal prompts Hotspur to ask his father, Earl of Northumberland, this question: "[D]id King Richard.../ Proclaim my brother Edmund Mortimer/ Heir to the crown?" (I.iii.158). Northumberland replies: "He did, myself did hear it" (I.iii.158). Afterwards, Hotspur sets out to organize another rebellion.

On the surface, it may appear that Hotspur is driven by devotion to the Doctrine of Divine Right. But he is actually given to an opposite inclination, rebellion, as is seen in the remainder of this play and in its sequel. These plays focus not on questions of Henry's illegitimate rule, but on rebellion and the adventures of Prince Hal.

In order for the uprising to be successful, Hotspur needs to gain the allegiance of allies. Believing that his father and uncle are standing with him in the struggle—"bearing our fortunes in our strong arms: (I.iii.298)—his next step is to get the support of "Glendower and Lord Mortimer" (I.iii.295).

Shakespeare devotes one long scene to Hotspur's failed efforts. In it, he wishes to make clear that the failure is due to Hotspur's poor diplomatic skills and his avarice.

Glendower, for example, maintains that, among other things, "[t]he heavens were all on fire, the earth did tremble" (III.i.23) when he was born.

Instead of indulging Glendower's superstitious beliefs, as a competent politician would have done, Hotspur mocks him: "O then the earth shook to see the heavens on fire,/ And not in fear of your nativity" (III.i.24-25).

Later on, Hotspur greedily demands a larger share of the land that is to be divided between himself and Glendower. Hotspur tells the Welshman that while in a "bargain, mark ye me,/ I'll cavil on the ninth part of a hair" (III.i.137-138). Not long after this meeting, much to his dismay, Hotspur learns that Glendower will not be joining the allies. Glendower sends the excuse that he cannot "draw his power this fourteen days." Is there any wonder why?

Shakespeare makes no excuses for Hotspur's failure in the revolt. We would expect some excuse if Shakespeare were in sympathy with divine right rule. Hotspur is defeated (in the midst of bad organizing efforts) because of King Henry's superb battlefield tactics and superior fighting ability of the king's marshalled forces. No other reasons are given.

Shakespeare gives an account of the defeat of Hotspur's rebel forces. The playwright accomplishes this mainly through descriptions of the effective tactics of the king and the fighting of Prince Hal. For instance, there is Douglas's bafflement at the number of kings on the battlefield: "Another king? [T]hey grow like Hydra's heads" (V.iv.42).

The particular king to whom Douglas addresses the question is the "King himself"—Henry IV—and a king in obvious danger. Fortunately for Henry, Prince Hal arrives on the scene to challenge Douglas: "It is the Prince of Wales that threatens thee" (V.iv.42).

Prince Hal then proceeds to chase Douglas from his position. Immediately following this display of battlefield prowess, Hotspur, a "very valiant rebel of the name" (V.iv.62), enters and challenges Hal: "[T]he hour is come/ To end the one of us" (V.iv.68-69).

The play ends with king's army firmly in control of the situation. The dying Hotspur declares, "O Harry, thou hast robb'd me of my youth!" (V.iv.77). Lord Douglas, realizing that all is lost, "fled," "we are told," "with the rest,/ And falling from a hill, he was so bruised/ That the pursuers took him" (V.v.20-22).

Then the king resolves to confront his remaining adversaries, both diplomatically and militarily, and ensure that "[r]ebellion in this land shall lose his sway" (V.v.41).

In *2 Henry IV*, after discovering that the "rebellion/ had met will ill luck" (I.i.51), members of the king's opposition are hit with one certain reality: For "safety and

revenge" they will need to "make friends with speed" (I.i.213,214). In other words, if they are to prevail against Henry, they must be as well organized the king. Also, they complain that defeat was due to the rebel's shortcomings. This blaming of weakness further demonstrates Shakespeare's view of power: Those who best use power ought to rule, and those who fail are "food [for] worms" (*1 Henry IV* V.iv.86-87). They have no one to blame but their weak selves.

Lady Percy, Hotspur's widow, reflects this sentiment when he assails Northumberland for his failure to "[b]ring up his powers" (*2 Henry IV* II.iii.14). Such negligence of power caused her husband's defeat, she says, knowing she will never again "hang [on] Hotspur's neck" (II.iii.44).

Of course, Lady Percy and her mother-in-law, Lady Northumberland, have clear intentions: They seek to convince Northumberland that the time is ripe for him to make tactical retreat "to Scotland" (II.iii.50), to remain there, as Lady Northumberland advises, "[t]ill the nobles and the armed commons/ Have their puissance made little taste" (II.iii.51-52).

Lady Northumberland goes on to advise, "If they get around and vantage of the king,/ Then join you with them, like a rib of steel" (II.iii.53-54). Shrewd advice from the meek and mild.

In the latter part of *2 Henry IV*, the forces of the king reveal that they are willing to maintain power by means of utmost treachery. If Shakespeare had any sympathy remaining for divine right, he herein loses an opportunity to exploit it. The king's messenger, Westmerland, after flattering the archbishop ("The dove, and very blessed spirit of peace" [IV.i.46) and other rebel leaders, asks them to attend a meeting with Prince John. That meeting is ostensibly offered as the means which could produce equitable peace: "In sight of both our battles we may meet,/ [And] either end in peace [or] to the place of difference call the swords/ Which must decide it" (IV.i.177-180). This offer to meet is accepted.

However, after reading the "parcels and particulars of [the rebels'] grief" (IV.ii.36), and announcing that "I like them all and do allow them well" (IV.ii.54), Prince John proposes that the two sides each dismiss their powerful armies "unto their several countries" (IV.ii.61). Then, John says, "Let's drink together friendly and embrace/ That all their eyes may bear those tokens home/ Of our restored love and amity" (IV.ii.63-65). Unfortunately for the rebel leaders, John has no intention of toasting their health. Once the rebel leaders dismiss their troops,

Westmerland arrests them for treason. Mowbry cries foul: "Is this proceeding just and honorable?" (IV.ii.110) Triumphant Westmerland replies: "Is your assembly so?"

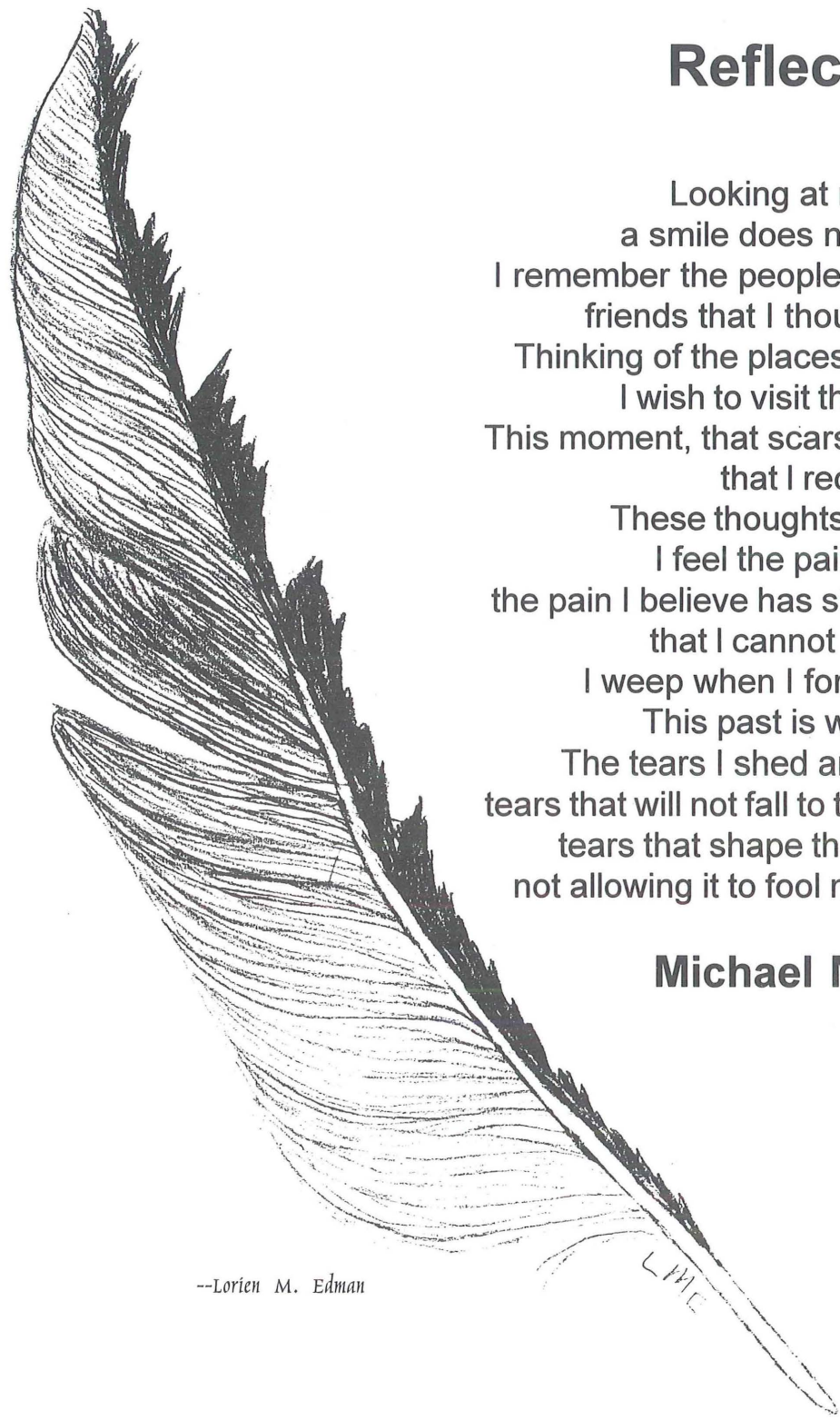
The scene is a primer for Machiavellism. Prince John gets his enemies, through diplomacy, to release their power; then he unleashes his power, vanquishing them.

Notably, after the episode concludes, Shakespeare offers no further comment. The implication is clear: Shakespeare probably endorsed John's effective, if deceitful, use of power. If not, he missed a chance to revile the illegitimate usurpers for their evil actions. Shakespeare also passed on opportunity to support the Doctrine of Divine Right.

Reflection

Looking at myself,
a smile does not appear.
I remember the people that cared for me,
friends that I thought I fooled.
Thinking of the places that shaped me,
I wish to visit them again.
This moment, that scars me is the moment
that I recall.
These thoughts haunt me.
I feel the pain again,
the pain I believe has shaped me in a way
that I cannot change.
I weep when I forget my past.
This past is who I am.
The tears I shed are my true life,
tears that will not fall to the ground like rain,
tears that shape the vision I hold,
not allowing it to fool my true reflection.

Michael Merrill



--Lorien M. Edman

The Robbery

By Randy Kohltfarber

Our white house and red barn sat 5 miles out of Eskridge, Kansas. Our house wasn't big, and as far back as I could remember my life was punctuated by my drunken father stumbling home to rest a spell before he took off on another alcoholic binge. Sometimes he'd be gone for weeks, so ever since we were old enough to walk my brother Ernest and I had become the "men" of the house. When the Great Depression came things became rough. My mother worked tirelessly to supply the bare necessities for our family, and we kids worked at any jobs we could find in order to make a few pennies; back then we could buy skim milk for two cents a gallon, and a loaf of bread for a nickel.

When I was a young teenager, my mother had somehow been able to scrape enough money together to buy me a small, .22 caliber rifle. I had been wanting one for a long time and she had known it. This gun was my prize possession and I kept it hung from two nails which I had pounded into the wall of my room. Every day after work I would take that gun down and head out across the fields. On those days I would carry a bag of bottles and cans with me. There was a small cluster of little trees not too far from the house and it was there that I played my games. I would place the bottles and cans in the limbs of the trees. Then, walking off twenty paces I would turn and stare down my prey. I would imagine I was one of those cool-eyed cowboys that I would listen to on the radio down at Van's filling station. Calm and composed, I'd quickly pull my rifle up and draw a bead on the cans. Bang! The can would fly out of the tree and I would snicker and spit just like the cowboy on the radio. I was the coolest character in the West. I had gunned down at least 100 bad guys in my imagination. Finally, after finishing off the last hombre, I would gather my things and head home a weathered old cowboy coming in from the range.

One particular night it was raining something fierce. On these type of nights it had become sort of a tradition for me to stop in and warm myself while visiting with my good friend Van who owned and operated the gas station about 1/4 a mile down the road from our house. Van was about fifty years old, and spending time with him made me yearn for the day when my father would return without a liquor bottle wedged in his hand. Old Van and me would sit around the station listening to radio programs, talking about baseball, and enjoying a couple of Coca-Colas that Van would supply from the cooler. On this particular night I had just left the

station and was heading for home when a car passed me without its headlights on. It was moving slowly toward the station and as I peered through the pouring rain I could see two men in the car. For a moment, I didn't think anything of it, and then my young mind began to run wild. I began to imagine the two men were robbers and poor Van was to be their victim. Finally, my curiosity got the better of me and I wheeled around and headed for the station at a run. A minute later I stood on the road panting and closely observing the scene that I now encountered at the filling station. The car had indeed pulled up to the station and just as I had feared there seemed to be a robbery in progress. Squeezing my eyes in order to see through the darkness and rain I gasped as I saw one man standing behind a pole outside of the station, in his right hand he held a revolver. My thoughts racing, I turned and ran toward home as fast as my feet would carry me. As I ran I could only think of one thing "I'm not gonna let 'em kill Van."

I reached the front porch of my house and took the first three steps in one jump, busting through the front door my words began to spew from my mouth in uncontrollable emotion. "Maw, there are robbers at Van's station! One is standin' behind a pole as a look out. I'm a gonna go down there and shoot 'em in the back. I'm not gonna let 'em kill Van!"

My mother, tired from another long day, looked at me sternly. "You're not going anywhere, young man." she said. "If there is trouble down at the filling station it's for the law to handle. You're too young to go running around sticking your nose into men's business."

"But MAW! You don't understand, Van could be gettin' shot right now! It's just not right. He's my friend." I felt the tears begin to well up behind my eyes.

My mother flashed me a vicious look. "I said no, boy! Don't you dare stand there and tell me what's right and what's not. I've seen my share of wrong, and now I'm telling you to stay put!" From the look in her eye I knew there would be no more discussion about the matter so I went storming into my room.

I threw myself onto the bed in both sorrow and rage. I knew that if I could just get down to the station with my gun I could save Van. My mother didn't seem to care that my best friend was in terrible danger. I looked up at the gun hanging on the wall. It might be too late already. It could already be over and Van could be . . . dead. I shuddered at

the thought. What did my mom know about man stuff, anyway? She hadn't seen me gun down the bottles and cans from the trees. I could be back down there in minutes, aim my rifle at that one behind the pole and BANG! It would be just like shootin' a bottle from the tree. That was it. I couldn't stand it. I grabbed the gun from its resting place. I hurried to my window and silently slipped out into the pouring rain.

Again I was running. I held the cold rifle in my right hand and ran so hard my lungs were burning after the first 50 yards, but I pushed on, the adrenaline pumping through me. Finally, I reached the station. I peered through the rain and breathed a sigh of relief as I noticed that the man was still behind the pole. "That has to be their lookout," I thought. There was an old broken down Ford in the lot. If I could get behind it, I would have a perfect shot at both the man behind the pole and anyone who might try to leave the station and get back into the robber's car. Quickly, I moved toward the car as fast and as silently as I could. "He's not doing a very good job, for a lookout," I thought to myself, as I noticed that the man was facing the other direction and intently watching the front of the store. I flopped onto my knees in the mud behind the old Ford. This was it. I could take out that man with a single bullet to the head. I raised my gun. Squinting I used the sight to draw a bead on the man's head. I moved the gun around a bit looking for the best area to strike the man's head. Finally, I found it. It was just the right place. All I had to do now was pull the trigger and that man would cease to exist. That thought stuck in my mind. My hand began to quiver. I tried to imagine a bottle in a tree. It didn't work. There was a man in my sights, not a bottle. My finger tightened on the trigger. "Just pull it! I screamed to myself. I have to save Van!" But I didn't. I knelt there in the rain and the mud holding a firm grip on the trigger. My stomach began to ache and I started to feel sick. Finally, I lowered the gun. I began to bawl like a little baby. I dropped the gun in the mud and sat with my back to the Ford.

"I'm sorry, Van." I said to myself. "I can't do it. I let you down."

Just then I heard a voice. I turned back around and faced the filling station. It was coming from the man behind the pole.

"Hey, you in there! This is the last time I'm gonna tell ya. This is sheriff Tate out here. I got my gun aimed at the door. You boys try anything but comin' out with your hands up and I'm sure as Hell gonna kill ya where ya stand! I'm in a Hell of a bad mood about being out in this Damn rain, so I'd just as soon ya come out shootin' so I don't have to deal with lockin' ya up. I'll just have Larry Dean come over and throw ya in his hearse. I hear he needs the business anyway . . ."

"Okay. Okay. We're comin' out, just don't shoot!" A voice hollered from inside the station.

My stomach turned. I sat in the mud on hands and knees and vomited. I had almost killed the sheriff. I kept retching until there was nothing left in my stomach. I had almost ruined everything. I rose to my full height and noticed that two frightened young men were moving out of the station with their hands up. The sheriff stayed behind the pole and gave them directions to get down on their knees. Van now stood in the doorway of the station watching the scene. As I turned, I thought I saw him looking at me. But it was dark and raining, and I couldn't be sure. I slowly walked home hoping the sting of my mother's wooden spoon would calm the horrible feeling that pounded in my heart.

Almost twenty years later, I was living in St. Louis when a package arrived one day. The note that came with the package read:

Dear Mr. Gilbert,

My father Van Swanson died last Wednesday. He often talked of you and thought highly of you. His will instructed me to send you this package in the event of his death. I wish you the best of luck. God bless.

Samuel Swanson

I opened the long narrow box and looked inside. Sitting there in the box, shiny as the day it was bought, was my old rifle I had left in the mud that night. Sitting on top of the rifle was a card. I opened it. "Thought you might like this back some day. Thank you for your concern. I'm proud of you. Love Van" I read to myself. I felt a tear begin to form, and decided I better get some nails. After all, I had a gun to hang up.

Incarnation of Infinity, Revisited

Time burns in the lungs of the mortal,
and the stars are as cold as ice,
a midnight kiss of deadly passion,
and our minds turn ever upward.

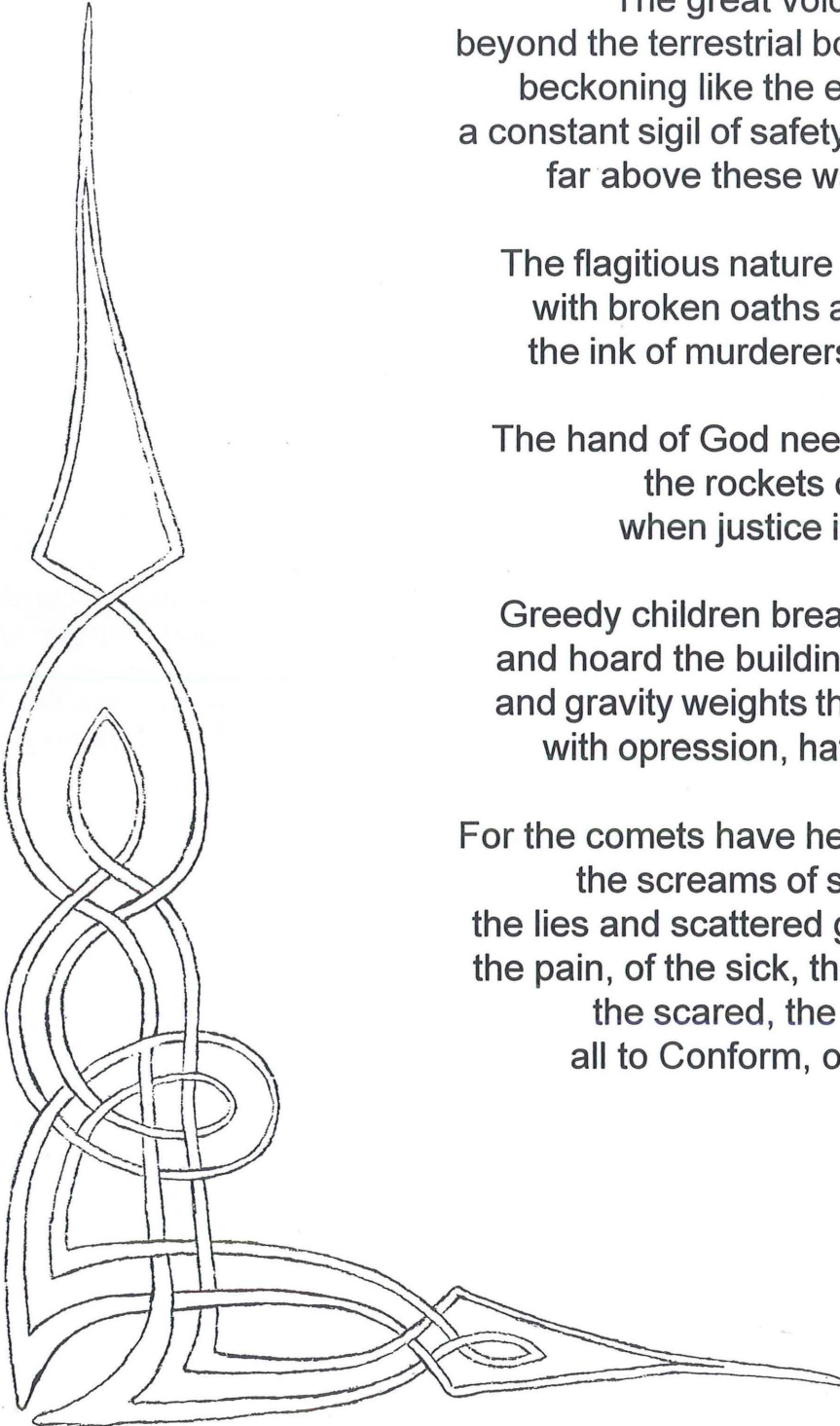
The great void of potential,
beyond the terrestrial bond of Darwin's kinder;
beckoning like the eye of a lighthouse,
a constant sigil of safety, hope and tranquillity,
far above these waves of violence.

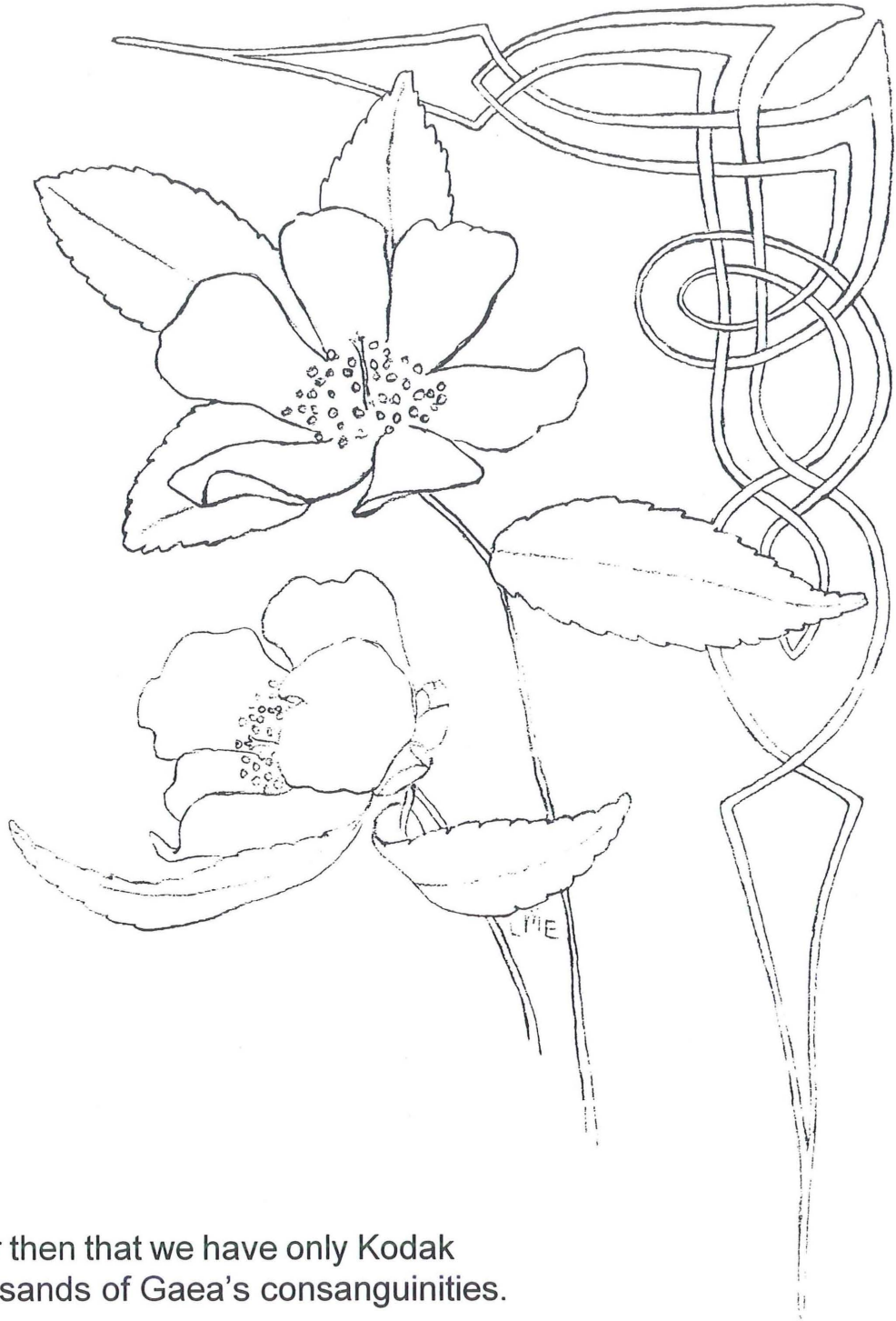
The flagitious nature of the human family
with broken oaths and bloody hands,
the ink of murderers, traitors, thieves.

The hand of God need little strain to keep
the rockets on the pad,
when justice is a bromide.

Greedy children break each others' toys,
and hoard the building blocks of science;
and gravity weights their struggling hearts
with oppression, hatred, and silence.

For the comets have heard the voice of Hitler,
the screams of starving infants,
the lies and scattered gunfire, the prejudice,
the pain, of the sick, the different, the brave,
the scared, the undesirable;
all to Conform, or be destroyed.





Small wonder then that we have only Kodak
memories of the sands of Gaea's consanguinities.

For buried in the steel and harnassed lightening of
the dollars spent on empire,
are the textbooks and the missing raises of
those who taught us to hold hands and share and dream...
before they taught us physics.

Kym Buchanan

--Lorien M. Edman

Two Men in the Light

By Lynn Barr Drake

One day last winter a young man died unexpectedly. He was a loving and intense person, wise for his years; creative, and filled with love for all life and people. He celebrated his world's beauty in his drawings of Ninja warriors, dragons, and knights. Japanese swords and a cross decorated his room as he dreamed of college and had thoughts of going to Concordia.

At his memorial service, many people came to share their love. The music was glorious, the flowers were heavenly, and the preaching spoke of comfort and peace. As his parents eyed the baptismal font through misty eyes remembering their only child now gone, the Paschal Candle brightly danced its flame into the chancel and into their hearts. They remembered this light of God's promise as people filed by to give hugs and words of love and encouragement. One man came through the line and gave an especially warm and endearing embrace: a pastor-professor with a soft voice and a ready smile; a love for God and beauty and Japanese culture. One Sunday in early January he preached a sermon that made the boy's parents cry and then later told them of how when writing it he remembered them and the loss of their son.

The winter turned into spring, and the young man's parents began to go on with their lives as best they could. On the evening of the Great Vigil of Easter, they came quietly to the church where the Paschal Candle stood tall, shining

out its golden radiance. A joyful sadness touched deep inside as they remembered how its light last filled the church and the room of their hearts on the day of their son's burial. The pastor-professor enthusiastically hugged the parents, remembering the special meaning of the Resurrection for them and himself this year--a reference to his own battle as he smiled and joyfully exclaimed how well he was feeling. He thanked them for pictures sent which the boy had drawn: Japanese warriors and English knights battling dragons--all to cheer him as he prayerfully fought his dragon on a personal, courageous journey to eternal life.

At the end of April the couple sat among the faithful in the crowded church, among the saints from Concordia, Japan, and many other places. They all praised God with holy sadness as the Paschal Candle burned its brightest, bringing Heavenly Hope to all who came. A special joy filled the hearts of this mother and father as they remembered their friend who helped them in grief, now united joyfully with their teenage son. The journey was over: Christ had defeated the dragon of death with the Paschal flame's burning Resurrection Truth. As the two men were now Home, the congregation also departed again with the new resolve that only Easter-glory can enkindle.

-- In Memory of Stephen Drake and The Reverend Clifford Horn



-- Erich S. Schneider

Inside

When the pain hurts so much I want to scream and yell and cry
all at the same time.

I want to start walking and never look back, leave it all behind.

I want to scream so long and hard that everything comes up,
nothing left inside,

just an echo,

it's empty,

it's bare,

no more hurt and no more pain is there.

It aches in every muscle and move I make,

It hurts inside, the pain is alive, it reaches out and takes me in,
come along for the ride.

"Let me go,"

but the storm continues to rage.

The rain falls from my eyes and finally it is washed away.

The clouds are pushed apart, the dark turns gray and a dull
pounding is all that is left.

Inside...

Amy Wulf

Maternal Ties

I cling to my maternal instincts like a baby to a mother bosom. I don't feel like a mother but I feel the feminine ties that link me so close to my past. The stumbling blocks of manhood have been conquered only through the sensitivity and understanding given me by maternal care and instruction. It is and innate feature that I enjoy only in my conscious and rarely is expressed but only at the explosion of my sub-conscious. An embarrassment to myself but only aesthetically for I feel an anormity of joy inside. In the labyrinth of my mind I find a few doorways for male bestial tendencies to be hidden through every corridor seems to lead to rooms filled with suppressed sensitivity that bangs at the door each time I pass. The women in my life have yet to see the true me and eventually this has led them away while the men have worshipped me thanks to the false regality I have portrayed myself as having. Only one has released the flowers inside and it is the one who placed them there. Maternity brings forth maternal tendency so I search for one who is like the one who bore me and to truly release the bud whose growth has been stunted by falsified earth too thick to dig through with male hands.

Josh Hill

Advice for a Young Man in Summer

Consider thy mortality,
maybe life is good to thee--
for now, but wait
the present state
cannot endure forever.

Consider how thy death may stand,
or fall, upon the deed thy hand
has held less done
for anyone
who passes by thee ever.

Consider well the doings of the hour,
remember that thy every word has power:
to speak or not
may shape thy lot
and change thy life forever.

Lorien M. Edman

Held Within

A young heart
 beating, stopped
 Ripped from life
 leaving me behind
 My mind searches
 to picture her face
 An aching hole
 inside, empty
 Yet we are happy
 seem strange, yes
 A young heart
 in Christ
 She is gone
 no, with Him
 Christ in my heart
 she is held
 Within.

Kristin Scherer

*In memory of Karissa Heidemann
 1972-1994*



Vetheuil

I would like to be there,
 My soul and I,
 Lying on a ripple,
 Burdened by a wave.
 For the depths of one mind
 Surely outweigh the mighty sea.

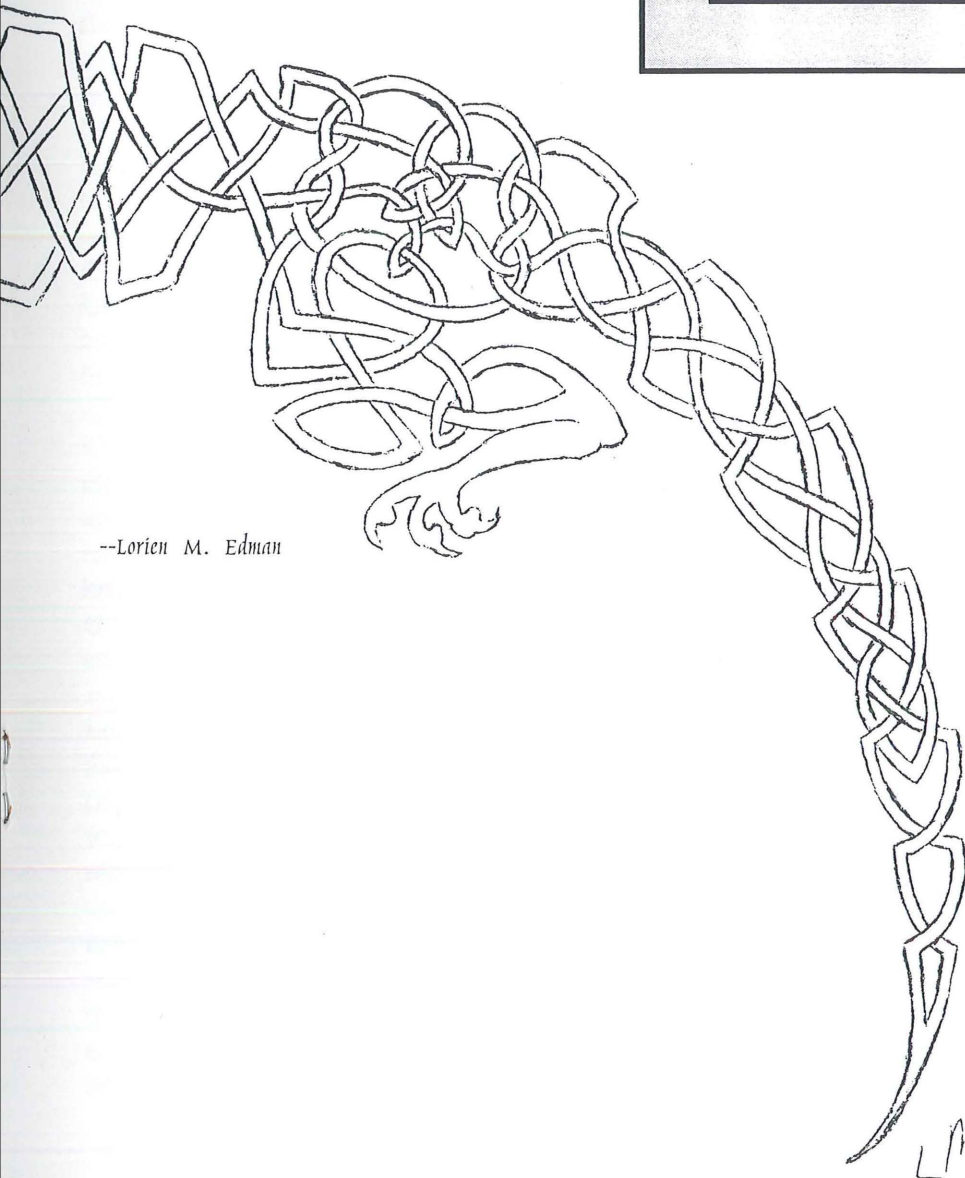
Josh Hill

Black Lace

Black lace
are the winter-sleeping trees!
The clouds and blue the stiffly trace,
they slice the breeze.

Each stands,
a sentinel, till spring
enfolds their hands
in leafy green.

Lorien M. Edman



--Lorien M. Edman

A Rue With a View

By Clancy Kelly

My mother never actually came right out and said I was the center of the universe, but she certainly did nothing to discourage the idea. When I was an infant, and later a small child, she would bring me outside our home to spend the night under the heavens. We would lie in the yard on a thick comforter or an unzipped and flattened sleeping bag and stare straight up, losing ourselves in the difficult task of not counting the stars, which jutted toward us like fiery Braille off a black sheet. I remember the warm swirling air that would charge at us through the grass and flip up the edges of our blanket, and the occasional raven or bet which would flit across the sky. If we lifted our heads we could see our fraying house with its garage wall doubling as a bike stand, my father's station wagon up on blocks for the second summer running, the picnic table with my older siblings' initials carved into it, the taped garden hose, the Jarts set, and the portable Hibachi--all things I understood we wanted no part of on those long nights. She (my mother) seldom spoke, choosing instead to let the darkness talk. Perhaps it was her background as housewife, or some innate sense of propriety, but my mother would let us lie there and soak like encrusted frying pans. ("It's the universe, dear. You're soaking in it.")

Floating there under the crushing immensity of the Adirondack night sky, I learned a paradoxical truth: I was insignificant in the great scheme of things, yet I was also at the center of this great scheme. One might speculate what this could do to one's *Weltanschauung*. In my case, it led to a dichotomy of consciousness, where on one hand I was aware of playing a key role in my life, yet on the other dismally ignorant of the nature, extent, or responsibilities of the role. As far as I can tell, this dually remained relatively harmless until my senior year, when I nearly caused a race war in my high school.

Like many boys in the underclasses, I suffered through the lean years when all the attractive girls in my grade dated the upperclassmen. Therefore, when I became a senior, I wasted no time in selecting a sophomore who suffered from, shall we say, a severe case of pulchritude. Smart, fair, green-eyes, Liesl provided a wonderful locker-to-lunchroom romance. We would sit in the corner of the cafeteria, laughing and kissing, eating half of our sandwiches and leaving the rest for the less fortunate who still hungered for love.

One day Liesl told me that a boy in her grade, William, was bothering her, constantly telling her she was pretty and asking her to be his girlfriend. I told Liesl he probably meant to be complementary. She said she didn't care, that she had told him about us and he just laughed, asking her what I was going to do about it. I said I would talk to him. I thought maybe I could relate to this to William, that perhaps he was feeling toward me the way I'd felt toward seniors when I was younger.

I approached him in the hallway after the last class that day. I introduced myself and began to explain that while Liesl certainly was interesting, she and I were a couple, and I would appreciate it if he would stop annoying her. He looked puzzled for a moment, as if I was not speaking English, but Finno-Ugric, then abruptly stepped forward and bumped his chest against mine.

Immediately our school classmates encircled us like sharks smelling chopped chub, a common high school response to anticipated combat. Before I could react, or was certain I would react at all, Mr. Felio, biology teacher cum intercessor, had pushed through the crowd and was standing with one hand on each of our chests. He separated us and told everyone school was over and we'd better leave the building.

I was washed out to the parking lot on a wave of sudden friends and well-wishers, who jostled one another while loudly assuring me that I was tougher and could "take" this kid. I was trying to understand what they were talking about (was I now obliged to fight?) when one word found its way out of the din and to my ears: Nigger. I broke from the crowd and began walking alone through the parking lot toward home. Ripples from the stone cold word "nigger" reverberated back and forth across my mind.

He *was* dark; his skin was definitely darker than mine. As we stood across from each other in the hall, I had noticed several things about him: his green dungarees; his tight black tee shirt; a belt too long that looped around itself; the faint smell of cocoa butter mixed with pomade. I remembered wondering whether he always stood so straight or was he perhaps recalling some good advice on confrontation he was given once. I even had the title of a story I had recently read flash through my mind, "Everything that Rises Must Converge" by Flannery O'Connor. Yes, I'd *noticed* the color of his skin, but I hadn't *seen* it. What I had seen were his eyes bright and moist, eager points set within the darkness of his face.

Don't misunderstand me. I was by no means innocent of racism. I felt blacks were often too loud, too aggressive, even funny smelling, all racist generalizations that I would later see as such. Perhaps the most damning testament to my racism was my habit lumping blacks together as *them* or *they*, as if unique individuals could be neatly grouped on the strength of one single trait, skin color, a trait that in actuality varies greatly among those we call black. However, I truly like my African-American classmates. I had many laughs with Stretchin' Gretchen Bookman, who was constantly telling me, "Clancy, your ass is crazy." I felt close to Ron Angle, the fastest man in school, and Eric Harkins, nicknamed "The Football Team" because, even though we didn't have a team, if we did we all agreed Eric would have been it.

The next day, the word was out that I was going to fight William following sixth period. I did not start this rumor, but I may as well have because I did nothing to stop it. I went to fifth period lunch with Andy, Larry, Frank, and Ed, the guys I usually hung out with in school. We crushed into Frank's mother's light blue Datsun hatchback and drove off campus to get some fast food. As we ate, all my buddies could talk about was this "nigger" and how I was going to kill him. They spoke at length about how tired they were of all these "niggers" bussing over from the south side of Utica to go to our school in the north. They said William was especially arrogant, and Andy, who was a senior taking tenth grade math, said that in class he had insisted to the teacher on being called William. I don't think these guys knew who Maya Angelou was, and probably none of us had ever read about Margaret, but I doubt it would have helped anyway.

We pulled back into the parking lot about ten minutes before the period ended and started smoking a joint. The talk about William now took on a more sinister air. Ed proposed that after I hit him, they should all jump on him. I was about to object when there was a knock on the car. It was Ron Angle. We rolled down the window and everyone said hi to Ron, passing him the joint and chatting, being as friendly with him as we always were. Interestingly, nobody was using the word "nigger" now. He asked if the rumor that I was going to fight William was true. Ed said it was, and added that they were going to get in a few shots themselves. Ron laughed knowingly, and smiled right at me.

I said that they weren't going to have anyone to hit, because I would take care of William, but to my ears I sounded weak and unconvincing.

One might ask why we were sharing this information with Ron, who at the very least knew William and probably felt a closer bond to him than to us in this matter. It's because we suffered from, as James Baldwin puts it in "Stranger in the Village," "white man's naivete." Like the *Herrenvolk*, we regarded Ron as an "exotic rarity," namely our good, black friend, and certainly not a "nigger." We took Ron's knowledge of our cabal lightly because we took Ron's existence lightly, demonstrating Baldwin's point that "white men have for black men a reality that is far from being reciprocal." Worst of all, I was at the center of a maelstrom and in no way understanding that I could and should prevent it.

At the end of sixth period I walked up to William, who was waiting for me in the hallway, and without saying a word punched him in the face, catching him just below the left eye. He absorbed the blow and retaliated by driving me into the lockers lining the wall at my back. The roar went up as we went down in a clinch at the feet of our classmates. Ed, Andy, Frank and Larry piled onto us, pulling William off and hitting him several times as they did. Ron and Eric, who had of course been watching, jumped in swinging. By the time two teachers arrived, the combatants and much of the crowd were divided along racial lines.

William and I were taken to the principal's office and suspended for two days. Strangely, once outside, we walked together for ten blocks to his bus stop. I explained that I never wanted to fight, and that I had let myself get talked into it. He did not attempt to ease my conscience, but he wasn't angry and even seemed somewhat pleased with the situation. We did not shake hands or become life long buddies, but the peace between us as we parted stood in stark contrast to the turmoil that was brewing back at school.

For the next two days, Liesl had her life threatened on numerous occasions by several black girls. Every change of class became an opportunity for the students to meet, segregate, and start a war of words. It was as if the fight had provided my classmates with an excuse to dredge up every prejudicial feeling they'd ever had and fling it at the objects of their pre-judgement. When I returned, nothing felt the same. Ron would no longer talk to me, not "The Football Team," nor any of the other black kids. I really

didn't understand why. Sure, my stupid friends had gotten involved, but should that make it a race war? The principal was forced to hire three temporary security guards. (This was in the days before schools routinely had security guards.) There was tension in every classroom and for over a week the school was composed of two nasty, unarmed camps. Luckily, after I apologized to several different people and enough time passed, the pressure eased and the school returned to a semi-normal state. But right up until graduation, there was a heavy bitterness in the air.

It is painful for me to look back on this episode and see myself as a weak and cowardly child. In retrospect, I can somewhat understand my acquiescence as my friends spoke of "niggers" and plotted to attack William. Even though I didn't like the word "nigger," they had the right to say whatever they wanted. As for ganging up on William, it was easier to believe they were not going to have a chance to hit him. And even if they were, it would be easier to toe the "all for one and one for all" line than to tell my friends they couldn't help me. I see now how horribly flawed this "logic" was, but to my teenage mind it probably made sense.

What I am most ashamed of, though, is how unaware I was of the powder keg I was igniting. I fancied myself rather enlightened in matters of race. I was well versed on the evils whites had committed against blacks, and

I thought I understood their anger. Slavery and segregation were history; now we were all equal. If William and I fought, it would simply be two kids fighting. But I was wrong, and made a mistake. And when I read "Stranger in the Village," I finally comprehended the nature of the mistake.

For you see, like the *Herrenvolk*, I failed to understand the anger of the black students at my school, in my city, in my country. I hadn't a clue as to how fed up my classmates were, and I'm not sure I could ever have truly known. They were, as Baldwin writes, "the disesteemed." Growing up in a racist society, unarticulated rage was their "daily bread." Like those Swiss villagers, I had "never felt this rage and being unable to imagine it, quite fail[ed] to understand it." My solipsistic world view had prevented me from being aware of the existence of this rage, let alone its dimensions in my fellow students, and my naivete nearly tore my school apart.

I've tried to make amends for my role in that shameful situation ever since, by ferreting out and aggressively debating stereotypes and prejudices I find in myself, and by helping others understand that we do not have to carry around the racial baggage we inherit from our culture. I do this because I believe that only by recognizing and respecting the humanity in others can we begin to realize the humanity in ourselves.



--Geramy K. Rapp

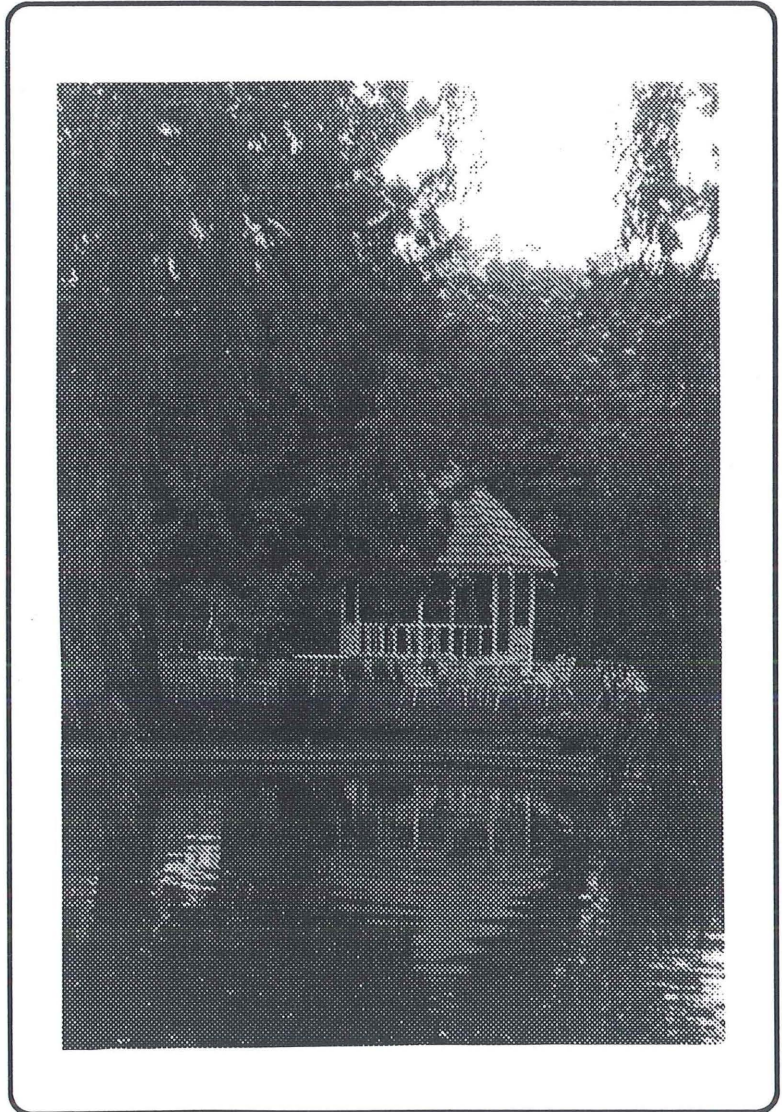
She Waits in the Shadows

As old as tomorrow, as young as the mountain,
as fair as the water that plays in the fountain;
She waits in the shadows for one who can free her,
but where she is waiting no one can see her.

She sits there in silence, her visage all lonesome,
she blames all the tyrants for making no motion,
to note her existence or speak of her beauty--
she would be contented if one would have pity,
and give her a moment fo true admiration,
or even pretended to give her attention.

The virtue of patience she has cultivated,
and such great endurance has
seldom been fated
to so many hours of fruitlessly
dreaming
and hoping and fearing and wishing
and grieving.

Lorien M. Edman



--Geramy K. Rapp

After the Empire Falls: Concordia Professor Brandt Helps Slovakian School Rebuild

By Gary D. Altman

What motivates a college professor to paint, scrape windows, and scoop dirt, not merely for free, but at his own expense? Why would anyone pay to do physical (and sometimes mundane) work?

Concordia College professor Dwaine Brandt helped restore a Slovakian "Evanjelicke Gymnazium" (or Lutheran high school) this past summer--for free. Brandt and other Portland Lutherans traveled to Tisovic, Slovakia at their own expense to work for free.

Tisovic is a European town described by International Volunteer Services (IVS) as "nestled within the foothills of the lower Tatra mountains." This quiet setting hides a past of confrontation, as IVS says: "The Lutheran high school was established in 1928 and gained a national reputation for school and used the building for other purposes. With the collapse of the Soviet system, the building lay empty, and was gutted by vandals... In 1993, the Slovak Lutheran Church regained possession of the old gymnazium building and began restoration efforts. Townspeople, parents, and almost two hundred volunteers have joined hands in readying the facility for the 1994-95 school year."

Historian Brandt explained the origin of the town's name: "I can tell you where it comes from. 'Tis,' in Slovak, is a yew tree. The area was known for its yew trees."

Brandt's said significant involvement with the restoration effort began with another group: "Lutheran Hour Ministries, which is the former Lutheran Hour, has projects in Eastern Europe--it's rather exciting I think. Right now they have about three projects going in Eastern Europe... One southwest of St. Petersburg, where they are renovating a... new church, and one in Guben... in the former East Germany--it's right on the Polish border... and then the third at Tisovec in Slovakia."

Brandt noted that the dominance and decline of the Soviet Union is reflected in the history of the Evanjelicke Gymnazium: "It was a building built in the 1920s... it was a Lutheran high school in part of its history. When the Communists came, they took the building over. Now they are returning it [following] the fall of the Soviet empire. The government is slowly returning certain churches and buildings and properties to the church. One of them happens to be in this school."

Lutheran Hour Ministries was able to help the Slovakian high school renovate in vital ways, according to Brandt: "They [the Slovakian Lutherans] are a poor people--they got the building, but they didn't have the money to office in... the capitol of Slovakia in the southwestern edge of Slovakia--decided to ask for financial help. Lutheran Hour Ministries made a [financial] contribution... There is now--as of September, 1994--almost finished inside."

Brandt first became interested in helping the Slovakian school through volunteer recruitment advertisements: "I saw it publicized that they needed volunteers. There's a program called 'Servants for Slovakia,' run out of St. Louis under the leadership of a man by the name of Rudy Shaser... I contacted him. And also, [Concordia promoter] Patty Schlimpert has been working with in international relations of the school. [She] tried to get some students from Concordia to go. She asked me if I wouldn't be interested in taking over some students... I tried to recruit students. One student did [go]. Nine students expressed a lot of interest [but did not go]. The people in this volunteer program have to pay their own way, which is tough for a student. It's paying to work, so some of the students simply could not afford to go."

Brandt went with a group of five people from the Pacific Northwest: "There have been volunteers going to Tisovic for approximately two years... most all of them

from the Midwest. I'm kind of happy that the Northwest got involved in this program; I hope that the future will lead to more people going over."

The purpose behind using professors, pastors, students, and retired people for manual labor is simple-- sparing the Slovakian Lutheran school some expenses: "In Slovakia, things are labor-intensive. They needed a lot of this work done, and it would have cost them too much to have professionals take time to do these jobs . . . painting, washing windows, painting fences, and moving dirt-- There's not a lot of equipment in Slovakia."

Although Brandt had been to Slovakia before, he said this particular trip had special meaning, since the group was able to stay in one place for a longer time and stay in the homes of the people: "A much different experience of traveling--getting to know an area rather well in a small community--a village of five thousand people-- wonderful people, very gracious, very sharing. They are poor people . . . They have no money. They raise all their food--and we ate like kings!"

When asked about the religious climate of present-day Slovakia, Brandt pointed to the impact of the country's history: "Having been under Communism for forty or fifty years, there is a vacuum in the sense of church values. On the other hand, it's obvious [that] all through the [years of the] Communist regime the people managed to hold on to their Christianity . . . one reason that American Christians needed to go over was that the Slovaks needed to see

dedicated Christian people [who] were interested in them . . . to help strengthen their faith--as well as their [faith] strengthen ours. There were many very pious people."

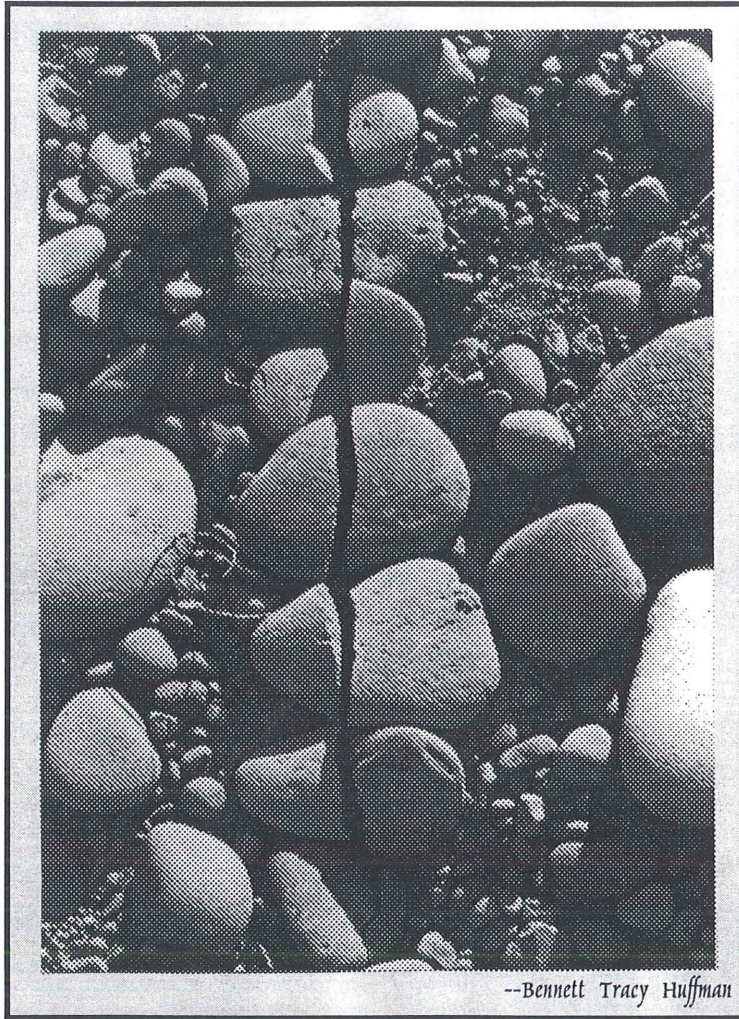
The future for the Church in Slovakia, while uncertain, is brighter, Brandt said: "What I am excited about is that the Church is alive-- if not totally well. The future looks bright. Perhaps with this school and new youth coming up, I'm hoping that a Slovak Lutheran student will be able to come to Concordia-- perhaps a pre-ministerial or a pre-teacher student-- and be exposed to the outside world."

Slovakia's exposure to modern technology has been limited by a focus on military armaments: "You don't see cars . . . you see old vintage tractors. They have a long way to go in terms of what we would call technology. People walk to get[to] places . . . The technology of this area, believe it or not, prior to the fall of Communism, [was limited to] T-62 tanks. Now those ate modern tanks. The big factories [were built] to produce weapons of war. There was [a factory] right in Tisovic. Today that factory is producing back-hoes."

So why do students, pastors, retirees, and professors of history invest time working in a

"low-tech" country, working for nothing? Brandt's answer seems simple and to the point: "I want to support the Church where there's need."

Building up from the rubble of a fallen empire-- that's an ancient and honorable tradition for the Christian Church, a tradition which includes in its ranks Dr. Dwaine Brandt.



--Bennett Tracy Huffman

An Old Man's Winter Night

All out-of-doors looked darkly in at him
 Through the thin frost, almost in separate stars,
 That gathers on the pane in empty rooms.
 What kept his eyes from giving back the gaze
 Was the lamp tilted near them in his hand.
 What kept him from remembering what it was
 That brought him to that creaking room was age.
 He stood with barrels round him—at a loss.
 And having scared the cellar under him
 In clomping here, he scared it once again
 In clomping off—and scared the outer night,
 Which has its sounds, familiar, like the roar
 Of trees and crack of branches, common things,
 But nothing so like beating on a box.
 A light he was to no one but himself
 Where now he sat, concerned with he knew what,
 A quiet light, and then not even that.
 He consigned to the moon—such as she was,
 So late-arising—to the broken moon,
 As better than the sun in any case
 For such a charge, his snow upon the roof,
 His icicles along the wall to keep;
 And slept. The log that shifted with a jolt
 Once in the stove, disturbed him and he shifted.
 And eased his heavy breathing, but still slept.
 One aged man—one man—can't keep a house,
 A farm, a countryside, or if he can,
 It's thus he does it of a winter night.

—Robert Frost

Advance of the Cosmic Annihilator: Robert Frost's "An Old Man's Winter Night"

By Dr. Daniel L. Wright

The bucolic lethargy which "An Old Man's Winter Night" induces is intimately united to the essentially serene quality of some of the poem's primary images: an old man, a lonely house, a "quiet light." But the poem is not constructed to tranquilize the reader or lull one into a mere sentimental euphoria; it is, instead, designed to inspire reflection and meditation upon that menace to harmony, peace, order—and life itself—which is suggested by the advance of the night and the chill of the winter ice. The central tension in Frost's "An Old Man's Winter Night" is nothing less than the primal tension of the cosmos: the threat to life that is urged by the powers of an ungovernable Chaos.

Chaos, the impersonal cosmic nihilist, is identified by Frost as that which is one with darkness and cold. Chaos is representative of the Void, negation, and death—a dark, frozen wasteland of eternal dimension: "All out-of-doors looked darkly in at him...." The impenetrable outer world—the "undiscover'd country" of Hamlet's melancholy muse—is a sinister, advancing landscape in this poem, one that would break through "the thin frost...gather[ed] on the pane" but for the light of the old man's lamp. And yet, though the feeble light of the old man's lamp prevents him from being engulfed by the suffocating darkness, it does not allow him to repel or overwhelm the darkness; because of the light, he cannot even fully *apprehend* the darkness: "it [keeps] his eyes from giving back the gaze...."

Obviously, as darkness functions as the poet's metaphor for death, so light serves as Frost's metaphor for life, and as such, the poem quickly becomes discernible as a conceit that addresses the mystery-filled encounter of life and death as the irresistible forces of extinction converge upon the lonely dwelling of an aged tenant. As such, we are presented with an existential picture of the experience of annihilation to which all humanity is inevitably, and yet singularly, drawn. This vision is confirmed by Frost's illustration of a barren world, entombed in ice and shrouded with darkness, wherein we behold the isolation of the old man who is—as are all who await the advance of death—alone. "A light he was to no one but himself"; and this light is nearly spent in its feeble efforts to keep back the rush of

the night, for it is but "a quiet light, and then not even that." The old man's light is fading, and darkness awaits the opportunity to invade.

The light fades because it is not just a man, but an *old* man, who peers into the wintry night: "age," Frost tells us, "has brought him to [the] creaking room...." All of these images—age, winter, night, and an emptiness which amplifies the measured "clomping" of an old man's steps—unite to fill our minds with quiet recognition of what is happening here: darkness, in its enormity, is pushing through, and the old man realizes the he is "at a loss" to allay the arrival of the intruder. He can, for the moment, substantiate and ratify his existence by doing so, but this clomping can neither delay nor deter the relentless thrust of the night, for this clomping, Frost reminds us, is "nothing so like beating on a box."

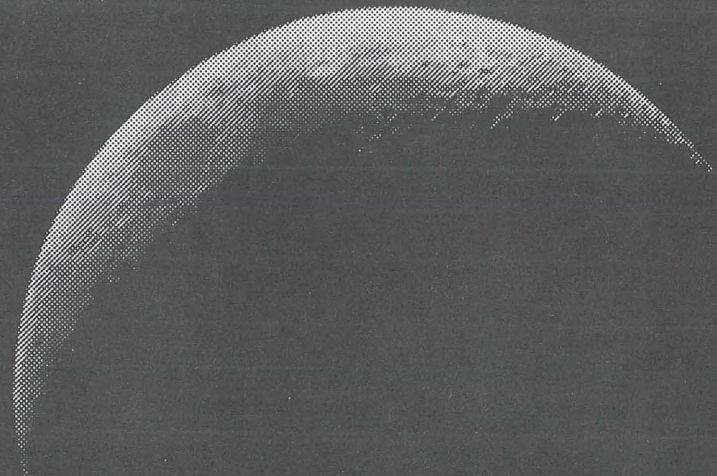
At this point in the poem (line 18) however, Frost introduces his redemptive message: the exile of Chaos may not reside in man's power, but Chaos might be contained by an eternal power, and Frost borrows his metaphorical figure for this eternal power from the Romantic tradition. The poet offers us the picture of an old man "consign[ing his]...charge" to the moon—an unintelligible vision but for our recognition of the moon as that Wordsworthian symbol of immortality, transcendence and gentle, caring femininity (see, especially, *The Prelude*, XIV). It is not the sun, therefore, that Frost prefers in contrast to the night, for as life and death do not displace, negate or nullify but rather co-exist with one another, so the moon does not evict the night but instead suffuses it with her soft brilliance, her likewise "quiet" light. Accordingly, the moon is "better than the sun...for such a charge"; consigned to the protection of the moon, the old man can rest, and no "log that shift[s]" can disrupt that secure, maternally-projected sleep.

Though the poem closes with a sense of resignation rather than conventional triumph, the tone of the poem is one of *contented* resignation: death *is*, but death is not *all* there is. Instead of striving in vain to repel the night, Frost suggests that one can embrace it and surrender to this experience which confirms the mutability and transience of all things, for as the moon does not vanquish the night but, instead, transforms it, so death allows life to be transposed into a new, higher sublimity. No one, of course, can accomplish this of oneself: "One aged man—one man—can't keep a house, / A farm, a countryside...." But, if one would rise above the limitations of bondage to one's mortal condition by surrendering oneself to that which is more than mere ego, one can find oneself united with that which is most completely the life-giving Other. In doing so, Frost suggests, one might know the experience of immortality, and "if [one] can, / It's thus [one] does it of a winter night."

Delphi

Distanced by words no tongue can speak
My petals and I are with a root that grow weak.
A mirror, a mirror which I see the same soul
A hope for redemption which somebody stole
For my heart a rogue, with reason unknown
Less sight recognition when an eyebrow is grown
Apocalyptic nightmares await thy two names
Death by the drowning and life by the flame
O were there hope that remain for the pair
A soul everlasting though filled with despair
The angels must ponder and ask at a time
Will two more perfect be witness of mankind
Before chance and hope take haste in their flight
Let the flower and its ground be one tonight.

Josh Hill



-- Geramy K. Rapp

Automobile Amnesia

By Gary Altman

Traffic—the final frontier. Some people seek out new experiences; others have experience thrust upon them. All people need new experiences; no one enjoys raw culture shock. The latter has been my continuing experience in city traffic. Case in point is my recent safari into the jungle, the jungle of Portland traffic, a reminder to those who forget what it's like to be lost. We, that is, I, forget what it's like not to know. We suffer from a kind of amnesia, an ailment quickly cured by a voyage around the Rose City.

Now don't get me wrong. I normally enjoy driving. Driving has, until recently, been akin to a grad scholl field trip: seeing the old familiar sights, rolling down the window and hearing the same birds sing their unchanging songs— yes, the good life in traffic— at least in Idaho traffic. Idaho, the Gem State, the sunny, slower traffic state—MY state. Towns with light, romantic, French names like “Couer d'Alene,” and “Boise,” harmonious, melodic names.

Some people seek out new experiences; others have experience thrust upon them.

I could tolerate the English— sounding names in Oregon— I'm part English. But I'm from Idaho and the names here are stanger than a trip to Oz. My ears are not tuned to “Port—land” (now *that's* inventive), “Salem” (sorry, its been used), “Eugene” (no personal names, please). Although some do soound rather whimsical, in fact (“Tigard,” “Hillsdale”), what name can be used to describe a town which hides its schools? Gresham. Grey—Sham. Sounds rather dark and deceitful, doesn't it? At least to my Idaho ears.

The reader may wonder at my hostility toward this suburb to Portland—proper (Is there a Portland “improper”?). Regardless, I have my reasons. I spent a week there one afternoon, trying to locate a school which existed in theory—but not to my senses. I have said that I enjoy driving. I do. When one drives in eastern Washington or northern Idaho, it's a breeze. You just get on one of the two—lane highways (or an abandoned cow—tail) and head for Moscow, that Russian—sounding town with the Nordic university team—the “Vandals.” Ah, yes, hub of the world, this land of farmers, this state of tree—fallers and fish—catchers, this home of Hemingway, this *Idaho!*

But Oregon is not Idaho, and Portland is not Boise. Would that it were.

But I digress. Traffic. Portland traffic. Portland noon traffic. If Dante fogot a level of Purgatory, this is it. As Dante began his underworld journey with Virgil his guide, so I sought some directions from friends. It's a bright Monday morning at the campus where I am studying to be an educaator. It's a beautiful day, so I decide to drop over to my friends in the administration building. I begin with the obvious first stop, my friends in the mail room.

“Say, Kris, I'm going to be doing some field experience for my teaching certification. Can you tell me how to get to Portland Lutheran High School? What's the easiest way to get there?”

I realize my question comes just as Kris is turning to work on a special project. But, hey, what are friends for?

“Oh, that's easy,” Kris replies. “you just take 205 to 84 and go right under the tunnel and just keep going— I think it's 181st— Yeah, 181st. Then you go right to— about a block— it's right there by— I think it's Stark, or maybe Glisan. Jan, is Lu' High on Stark or Glisan?”

“Jan knows,” Kris says aside to me.

“Stark,” says Jan as she rushes out the door. She's understandably busy.

Kris is busy, too, but not too busy to pull a map from her desk. I glance at the map as a phone call comes in for Kris who takes the call and puts the map away. But, hey, who needs a map?

As she darts to the phone I ask, “Does the information office have any more maps like that?”

“No, but you won't have any problem. It's only about a half block off the main road.”

Famous last words.

“Thanks.”

I have by this time sketched on some scratch paper what seems to be a rough reproduction of Kris's map, as best I remember it. I tuck the paper into my shirt pocket and confidently head out of the mailroom. No problem, that's what Kris said, right?

“Problem” is an understatement for what happens the following day. Leaving concordia College with plenty of time to spare— an hour and a half— I decide to cruise over

to Super Cuts for a trim. From there I drop past my place, have a quick bite of lunch. After lunch I still have half an hour of travel time—no problem.

I drive over to the 60th Avenue entrance to I-84. Oh boy—Lu' High here we come! Up ahead is the sign for the Dalles and east on 84. So far, so good. A garbage bag flies across the freeway. I miss it but it lodges under the Winnebago next to me and begins making a roaring, flapping sound.

No problem. Just ignore the bag and the noise. There's the 181 exit. Just turn here and—wait—there's a stop light after the exit. Left or right? Which is it? I'll try right—yeah, right sounds right—I think. Okey, up the hill. Wait, what's that sign say? San Ra . . . something—it doesn't matter. It's Stark I'm looking for, right?

The cars around me speed past, which doesn't help me feel any calmer. Don't look at me, buddy—I know where I'm going; I'm, well, same to you, you jerk! He was goin' too fast, anyway. Just a couple of blocks and—yeah, yeah, I see you on my bumper. You'll like it when I hit my brakes and you're filling out papers 'til kingdom come. It's thirty-five miles-per-hour; that's "three-five," you mental midget; now back off!

Two blocks and no school. Ah, man, I hate this! Ten minutes. I can still make it in ten minutes.

I whip the car around and begin driving west on Stark, then east, then west again. I'm looking for any symbol or sign of *any* school. A red sports car with ghetto-blaster-head-banging "music" pounds up behind me, inches from my bumper. Yeah, that's right; that's real smart, you low life!

A sign whips past. What—huh? 220 Avenue? 230? Oh, man, now I'm late! Gotta stay cool; gotta take care. Gotta turn around. But that jerk back there—well, then, go around, you jerk! Gotta find somebody to tell me where—but not a restaurant—too slow—or insurance agency—too many questions—not that—wait—a BP Service Station! I whip the Chevy Citation into BP. Two attendants see me. The older one eyes me like I'm Clyde Barrow. Thanks buddy, like I've got this Marine haircut just so I could look good for the holdup. Like I'm gonna roll this gas station.

The other attendant can see I'm the kind of guy who would get lost in his own house. I focus my question on him.

"I'm trying to find Portland Lutheran High School. Do you know how to get there?"

The older guy glances at my yellow legal pad to make sure I'm not packing a pistol. Jerk. The younger guy looks at me like He's just heard a rendition of Amazing Grace. He decides to help a wretch like me.

"It might be on Glisan or Burnside. I've heard of it."

I try not to grovel.

"Okay, I'll try that. Thanks." And tell your partner the jerk that I'm not Clyde Barrow.

I race to 181st, hang a right onto Burnside. Yes, just follow the Yellow Brick Road—but I'm not Dorothy and this doesn't look a bit like Kansas, or Idaho. Noe school. Back to Glisan.

No luck. Desperate. Maybe if I back-track—this is like being lost in the hills of Idaho—right, back down 181st.

I get within a quarter of a mile of the 84 exit. Back to square one. Man! Then I spot my last, best hope: Burger King!

The friendly cashier approaches to take my order. Sure, you can help me—I'm trying to find Portland Luth—well, no, I'm not ordering a burger. Would you happen to know the way—the smile leaves her face as she realizes I won't be the billionth burger sale of the day. She passes the buck to her underlings in Burgerology 101:

"Any ya guys know where—what?"

"Portland Lutheran High School."

"Yeah, right, where Portland Lutheran School is?"

"Nope"

"Uh, nope, sorry."

After the Queen of Burger City has failed to rally the Goofy wanna be's, one lone soldier remains in F-troop. He's younger than the rest—they all look like they've cut classto flip burgers—and he has the sense to pull out a phone directory.

"It's in the public school section, right."

"No, actually, it's a Lutheran school. Maybe it's in the Yellow Pages."

"Here," says the scowling Burger Queen, grabbing it away from the kid, "you can look for it."

"Thanks." And may God have mercy on your soul.

I fly out of Burger Kingdom leaving the burger royalty frustrated that all the extra attention did not result in a single sale of fries. Maybe next time.

At this point I'm reaching beyond the lords and ladies of Fryville. I'm even beyond pleading with the Lord. I have reached that final stage in the twelve-step program in automobile amnesia: Beyond denial, beyond anger, beyond bargaining, I am at the stage of resignation. I resign myself to a higher power, to Divine Will. Like an alcoholic at an A.A. meeting, I have spent my energies. Now I open up for mercy. Thy will be done, lost or found.

Just then (seriously, just then!) I spot a Century 21 real estate agency. Those huys are paid to know, I'm thinking. Maybe they're even paid to be nice. I'll try.

I pul up to the building in my dented 81' Chevy. Right, like I'm gonna purchase a house.

"I'm looking for Portland Lutheran High School. Could you direct me?"

It's like the clouds open up and we hear Handel's Messiah Chorus.

"Certainly," says the agent with a friendly, toothy grin, "Come back here; we have a map."

And what a map! A map with those nifty keen arrows which point and say things like, "You are here." Oh, Totto, we're home!

We're right here. Portland Lutheran is over here on 182nd. You probably missed 182nd because they have blocked off the road. You just go back to Stark and turn right. You'll see a Plaid Pantry, a Sea First Bank, a . . ."

But I'm already chanting to myself, "There's no place like home—there's no place like home."

When I arrive at the school, everyone at the front office acts like I'm on time. That's right, I said I would arrive between 1:00 and 2:30. It's 1:50. I'm still safe. Oh, Auntie Em!

I mentally click my heels together and proceed down the hallway to the classroom of the cooperating teacher. I'm not sure which character from Oz to expect.

I know who plays the part of the Cowrdly Lion. My emotions are repeating the script: "I do believe in ghosts, I do, I do, I do!"

I poke my head into the classroom where my mentor should be. No teacher. Just Munchkens—students. Is your teacher here? Not for a while? Okay.

Coming down the hallway is the school's chaplain and religion teacher. No, he hasn't seen her. Did you check here in the teacher's lounge?

My cooperating teacher also acts like I'm on time. I feel bold enough to relate, if by inference, some of the difficulty of finding the school.

"Your school is kind of hidden from the main road."

The simplicity and matter-of-factness of the sentence hides the gut-wrenching humiliation of only a few minutes before.

My cooperating teacher just smiles. She's heard others say the same thing. Finding one's way in the world can be challenging. She knows. She has seen frightened new students, and fearful student-teachers, before.

She has not forgotten what it's like to be lost.



Who Heals?

Love.

Grasping hold of your heart.

Consuming your thoughts, your soul, who you are.

Beginning in a crashing wave or a tiny spark.

Love.

Pain.

Breaking your trusting heart.

Gripping fingers, tightly clenching; it hurts.

Consuming your thoughts, your soul, who you are.

Consuming done in a shadow, heavy darkness.

Pain.

Christ.

Healing the broken heart.

Grabbing onto you, there is light.

Gentle hands carrying you through the shadow.

Consuming your thoughts.

Owning your soul.

Showing you who you are.

Christ is

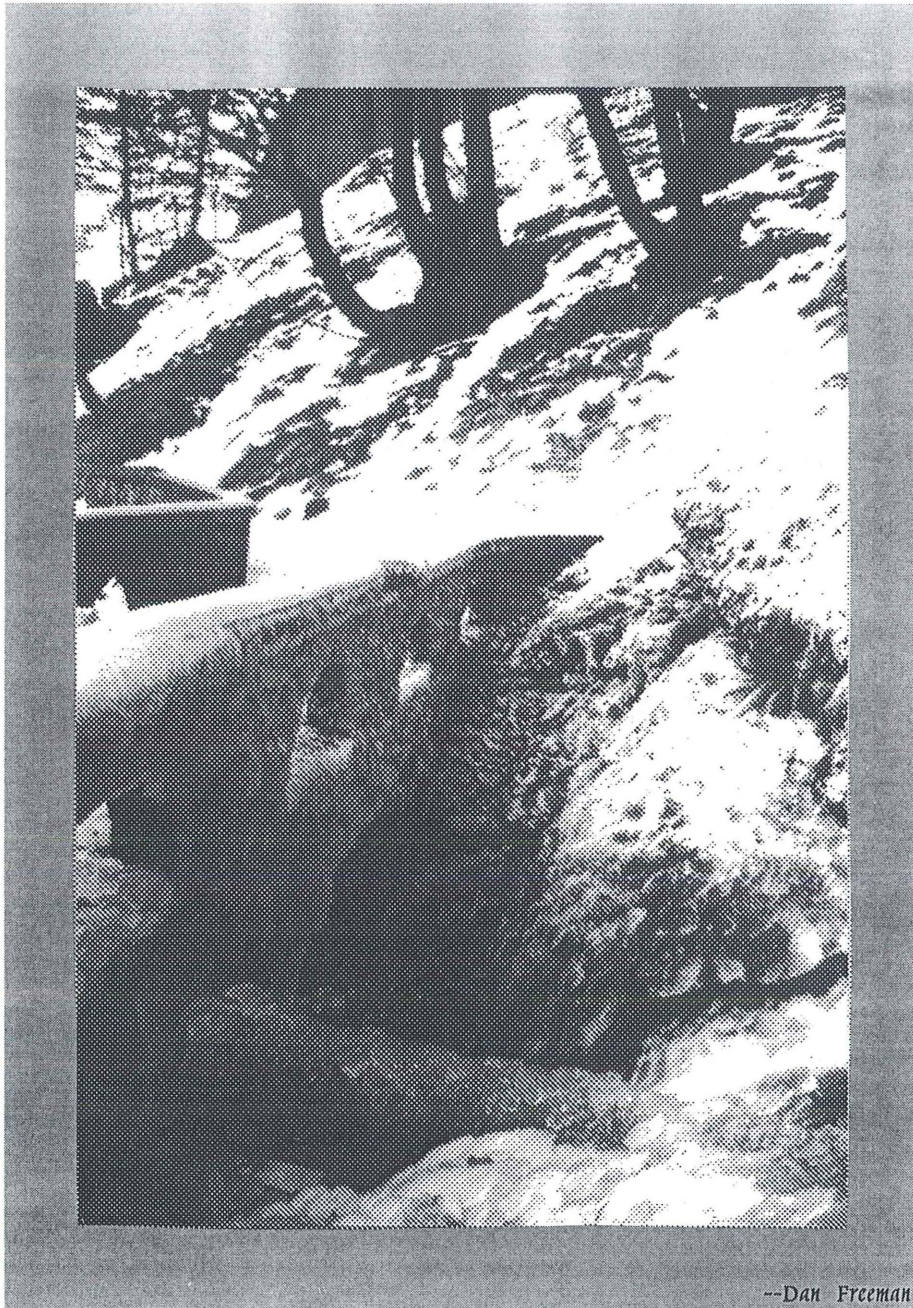
Love.

Kristin Scherer

The Last Grin of Winter

Twelve or ten or fifteen birds in a dark plum tree,
cannot hear the weary words of Winter that I see--
they flit, their tiny wings abound in branches dark and bare
a tree so delicately crowned with buds begin to flair.
The wary Spring is creeping in with little cause to fear--
though Winter gives one last cold grin, he knows his end is near.

Lorien Edman



--Dan Freeman

Contributors:

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