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POINT OF VIEW



# Little boys, they have magic

by Bob Putman

I always spent my coffee break behind my desk; either paging through a fresh run of the New Yorker or working on the advertising layout for this month's copy. My determination in college had paid off. It had landed me a \$25,000 a year contract with the New Yorker. Success was staring me in the face.

The coffee was bitter as an arctic snowstorm. Still slightly hung-over from last night's cocktail party, I slipped out onto the balcony. I sat down on the protective railing, took a deep breath of what the atmosphere had to offer, and closed my eyes. The bustle of ten o'clock New York continued on the streets 13 floors below, each sound a dagger to my ears. Then I closed my mind.

Remember when we were young, we used to go down by the creek and catch crayfish and tadpoles among the stones and swirling bubbles. And each breath of morning sun would kiss the daisies in the meadow and the hollihocks behind the tool shed. And remember crawling through the cool tall grass with our imaginary swords, chasing a garter snake away from the secret cave. I'd climb a willow tree to sing a bird my song; and old lady willow, she'd sing along with me; she knew all the words. No one knows little boys have magic, and I kept mine in my pocket concealed from everyone. Do you remember when I buried an apple core, and prayed that night for a tree. It's nice to be young again, I'd love to be young again and I promise, cross my heart lady willow, I'll get back some day.

I stirred, looked at my watch. Five minutes late on coffee break, I gulped. I looked

down on the street, ants scurrying about, each one doing his job mechanically. I fingered my lip. The inner office was busy with the bustle of executives running to and fro chaotically with articles, editorials, photo layouts, feature stories, society columns, fashion articles, "About Town" articles . . .

"Can you live in a box," I screamed. With that I removed my hands from the protective railings and leaned back. I'm comin' home lady willow, comin' home.





## HIGH

Margi Madding

High  
flying,  
dancing gaily  
in the soft clouds,  
soaring like a bird in the  
blue, teasing the whipping wind,  
dodging the vicious naked trees who  
reach out to impare the journey with wicked  
fingers, meeting the challenges the law of gravity  
enforce, escaping restrictions by flowing with the unexpected,  
creating unique patterns of adventures as it whirls  
and swirls on its string. But time can end  
this joyful jaunt, tumbling to the  
earth, falling from carefree  
problems and dreamfilled  
highs, to impossible  
problems and  
dreamless  
lows  
it  
is  
so  
like life,  
it  
can  
change from  
good  
to  
bad  
by  
the  
snap

— David Kehs

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— Laurie Peterson

## ACT IV

by Marty Matin

*(The next day. Early afternoon.)*

*(George and Martha's bedroom. Both are in bed sleeping. Martha awakens and sits up in bed. She lights a cigarette. George turns on his back and looks at Martha.)*

George: What time is it?

Martha: Eleven-thirty.

George: Hm.

Martha: You sleep O.K.?

George: Yea — You?

Martha: Uh-hunh, I guess so.

George: You were pretty restless. Did you dream?

Martha: Yea — bad.

George: Got a cigarette? (He sits up, too.)

Martha: Yea — (She gives him a cigarette.)

George: You want to tell me?

Martha: Uh-hunh, I guess so — We were driving, somewhere. A long drive — you were asleep in the back, I was behind the wheel.

George: Where were we going?

Martha: I don't know — We were just driving. Maybe in the country, you know, just to get away for a while, I guess. No, I think we drove to the mountains — they were big — snow and ice all over — Rocks, too. — There's nobody else driving, anywhere — no towns, no people, no gas stations. Nothing. Not for miles — for hours, no one. We were running out of gas. I tried to wake you, but you were sound asleep. (She puts out her cigarette and thinks a moment.)

George: What happened then? (He puts out his cigarette.) Did I wake up?

Martha: No, you just slept. I drove a little further — It began to snow, hard, real hard, you know. The gas was almost gone, and I couldn't see the road too well. (Slightly apprehensive.) The road became icy — I tried to slow down, but I couldn't — I called for you, I screamed, George, I screamed, I was scared. You wouldn't get up. The car seemed to go faster, and faster — we were sliding all over the road. I tried to stop the car — the brakes seemed to be stuck — frozen. The car started to spin — (Screams.) George! (She grabs George; she hugs him around the neck. She is breathing hard, trembling.)

George: Hey, take it easy. (He hugs her, stroking her hair, her back. He is concerned, calm, and seemingly emotionless.) What happened, tell me?

Martha: The rail —

George: What?

Martha: We hit the guard rail, b-but it didn't hold us — We crashed — we rolled down the ravine — then we stopped. I didn't faint — I didn't black-out — I remembered everything. It was silent — I couldn't hear anything, no sound. I crawled out of the car — I looked at it — Where were you, George?

George: Where was I, Martha? Dear, where was I?

Martha: I looked for you, George, but you weren't anywhere — I looked in the backseat, but you weren't there. I looked everywhere — in the snow, the bushes — but you were gone! I looked back at the car — blood! Everywhere, blood. I hadn't seen it before — the blood was coming from the car, through the twisted doors — again I looked in the car — I saw — I saw my father, it was

George

Martha

George

Martha

George



my father — Then I fainted — scared — fainted. (Exhausted, perspiring, breathing heavy.)

(Agreeing.) You fainted. How did your father get there? I thought I was in the back seat?

I don't know — I fainted. I was lying in the snow, and you came — I opened my eyes, and you came.

From where?

Down the ravine — from the road. You wore a cap and gown — You had a — a candle in your hand, and a red rose. You gave them to me. Then you picked me up — suddenly it changed — You were carrying me through the campus — then you stopped and laid me down in the street — but the street then changed and I was lying among flowers in daddy's greenhouse — People were staring at me through the glass — You and Nick and Honey and daddy and some people from the party. You were all smiling — not happy, or laughing, just smiling — nice. I don't know why I was there, but I saw a man — a young man walking towards me — he was the only one in the greenhouse. He kept calling my name — Martha — Martha. I looked around to call for you, but you were gone. I looked back at the young man — he was standing next to me. Only he and I were there — you were gone. The man then stretched both of his arms out to me and said — and said — Hold me — Hold me, mother. (She stops and sits upright in bed staring blankly ahead.)

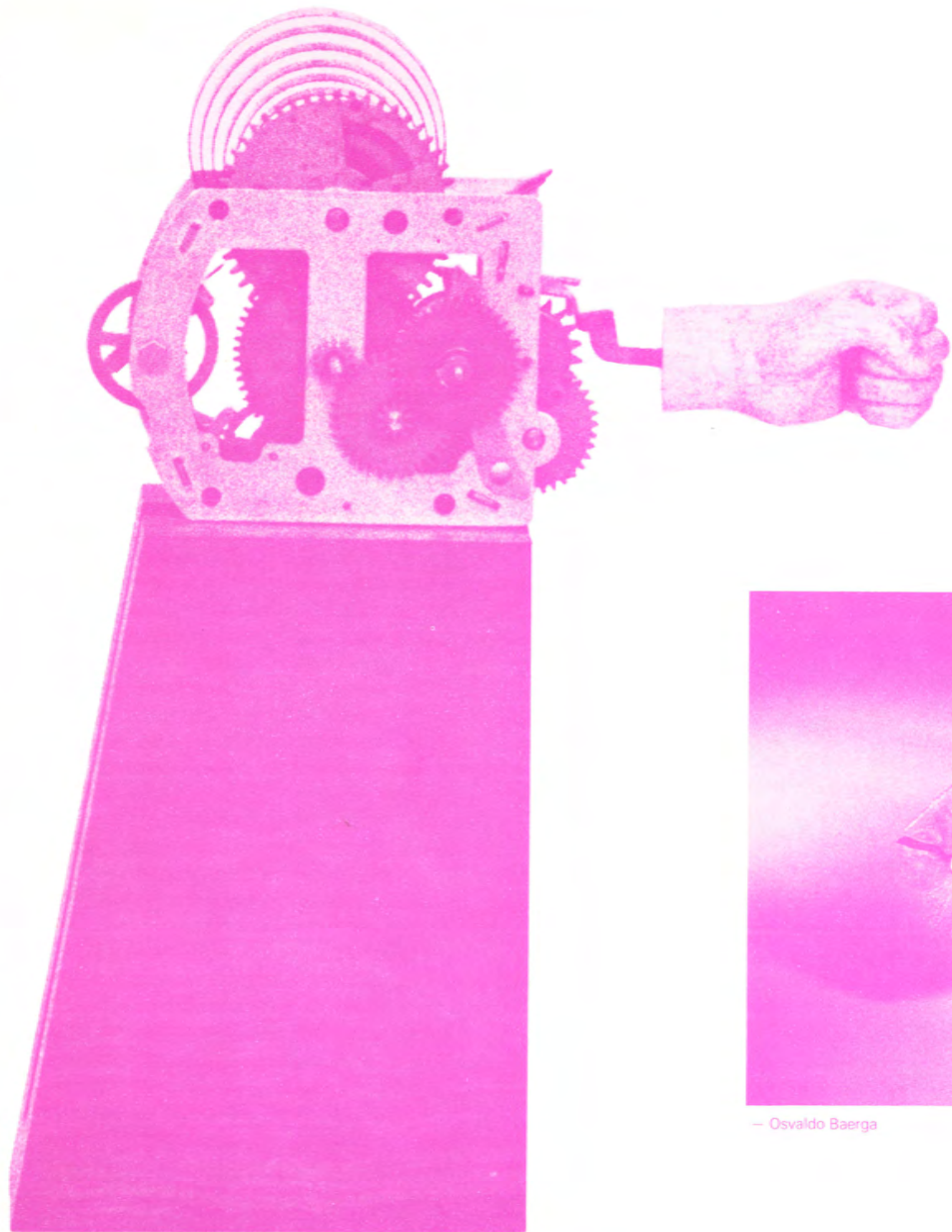
(Somewhat surprised, concerned.) He said, "Mother?" (Martha continues to stare blankly ahead.) Martha, are you all-right? (He reaches for her hand, but she shows no response.) Martha, Martha, are you — Martha? Is everything O.K.? — (Very

concerned.) Martha, can you hear me? (He takes her head in his hands and turns her towards him. She still stares into blank space.) Please, honey, say something — dear — Martha — Please . . . please. (George seems confused about what to do. He first gets out of bed and helps Martha lie down in bed. He covers her, and speaks to her while he is getting dressed. He hurries about the room, almost frantic, as he picks up wrong pieces of clothing, then throws them down in search of the correct articles.) Martha, everything will be all-right . . . I'll call the hospital . . . We'll get a good doctor . . . Martha, are you listening, can you hear me . . . You'll get a private room — with flowers — and candy — and there are nice people there . . . Oh, Martha, why, why, why? It's not fair — drinking, that's all we ever did, we drank. We only drank with friends — colleagues, deans, professors, associate professors — your father. This can't happen to my wife — she's not — not sick. (Realizing what he had just said, angry.) Sick — we're not sick — (He kneels next to the bed and holds one of Martha's hands. He kisses her hand, then he holds it to his cheek . . . He cries softly.) He said mother? — Hold me — Hold me, mother. — Why, Martha, — why? (He cries softly.) (Lights dim.)

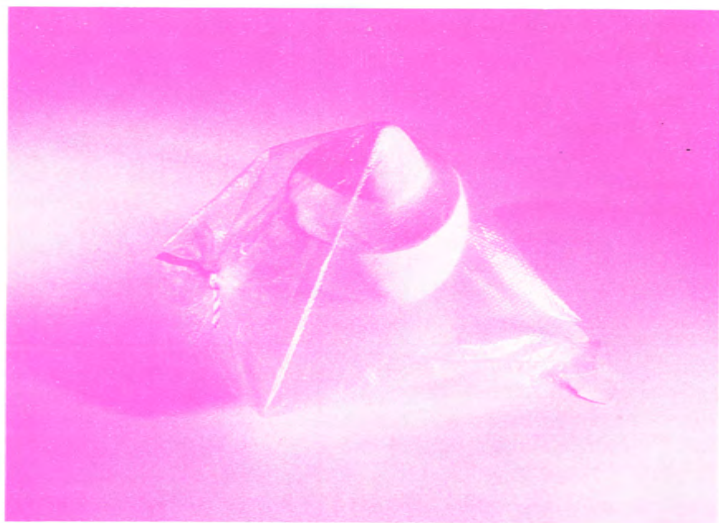
*(Curtain.)*

— Laurie Peterson





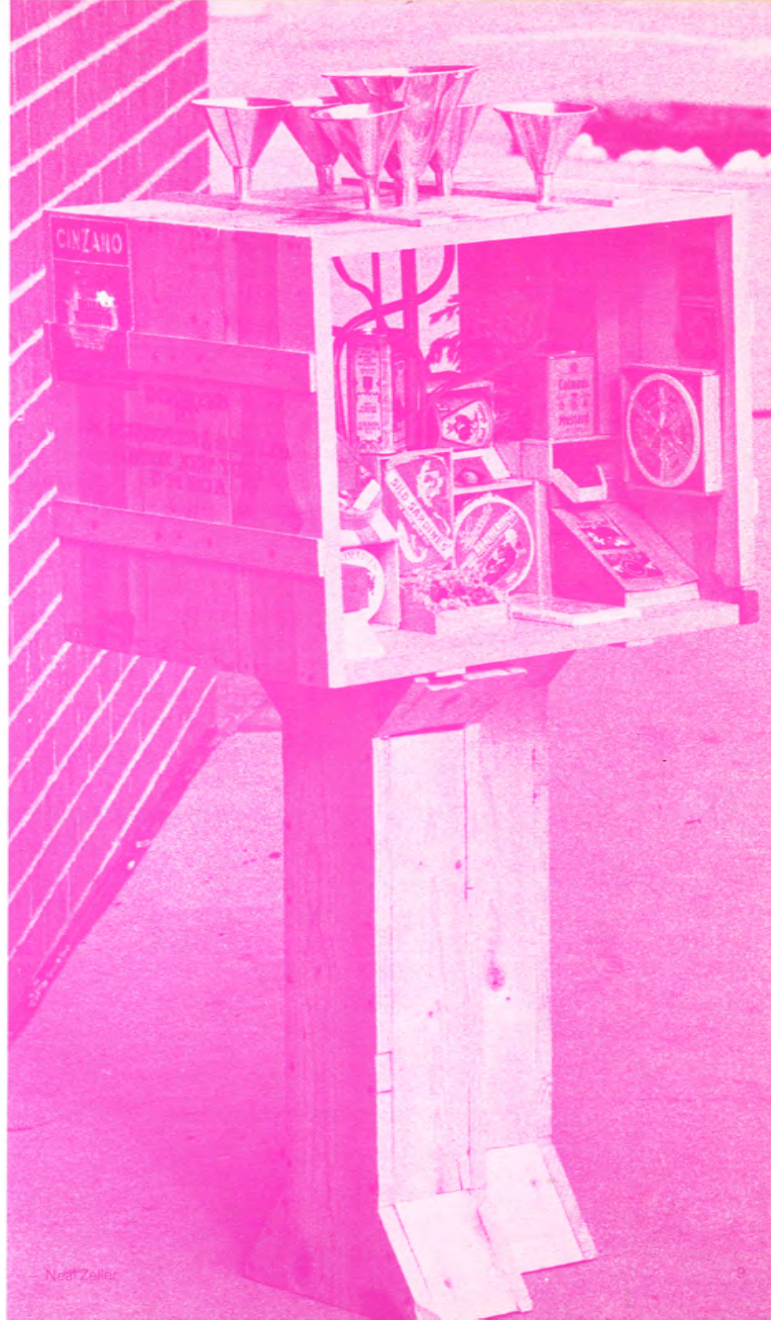
— Michael Erikson



— Osvaldo Baerga



— John D'asto



— Neff Zeller





— Michael Erikson

## FACTS

Ronald A. Robinson

*Facts  
can be  
hard as diamonds,  
spilling with the  
clear ring of  
rock candy on a counter.  
They are the small change  
of reality:  
dead as fossils.*



ly river bank, settled down to slowly and awesomely put the sun to bed.

Some wakeful lingering rays were darting playfully across the water when Tom pointed out the purple clouds to our left. They were playing a duet with shimmering heat lightning. And then to our right, the skies above the little village came alive with Roman candle flares, star bursts and all the other glorious light effects and cacophonous sounds man has made and the people were using to pay tribute to our historical spirit.

Mike cracked open several cans of beer and they were passed back and forth from hand to hand between the five of us. The light show continued, thunder rumbled off in the distance, someone pointed out a shooting star and Ed reached across the sand, found my hand and squeezed it briefly. The river churned below us where it has made its masterful cut through the dike and all the night sounds joined together in a contrapunctal serenade behind us.

Then slowly, reluctantly we headed back. Mike leading the way this time and all of us having to wait every once in a while for Rick to catch up. When we reached our place, no one had much to say except Rick. Talking and giggling constantly then suddenly sound asleep. Mike and Tom laughed when they realized who had drunk most of the beer.

We were all relaxed. The magic had worked again. We felt clean and rested. Composed and comfortable. We felt good about ourselves and each other. We had hungered for this tranquil serenity and had not been disappointed. The slow languid inertia would in actuality feed our spirits with sparkle and lively vitality for the next days' activities.

Soon our place was quiet. Bits of conversation had bounced around for awhile. A sleepy question — a soft reply. Good-nights echoed for awhile and then all was still. Ed was asleep beside me. I scrambled up on my knees and shoved back the curtains. Moonlight timidly entered the room and then I slept.



— Karen Walsh

# XI

Andrew Dorner

*that glimmering, shimmering rainbow  
of colors glowing before my eyes,  
reaching far into my soul,  
and searing a mark within  
the innermost crevices of my being.*

*multicolored particles of many lives  
float up into the sky,  
into the blackness of infinity,  
like sparks or flames that glisten  
with a magical hue which  
cannot be dimmed in their  
glorious ascent to the stars.*

*the stars, pinpoints of splendor  
in the majestic blackness above.  
tiny miracles to guide man  
to his final destination  
with the wonders of the universe.*

*floating free among the stars  
to follow whatever life may bring  
within our grasp today.  
ever reaching farther out  
and turning darkness into light.*

*and still our lives shine and fade away,  
while small birds sing in evergreen trees,  
and an old fox brings forth more young,  
as flowers bloom and wilt,  
and from the seeds new flowers grow.*

*is it too much to ask  
that there be more than death,  
that there is no end to  
what has been begun in us?*

*the universe is vast and spacious,  
and we are always moving out.  
death is but another step to be taken.  
yet, it's so hard to understand.*





# "POEM"

Keith Peterson

*Dates and lemons are served from silver mirrors  
Pearls sink like a veil into the crusts of dark bread  
In a glass woven from the stomach of a sphinx  
the wings of moths float in unmixed wine*

*I.  
We  
are  
waiting  
for  
messiahs*

*He who wears the headdress made of elephant-skin  
and has never tasted water in his cup;  
Slays tens upon thousands and then takes the mothers  
of these murdered into his house  
in the marshes  
minarets like bulrushes rocked gently  
in the mud  
The sailor's head is pinned to the topsail*

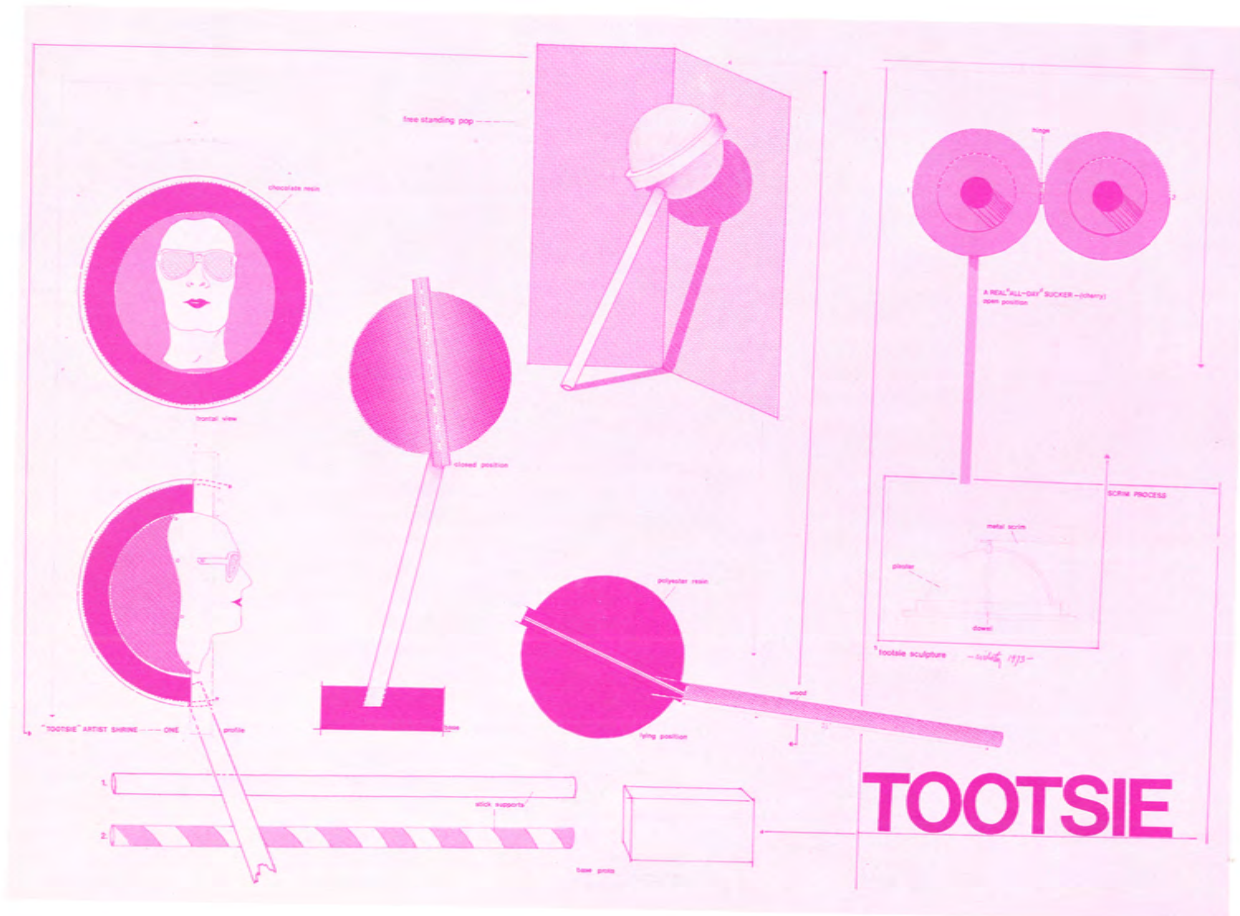
*We  
are  
waiting  
for  
the sons  
of messiahs*

*II.  
Ferns pulled from Moses' wrist were pressed  
into the lips of an ivory lion  
While the fruit was cut from the branches  
With long swords, and half-eaten, and spit out  
Agate earrings made from the spines of slaves  
Dance from the ears of the concubine  
While children kiss shattered glass  
and embrace each other in ovens  
Mourning doves carry wind white as apples  
through the sky; at night they take their place as stars  
While virgins sleep with their tormentors  
and put poison in the ears of their suitors  
While carefully glorious histories and sweetly perfumed prophetic books  
are fed to the fires that warm the public baths  
While the soft flesh of the oracle  
is scraped from her bones with the shells of oysters*

# A COLD FRONT

John DiAsto

*A cold front moved through my left ventricle today.*





# LANDSCAPE MARKETS

Curt Galbraith

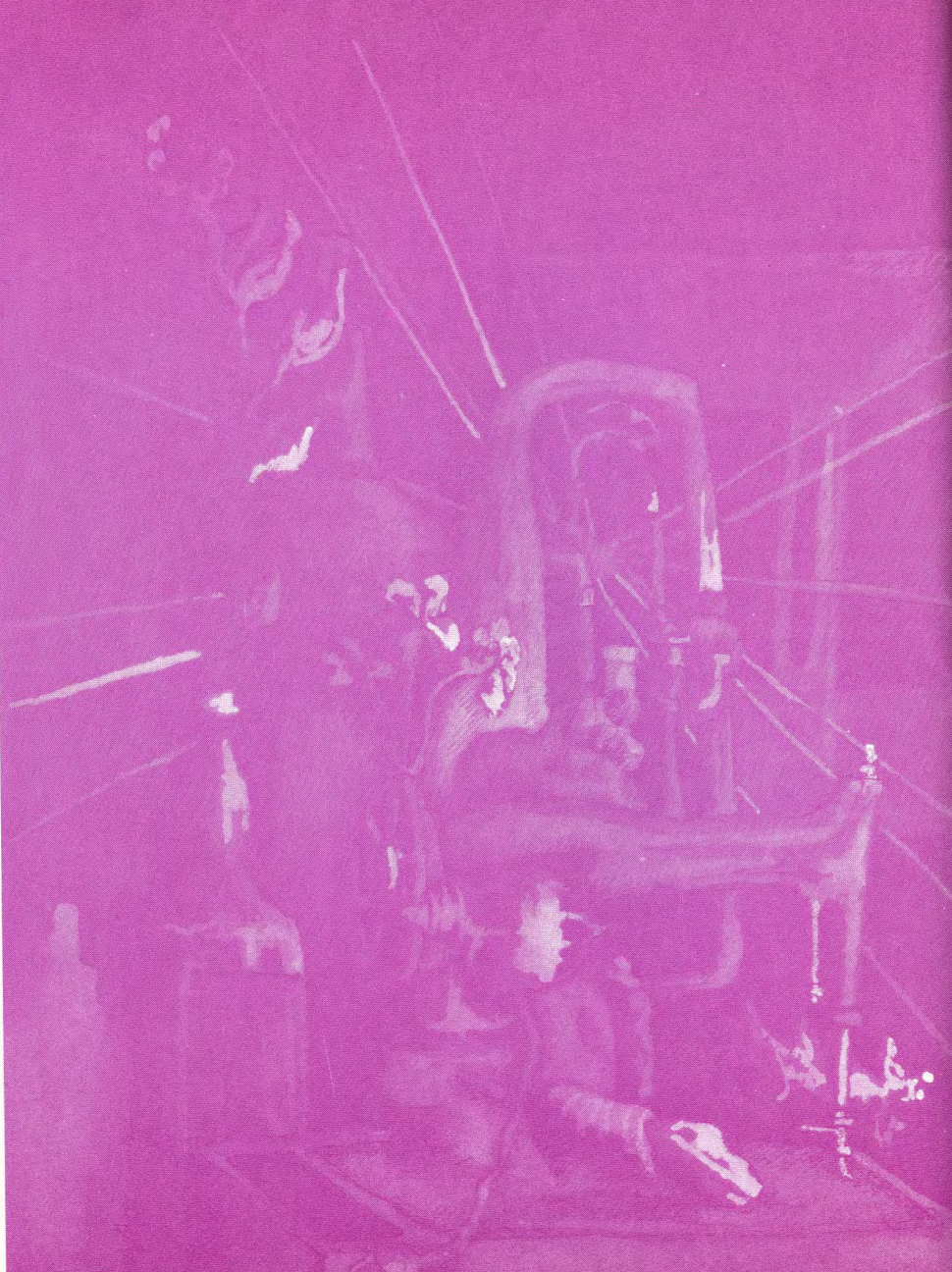
*Landscape markets raise tender podded vehicles,  
Garden emeralds blossom toward dawn.  
Beauty bounds forward, to a melting mist,  
Pursuing nestled security, from a darting touch.*

*Nursery giants keep vigilance steadfast,  
Thwarting hangmen of thirst or crystal cold.  
Pampered touch, images, a budding stalk,  
Clenched roots as fingered palms, strive upward.*

*Bubbled joy gives essence to curious growth,  
Tumbled stumble,  
Twirled laughter.  
Sprouting stems interblend tones,  
Squeezing another for self-passion.*

*Garden patch with multicolor radiance.  
Struggles of ground, no coaction,  
Placidness unheard, between the rooted streets.  
Landscape giants, fade with crystal cold.*

*Flaming bronze melts crimson shadows,  
Slowly calling to mind, time of youth-  
Days of youth, a podded vessel  
Running the winds, to travel.*



# I WANT TO PAINT MYSELF

Keith Peterson

*I want to paint myself with pleasant tars;*

*Above the dull, rehearsed slumber*

*I want to sleep, billowing in the soft*

*deep eye of Saturn*

*And hear the tsetse hum 'round the rings at night*

*There is a stone in my throat*

*It belongs to Ishmael; his*

*twentieth piece of silver,*

*his*

*father's diamond wrapped in*

*a ram's skin dyed red,*

*his*

*smallest ruby pulled from the*

*skin of a goat's kid*

*I want to anoint myself with strong odours;*

*Burn myself by the light of the cressets of Troy*

*I want to stumble, fall into comas on the black*

*burnt beaches of Alexandria*

*And hear the dogs barking as the waves lick at their paws*



— Paul McCoy

# Helen, Queen of the Desert

John Whalen

The dealer's sunscorched face remained blank as he spun out the cards. His eyebrows had been burned off, and he leaned forward slightly, weathering an invisible sandstorm.

He didn't look at the players at all. Instead, he squinted straight ahead, engrossed in a patch of wall. Expression flickered across his face only if an exceptionally outrageous lady swept through his stationary field of vision.

The players were all silent, intimidated perhaps by the dealer's tight mechanical flow. Or maybe they were just tired.

It was six A.M. and about as quiet as it ever gets in Las Vegas.

At one end of the blackjack table sat a round man sucking on a wet cigar. His oily red face hinted that he was losing. He was. About a hundred an hour, near as I could tell.

The man fought his rotten luck all the way. He grunted bitterly whenever he took a hit that sent his count over 21. When he got a hand that had a chance he tucked his cards respectfully away and sweated

while he waited to see if he'd made it. If he happened to catch a blackjack, he flipped his cards over violently, sighing curtly at the same time — as if someone had kicked him in the chest.

Next to the man sat a middle aged lady in horn rims and a floral housecoat. She was dressed like a midnight icebox raider, and played the same way — sneakily, and knowing that it was wicked and that she should really be in bed.

I was sitting a couple of stools to the right of the woman and trying to appear completely calm. Perfectly cool. Bored even. That was because I was winning what seemed to me a lot of money. I didn't want to offend the Great Blackjack God with any jubilant behavior. (I have this theory that the blackjack god keeps track of those things.)

As play continued, I kept winning, the round man kept losing, and the floral lady continued looking over her shoulder to see if anyone was coming to return her to her room and some

warm milk and cookies.

About six-thirty I heard the announcement that Helen had arrived. The announcement came from Helen herself, as she slid onto the stool next to mine.

Helen was evidently famous. The pit boss smiled when he saw her. She returned his smile with an ancient street gesture. The floral lady decided it was probably time to go to sleep after all. She left very quickly.

Helen looked like she'd had a rough night. Or maybe several years of rough nights piled on top of each other.

Her face sagged drastically. All those creases, deep as they were, couldn't contain the caked makeup. Streaky beige overflowed everywhere like rain pouring from an eroded irrigation ditch. Clots of mascara clouded her eyes, which seemed just barely open.

The eyeshadow, the rouge, the powder, Helen's features — which had to be under there someplace — the whole face, everything was in danger of falling right off the front of the

head.

The rest of Helen was startling.

She had smooth, healthy looking legs. Her body appeared firm, packed as it was into a tight red velvet cocktail dress. The dress, and probably some complicated elastic contraption underneath combined to push and punch and bully Helen's upper torso into an aggressive doubleheaded projectile of formidable impact.

The dress was open in front as far down as anyone could want. The only clue that Helen's face was to be taken seriously was a ragged vein of blue which ran down the center of the remarkable chest — incongruous like a dribble of wine on a nun's habit.

Helen sat down with three five dollar chips. She lost two immediately when she blew a double hand. Helen swore at considerable length, and with an imaginative detail that you just don't hear any more. She change the last chip into silver dollars.

She played on that for

almost an hour. While she played, Helen did a little monologue for us. Or maybe for herself. Mostly intricate complaints about the coldness of men, the deceit of women, and her own unfortunate craziness, which she claimed, kept her from earning a decent living even though she was a bonafide licensed graduate of The Lovely Lady School of Beauty in Ogalalla, Nebraska. She gave the impression that what living she did make these days depended on a lot of business conducted late at night in hotel rooms along the strip.

Between complaints, some more amply hyphenated curses, and several free drinks, Helen was able to pay enough attention to her cards to get ahead about thirty dollars. She upped that to seventy-five with a blackjack and two successful double hands. Then she sat out several hands, apparently deciding how best to invest the sudden bonanza.

For some reason she began watching the dealer closely. I couldn't see any clues there. The guy could have been asleep

except for his hands.

Suddenly, right after a new deck had been shuffled, Helen pushed a bet out onto the table. Fifty dollars.

Divine inspiration she said.

The cards were dealt. Helen showed me her 19 and winked. I nodded, coolly, of course. The dealer turned up a 4. Helen grinned, her cosmetics shifting dangerously. I nodded again. I didn't know any other cool gestures.

The dealer turned up his hole card. It was a 6. Helen frowned.

The inevitable face card floated down and gave the dealer 20. He swept Helen's bet into one of the house's smug little stacks.

Helen shrugged, as if she'd been through all this before. She tossed a final oath at the dealer and bid us all good night.

I saw her a little later. She was heading for the elevator with a bald man in a green Hawaiian shirt. The man was staggering a little, but so was Helen.

I decided it was time to go see how my wife was doing at roulette.



— Elizabeth Ryznar

## MOODY CHILD

Chuck Dickey

*Moody Child,  
Beautiful face of scorn,  
Turns his head slowly  
From the light of Dawn,  
Lingers in shadows, his head held high,  
Watches the absurd crazily dance by,  
Everyone living, grasping at straws  
Lovers cling as vines on a wall.  
Nobody calls him, he knows all;  
Stands solemn, alone in the hall.  
Don't listen to the moody child's eyes  
They tell the truth without disguise.  
They tell of life's sorrow without blame  
The moody child turns away again.  
Reach out to him, you've a life long friend,  
But then,  
You'll never smile again.*



— Elizabeth Ryznar



# TOMMY

Margi Madding

He jumps out of the car and trots over to the empty basketball court. The court is surrounded by hills of green grass, and today the sun is brightly shining. The temperature is very warm, and a twelve year-old boy is ready for some action.

His shoes are old white Adidas. The red stripes are peeling off the sides and the heels are held together by a few worn threads. His pale legs are thin, yet every muscle is evident. The short cut-off blue-jeans hug his muscular thighs and rear. An old ragged short-sleeved jersey covers his shoulders, chest and back. On the back of the red and white, extra-large shirt is the name "MADDING" printed in huge white gothic letters above the numeral 11, and Barrington is printed above the numeral on the front. His arms are thin, though strong enough to shoot the red, white and blue basketball through the hoop from anywhere on the half-court. His light brown hair blows gently in the wind, short enough so it won't bother his playing, yet still too long for dad's taste. His large brown eyes are blind to everything around him except the empty outdoor playing court. He hears only the sound of the basketball hitting the black-top, the swish as it glides through the hoop, or the sickening sound as it smacks the backboard and drops death-like to the ground away from the goal.

He works alone, yet weaves in and out through imaginary opponents to "lay-up" the ball and score two points. He quickly soars toward the basket, dribbles the ball, right hand, left hand, between his legs, around his back, dodging player upon player to reach his goal. He stops, looks around, then leaps for the hoop.

His lunge is like a slow motion picture. His muscles tense as they launch this long skinny body toward the sky. His arms reach for the hoop as tree limbs reach for the sun. The ball swishes through the iron rim

barely rippling the net. Then the young player returns to earth with an angel-soft landing.

His smile, glance in my direction and sharp scream, meet my smile and nod of approval to fill the surrounding atmosphere with our satisfaction. However, he doesn't stop his work-out here. He picks up the ball and bounces it hard against the pavement with both hands and trots back to the half-court line.

Time and time again he attempts this stunt, time and time again he makes it. He goes right, then left, he shoots and rebounds with a steady flow of per-



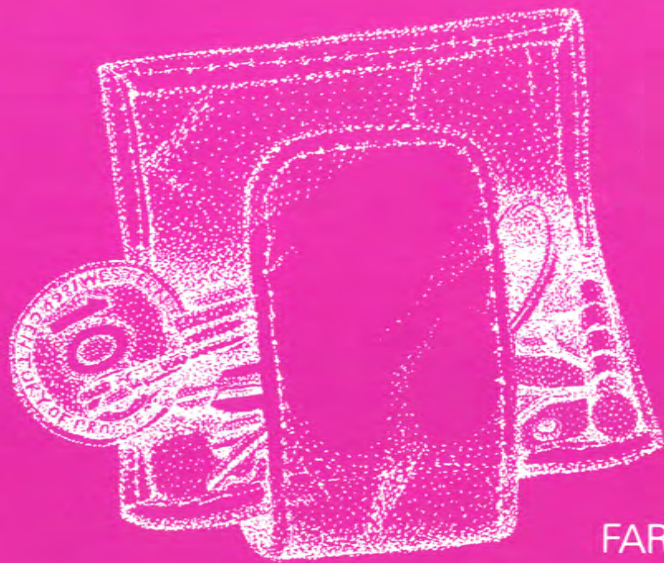
— Debbie Quick

fection. The sweat beads on his face and the drenched jersey sticks to his body. His wet hair is plastered against his forehead and drops of sweat fall into his eyes.

Only dusk forces this basketball player to end his afternoon sooner than he wants. The sun steals his last minutes of practice as it descends below the horizon. He gazes at the sun with extreme disappointment, slaps the ball with an open palm, and spits on the black-top.

The young athlete shoots for the last time today ———Swish. He retrieves the basketball and walks toward me. His eyes are red, his breathing quick and heavy, his walking slow. He resembles a wind-up doll that has finally run down.

He gets into the car but before he shuts the door, glances back at his battlefield. With a smile of satisfaction and a final wipe of sweat from his face, the “victor” plops into the car.



— Carolyn Grazinkas

## FAR AWAY

Marty Matin

*I curled up in my chair  
And began reading a good book.  
The language engulfed me.  
I let the words flow over me;  
They took me far away.  
I had become part of a war  
In a land I did not know.  
The setting was totally strange  
To me, but the scene was  
Familiar. Forbidden forests  
Set on a mountain top;  
Green valleys surrounded the trees;  
Rivers flowed into lakes.  
The air was golden; Clear blue sky  
Hauntingly suspended  
Over my head. Where had I gone?  
I breathed deep and thought long.  
I was in the land of Israel.  
My name was Moses. I'd  
Led my people out of bondage.*



— John D'asto

## THE PEDESTRIAN

Judi Jacobson

*Tar hot  
city streets  
provided a playground  
for barefoot children  
with  
humidity frizzled hair  
and torn jeans and t-shirts  
and scraped knees  
and tear-streaked faces,  
but the pedestrian didn't notice  
the playful laughter,  
the cruel  
mocking  
sing-song  
tunes*

*of little boys  
with baseball mitts  
teasing  
little girls  
skipping rope,  
and screeching tires  
at the sight of red  
lights  
and somewhere a man  
shouting,  
selling news-  
papers.  
But the pedestrian wasn't noticed  
amidst  
the shirts and ties  
and out-to-lunch  
flowered hats with  
clean white gloves  
or dirty ones,*

*Drunken  
Debate of life and death.  
With eyes Vin Rosé red  
Searching  
With stumbling lids and  
Stammering speech  
Searching  
For a point too muddled to be  
Clear.  
The other grape-eyes  
Find the point,  
And the pint.  
Until they're sloshed together  
And the point is  
The pint is  
Empty.  
And all agree  
That it is cruel and unusual  
Punishment.*

## CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

R. Delaney

*and uniforms decorated  
in brass and gold,  
and sloppy raincoats,  
and seeing-eye dogs.  
Sickly sweet perfumes  
and after-lunch belches,  
rotting garbage hidden in alleys,  
and passing drifts of sweat  
and stale liquor,  
filled the nostrils  
of the pedestrian  
forcing suppressed tears  
to flood  
his numbing toes,  
but no one noticed.*

— Ronald J. Osgood —



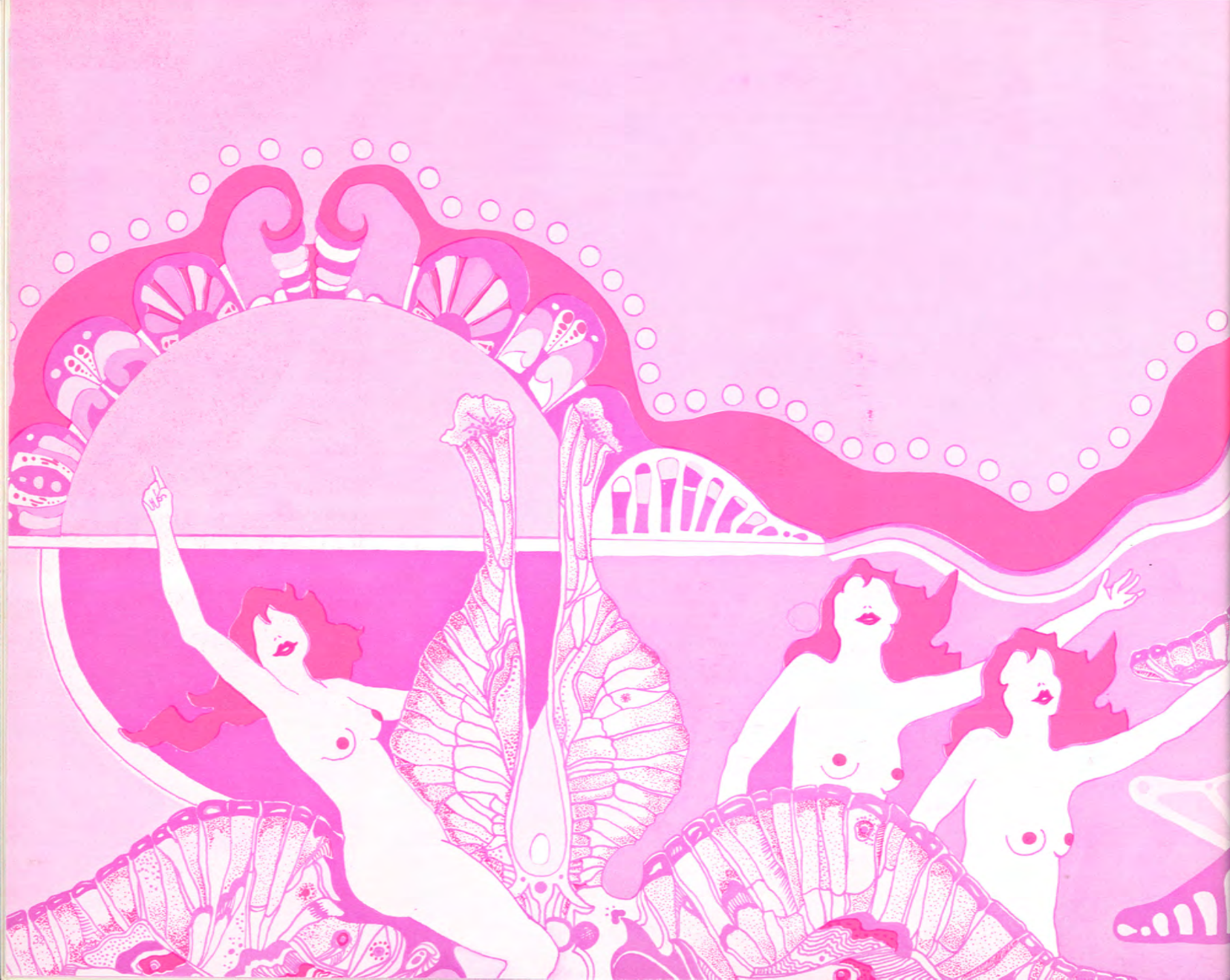
## “THE WEDDING”

Becky Blanchard

*Dark smoke, sickly, this evil creeping friend  
Drew shackling, waxen fingers round my head,  
Which pressed my sore, burdened mind to bend.  
Even my room atook this: for my bed,  
Too, heard the noises of voices mocking.  
And my fired eyes could only roll at  
Seeing Him haunching; dusty, cornerwise rocking  
As sat He crook'd of finger. My goal.  
And in this padded cell of twisted source,  
My tormented mind yearned a razor wrist death,  
To douse all away His sadistic force.  
Yet stalked He closer, with putrid breath.  
So He, that tyrant of the kingdom of Mind,  
Wedded me to hatch the insane: mankind.*







## POINT OF VIEW

There is in every man a need to be known  
a want to be free  
a need to be he

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