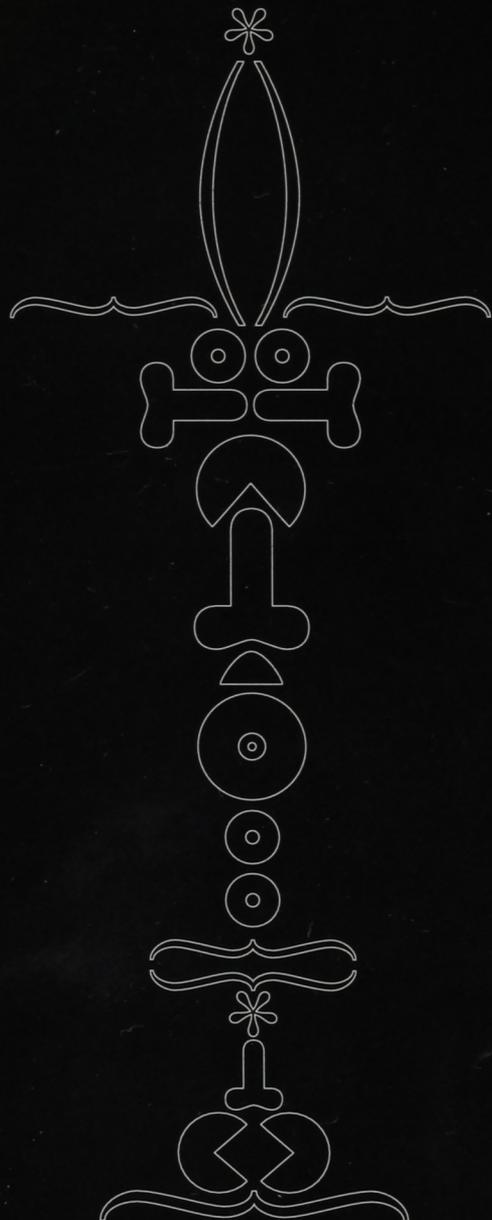


Global City Review

*Totem
and
Taboo*



SPRING 1996
NUMBER SEVEN

Global City Review

Totem and Taboo



SPRING 1996 · ISSUE NUMBER SEVEN

EDITOR

Linsey Abrams

SR EDITOR

E. M. Broner

MANAGING EDITOR

Rachel DeNys

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

*Susan Daitch, Marin Gazzaniga,
Randall Kenan, Michael Klein, Mary LaChapelle,
Susan Thames AND Eliot Weinberger*

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

*Angie Argabrite, Judy Bloomfield, Patricia Chao,
Edith Chevat, Jennifer Coke,
Amy Dana, Karen de Balbian Verster, Carolyn Ferrell,
Christina Gombar, Christine Liotta,
Leslie Morgenstein, Laurie Piette AND Leslie Sharpe*

INTERN

Elizabeth Winston

PUBLICITY DIRECTOR

Elizabeth England

PUBLISHER

Laurie E. Liss

GLOBAL CITY REVIEW
Totem and Taboo
SPRING 1996
NUMBER SEVEN

COPYRIGHT © 1996 BY GLOBAL CITY PRESS
ALL RIGHTS REVERT TO AUTHORS UPON PUBLICATION.

Global City Review is published twice yearly.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: \$12 FOR ONE YEAR, \$20 FOR TWO YEARS.

INTERNATIONAL: \$17 FOR ONE YEAR, \$30 FOR TWO YEARS.

INSTITUTIONS: \$15 FOR ONE YEAR, \$25 FOR TWO YEARS.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO GLOBAL CITY REVIEW

ALL CORRESPONDENCE SHOULD BE SENT TO:
GLOBAL CITY REVIEW
SIMON H. RIFKIND CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES
THE CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK
138TH AND CONVENT AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 10031
PLEASE INCLUDE A SASE WITH ALL MANUSCRIPTS.

GLOBAL CITY REVIEW IS DISTRIBUTED BY
CONSORTIUM BOOK SALES & DISTRIBUTION
1-800-283-3572

ISBN: 188-7369-023

GLOBAL CITY REVIEW
CONTINUES TO BE PUBLISHED WITH
THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF
THE SIMON H. RIFKIND CENTER FOR THE HUMANITIES
AT THE CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK.
WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO DEAN MARTIN TAMNY.

DESIGN BY CHARLES NIX
LAYOUT AND PRODUCTION BY BRIAN GREENSPAN

Contents

ESSAYS

- Rediscovering Deaf-mute Existence in Film*
by Ann Claremont Le Zotte 1
- Vampires, Conquerors and Other Monster Selves*
by Greg Blackburn 51

FICTION

- Bozo and Other Snapshots* by Susan Daitch 3
- The Retriever* by David Madden 15
- Vibrator* by Gene Hult 37
- Chicken* by Elizabeth England 85
- My Mother's Hands* by Jonis Agee 105

POEMS

- I'm Dealing with My Pain* by Denise Duhamel 33
- If God Really is the Ultimate Pornographer*
by Denise Duhamel 35
- Gravity* by Patrick Connolly 9
- The Shower* by Kimiko Hahn 49
- Starvation* by Linda Smukler 103
- After "The Vanishing"* by Richard Tayson 79
- The Chase* by Richard Tayson 81
- Scapegoat* by Sawnie Morris 109
- Grief Waits for Expression* by Sawnie Morris 113

UPCOMING ISSUES 115

GLOBAL CITY BACKLIST 116

CONTRIBUTORS 117

Global City Review's ISSUE #7, *Totem and Taboo*, SPRING 1996, takes as its themes culture and the individual, primitive being, primal languages, representation, the unspeakable social and psychological organization, personal taboos of all kinds, and assorted totems. Essays include one on deaf-mute existence as rediscovered in film images of the faces of two great actresses. Another entitled *Vampires, Conquerors and Other Monster Selves* traces 19th-century male projections in Frankenstein, the Vampyre, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and Dracula. Fiction writers range from the well-known Southern storyteller David Madden, author of over a dozen novels, to postmodernist Susan Daitch to the transcendent Jonis Agee, as well as new voices. Poets Denise Duhamel, Linda Smukler and Kimiko Hahn are matched again by newer voices in the surprises and intensity of this collection. Who were we? And who are we really? Both questions are implicit in the writing here.

LINSEY ABRAMS

Editor

Rediscovering Deaf-mute Existence in Film

by Ann Claremont Le Zotte

THERE IS A DEAF STORY WHICH TELLS OF A CLINICAL physician who supposedly traveled to Gallaudet University, in Washington D.C., to observe first-hand the importance of facial expression in the conveyance of Sign Language. It is said that Edward Gallaudet, the school's founder, demonstrated this principle by using only looks and gestures—enacting historical events, such as the Battle of Waterloo, for his students to guess. They knew them all. The doctor left incredulous, astounded, at Gallaudet's expressiveness.

Renée Falconetti has such a face. I was so obviously struck by this fact while recently rewatching Carl Theodor Dreyer's 1928 classic *The Passion of Joan of Arc*. Although she talks occasionally in the silent film, it is, I believe, the consummate Deaf-mute performance. It is high art too. From the first moment, when she is led into the interrogation chamber, the camera focuses, almost with discrimination, on each flicker of her face. Her short hair, cropped closer, leaves a mask below of terror, ecstasy, disillusion, verbally inexpressive love. And her words are few: thrown on a black screen. We understand them before, anyway. She also chooses to answer many questions by not giving an answer. In fact, the quick camera angles of a bloated Cauchon talking brusquely (also without sound) and her wordless reply, tempt one to interpret the film from a certain perspective as a strong expression of Deaf-mute autonomy in front of spoken rhetorical authority. It is *that* quietness.

The incomparable Liv Ullmann is another actress who can give a performance without relying on her obvious verbal gifts to pull her through. *Persona* shows her most triumphant example of this. And it is, many feel, among her greatest performances. In it, as the character Elisabeth Volger, a stage actress, who has chosen muteness as an active response to the world around her, Ms. Ullmann also wears a profound mask of expressive silence. There is no limit, in fact, to her acting here. These new sets of “boundaries” seem to open her to a different set of circumstances and reactions than we have seen from her before. As she stands in the corner of her hospital room watching Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Quang Duc immolate himself on the television, we can see all the horror of her exile. Likewise—when she pauses and giggles, soundless, on stage, or listens to the obscene story, or photographs the screen (us) directly. In fact, Alma, her attendant, is terrified by the presence of her willful muteness (a choice the Deaf also may make). We all feel the movement of her body across the landscape at every turn: she is not looking to speak, but to be understood. And stubbornly utter a protest (or not). There is a sparkle of genius here. I have found it. And other Deaf people besides.

As we look for our past, not only among the Deaf, but as artists, there is a common quietness. The gestures Gallaudet celebrated are translatable, and, in many ways, universal. “Listen, listen” a story usually begins. But by watching we will find one another. What is really the same, but has been too long buried. Here I have read it in two faces. A flicker of light. Black, white; white, black. Frozen celluloid expression. One could rightly say Sign.

Bozo and Other Snapshots

by Susan Daitch

FOR AUDREY IT WAS LIKE THE MOVIE WITH THE GIANT mother in the sky speaking to her son from beside billowing clouds so that everyone could hear, except the nightmare giant, in this case, was not her mother, not anyone in particular really. For days afterwards Audrey felt exposed. If near strangers could feel no compunction about publicizing something as ordinary as eating a sandwich and making it into something obscene, then it was better, she felt, to stay in one's apartment at all times.

They were in a restaurant which she hadn't ever been in before. The waiters were all old men in gold-colored jackets, and they spoke to her mother aggressively as if she were a little girl. She didn't like the sticky booths and felt ashamed of the way the waiters bullied her mother. It was only a gesture, an expression of impatience, but Audrey read offense in their abruptness. Her grandmother was visiting, her grandmother who always came on bus trips with a phalanx of friends. If she wanted to tell her grandmother how she felt, the circle of friends were kept close around, smiling, keeping any sort of private emotion or confession stillborn. There were seven or eight of them sitting at a table when Audrey and her mother joined them.

"What is she eating?" one of the friends asked.

She whispered to her mother, "What am I, two years old? The people in the next room can probably hear her." They asked her general, ordinary, yet prying questions: would she like to leave the city to go away to school? Would she be learning to drive soon? She had her grandfather's eyes, did she know that? Audrey looked at her plate. Their voices bounced off the glass case displaying plates of smoked fish and trays of jello. They wanted to know if her mother remembered their various sons and daughters. Later at home her mother confessed that she barely did, and

since they spoke in past tense she wondered if one son in particular was dead.

“Audrey is studying the human reproductive system in school.”

Audrey felt her mother was serving her to the devil in small slices, but the women didn't seem to actually listen to her answers. She scratched her head nonchalantly as if all she ever did all day was sit around discussing wet passages everyone around the table had and the friendly acids most of them didn't.

They asked if she had nothing better to do than cut holes in her blue jeans. Audrey racked her brain for topics, safe subjects which would soothe them and allow her a kind of theoretical escape, but there were no happy groups of words or conciliatory phrases to be found. She couldn't leave the table until her mother was ready to say good-bye. Looking around at the plates and glasses, at her grandmother at a far end; she listened to assertive, declarative sentences. Abrasiveness turned good intentions into contention no matter what. She tried to participate in spite of bad odds. She tried. First she attempted to deflect the conversation from herself by asking what their own grandchildren did. It had seemed a harmless question to her. She thought they would be eager to brag or even to complain about the invisible generation who never visited, but at the sound of her question, her grandmother's knuckles seem to whiten around a knife. One woman answered that she hadn't needed the tax deduction and had no grandchildren. She took a large bite from a chopped-liver sandwich.

A third woman with unnaturally russet hair, who smelled of what Audrey interpreted as tangerines, told her that her daughter was a doctor at Mount Auburn Hospital, in another city whose name Audrey didn't hear. She showed Audrey her daughter's picture, removing it from an old chestnut-colored wallet. The woman in the photograph looked friendly. She had her arm around a child in a Bozo mask. Putting the picture back in her wallet, she asked Audrey if she would like to be a doctor. Audrey didn't think so, but she wanted the woman to like her, to think

she was interesting or at least empathize with her in some way. Audrey thought of a related subject. She had seen something very unusual on their way to the restaurant. Someone had left a large box on their window sill which had been labeled: *Human Kidney. This side up.* Actually, Audrey said, it looked like the box was propping up the window, keeping it open. It had been an official-looking box, and the apartment building was formidable with two uniformed doormen. The wallet snapped shut and the woman buried herself in her potato salad.

Audrey wanted to tell her mother that after they left the restaurant, the women would sit on their bus and feel sorry for her because she wasn't married, but she didn't know how her mother would feel about something she probably knew and never discussed. No, her mother would contradict her, they'll be distressed about the holes you cut in your clothing and tell themselves you never comb your hair.

"Why did you tell them I was studying the human reproductive system?"

"Because you are."

"Why didn't you just say sex class?"

"I didn't want to open a can of worms."

"They don't care."

"You're right. They probably don't."

"You never give me a straight answer. It's as if straight answers don't exist. You drive me nuts. You say *unfortunately* when you mean *it stinks* or *it sucks*, for example."

"It's just another way of saying essentially the same thing."

Later when they got home her mother telephoned someone she had grown up with who still lived in the same neighborhood, and who might know what had happened to the son spoken of in the past tense. Audrey was doing her homework on the kitchen table and heard her on the telephone. She guessed from her mother's responses, the son had never married and had died recently. Audrey sat on the kitchen table with her feet on a chair, and felt that even if she went to China, the face of the woman who had

asked her what she was eating would appear from out of nowhere and demand to know what she was putting in her mouth. There was no escape. Eating seemed a profane and repulsive activity when broadcast so everyone could get in on the process. She would never do it again. She would give it up unless there was absolutely no one else around.

"I'll be right back. I'm just going to the corner for a coffee to go." Coffee to go was her mother's obsession. She claimed it helped her concentrate. Audrey suspected her mother only used this as an excuse to be alone for a few minutes.

Moving her feet from a chair to the top of the table, she opened her biology book, staring at a diagram of male and female sex organs without reading any of the words. The diagrams were drawn in shades of gray and blue. The human figures were bluish shadows surrounding their reproductive organs, highlighted and enlarged. The woman's hair was in a blue flip, to Audrey an annoying anachronism. She wondered if the information in the rest of the book, particularly in this chapter, was just as out-of-date. She listened for sounds of her mother's footsteps; if she stood near the front window of their apartment she might hear her explain to the woman who sat on a milk crate enthroned on the stoop, explaining to her for the millionth time what they'd had for dinner, that Audrey was home, not down the street although the woman was always sure she had seen Audrey run off. (Sometimes in fact she had.) It was quiet. She heard nothing. The full-page sex figures stared back at her without giving in, as long as the book remained open. Audrey poked their organs with an index finger. The secrets of a man and a woman seemed to have nothing to do with these two. "That's for me to know and you to find out," she said as she thought she heard what might have been her mother's steps pause outside the door. The steps moved past, and Audrey flicked on the television without moving from her chair.

"Convex glass, ten inches thick," Dr. No said, indicating the windows installed in his headquarters miles below the surface of the Caribbean.

“So the minnows look like sharks,” James Bond answered.

“That,” Dr. No replied, “depends on which side of the glass you’re on.”

Audrey sat cross-legged on her chair, trying to become engrossed in the spy movie, but the dinner wasn’t entirely forgotten. A stranger’s remarks could make you feel as if someone had taken a crowbar to you, and painlessly, with no blood shed, split you in half, like the figures in her textbook, exposing everything about you to public scrutiny. The incident was trivial from one side of the glass, predatory from the other. She’s forgotten all about you, her mother would say, you’re too easily embarrassed. If a stranger could intrude so effortlessly, upsetting the balance between idle conversation and what is not discussed, than all kinds of secrets could be exposed in an instant. Attended by sweet and motherly “hostesses” who were probably deadly, James Bond fell into a deep sleep. No one, 007 seemed to be saying, can be trusted; few people are what they appear, whether waiters, doctors handing out Bozo masks, anatomical drawings, or the hand that feeds you.

When her mother returned she looked upset, but Audrey couldn’t ask her, couldn’t intrude. Death comes on rubber-soled shoes, shouted about at a table of strangers, hinted at, but never really looked in the face. The shouting reduces death to a banality like the desire for a clean water glass and an unfinished dinner put in a bag. The strangers in their loud way were trying to reassure themselves that it happens to other people, other people make those kinds of mistakes, not they.

“What’s wrong?”

Audrey zapped James Bond into silence, followed her mother into the kitchen, and then into her room, but her question went unanswered. Her mother curled up in bed, then picked up a book without looking at Audrey. The door between what was thought and what was said remained shut and, for the duration of night, locked tight.

Gravity

by Patrick Connolly

"For it was part of her magic that she could make things look like what they weren't..."

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe by C. S. Lewis

I'd never flown before
that summer my older brother
would have his accident.
\$38 a piece for the
two of us and another boy
to fly to New Jersey,
and the clear sky looked harder
than I expected,
a massive laboring
of sculpted blue ice.
I watched closely
the lesson on how to float
if we dropped into the ocean
or how to breathe
if there was no air,
thinking I would panic
if anything serious happened.

At the airport, I hoped our hosts—
old friends of our parents
and their three horny sons—
couldn't see my secret dread.
The two-week trip was really
the other boys' desire.

No one wanted me to feel bad
and I was afraid of wanting to be alone.
On the way to their house
the three boys laughed,
“We were going to hang a sign
that said: “WELCOME MEN—
AND PATRICK.”

Before they moved out-of-state,
these were the boys who
showed us how to maim kisses;
fierce hands gripped between
gnawing mouths,
skinny colts snorting and blind
with hunger.
Jason, the youngest of us,
they stripped to the waist
and roared at his cock
gleaming like a poison dart.
We'd already seen their father
twist the bodies of six naked women,
wide-eyed and plastered
on a Rubik's cube.
Each body broken into the others,
an etherized flesh puzzle
for bleary nights buzzing with
television and ice cubes.
(Our father would ease into another beer.
Mom's face would erase itself
into a pink-cheeked emblem of shame.)

It shouldn't have shocked me,
the first days in the New Jersey suburb

GLOBAL CITY REVIEW

that was a circular maze
of Shakespearean street names,
the education we got in porn mags,
titty movies and MTV.
Richard, the oldest, wanted us to
watch naked,
to see who got hard first.
The loser would have to jack off
in front of everyone until he came.
Ean, the five-year-old across the street,
could match the artist of the title
of absolutely any music video:
Modern Love, Fascination, Come Dancing, Thriller.
I didn't know exactly what "come" meant
and no one expected me to ravish Jason,
the one with the cock like a pen-knife,
on the big bed in the guest room.
His eyes spun deliriously as
his legs flailed and out tongues
seared my hand. Rod Stewart,
they insisted, had to have
his stomach pumped in an emergency room
because he swallowed the come
of every musician in his band.

Then, while racing bicycles
around King Lear Circle,
my brother braked to a careful stop.
As if by a hint of wind
he and the bicycle fell over flat,
like a book or a tree.
We thought it was nothing,
but they peeled him up like plastic wrap,

CONNOLLY · GRAVITY

blood streaming his face.
The five-year-old laughed
so hard it felt like entering a cartoon.
The X-rays were fine at the
emergency room.
When we came back to the house,
my brother slung half-conscious
over their father's shoulder,
Richard stood with his pants down
in front of the TV.
And hating him, I realized
the windowed violence
of the ash-eyed voyeur.
Then my brother slept
and slept for two days straight.
We watched him.
Now and then he moaned
of a headache.
Their mother found him falling
down the stairs in the night.
He told her he needed to iron the laundry.

After the months of hospitals,
when the blood clot
the size of a flat orange
between his skull and his brain
hardened;
but before we really became afraid
of him, how at any moment
he might ignite into a fury,
fly at us, and spiral
smoking down to death;
before my father found him

GLOBAL CITY REVIEW

fallen in his own urine
steaming with whiskey
in a moonlit field somewhere,
and slung him unconscious
and vomiting over his shoulder;
before rehab;
I prayed to the Virgin Mary
for an hour before sleep,
that our hands wouldn't
leap the chasm between our single beds
to each other's crotches.
Still, poised breathless
over his body one night,
a sea mist mirrored
in his troubled depths,
I almost forgot who I was
and he flung me off
like an encroaching nightmare.

That year of the accident
my brain was saturated
with the waxen image of Michael Jackson,
lithe and gorgeous
in a natty white suit,
coily curled with a tiger. In the fall,
I started clipping celebrity photos,
anyone with that power to be seen,
and kept them piled in folders
at the bottom of my closet.
Was that the season,
the summer before seventh grade,
I started teaching myself
not to speak, ever?

To conjure my body into sexless driftwood,
like the paper white Queen of Narnia,
whose bones craved winter in the book
that mesmerized my childhood?

After the Lion's breath
fired the meadows back
into exuberant bloom,
she dwindled to a stone,
heather-chested centaurs
thundering over her perfect hiding.

This is what I think happened:
one day my brother
splintered on the asphalt
like a kite that never hit the sky.
Childhood ended
and I never saw him again.
Fear became a restricted way of breathing,
sucker punch to the diaphragm,
a rhythmic punishing of need.

Later,
we mostly argued
and sometimes he called me faggot
as a way of silencing me totally.
Once, he did this
and I, clinging like a tragic drape
over his torso,
hammered his skull with my fist:
"Rockhead Rockhead Rockhead."
Then the forgetting began again.

The Retriever

by David Madden

STIRRING THE BROTH, HE LOOKED UP. A SILVER CAR WAS suddenly out there in the street, coming slowly, quietly to a stop under the wooden trestle. A Mercedes Benz. It was as if the Garden District had followed him over to Spanish Town Bottoms. The driver's door opened. A hand with polished nails set a bowl by the weedy edge of the street. She's brought me the rest of the dog food. When he saw a Golden Retriever pour out the door onto the ragged pavement, he said aloud, "And the damned dog with it."

The Golden Retriever turned in one fluid movement and tried to leap back into the car but the door shut too quickly, and quietly the car glided off between the rows of ramshackle shotgun houses through the mist that was still rolling off the river into the bottom.

"You son of a bitch!"

The dog, big but still only a pup, loped jauntily after the car, as if not sure whether to take this as a game or not.

Watching the Golden Retriever chase after the silver Mercedes, he left his fire, parted the tall ironweed, and reached for the brimming dog dish. That dog'll be sitting on the front steps when she drives up, he sneered. Dogs don't know any better.

Back under the trestle at the fire, he poured the broth from the heated tin can over the cold chunks of beef in the dish and sunk his white plastic spoon into it.

Before six the next morning, he was in another part of the Garden District where trash pickup was Wednesday, going from one neat green recycling bin to another, like sauntering down a mile-long supermarket shelf. Sniffing each empty dog food can, he tried to

recognize the excellent brand the Mercedes lady had deposited under his trestle. No prices to go by, only computer codes. But in the bins, unmixed with garbage, he could scavenge quickly. The plastic Maison Blanche shopping bag he had filled with empty dog food cans yesterday morning was empty this morning when he left the Garden District and crossed Government into the black section. Yesterday, he had rinsed out each empty can until he had a beef broth. Then the old lady in the Mercedes had delivered the top of the line brand and spoiled him. *Old* lady? He hadn't seen her face. He was remembering the interview on TV several years back with the old lady who was caught stealing cat food and who cheerily declared, "I fed it to my cat for twenty years because it has all the nutrients any animal or human needs and now my cat is dead and I can't afford these high prices!" Her voice had made him sad, sitting in the rec room in the midst of his family, but now he often repeated aloud what she had said because it was so true it almost made him laugh.

Seeing the white-haired, red-faced man coming toward him, he crossed over to the National Cemetery side. He felt the aversion in his very flesh, just as he had felt it when he used to see the man walking as he drove past in every possible part of this area which he himself now walked—or saw him mowing someone's lawn or raking leaves. He was wearing the same business suit he wore winter and summer, immaculate. Probably a miser who emerged every morning from a mansion passed on to him from the Civil War—or stepped out of an abandoned car in Beauregard Town. Always uttering a shrieking, one-note whistle. That nose stuck in the air as if he had everybody fooled. Some time before dark, he knew he'd see red-face again, always coming toward him, never walking away from him.

He followed his daily track. Like a rat. Like a roach. Routine took less effort than venturing outside his habit-determined

domain. What would he find beyond the boundaries that he had not routinely found inside? Merely *looking* beyond the boundaries set up an agitation in his blood until he could taste, like metal, the edge of violence.

The firemen sat on their station porch like housewives taking a breather from Glo-coating the kitchen floor. Even on this familiar street, the sight brought the taste to his mouth. Like metal because of the chair he had thrown across the basketball court at the referee who'd called a game—deciding foul. Men like those firemen would have come to watch the game, watch their kids play, watch skills he had trained them to employ. One such skill—how to repress the impulse to beat the hell out of your opponent when he commits a foul—had failed him that night. The referee showed up in court with ten stitches in his forehead.

Walking among a crew of men installing an elaborate pattern of Christmas lights over the grounds of the state Capitol, he heard a clicking noise on the sidewalk behind him. What he saw when he turned was a Golden Retriever in name only. Its coat was matted with something that—stank like holy hell! He quickened his pace.

The acres of petrochemical plants upriver blessed Baton Rouge each day like this one with a glorious sunset of burnt orange streaked with baby blue. Every dodging device he could imagine had failed. The stink that had followed him the rest of the day was terrible enough, but seeing how miserable the dog felt had got to him. "Here's *my* contribution," he said to Grandfather Mississippi, rinsing the goddamned Golden Retriever for the seventh time at the foot of the levee where the *USS Kidd* at permanent anchor cast its shadow.

He expected the dog to keep following him, just as it did, because he had rid its coat of whatever cruel concoction some

yard-grooming taxpayer had probably doused it with, in mid-crap, to send it home to its master with a reeking message to keep it penned up in its own yard. “But that’s it, dog. I have no vices. I don’t steal. I don’t smoke. I don’t drink. And I don’t talk to dogs. I *do* eat.”

So he got back on track, made a stop behind the City Club, hoping for steak instead of the limp quiche he’d had to settle for the last time. Turning from scavenging, he saw it sitting, as if expecting to be waited on. Clean, and almost dry now. He wondered if it could be the same Golden Retriever the silver Mercedes dumped. Another goddamned coincidence. He saw them everywhere he went. He was getting sick of coincidences.

He flapped the yellow plaid overcoat and yelled, “Git!” It didn’t work this time either.

Sitting on one of the benches the city had set out along the median of North Boulevard, under the tiny white Christmas lights strung through the newly planted trees, he nibbled the steak bone he’d found behind the City Club. The landscape designer had called for a red-brick walk that snaked rather than shot straight down the median, making him think of Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* that his parents had watched with him on TV and he had watched with his own children religiously each year. Such sudden memories agitated that metal taste in his mouth.

He felt the urge to yell “Go to hell!” into the night to everybody—“You, too!” he said, even-temperedly to the dog—but after the first few weeks on the street, he’d managed to control that kind of spontaneous outburst.

“If I give you this bone, that means I own you, and I do not want to own anything. See this coat? I don’t *own* this overcoat. The man who owned it bought it years and years before I was born, and when he died, his relatives cleaned out his attic somewhere over in the Garden District probably and let the St. Vin-

cent de Paul people cart it off, along with everything else. And I found it under the trestle. Some man—or woman—left it in a hurry maybe. Or got tired of it. Or found or stole one that fit better. You get it? I'm wearing it, that's true, but I refuse to own it. Same with these high-tops and this motorcycle helmet. As far as I am concerned, if anybody owns it, the original owners still own it. I don't want to own anything." He handed the bone to the whimpering dog.

"I owned a dog once. Owned a long list of things, and now I'm glad *she* owns them—her and the kids. I owned a house, a car, even saw a sailboat in my future. Owned people too. A son, a daughter, a wife. They were mine. Not anymore. My students, my team. Now another coach owns them. And the position itself, I worked hard until I owned that. This bench, these lights—the City owns them. I wouldn't rest any easier, while I gnaw on a bone, if I owned this bench, those lights. I don't even own that bone I gave you, like an idiot. And I don't talk to dogs. Git!"

He got up to start out walking to the trestle to crawl inside the big box somebody's Giant Screen TV came packed in while there was still enough twilight to see people by. He saw too clearly that the dog was following him, the bone in its mouth.

He turned on it, cursed it, waved his arms, flapped the wings of the overcoat.

If rich people once owned it, maybe it was trained. "Sit! Sit! Sit!" Still a pup, no discipline.

He decided to teach it to sit, to *stay* on command. Then he would go off and leave it when it was unsuspecting someday.

He was on Spanish Town Road, about to go down into the Bot-toms, when a car pulled up alongside and he knew it was a cop car even before he glanced over.

Even before the window got all the way down, the cop was motioning him over with his finger. He doesn't know how easy it

would be for me to break his finger, turn it to point the other way.

“Is that your dog?”

“I don’t own a dog.”

“Then what are you doing with it?”

“You mean what’s it doing with me, don’t you?”

He saw the cop size him up. The height that helped make him the high school basketball star that got him the scholarship to LSU and then the coaching position at Live Oak High now served to get him out of dangerous situations every day.

“You didn’t steal it by any chance?”

“I don’t steal. You want to own a dog? Take it.”

“No, you keep it.”

The window went up and the cruiser took off, red light flashing, a gesture that made him swallow the faint taste of metal.

Throwing trash toward the dog just to scare it off, only made himself tired. The dog’s tail brushing across his face woke him. It was turning around and around to line up its bones just right, then it collapsed, tight up against him. “Git!” On all fours, he shouldered and pushed the dog out of his box. “Git!”

It howled all night like any dog forced out of the house into the night.

The dog followed him, more closely every day, as he walked over the Capitol grounds among the people, mostly parents with kids, who thronged to view the most spectacular display of Christmas lights ever seen on earth, he supposed. He had read in a throw-away *Morning Advocate* that they burned all night long.

As the crowd thinned out to the point where the state trooper cars started leaving, the aura of the lights moved him to crawl up under a live oak whose light-studded limbs swept the ground. He relished the irony that thousands over the past few weeks had

come to view the lights, even a week after Christmas was over, as something grand and special, a once-in-a-lifetime spectacle, while he could sleep among these animals and toy creatures traced out in colored lights higher than a house with as much a sense of solitary enjoyment as if he owned them. A flamboyant New Orleans businessman had lent them to the state. But was *he* sleeping in the midst of them, *under* them tonight? Well, while he had always known in the back of his mind that everything was relative, never before had he slept in that knowledge.

But the cold open air and his uneasiness over breaking his habit of sleeping in the TV crate under the trestle made his sleep fitful for a while. When he woke and felt the dog snuggled up to him, he realized that the dog and the lights had been warmth enough to get him through the night.

“Sit!” The dog sat. “Stay!” The dog stayed.

He turned the corner and waited and was glad when the dog did not follow. He’d succeeded in training it to “stay” so he could elude it.

The white-haired, red-faced man in the business suit was coming toward him. Irritated almost to the point of anger, he did not cross the street to avoid him. He stared into his eyes. The old man emitted his one-note whistle but the eyes did not recognize his existence. Stifling the impulse to give him the commands “Sit! Stay!” he walked on past red-face and, feeling the flush of anger on his skin, kept on going, around the next corner and the next and the fourth, and, on an impulse he failed to control, called “Come!”

Seeing the dog running toward him, he was sorry to realize that the sight made him feel glad. “Heel!” And he felt nauseous—knowing he couldn’t teach the dog to unlearn commands that made him seem to own it.

But that night, sitting, the dog’s chin resting on his leg, on a

bench on Riverside Mall uptown, totally deserted, while watching a television in a store window, the sound off, report violence in the Middle East, he realized that what he had read years ago about animals having a calming effect on solitary people was true. In the past few days, fewer and fewer things threatened to stir anger in him. "But I don't own you," he said to the dog, "believe me. I don't own *anything*..."

After his anger launched that metal chair at the referee and he was convicted of assault and battery and the school system fired him and he lost, one by one, most of the things he owned, his wife expressed her desire to own all by herself what was left, including their kids, while also legally declaring that she no longer desired to own him.

When he left the halfway house, owning nothing, not even the clothes on his back, and hit the public streets, his predicament made him see the connection between anger and ownership. Being made to feel that you *must* own things in this world, fight to get them, strain to maintain them in working order, and fight to keep them, made him angry all the time. The ownership of things gets confused with the ownership of people and you feel somehow a kind of valuelessness. To ward off that sense of worthlessness and to avoid anger, he told himself, don't own *anything*. Having seen that clearly, that first day out walking the public streets, he had felt anger less and less often and had been moved to violence not once.

It was the huge yellow house on Park Boulevard's turn to lend him the morning paper. In appreciation, he wiped the windshield of the Mazda parked at the curb, but then he saw the dog pissing on the rear tire.

On the front of the Metro section was a photograph of a man and his dog. The man was tall, his back to the camera, following a dog

that had stopped and turned to look at him, a Golden Retriever, and up ahead a wooden railroad trestle crossed where the street dipped. Anger rising in him blurred his vision as he read the caption. "A homeless man walks along Spanish Town Road at dusk, his faithful companion making his life just a little easier."

Shot without his knowledge, the photograph made him want to roll the paper the way he did when he was a paperboy and throw it through the big beveled glass window. He picked up a loose brick and kept hefting it all the way across Government Street and into the black district.

He stayed angry for two days, hoping nothing, like the sight of the red-faced man coming too close, would trigger him.

When he opened his eyes, he couldn't see straight and his head throbbed with a pain like the time the landing gear of a chopper grazed him in Vietnam. The inside walls of the cardboard TV crate were splattered in full sunlight with blood. He tried to raise his head but couldn't. He tried to call the dog, but only whimpered. When he finally crawled out of the box onto the ground where the ashes of last night's fire were cold, he saw just barely well enough to know that the dog was nowhere around. When he could finally call out, the dog did not come.

He staggered around in the noon sun but collapsed in the road and lay there within sight of the trestle. When a train passed over, the noise hurt.

"Have you seen The Golden Retriever around here anywhere?" he asked the red-faced man.

"I have rights," the old man said, and let out that high-pitched whistle of his and stuck up his nose. "I have rights. I don't have to answer your questions. I have *my* rights, too."

As red-face passed on by him, he grabbed his coat sleeve and

spun him around three times until the old man's shoulder struck a telephone pole.

"If you took it, I'll beat your brains out!"

"You people think you own the world," Red-face said, apparently not even stunned by the impact with the telephone pole, "just because I rake your leaves for you!"

"You aren't senile, you know what I'm talking about, you've seen The Golden Retriever walking with me, and you better tell me if you've seen it! Have *you* got it? Did you sell it to one of your rich customers?"

"If you don't turn me loose," said Red-face, raising one finger to show he meant business, "I will never, never speak to you again."

He turned loose the old man and let him walk on toward the bakery. Again? This is the *first* time, you goddamn... "You almost make me laugh!" he yelled after the old man.

Along his daily track, he looked for The Golden Retriever and asked, have you seen her? of every person he passed on the street or saw on the porches or in the yards or waiting at traffic lights, whether they rolled down their windows or not. He repeated the question in what seemed in his head-hurting delirium to be one unbroken stream. The whole day was the question, only the question, from street to street, until he was wandering late at night in the Garden District along streets that were off his beaten track, seeing no people now, calling, "Ky-le! Ky-le! Kyle...!"

A few lights went on in the fine houses on Terrace and on Drehr and, as if on signal, a cruiser was suddenly at his side.

"You! Shut the hell up! What's your name?"

"Kyle."

"Kyle what?"

"Kyle Watt."

"Don't mock me, asshole. What's that you keep screaming?"

"Have you seen The Golden Retriever?"

"No. Is that your dog you're calling?"

"I don't own a dog."

"Yeah, sure. What's its name?"

"Kyle, I call it Kyle."

"I thought that was what you said *your* name was? You mocking me?"

He didn't want to tell the cop Kyle was his middle name, after his uncle, but that his mother never let him use it because she hated her own brother, so that he'd given it to The Golden Retriever. "Have you seen him?"

"No, and I don't want to see you in the Garden District after tonight. You hear me?"

Seeing that gray metal chair slice through the air across the basketball court toward the referee's head, he turned, without replying, and walked toward Broussard, bordering the Garden District, and then cut back up Park Boulevard toward Government and the black district, hoping Kyle had wandered back up that way. He couldn't hold it back long. He wailed, "Ky-le! Ky-le! Kyle...!" all the way to the trestle and collapsed exhausted inside the blood-stained box.

"I ain't looking for no goddamn golden nothing!"

"Retriever, it's The Golden Retriever," he said, as quietly as he could, looking through the ripped screen door into the front room of the only shotgun house on the street that wasn't nailed up or burnt down, at a room full of men sitting on a sagged-out couch or around the walls, several making noises behind the door.

"The Golden Retriever? Ain't they more than one in this world?"

“Only one.”

“Hey, man, ain’t you the one that stays in the box under the trestle?”

“I’ll ask you one more time, have any of you people seen the Golden Retriever?”

“‘You *people*?’ You saying ‘You *people*’? Any of you black *people* seen Whitey’s *The Golden Retriever*?”

“No, but I seen *The Golden Beaver*,” came a voice from behind the flung-back front door.

They all took it up, yeah, we seen *The Golden Beaver*, everywhere we go, and pink elephants and purple tigers, and the screen door came flying into the living room, skidding to a stop at the feet of the men on the couch.

Not all of them were even able to rise to their feet to come at the door where he stood long enough to punch in the face of the first one to reach him. To keep from breaking bones left and right, he leapt off the slanting porch and ran, putting on some of the speed that won him trophies at track meets in the other life. Once he was out of that neighborhood, across Government on Camelia Street in the Garden District, he let go and laughed till his head started hurting again.

Now, somehow, seeing the red-faced man mowing the new spring grass and seeing other characters, homeless and not, with all of whom he implausibly crossed paths almost every day, kept him less agitated, less ready to cut loose at the slightest provocation.

He’d stayed out of jail so far, and he *must* stay out of jail. Too much time would pass before he got out and he might never find Kyle. If he didn’t find Kyle soon, he might do something that would put him in prison beyond Kyle’s life-span. He’d always feared prison, and felt proud of his ability, except that night at the tournament within one point of victory, to control a temper

that his mother used to assure him “will land you in the electric chair.” She’d exaggerated just to make a point, but she didn’t know, even when he was a kid, how little it took to trigger him and that his keen awareness, almost every day of his life, of how little it took was always a caution and a torment.

So he tried the politeness his mother and grandmother had trained him to show, using a tone that sometimes seemed to put his own family on edge. “I would be very grateful if you would tell me whether you’ve seen The Golden Retriever?” Calling Kyle by that name with strangers somehow made him safe and alive, just around the next corner, maybe.

When politeness produced no lead on Kyle’s whereabouts, the urge to violence took on a sharper edge.

“I ain’t seed no gold dog,” said a little black boy on a new bicycle during school hours, “but I seed a man in a gold-colored van chase a dog and throw him inside and drive off.”

“I would be very grateful if you would tell me where you saw this van?”

“Over on Oleander. My daddy pointed him out to me one time and said for me to watch out for him around our dog because he steals dogs and sells them to doctors that cut ‘em up and shit.”

He ran all over the Garden District, looking, and calling, “Kyle!” but had to lie in the crate under the trestle all night long, alone, wracked with nightmares of bloody mayhem.

The gold van parked beside the mail truck at the Seven-Eleven on Government was empty of dogs, and of driver until he came out sucking on a multi-colored straw, a Mardi Gras feather in his bill-cap. He knew somehow this was the man, just by the way he walked, sucking on that straw like a winner.

“Where’s The Golden Retriever, Dead Man?”

Stopped in his tracks, strangling on Pepsi that had gone down

the wrong hole, Dead Man turned on his heel in the gritty parking lot and ran into the black neighborhood.

Taking off the plaid overcoat as he ran, he got close enough to throw it like a tent over Dead Man, who tried to fight it off as he ran into a wall of bone and flesh—two young black men who had been walking toward him. In their iron embrace, Dead Man squirmed.

Dead Man drove with one hand because the middle finger on the other was pressed back in pain just up to the threshold of consciousness.

The makeshift, wire-mesh kennel exploded with dogs moiling and barking but the golden retriever among them was not Kyle.

“Turn ‘em all loose, Dead Man.”

“Just don’t kill me.”

After the dogs were all out and running, he forced Dead Man to drive him back into Baton Rouge to the river. “Up onto the levee, Dead Man.”

Dead Man took commands well.

“Now, aim it.”

“My truck?”

“You don’t own this truck, I don’t own this truck, the city don’t own this truck — it’s just a truck that will do better stuck in the Mississippi River than driving up to an animal experiment building full of dogs.”

He left Dead Man standing on the levee, looking down the slope into the Mississippi River at flood stage higher than it had been since 1927.

Roaming the streets, on and off his daily track, he craved the calming stride and faint panting of The Golden Retriever, dreaded the moment that would surely come when the mere look on the face of any one of these people would incite violence again.

Venturing into a classy neighborhood that was strange to him, he started to resent The Golden Retriever for coming into and disrupting his well-regulated life. A tough life, but so was his former life, for a man of his temperament, who, he had always been willing to admit, brought all his troubles on himself.

Up ahead, he saw what he now knew he must see if he was to survive—the silver Mercedes, parked in a circular drive. *The?* That's it! "I know that is the one!"

Despite the bruise under her right eye, he saw that the woman, about his own age, who answered the bell was attractive. Her shoulders cringed like a person whose face hurt.

"Who is it, honey?" asked a male voice, somewhere at the end of the hall.

"Nobody. Just a man who wants to work for food," she called back. "That *is* it, isn't it?"

"Tell him, *no*," the male voice called.

He started to ask to speak to the old lady, but looking at the the long polished fingers holding the door open, he knew they were the ones that had forced the dog out of the car.

"Is The Golden Retriever here?"

"There's no Golden Retriever *here?*" She called back into the house. "Honey, will you talk to this man, please?"

The man was suddenly beside her in the wide doorway, as if slotted in.

"*No*, whatever it is, buddy. We're trying to enjoy a Saturday morning together."

"Did The Golden Retriever come back?" As the anger pumped through his veins, he felt confident he could control it. "Or did you," he looked straight into the man's eyes, "hire somebody to bash my brains in to get your dog back after your wife dumped him on Spanish Town Road?"

"My wife tells me he just showed up again at the front door—

if that's any of your goddamn business, buddyboy! Brenda, get back inside," as if brushing a fly aside even before it can start landing in your hair.

"You think you own him, don't you?"

"You see what your father's goddamn dog—?" he said to his wife. "Vanish, buddyboy, or I'm calling the police."

"To report that—"

"Off my porch!"

"To report that bruise under your wife's eye?"

The barking of The Golden Retriever came from somewhere outside, behind the house.

Even as the husband threw a punch at him, it was obvious he wasn't used to going after another man and, missing, lunging off balance out onto the porch and down the steps where he sprawled out on the walkway like the morning paper that hits and splashes open.

Picking the husband up and dancing him up the steps and through the front door and down the hall to the glassed-in breakfast porch at the back, he kept saying to him and to himself at the same time, "Don't get your blood in an uproar, don't get your blood in an uproar now, just, just, just... Okay?"

"Yeah, yeah, I'm okay," the husband kept saying, "I just need to..."

"Why don't you just sit down, just the way you were when the doorbell rang, and let Brenda tell me what happened?"

Brenda told him that soon after her father died her father's Golden Retriever gave birth and she took one of the puppies to remember him by and that her husband screamed bloody murder when she walked into the house with it, and every day she promised to take it back, but despite a bruised face every few days, she kept putting it off, until one day she had to do it, but she knew her mother had had to have the other pups put to sleep

and she couldn't bring herself to let that happen, so she thought, she said, of all the poor little black kids who would love to have a purebred Golden Retriever from a good environment. After she left her dog that morning on Spanish Town Road, she felt so guilty she couldn't sleep, and now her husband hit her for moping around the house all the time—he looked as if he couldn't wait for the chance to hit her again—but when she saw the photograph in the paper of the homeless man and his dog, she recognized the dog as her own, and she had decided she had to have her dog back, even if she had to take the beatings with it. “So, I'm ashamed to confess, I paid my lawn boy a hundred dollars to get it back for me, but looking at that wound on your head, I *am* shocked to see that he used such force.”

He looked at husband and wife, at the half-eaten breakfast spread on their wrought-iron table in their sunny glassed-in porch, and said, “Nobody owns anything—or anybody,” and without looking out into the yard where he imagined The Golden Retriever was penned up, he excused himself and walked out of the house through the front door.

He was halfway to his trestle habitat before he realized that he felt no urge to violence, and not until he was curled up into his crate was he aware that what he felt now was sadness.

I'm Dealing with My Pain

by Denise Duhamel

HE'S ABOUT 300 POUNDS AND KNOWS MARTIAL ARTS, boxing, and wrestling—both the real and the fake kind. So I never know when I'm thrown to the ground or hurled against the ropes of a boxing ring fence (who can guess when he'll surprise me with a punch next?) if the ache in my back is real or cartoon, if my bruises will stay or wash off like kiddie tattoos.

Pain is a sneak and a cheat. He loves to eat unhealthy foods (scrapple, greasy gravy, Little Debbie Snacks). Not only that—I think he smokes. I can smell it on his breath, all fire and ash, when he pins me to my bed without asking. He's hefty and invisible and likes to strike in the dark so that even my magnifying glass and double locks are useless. Sometimes I call him Sumo, the Devil, or any member of my family. He's a changeling and a scam. His footprints are the ones that make cracks in the sidewalk.

Pain first introduced himself as a sadist. I was confused at the time. He said he was seduced by the blue of my wrists, the soft hollow at the center of my throat. He squeezed my heart like a Nerf ball until it was all lumps and fingernail marks. I nursed Pain like a mother. I tried to cheer him up like a sister, but everyone knows how that story goes.

Pain and I did have a few good times, if you can call them that. Eating ice cream under the covers, our tears drying on our cheeks so they chapped. We liked to go to movies alone. Pain,

WRITER & PIECE

being invisible, snuck in without paying, then he'd leave the seat next to mine and feel up another girl in the theater. I could always tell which one. I'd hear her crying the way I did or crunching her popcorn as though each kernel was a small bone in Pain's neck or foot. He still comes around, though I tell him it's over, though I spit into his found hairy face.

He just laughs that sexy laugh. You know, the kind that gets in your head and you can't tell if it's making you nauseous or turning you on. There's no restraining order that works on Pain, the outlaw who loves to chase and embrace us, the outlaw we sometimes love to chase and embrace.

If God Really is the Ultimate Pornographer

for Andrea Dworkin

by Denise Duhamel

He must get bored watching the mountains
until a coyote rips open a sheep, leaving
only bones and a few tufts of fleece.
There's a close-up of the coyote's full bloody mouth,
then a panning away as the sheep's bones begin to bleach in the
sun.

A knife through a pregnant belly
is always good for a rise, a child under bright lights
with a penis forced into her mouth.
But even God has a conscience, tapping through
His ultimate detachment. That's why
we get a few days relatively free from war now and then.
Yet, like any addict on the wagon, God can't stay away
from His slums very long, where children's hands
hanging off the sides of their cots are bitten by rats
in the middle of the night. It's a riot,
the way those kids wake up screaming, realizing
slowly it wasn't a dream. Sometimes the dying children
can get boring, but the few that struggle against their hunger
make it all worthwhile. And bless those serial rapists

WRITER & PIECE

who spice things up and the volcanoes
and earthquakes that tear open the Earth
just when She least expects it. The drama
of the hospitals can hold God's attention
for weeks on end, especially with all the new diseases.
He has the most valued collection of snuff films
in the galaxy, but like any addict, He needs more
all the time, to do even the simplest things,
to get Him out of bed each morning.

Vibrator

by Gene Hult

SEBASTIAN FOUND THE VIBRATOR IN THE TOP DRAWER of the bureau in Room 212, during the last step of cleaning, which was checking for any items guests might have left behind. He was a housekeeper at Mountain Ridge Resort, and cleaning the rooms was part of his job, most of his job. He already had made both single beds, folded over their corduroy orange bedspreads in a sharp crease, sterilized the bathroom, put out little wrapped bars of soap, and neatly hung clean rough beige towels. Sebastian stared at the vibrator. The small machine was also beige, a shade darker than the towels, and cylindrical, and it tapered at one end. It was covered by raised bumps. Sebastian bit his thumbnail; the vibrator was a serious dilemma. Should he leave it rolling around loosely in the drawer, and risk losing his job when the next guests found it, or turn it in to the lost and found and risk offending Betty?

He needed this job. Only three months had passed since he had run away from home, and it was imperative that he prove he could survive, alive and happy, on his own. This job at the hotel was perfect; the work was easy, it was just cleaning after all, anyone could do that, and the manager, Mr. Williams, had given him a place to stay, a single furnished room in the basement. The room was harsh and utilitarian, but it already seemed like home, his home. The branching crack in the ceiling of his little room was *his* branching crack. It was his haven; nobody hated him within those four walls, and he didn't hate anyone, either. He would have to turn in the vibrator, no matter how embarrassing that would be.

And it would be extremely embarrassing, worse than calling

out to a figure in the distance, and the figure turning out to be a stranger. Betty worked at the front desk in Mr. Williams's office, and Sebastian had suffered from a crush on Betty from the first day Mr. Williams introduced them. She said, when they shook hands (an electric tremor running up Sebastian's arm), "Hey, how's it hanging?"

Sebastian found himself without a suitable reply, but he was seriously smitten. In the days following the introduction, he tried desperately to think up a proper response to her question in case she ever asked again. Something slightly coy, making his romantic interest understood, without coming on as a boor, only out for sex. But some of his fantasies made him blush, made sweat trickle into his thin eyebrows. He imagined that he'd answered, "Would you like to find out tonight?" and her lovely, lovely sparkling green eyes glowed, and that evening there was a knock on the door of his little room. It was Betty, floating two inches off the floor, wearing only a pink transparent teddy, her golden hair singing delicate melodies, down loose around her shoulders.

But, so far, the best reply Sebastian had come up with was, "Long and strong, thank you very much," which didn't seem to be quite there yet. And anyway, she had not asked again since.

He stared at the vibrator in his hand. Now he'd have to be crass, handing over the vibrator for Betty to put in the lost and found. There was no way she would not mistake this for an obvious sexual gesture—his trembling hands, his rising intentions revealing themselves. Not that his intentions were pure, he thought sadly, lowering his head. He wanted his intentions to be pure, he wanted to be a flawless crystal container for the purity of physical love, for Betty to be impressed by the stain-free linen of his love for her, but now hope had darted away, in a flutter of soiled feathers. He now would be forced to be blatant.

Maybe Sebastian should just throw the vibrator away, in the incinerator, where it would become a charred unrecognizable lump. But what if that nice Ms. Halpern, who had checked out this morning from Room 212 and had left a five-dollar tip for him on the telephone desk, came back looking for her vibrator? It was her private personal property, after all, even if Sebastian had difficulty picturing her using it. Maybe she used it to massage her feet, like his Grandma Wilma. If Ms. Halpern came back to retrieve her property, then Sebastian would be in for it, absolutely. It would all come out that he had destroyed the vibrator, and he would be shorn naked in front of Mr. Williams, and stripped bare in all his lustfulness in front of Betty anyway, and most likely fired.

Sebastian put the vibrator down on top of the bureau, regarded it forlornly for a moment, and then checked the other drawers in the bureau to make sure nothing else damaging had been left behind.

Betty was flipping through an *US* magazine, sitting behind her desk which had a potted fern and a smiley-face mug on it, when Sebastian dawdled down to the office to let the unfairness of fate have its way with him. He hadn't changed out of his red-and-white housekeeper jacket, because he hoped there would be more easy comradeship between himself and Betty if it were obvious that they both worked for the same establishment.

"Hey, Sebastian," Betty said, glancing up briefly. "What'd you find this time? Anything interesting? Or just more combs? Any dough?"

Sebastian didn't say anything. He was hiding the vibrator behind his back. With a shaking hand, he slowly revealed it and placed it, standing up on its flat bottom, on Betty's desk.

"Eew," said Betty, wrinkling up her nose. "Where did you find *that*?"

“Room 212,” Sebastian mumbled, his head down.

“What?” Betty said loudly. “Sebastian, don’t mumble. Pretend like you have some balls.”

Sebastian looked up at Betty nervously. She was grinning; she was only teasing. He smiled. “Room 212!” he shouted.

Betty said, “That’s better,” and she reached out for the vibrator. “Does it work?”

“I didn’t try it,” Sebastian said.

“What a wasted opportunity,” Betty said, smirking. She turned the flat bottom of the vibrator and it buzzed to life. “Well, it works, all right,” she said. She put it down on its side on the desk and it slowly crawled under its own power. Betty and Sebastian watched it vibrate its way across the desk to the potted fern, and then Betty put her hand (her fingernails were not painted) on it, stopping it, and turned it off. “Okay,” she said to the vibrator. “Into the drawer with you.”

Sebastian watched her bend over, open the lower desk drawer, and drop the vibrator in it. What was it about Betty that was so...ravishing? She had up-front beauty, he decided. Like a daffodil, she had direct surface beauty, beauty nobody could contest. Betty sat up straight, pushed her hair over her shoulders. “Anything else?” she asked.

Sebastian shook his head no.

“Okay,” she said cheerfully. She started to read *US* again. Sebastian didn’t move.

After a few minutes Betty looked up. “Sebastian,” she said. “You really need to relax.”

“Relax?”

“Don’t be so shy. You’re cute, the guests like you—”

“They do?”

“Sure. You always get big tips, don’t you? You’ve just got to be more self-confident.”

Sebastian blushed. "Is it that obvious?" he asked. "I mean, I try not to act shy. I don't think I'm really shy. It feels like I'm trying to be outgoing."

Betty stared at him a moment. Sebastian looked down at his feet. God, she was beautiful! "Look up at me," Betty said. Sebastian raised his head, met her eyes, decided that wasn't a good idea, and looked at her shoulder. "You're cute," she said. "You're attractive, in a weird way. Relax. Don't worry so much. I like you, the guests like you, and...hmm...nobody ever knows what surprises are in store."

"Really?" Sebastian asked, trying to contain the happiness in his voice. "Really?"

"Really," Betty said. "You're interesting. Now scoot, sweetie. I'm busy." She winked, bent her head, and started to read.

Sebastian watched her read, the slow slide of her green eyes. He was elated, pulsing. She said she liked him! Betty liked him! Who knew what could happen? She thought he was cute! He couldn't keep still another minute. "Thanks," he whispered, and he fled from the office.

That night Sebastian could not sink into sleep. He was interesting, cute, attractive in a weird way, although much, much too shy, and he couldn't fall asleep. He watched Betty's lips say, "I like you...I like you...I like you..." The tip of her pink tongue stuck out between her teeth when she pronounced the "I" in "like." He wanted to grab that tip of her tongue between his thumb and forefinger and hold on to its wetness, feel it as it wriggled in his pinch. So this was sexual obsession! How hot he felt, on fire, consumed by the raging blaze of desire. Were there better words to describe this? He knew that a drip of water would vaporize instantly on his flushed forehead.

Sebastian dug his fingernails into the clammy sheet and prayed for death. Take me, spare me, Sebastian begged. I am

combusting, don't let me feel all this and be aware, be alive, and consciously combust. Please, please... He began to squeeze his thighs together, harder and hotter, the hair on his legs pulling and knotting. He had never experienced a pain so suffused with fevered pleasure, and he had been well-acquainted with all forms of physical pain before, before he had run away.

There was a soft knock on the door. Sebastian stiffened, his heart hopping. Oh, God. Oh, God. Was it only his shameful boiled imagination?

No, there was a knock again, louder, more impatient. Sebastian sprung out of his bed, stubbed his toe on the bedside table, and wrenched open the door.

Betty stood in the doorway, in faded blue jeans and a pink T-shirt, smirking. She was carrying a small red tote bag. "Did I wake you?" she asked.

"No...no, I was just..." he stammered. "Yes. I mean yes."

"Too bad," Betty said. She glanced down at his white briefs, and laughed. "Nice tent pole," she said.

"What?" Sebastian looked down and saw his erection propping out the fabric of his briefs. He nearly swooned.

"Relax," Betty said. "Don't worry about it. Get back into bed, I don't care. I've seen them before. Do you mind if I come in?"

Sebastian shook his head mutely, and pulled down his sleep T-shirt to cover his front. "Come on in," he croaked. He turned around, and jumped back into bed, put his pillow on his lap. He stared at the blue-striped pattern on the white pillowcase.

"Cute butt," Betty said, and she entered the room, shutting the door behind her. "I just thought I'd come on down and see what you're up to. I hope you don't mind."

Sebastian shook his head again. He liked the way the blue stripes didn't connect on either side of the pillowcase's seam. Bet-

ty sat down on the edge of the bed, and Sebastian exhaled and shifted his feet away from her. She put the red tote bag by his feet, between them.

"I'm a virgin," he said, matter-of-factly, without looking up. He couldn't believe he said that. What was the *matter* with him?

"Duh," said Betty. "As if I couldn't tell. But it's all right. How old are you? Fifteen?"

"Sixteen. I'll be seventeen in three months, though."

"So that's normal. Don't worry about it. I don't care."

"It is? You don't?"

"Sure. It's not late at all. I lost my virginity at fifteen, but I'm a special case. I never thought of it as a keepsake, a gift for some selfish man. "Betty, save it for your future husband." Blah. I've got better things to give my future husband."

Sebastian couldn't believe he was having this conversation. He decided to be adult about this. He would be adult about this! "Like what things?" he asked.

"I've always been a naturally talented cook," she said, her eyes glazing slightly, staring over Sebastian. "I just love the way it works, I guess. And that you get to eat it afterwards, and you can make people happy with it. People need food, and it makes me happy to do something so...solid, so useful. Something I made, with my own hands, on his tongue, the flavor expanding on his tongue, going down his throat, into his stomach. Eventually becoming part of him, making up his own separate cells, that's wonderful. That seems like magic. So I'm saving my skill in cooking for the man I plan to marry. That will be my gift."

"Wow," Sebastian said.

"I run off at the mouth," said Betty, smiling ruefully. "That's not what I meant to say at all. You sitting there so innocent looking, your big eyes, it just drew that out of me."

"I'm glad you did," he said. There, now *that* sounded adult! "I'm not that innocent." He sat up straighter, moving his feet, and he accidentally kicked the red tote bag. It started buzzing.

"Oh, no," Sebastian said, drawing his feet away from the buzzing bag. He felt the top of his stomach constrict. "No. You brought *it* with you."

"What did you think," Betty said, smiling. She looked feral, she raised one corner of her lips to reveal a single yellowish canine. Sebastian felt it to be enormously sexy. "You intrigued me, Sebastian," she said in a low voice. "The way you handed it in to me was very intriguing."

"Really?" he asked, the word sticking in his throat like a feather.

"Really," Betty said. "Turn off the light."

"The light?"

"Turn off the light, silly," she said. He reached out and clicked off the lamp on the bedside table with incredible rapidity. His room had no windows; the darkness was total. He couldn't even see the outline of Betty.

Sebastian heard Betty unzip the tote bag and turn off the vibrator, quieting it. His hands were shaking, and he held on to the sides of his thighs. "I'm cold," he said. "I'm shivering."

"We'll fix that soon enough," Betty said. "It's not really cold in here." The bed shifted as she stood, and Sebastian's eyes were growing used to the darkness, and he could see the weight of the space in which Betty was standing, the vivacity there. There was a whisper of cotton as she pulled off her T-shirt; he could see movement on her chest, which must be her breasts—her breasts! She wasn't wearing a bra! My God, can she *do* that?—and they swung forward slightly as she bent at the waist to remove her jeans. Betty hopped as she had to lift one leg to get the cuff of the jeans over her foot. She stepped closer to the bed, and Sebastian

stared up at her, a shadow against blackness, standing over him. He held his breath, hoping to calm his breathing, but that made his exhalations all the more noisily obvious.

“Relax,” Betty said softly.

“I’m trying,” Sebastian whispered. “It’s not working.”

She climbed on to the bed, on top of him. Sebastian was surprised at how heavy she was, how heavy another person was. He put his hands awkwardly on her back. So soft and, and...! And that, as he moved his hands slowly, experimentally, that must be her spine! How delicately it curved! “Kiss me,” Betty said. Sebastian raised his head slowly, met Betty’s lips with his. He sent out his tongue slowly, carefully, testing the wall of Betty’s lips to discover that her tongue was moist and waiting just beyond their seal. The wet tingle of the licking lips touching coursed inward and Sebastian’s eyes opened to find Betty, a lovely grey shadow, watching him and he looked into her as far as he could, kissing, his hands moving along the soft planes of her back on their own secret mission, sliding slow along her sides, following the consecutive sensualities of the silky staircase of her ribs. The skin of their faces, their cheeks slid together and Sebastian hoped he might melt, he might wash like waves along a coastline, drawing outlines of mountains in the damp dark sand.

Betty broke off the kiss. “Are you sure you’re a virgin?”

Sebastian giggled. “Yes,” he said. “Oh, yes. Wow.”

“Could’ve fooled me,” Betty said, her voice husky. “I think you’re wearing way too much right now.” She reached her hands under him and grabbed the back tail of his T-shirt. He bent forward and raised his arms, and she tugged upwards, and he had a frightening moment of vulnerable claustrophobia, his head tangled up in the shirt, but then his head popped free, and the shirt slid off easily. He shook his head to get his hair out of his eyes. “Yikes,” he said.

Betty put her warm hands on Sebastian's chest and pushed him back down on the bed. She tweaked one of his nipples. He giggled. "Now your underwear," she said. She scuttled down in the bed, and hooked her thumbs low in the elastic waistband of his briefs. "Lift your butt," she ordered, and as Sebastian did, Betty slid the briefs down, and Sebastian's erection sprung free, slapped against his belly. Why wasn't he embarrassed? He didn't know—he only felt anxious, twanging like a harp string, with anticipation. She slid her hand around his penis and held it gently. "Cute," she said. He hoped she would never let go. How could a hand be that warm, so totally encompassing? But she opened her hand and slid it down his upper thigh. Sebastian shivered. She bent down and swayed, brushing her nipples over the head of his penis, softest skin on softest skin. Sebastian raised one hand slightly off the bed by his side, and then dropped it. "Feels good, huh," Betty said. She scooted further down his legs—skin sliding like satin—and tugged his briefs further down. Sebastian brought one foot up awkwardly, his knee brushing against her soft ass, hooked his toe in his briefs, and pulled them all the way off.

Betty placed both of her knees between Sebastian's legs, and pushed his legs apart. She knelt in the space between his legs, pushed his legs toward him so his knees stuck up in the air. His balls shifted down, he could feel his anus gaping.

Sebastian cleared his throat. "I'm a little nervous," he said. "Is that all right? I'm a little nervous."

"Shh," Betty whispered. "Relax. Loosen up, relax into the bed. Isn't it soft under you? Relax. Just enjoy this. That's all, just enjoy." He heard her uncap something, and then a slippery sound. He closed his eyes, watching the pink, yellow and red splotches expand and contract against the inside of his eyelids. Then he felt it, warm and uncompromising, up against his anus. He tightened his hands to fists.

“Relax,” Betty whispered. He didn’t open his hands. Betty exhaled, and bent over to bury her face in the space between his penis and his thigh, into the crook there, and she opened her mouth. “Ohhh,” Sebastian said. Betty licked, moving her face, licking up his thigh, and Sebastian squirmed and moaned. She slid the vibrator into his hole.

He immediately stiffened, tightening around it—he felt so absolutely *full*. He waited for the pain; one moment, two...A minor jolt of sharpness spiked up his spine, but that quickly passed, spreading, losing focus. He ached slightly, but there was no other real pain, and he loosened, accepting the vibrator. Betty had remained motionless, waiting for him. “Okay,” he said softly. “This is crazy. Okay.”

Betty put one hand on his upper stomach, just below his ribs, leaning with gentle pressure. She began to slide the vibrator in and out, in and out. His sphincter flared, registering as soreness, but the feeling remained diffuse, never sharp again. The vibrator brushed up against something inside and pleasure flooded him, as if he had been immersed in a hot bath of quivering liquid. He arched his back, opening wider. “Ah,” he said. “Ah. Don’t stop. Betty! Ah. Don’t stop.”

Betty turned on the vibrator, and it buzzed to life, and Sebastian turned to boysenberry jam, quivering, oozing, each vibration a whole berry in him, each boysenberry a hard imbedded shivering pinhead. He was out of his head; the boysenberries reached his brain, ping-pong, surrounded by concentric circles, ripples of pleasure. His eyes rolled back, his eyelids fluttered. His lips pulsed in jagged surges. “God!” he screamed. He gasped. “My father beat me! Oh, God! He always beat me! On my arms, bruises on my back!” He felt his loins explode with heat and wet. “For no reason!” he screamed, a second tremor jetting up from his penis. “For little things! For leaving my shoes

HULT · VIBRATOR

in the living room! For not turning out the lights! I hate him, I hate him! Oh, GOD!” Sebastian gasped for breath, his pulse throbbing, ebbing, in his temples.

Sebastian felt Betty slide out the vibrator. She turned it off, and he heard it thunk on the floor where she dropped it over the side of the bed. She broke contact with him, moved her skin away from his. She was keeping still; she surrounded herself with stillness; Sebastian could feel the cold edges of it. Betty sat there, and Sebastian lay there, silently, for long moments. There was a gap between them like torn money.

The Shower

by Kimiko Hahn

The hot spray softens her neck muscles
as she swings her head side to side
raised an arm and spirals fingertips
from armpit to areola firmly firmly
the legacy of twentieth-century females,
a fact even brown rice, underwire bra,
or low-impact aerobics cannot
cauterize. She recalls the nurse
who told a dormitory of freshmen about
self-examinations, about a farmer's wife
in Oxford, Iowa, whose breast tripled in size,
festered, stank, and still she hid
the awful message: what was meant to nourish,
what had nourished half a dozen babies,
poisoned the whole system. While soaping
beneath her breasts she remembers
an Ariyoshi novel from Japanese Lit.:
the mother and daughter-in-law
in grotesque competition for the son/husband
to anesthetize and sever experimentally.
Now the left side and thoughts of nursing
at two then four in the morning.
Her own daughters are tucked into their unconscious,
perhaps,
images of the breast, pillow-like: sweet
or so large as to suffocate. Which dream?

HAHN · THE SHOWER

which dream for me? No lumps
detected while showering she wraps
a terry-cloth robe around herself,
thinks, nursing was erotic and precious, both
and it is over. What to make of these
ornaments, these empty chambers
that sting with pleasure even as
the skin begins to loosen? How to take care?
how to see these breasts as flesh
and emblem? her own mother's breast—things
that finally belonged to her younger sister,
things she wanted, wanted to possess
like two suns emanating from her chest.

Vampires, Conquerors and Other Monster Selves: Literary Projections in Four 19th-Century Stories

by Greg Blackburn

THE TWO MOST RECOGNIZED MONSTERS IN THE WORLD today, the Frankenstein monster and Dracula, were conceived in Geneva, Switzerland in 1816. They both had the same “father,” Lord Byron, but different “mothers,” Mary Godwin and John Polidori. In 1818 *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* was published and, a year later, *The Vampyre*. This was during the height of the Gothic novel, but these stories were something new and different. These dynamic and detailed fictions pushed forward toward ungrasped forces, unlike the usual Gothic tale which looked back in nostalgic lassitude to the inert hierarchy of the Middle Ages.

These two writers knew each other in 1816, when they were with Percy Shelley and Lord Byron, who were both in Europe in self-imposed exile from England. Mary Godwin was living with and would later that year marry Percy Shelley. Polidori was accompanying Byron as his traveling companion, diarist and doctor. These four, along with Claire Clairmont, who was with the Shelley party and was Mary’s step-sister and Byron’s lover, met together in Geneva and stayed in adjoining houses along the lake. Their scientific, philosophical, and literary discussions, that often went late into the rainy evenings, inspired them all. Byron said, after reading to them from a book of German ghost stories called *Fantasmagoriana*, that they should each write a ghost story. The seed was planted. (*Shelley the Pursuit*, Holmes)

Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus is about a man who plays god by creating a living being from inanimate flesh. In mythology, Prometheus the Titan made mankind from clay and water and then life was breathed into this new being by Athena, the goddess of wisdom. Prometheus also brought fire to mankind against the wishes of the ruler of the gods, Zeus, and was chained to a rock, where a vulture came every day to devour his liver, which then grew back to be eaten again. (*The Greek Myths*, Graves) Prometheus seems therefore to be the symbol of human creation as well as human suffering, which is perhaps the inevitable byproduct of creativity. Many writers see Prometheus as the most important mythological representative of the Western imagination. One writer has stated that the Western world's "...predominant culture-hero is the trickster and (suffering) rebel against the gods, who creates culture at the price of perpetual pain. He symbolizes productiveness, the unceasing effort to master life...Prometheus is the archetype hero of the performance principle. And in the world of Prometheus, Pandora, the female principle, sexuality and pleasure, appear as curse—disruptive, destructive." (*Eros and Civilization*, Marcuse, p. 146)

Percy Shelley, an avowed atheist, seems to be the model for the character of Victor Frankenstein. Percy called himself Victor as a child and, like Frankenstein, went from an interest in alchemy to an interest in science. Percy also had a younger sister named Elizabeth. Byron, on the other hand, seems to be the model for the monster. Byron had a reputation for believing in evil, if not always practicing it. However, like the monster, he was an incarnation of pure will and willfulness. Frankenstein and the monster have a number of conversations and debates in the book, very much like Shelley and Byron did in Geneva in 1816.

The monster is created by Victor Frankenstein, a student of science in general and chemistry in particular, at Ingolstadt University in Germany. Victor Frankenstein is Swiss, but is compelled by his father to go to this German University. This is reminiscent of the exile of Percy and Mary from England, which

was partly due to the disapproval of their fathers. The stated reason for Victor's father sending him abroad is that he will become acquainted with foreign customs. However, this seems not to be the true reason because Victor had traveled throughout Europe, as a young boy, with his parents.

Just before Victor is to leave for Ingolstadt, his adopted sister Elizabeth catches scarlet fever. Victor's mother nurses Elizabeth back to health. But Victor's mother, Caroline Beaufort Frankenstein, herself catches scarlet fever from Elizabeth and dies. Elizabeth, an orphan, had a Don Juanish Italian nobleman as her natural father, who was more interested in his country's battles than his child. Many of the villains in Gothic stories were Italians, as was Polidori. Perhaps the scarlet fever that Caroline Frankenstein could not fight off was this inherited villainy or licentiousness she was exposed to from the person of Elizabeth. As she dies, Caroline Frankenstein joins Victor's and Elizabeth's hands together and says to them, "My children, my firmest hopes of future happiness were placed on the prospect of your union. This expectation will now be the consolation of your father. Elizabeth, my love, you must supply my place to my younger children."

Shortly, Victor discusses his feelings, mentioning "...the void that presents itself to the soul." Victor also states, regarding his mother's influence, that her "...very existence appeared a part of our own." Victor gets his father to delay his leaving for Germany for "some weeks," but no more.

Victor Frankenstein's mother dies when he is seventeen years old and about to leave home. From the words he uses, it is obvious that he has been very attached to her and has even "idolized" her. This indicates that Victor has projected his soul or anima onto his mother. As Jung states, "It is indeed, the rule that a man's consciousness projects all perceptions coming from the feminine personification of the unconscious onto an anima figure, i.e., a real woman to whom he is as much bound as he is in reality to the contents of the unconscious." (*Flying Saucers, A*

Modern Myth of Things Seen in the Skies, p. 72) Idolizing is also connected to transference phenomena and incest. Regarding transference and incest, Jung states, "The transference is far from being a simple phenomenon with only one meaning... The same applies to its specific content, commonly called incest. We know that it is possible to interpret the fantasy—contents of the instincts either as signs, as self portraits of the instincts, i.e. reductively; or as symbols, as the spiritual meaning of the natural instinct." (*The Practice of Psychotherapy*, p. 175) The spiritual meaning of transference and incest is the moral problem posed to the individual by the projection of unconscious contents onto another person.

The other important woman in Victor's life is obviously his adopted sister, Elizabeth. Since Victor did not meet his adopted sister until he was five years old, any projection onto her would have occurred well after any projection onto his mother and thus would be much weaker. However, his mother puts him into a "double-bind" by transferring his Oedipal connection to her onto Elizabeth. ("Double-bind" coined by anthropologist Gregory Bateson)

After being at the University in Ingolstadt for two years, Victor has made such progress in his studies that he is able to make improvements to some chemical instruments, which gets him high praise from his professors. Interestingly, Mary Shelley knew that Ingolstadt was the birthplace in 1776 of Illuminism, which was a philosophy dedicated to the abolition of religion, monarchy, marriage, and private property. This philosophy was like the one most radical adherents of the French Revolution espoused. Also, Illuminism was somewhat like the early philosophy of Mary's father William Godwin, the philosophy of her husband Percy Shelley, as well as her own. (*The Godwins and the Shelleys*, St. Clair and *Shelley the Pursuit*)

Victor thinks of returning to his family in Geneva, since he feels that he has learned all that he can from his professors. He feels that he is now their equal or perhaps their superior. He

does not return to Geneva, however, since he may want to avoid his fiancée-sister-mother Elizabeth, but instead begins studying in earnest on his own. He asks himself what causes life. He decides that in order to answer this question, he must study anatomy and also, "...observe the natural decay and corruption of the human body." Victor thinks that in order to understand life, he must closely observe death.

In watching bodies decaying in graveyards, including watching worms consuming the bodies, Victor discovers the secret. He discovers the secret of "...the cause of generation and life; nay, more, I became myself capable of bestowing animation upon lifeless matter." Victor starts to gather bodies together, both human and animal, in order to create a living being. One of the definitions of the word "monster" is a being which is a combination of two or more species. H.G. Wells developed this concept in his novel *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, where animals are surgically transformed into humanoid creatures that speak.

Victor Frankenstein states that "...the moon gazed on my midnight labors, while...I pursued nature to her hiding places." This personification of the moon is indicative of an anima projection, since the moon is symbolic of the Triple-Goddess in mythology. (*The Greek Myths*, Graves) In most mythologies, the moon is represented as a female divinity. Finally, after constant labor that nearly ruins his health, he succeeds in creating a living being and is repulsed by its ugliness. Victor rushes out of the room into his own bedroom. He nervously paces back and forth, hoping that his repulsive creation will die, but he gets tired and falls asleep.

That night, Victor has a dream. He remarks, "I was disturbed by the wildest dreams. I thought I saw Elizabeth, in the bloom of health, walking in the streets of Ingolstadt. Delighted and surprised, I embraced her; but as I imprinted the first kiss on her lips, they became livid with the hue of death; her features appeared to change and I thought that I held the corpse of my dead mother in my arms; a shroud enveloped her form, and I saw

the grave-worms crawling in the folds of the flannel. I started from my sleep with horror..." This dream is similar to one of the German ghost stories that Mary had heard in 1816. In that story, however, the dreamer beholds the corpse of his ex-lover, not his mother, in his arms. Thus, Mary accentuates the incest element in her story. Right after this dream, Victor wakes and sees the monster looking through the bed curtains at him. Victor states, "...by the dim and yellow light of the moon, as it forced its way through the shutters, I beheld the wretch—the miserable monster whom I had created...His jaws opened, and he muttered some inarticulate sounds, while a grin wrinkled his cheeks."

Victor is thus drawn to Elizabeth, but is equally repelled by the strong taboos operating between them. This clarifies what Victor's dream means. He rushes to her, in his dream, and kisses her on the lips. When Elizabeth turns into Victor's mother, it also makes explicit the implicit taboo operating between them. Since she is a taboo sexual partner, the kiss has a deadly result by turning her lips "livid." This is not only the hue of death, but is also the hue of extreme anger and fear. Victor has a deadly fear, as well as a deadly anger, that he projects onto Elizabeth. Fear and anger in combination equal the deadliest of all human emotions, namely hatred. Since Elizabeth was the indirect cause of his mother's death, Victor's hatred of her would be all the greater.

The only solution that Victor has to this double-bind is to reject Elizabeth. This explains his staying in Ingolstadt and not communicating with his family. But rejecting Elizabeth is also a ruinous choice for him because Elizabeth is now the sole repository for his anima. By rejecting her he has rejected his soul. It is now only a matter of time until the monster runs amuck.

The Frankenstein monster is eight feet tall and is a patchwork of both human and animal corpses. The monster can move around, but can only grunt and grin to communicate. His creator abandons him, so he wanders off into the countryside and is transfixed by the beauties of nature, especially the moon. He approaches people, but they are so afraid of him that they attack

him and drive him off. The monster is then so afraid of people that when he comes across a cottage in the woods, he hides and watches the inhabitants. He learns to speak and read by watching them and finding some books. Like a good nature sprite, he comes to do favors for them, such as chopping wood and leaving it for them. The monster comes to love and almost worship them. He eventually goes to the cottage and talks to the blind patriarch, but when the grown son comes home he attacks the monster and drives him off. After this, the monster starts on his path of destruction.

Victor Frankenstein, by creating this being, has violated a number of taboos, and the monster is symbolic of these taboos. One is the ancient taboo relating to death, and particularly to dead bodies. Most cultures have elaborate rituals to deal with this taboo, since it is so sensitive, especially to close relatives of the deceased. Many terrors are related to the viewing of dead bodies and death, in general.

Frankenstein also ignores the taboos relating to mixing of species, which would be a violation of natural boundaries. This violation of boundaries relates, similarly, to the psychological boundaries that Victor has violated due his incestuous connection to his sister Elizabeth. Beings that are a mixture of species, like the creatures in mythology, are generally supernatural and thus sacred.

The monster's physical ugliness seems to be a moral ugliness as well, however. The monster, although seemingly innocent at first, ends up being pure evil. This evil is the evil within Frankenstein, symbolized by his out-of-control temper, that is projected from him to become the monster. As the creator of the monster, Victor has put *himself* into the Monster. Or, to be more precise, the monster is one aspect of himself. The monster is born from Victor Frankenstein rejecting or projecting his soul or anima.

Once the monster appears, he is like other monsters in that he can't be stopped or controlled. Victor describes his creation

when he says, "I considered the being whom I had cast among mankind, and endowed with the will and power to effect purposes of horror...nearly in the light of my own vampire, my own spirit let loose from the grave, and forced to destroy all that was dear to me." Victor has given the entire "will and power" of his own evil side to the monster. The monster was thus compelled, even fated, to destroy the good parts of Victor and like a vampire, to live off of that destruction parasitically.

The monster, although he states that he is remorseful and that he was driven to evil by mankind, describes his own behavior in terms of a compulsion to do evil. As the monster states, "...a frightful selfishness hurried me on..." He, or it, also adds, "I was the slave, not the master, of an impulse which I detested, yet could not disobey. Yet when she died"—the Monster strangles Elizabeth on Victor's and Elizabeth's wedding night—"nay, then I was not miserable...I had cast off *all feeling* [my italics]...Evil thenceforth became my good." This last quote, which echoes the epic *Paradise Lost*, which the monster has read and then cites throughout the novel, shows the monster's identification with Satan. The monster's essential nature is Satanic.

Toward the end of the novel, Victor Frankenstein states, while near death, "...like the archangel who aspired to omnipotence, I am chained in an eternal hell..." Victor also identifies with Satan, thus the monster. Although Victor dies before the monster does, the monster states that it will build a funeral pyre and commit suicide upon it. This ritual shows the pagan nature of the monster. And, in Christian terms, one is a servant of Satan if one is a pagan and not a Christian. The monster then indicates that it has accomplished its purpose, which was to destroy Frankenstein. And since the monster is actually a part of him, it must die or fade from the scene.

The Frankenstein monster is a symbolic representation of the anal stage of sexuality, as the vampire is symbolic of the oral stage. The Frankenstein monster is made up of "waste" materials. In *Life Against Death*, Norman O. Brown has shown how the

evil of the Devil has been associated with “waste” matter in Luther’s theology. According to Freud, the oral stage occurs first, followed by the anal stage, when both are supplanted by the genital stage. However, these earlier stages survive within us into adulthood, as do all previous stages in our personal development as well as our evolutionary development. Within adults, the oral and anal stages survive as “complexes,” organized psychic centers that are subsumed under the larger whole of the self.

As complexes, these parts of the self have a tendency to assert themselves and can attempt to achieve autonomy. Because sexuality is such a powerful force and has a tendency to achieve a certain autonomy anyway, these “infantile sexuality” complexes are feared as forces that will cause one to lose control. Once a complex takes over a person, the complex achieves a certain personality of its own, since it then can draw from the personality of the person. And this complex, since it has supplanted the conscious self, can be perceived as a monstrous entity.

In *The Vampyre* by John Polidori, an unusual English nobleman and a young English gentleman appear in London society about the same time. The gentleman, named Aubrey, had been left an orphan in childhood, along with his slightly younger sister. Their guardians are extremely distant, almost god-like in their distance and have assigned servants to take care of the two extremely wealthy children. It is interesting to note that orphans are important characters in three of these four 19th-century stories. Orphans, like illegitimate children, were shut out of respectable society in the nineteenth century. As *Oliver Twist*, the most famous novel about orphans of that time, shows, being shut out of society results in anger. The outcast’s attraction and repulsion toward such a society can accentuate a split in the self.

Aubrey is extremely naive and innocent and “...believed all to sympathize with virtue.” The narrative states that Aubrey thought “...the dreams of poets were the realities of life.” In an

introduction to Percy Shelley's poems, Mary Shelley wrote that Shelley "idealized reality." Byron said that Shelley was the "...least worldly-minded person I ever met..." Clearly, Shelley is the model for Aubrey. The fact that Shelley had an hysterical fit in Geneva in 1816, very much like the one Aubrey has in the story, is further evidence.

Aubrey goes to high society parties and meets the strange nobleman, mentioned earlier, and is very curious about him. This nobleman is said to have "...gazed upon the mirth around him, as if he could not participate therein." The nobleman, Lord Ruthven, is described as having a "...a dead grey eye..." and a face with a "...a deadly hue." Lady Caroline Lamb, a lover of Byron, wrote a novel, *Glenarvon*, published in May 1816, about a ruthless nobleman named Ruthven, basing Ruthven directly on Byron. She also stated about Byron that he was "...mad, bad, and dangerous to know." So, the model for Ruthven seems, similarly, to be Byron. (*Shelley The Pursuit* and *Byron and His World*, Parker)

When they go to Europe, Aubrey finds out that Ruthven is a gambler and a frequenter of "...the centers of all fashionable vice." When Ruthven gambles, he always beats those with the most to lose, such as fathers with hungry children. Aubrey is bothered by this, but doesn't say anything to Ruthven. When they reach Rome, Aubrey goes to look at the ruins, while Ruthven visits the fashionable salon of an Italian Countess.

Aubrey receives a letter from his guardians, who play the part of superego, telling him that Ruthven's "...character was dreadfully vicious..." and that his "...irresistible powers of seduction, rendered his licentious habits more dangerous to society." Byron, of course, had the reputation of being a Don Juan with both men and women, throughout his life. Aubrey's unnamed guardians urge him to leave Ruthven at once.

Aubrey attempts to invent some excuse to leave Ruthven's company, then finds out that Ruthven is attempting to seduce the young, innocent daughter of the Italian Countess. Aubrey con-

fronts Ruthven and asks him if he is going to marry the Italian girl. Ruthven laughs in his face. So Aubrey and Ruthven part company.

Aubrey leaves Rome and travels to Greece, where he continues being a good tourist by looking at ancient ruins. In Greece, he stays with a poor family who have a daughter, Ianthe, with whom Aubrey falls in love. Aubrey describes Ianthe: "As she danced upon the plain, or tripped along the mountain's side, one would have thought the gazelle a poor type of her beauties... The light step of Ianthe often accompanied Aubrey in his search after antiquities, and often would the unconscious girl, engaged in the pursuit of a Kashmere butterfly of her form, float as it were upon the wind...(with) her sylph-like figure."

Ianthe was also a character in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. She was a Cretan woman who married Iphis, who was transformed from a young woman into a young man for the marriage. Incidentally, both Byron and Shelley used this name in their poems. Byron dedicated *Childe Harold* in 1812 to "Ianthe," who was eleven year old Lady Charlotte Harley. Shelley's eldest daughter and the main human character of his 1814 poem *Queen Mab* was named Ianthe. The character Ianthe in *The Vampyre* appears to be an anima projection. She is described like a mountain-nymph and a sylph, which are classical mythological and alchemical anima symbols, respectively. The term "sylph" was coined by the Swiss alchemist Paracelsus, who is referred to as influencing Victor Frankenstein in *Frankenstein*.

Aubrey sees Ianthe chasing a butterfly and imitating its movements. The butterfly, in ancient Greece, was symbolic of the soul or psyche. The butterfly has also been a symbol in folklore of the vampire. This suggests an identity between Ianthe and the anima and the vampire. This also reflects Aubrey's awareness of his own chasing after her. Ianthe is also described as "unconscious," which is also an attribute of the anima, especially in men. Aubrey's falling in love with her indicates that he is projecting his own soul onto her or perhaps creating her by projecting his anima onto nature.

Aubrey spends more and more time around Ianthe. She tells

him of her belief in “vampyres.” She tells him of the “...living vampyre...forced every year, by feeding upon the life of a lovely female to prolong his existence for the ensuing months...” Ianthe’s parents also believe in vampyres. Ianthe describes a vampyre and Aubrey is shocked by the description, because it fits Ruthven exactly.

Aubrey goes out exploring one day, after being warned by Ianthe and her parents to be careful to avoid the woods at night. Aubrey loses track of time, however, and stays out after dark. He comes across a small cottage in the woods, the woods also being a common symbol for the unconscious. Aubrey hears a scream within the cottage and goes in to investigate. In the dark, he grapples with an unusually strong being, who throws him around easily, while laughing at him. This invisible being flees when rescuers arrive. Aubrey loses consciousness or his consciousness dims. Ianthe’s body is found in the cottage.

After being rescued, Aubrey becomes feverish and delirious, and in his delirium calls on Ruthven to spare Ianthe. By “chances,” Ruthven is in Greece and comes and nurses Aubrey back to health. When Aubrey’s health returns, he and Ruthven travel throughout the wilds of Greece, where they are seized by bandits and Ruthven is shot. Ruthven seems to die. But before he dies, he makes Aubrey swear that he will tell no one about his death for a year and a day. Aubrey agrees and swears.

The bandits, at Ruthven’s dying request, place his body on a mountain top to be “...exposed to the first cold ray of the moon that rose after his death.” Ruthven’s body is placed on the summit, but the next morning it has disappeared. The moon has seemed to restore him, due to its power as the Triple-Goddess—according to Robert Graves and others, the original deity of the ancients before the male gods arose.

Aubrey returns to London and accompanies his younger sister to society gatherings. Aubrey, to his great shock, sees Ruthven at these parties. Ruthven whispers in Aubrey’s ear and

reminds him to remember his oath, which he says that Aubrey is still bound by. At another party, Aubrey sees Ruthven talking to his sister and quickly takes her away to protect her. But, before he can leave, Ruthven again reminds him of his oath. An oath is defined as “a ritualistic declaration, based on an appeal to God or to some revered person or object, that one will speak the truth, keep a promise, remain faithful.” Ruthven is some kind of supernatural being, then, that Aubrey has sworn allegiance to.

Not knowing what to do, Aubrey becomes confused and distracted. Aubrey thinks about his oath and rationalizes his doing nothing, by thinking that he will not be believed if he tells people that he saw Ruthven die.

Aubrey becomes so distracted and disheveled that his unseen guardians hire a doctor to take care of him. Aubrey is then confined to the house, where he counts the days until his oath will be over. After one year passes, Aubrey finds out that his sister is to be married the next day. She has a locket around her neck with her fiancée’s picture in it. When Aubrey looks at the picture, he recognizes Ruthven’s face. He tries to stop the marriage, but Ruthven confronts him and reminds him that his oath will last until midnight of that night.

Aubrey becomes enraged and has a stroke. When midnight comes, and the year and a day has passed, Aubrey tells the story of Ruthven’s death then dies. The guardians are told and go to save Aubrey’s sister but they are too late. They find that she has been killed and that Ruthven has disappeared.

This story shows another incarnation of the soulless monster. The monster, Ruthven, appears in society about the same time that Aubrey does, indicating an identity between the two of them. Aubrey is transfixed by Ruthven and idolizes him, making him into some phantastical hero that he is not. This transfixing of Aubrey is akin to the “fascination with unconscious contents” that Jung has written about, stating that it can lead to a severance from reality and ultimately psychosis. (*Symbols of Transformation*,

Jung) Aubrey has confronted a monster that he is not prepared to deal with, and at last it possesses and then destroys him.

Aubrey has been orphaned and thus lost his mother, the primary recipient of his anima projection. Aubrey's encounter with Ianthe shows that again his soul has been projected outside himself. However, she is killed by Ruthven, that monstrous side of Aubrey released by the projection of his soul, or since we never actually see Ruthven there, perhaps Aubrey has himself killed her.

When Ianthe is killed, his anima has been destroyed and he becomes unbalanced. It is then only a matter of time, as in *Frankenstein*, until the monster will prevail.

Ruthven is killed by Greek bandits, but is apparently then brought back to life by the moon's rays. This is of course reminiscent of the moon's influence in *Frankenstein*. While Ruthven is on his deathbed, Aubrey is made to swear an oath by Ruthven, not to tell anyone about his death for one year and a day. This use of a common legal time period indicates the formal nature of this compact and perhaps that Aubrey is making an agreement with the greatest of all lawyers, the Devil.

The monster Ruthven is a part of Aubrey and thus Aubrey has made an oath to himself or a part of himself. By this oath, the monster has symbolically taken over Aubrey's will to act and now controls him. The monster's marriage to his sister again brings up the theme of incest, which occurs in all of the stories analyzed herein.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the inchoate forces of the early part of the century had fully developed. European imperialism, especially British imperialism, had reached its highest stage, and the developing social sciences had brought to Europeans a greater awareness of the forces and contradictions inherent in their advanced, industrial civilization. The short novel *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, published in 1886, was written by the Scottish lawyer and writer Robert Louis Stevenson. In this novel, Dr. Henry Jekyll attempts to

eliminate the “unbearable” conflicts within himself by separating the “evil” and the “good” sides of his nature, because these two sides are constantly fighting for pre-eminence within him. He is attempting to eliminate the tension of morality, which plagues all humankind. Jekyll is afraid that his “undignified” pleasures, which he considers evil, would lower his stature in the opinion of the “wise and the good” in London. I believe that the reason Frankenstein has become a doctor in films, when he wasn’t one, is because of the confusion or melding in the public consciousness, due primarily to the film versions, of Henry Jekyll and Victor Frankenstein.

The favoring opinion of the wise and good seems to be Jekyll’s primary motivation for doing good deeds, not the act itself or even some internal feeling of moral satisfaction. It seems that Jekyll has not internalized any moral beliefs. For Jekyll, something is evil only if a particular group that he defines as the wise and good disapprove of it. An act is wrong for Jekyll only if he is caught and criticized or punished for it. Since Jekyll sees both his good and evil sides as essential parts of his nature, and since there is no inherent difference between them to Jekyll, a separation of these two sides seems to offer the best solution for him.

Jekyll states that he has had all the privileges and natural abilities to guarantee for him “an honourable and distinguished future.” Until he neared the age of fifty, when the story takes place, he apparently led such a life as a successful London physician. However, bachelor Jekyll had over the years concealed his undignified pleasures, whatever they are, since they are never specifically named. He states that he concealed these unnamed pleasures because of “my imperious desire to carry my head high, and wear a more than commonly grave countenance before the public.” The use of the words “grave countenance” indicates that Jekyll is wearing a mask and the mask is the face of the grave or death. Jekyll may have a death-wish or may believe that he is already dead, spiritually speaking. Also, Jekyll’s “imper-

ous desire” is probably an imperialist desire, since this seems to describe an attitude of a colonizer toward the colonized. Britain, and the western world in general, attempted to repress or control its “primitive” desires, what was taboo, by projecting them onto its colonists and then controlling them.

This type of split consciousness is also portrayed from the other point of view in a book published in the United States years after Stevenson’s novel. It states, “It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.” (*The Souls of Black Folk*, DuBois, p. 3 of Bantam Classic)

Jekyll is a hypocrite, although he vehemently denies that he is one. Perhaps the good Dr. Jekyll protests too much about his being two-faced. Jekyll is also a conformist, who tailors his actions to please public opinion. This hypocrisy is probably what was unbearable to Jekyll and he looked for some way out of this cowardly conformity. W.E. Henley, the writer of the poem *Invictus*, seemed to play an important role in the creation of this story. Stevenson and Henley were co-authoring a play just before *Jekyll and Hyde* was written. They had worked in the past to co-author a play about a real person who was the model for Jekyll-Hyde. This real person was not a split personality, but was a respectable person by day who consciously hid his being a master criminal at night. The first draft of *Jekyll and Hyde* was this kind of a story, but Stevenson’s wife read this first draft and told him that he had missed the “allegorical” meaning inherent in the story. Stevenson burned his original and rewrote it as it is today. (*Dreams of Exile, Robert Louis Stevenson: A Biography*, Bell)

Henley was the classic imperialistic Victorian gentleman, who later discovered and published Kipling’s work, and his poem expresses his age’s optimism. *Invictus* expresses the diamet-

rical opposite message of Stevenson's story. Henley in *Invictus* states: "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul."

According to Jekyll, this double life of his, "...severed in me those provinces of good and ill which divide and compound man's dual nature." He had divided his good and evil to such an extent that these two sides were constantly at war, giving him no internal peace. Jekyll daydreamed that the good and evil within him could be confined and compartmentalized into separate, independent identities. The unjust part could then enjoy its pleasures without worrying about Jekyll's high aspirations and subsequent remorse. The good part could then concern itself with doing good and would never have to worry about "disgrace and penitence." Thus, each part would be purified of any contamination by the other part and the unbearable conflict would be eliminated.

Jekyll mixes a drug that helps him to realize his dream, at least partially. The description of this drug is kept very vague, much like the vagueness of the description of how the monster was imbued with life by Frankenstein. This drug creates, or perhaps liberates, a completely evil personality within Jekyll that is called Edward Hyde. In real life, Edward Hyde, the Duke of Clarendon, was a follower of Charles I, the only English King to be dethroned and executed, in 1649. This was similar to what occurred a century and a half later, during the French Revolution. Hyde went into exile to the continent with the Pretender and then returned with him when Bonnie Prince Charles returned to England to become Charles II. The historical Hyde was eventually accused of treason and was exiled from England for life.

When Jekyll takes the drug as himself, he turns into Hyde. When he takes the same drug as Hyde, he strangely turns back into Jekyll. Hyde is entirely evil, but Jekyll is a combination of good and evil. What Jekyll has done to himself is a kind of reverse alchemy, in which from an impure base metal, Jekyll, he creates a pure but baser metal, Hyde.

Although he brags about his "good" side, Jekyll's good is real-

ly a lie. It is prudence, not goodness. Jekyll states that his worst fault, before he created Hyde, was "...a certain gaiety of disposition such as made the happiness of many." This is not a fault, but rather the last vestiges of Jekyll's morality. That gaiety was the last remnant of Jekyll's feelings of sympathy for others.

Feelings of sympathy, not conformism, are the true foundation for morality. In Hinduism, one's identification with the other person, referred to by the phrase "this thou art," allows one to attain the sympathy to treat others well. The golden rule, espoused by Christ as well as Confucius, is the same idea.

Jekyll's good is based entirely on his "imperious," or, as said, *imperialist*, wish to be thought superior to others. Franz Fanon shows the duality inherent in imperialism in his books *Wretched of the Earth* and *Black Skin White Masks*. There is an explicit duality created in the colonized and an implicit duality created within the colonizer. Jekyll's good is driven by entirely selfish motives. Since both his good and his evil arise from non-sympathetic motives, the monster is already himself. But as Hyde, the stakes are raised.

When Jekyll drinks the potion that turns him into Hyde, he feels agonies that amount to birth pangs. As he describes his later, post-partum sensations, "I felt younger, lighter, happier in body; within I was conscious of a heady recklessness... a solution of the bonds of obligation, an unknown but not an innocent freedom of the soul. I knew myself, at the first breath of this new life, to be more wicked, tenfold more wicked, sold a slave to my original evil; and the thought, in that moment, braced and delighted me like wine."

Hyde, referred to as a slave to evil, has greater freedom than Jekyll, since Hyde has thrown off Jekyll's artificial bonds of obligation. Hyde feels intoxicated by this freedom because, unlike Jekyll, he will not be bound by the opinions of others. Hyde has no duties toward others because he is pure selfishness. For Hyde, everything is permitted. He has no conscience. The artificial, and thus the weak, social restraints of Jekyll have been

broken and Jekyll's nihilism has come out into the open in all its ugliness, namely Hyde. This late 19th-century nihilism, which Nietzsche and Dostoyevsky and Turgenev were also writing about, had swept the western world. Another face of this nihilism, the philosophy of Aestheticism, was both praised and warned against in a work that appeared in 1890. This was *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, by Oscar Wilde, who was one of the primary theoreticians of Aestheticism. The perfect art work, that allows its subject to sell his soul in exchange for his becoming that perfect image, results in a monster and the death of both creator and creation. There is also a transference connection because the subject of the painting turns into the image seen by the painter, his friend. He becomes someone else's image of himself and thus the child of both of them. Aestheticism jettisons moral values in favor of aesthetic values and has similarities to Nietzsche's aesthetically-tinged nihilism. Another 19th-century figure, Soren Kierkegaard, warned about the spiritual dangers of this purely aesthetic approach to life because of its elimination of moral values.

When "Jekyll" looks at Hyde in the mirror, he feels no repugnance, but rather a "leap of welcome." Jekyll says, about Hyde, that "this too was myself." Hyde is the true reflection of Jekyll. Jekyll had cultivated his selfishness over the years and destroyed any sympathetic attachments. Hyde was the logical culmination of this process. Everyone, except Jekyll, is repulsed by Hyde because he has a purely evil nature. Hyde seems also to be symbolic of the anal stage of "infantile sexuality," since the producer of Hyde is also the only person not repelled by him.

Hyde is described as an "ugly idol," a "man of stone," and a "juggernaut," indicating Hyde is god-like. A "juggernaut" is a large idol, representing the god Vishnu, that is dragged through the streets at religious festivals in India. Vishnu, in the Hindu religion, is an incarnation of Shiva, who is the creator and destroyer god. While the juggernaut moves through the Indian streets, worshippers have been known to throw themselves

under this huge car only to be crushed to death. The followers of the god thus sacrifice themselves. This use of a Hindu religious term also indicates that Hyde symbolizes imperialism in general and the colonized in particular, since at the time India was the “jewel in the crown” of the English empire. One of Queen Victoria’s titles was “Empress of India.”

Hyde, as an incarnation of a “stone idol” and “juggernaut,” represents a pagan deity. Pagan deities, in Christian terms, generally represent Satan or the followers of Satan since Christian theology is by nature dualistic. In *Paradise Lost*, the pre-Christian middle-eastern deities are the angels who fall with Satan.

Hyde first appears in the novel in a story told about him by other characters. In this story, Hyde runs into an eight-to-ten-year-old girl at a street corner at 3 AM and calmly tramples over her. This young girl is running through the night, like a nature-nymph, and is looking for a doctor to help her family. Perhaps she is looking for Dr. Jekyll himself.

This young girl is a perfect symbol for Jekyll’s soul or anima, which Jekyll has projected away from himself. Hyde has no concern for this other part of Jekyll, since he has been entirely separated from her. Since Hyde has no soul, he has no concern for anyone. Hyde and this young girl collide at an intersection, indicating their tendency to join together, to make Jekyll whole again. However, once the separation occurs, they can never be joined again, even if they collide. Also, since Hyde’s stature is smaller and his age is younger than Jekyll’s, it appears that if Hyde and this girl were added together, so to speak, the sum would be about Jekyll’s size and age. This is another indication that the girl is Jekyll’s anima and Hyde is his internal monster.

Hyde is portrayed as a lower-class Londoner, who lives in the slums. He is quick to violence and indifferent to the injuries and the death he causes. Stevenson, who was familiar with the slums of Edinburgh, having spent much time there in his younger years, uses Hyde as a symbol of Jekyll’s “lower” nature. The slums of London were considered off limits, and thus taboo, to London’s

middle and upper classes.

Hyde commits a murder, while there is a full moon. Sir Danvers Carew, an elderly member of Parliament, meets Hyde in the street and seems to politely ask him something. A maid in a nearby house watches the scene from a window overlooking the street, and is transfixed by the moon shining on Carew's face as he speaks to Hyde. The moon again plays an important part in the violence of the monster, as well as its birth. Hyde, who has Jekyll's heavy oak cane with him, becomes angry at Carew's words, whatever they are, and beats him to death. Perhaps Hyde, who is among other things a symbolic colonist, is killing Carew, a representative of the government. Further, Hyde kills him with the "Cain" part of Jekyll's nature. Incidentally, Robert Louis Stevenson was very upset that the English government did not protect its representative, General Gordon, who was killed in the Sudan by a non-Christian religious leader, the Mahdi. Perhaps Hyde's killing of Carew is symbolic of this event, too.

Hyde's anger is described as an "ape-like fury," indicating his pre-human or inhuman nature. Henry Jekyll is Harry Jekyll, who is perhaps a Hairy Jackal. Jackals, like wolves, are scavengers who in folklore have been associated with werewolves. And many writers have seen *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* as a thinly disguised werewolf story. Jackals have always been closely associated with the Devil. Also, *The Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin had been published in 1859 and had had a profound affect on the public consciousness. The human and animal continuum was a ripe subject for portrayal and debate.

Hyde begins to spontaneously replace Jekyll, toward the end of the novel. Jekyll changes into Hyde more and more frequently, even without the use of the drug. This indicates that Hyde is now the outer and the inner nature of the man, and that the mask of Jekyll will no longer suffice. At the end of the story, Jekyll is using the drug only to turn back into Jekyll, since he is automatically turning into Hyde.

The inner nature of Jekyll, which has always been Hyde or

contained Hyde, is finally realizing its heretofore potential self. Hyde has completely possessed the body of Jekyll. The drug eventually runs out and Jekyll is unable to duplicate it, since it was based on an erroneously mixed batch of chemicals.

Without the drug, Jekyll turns permanently into Hyde. And once the monster is separated from the soul, it cannot be stopped by the host. Hyde commits suicide when he is about to be captured and “dies” back into the unconscious, to be born again when called up by another man who has exiled his soul, Dracula.

Dracula, published in 1897, by the Irish lawyer and writer Bram Stoker, is the most complex of the stories examined in this essay. There are lots of characters and the scene ranges from London to Eastern Europe. The monster in this book, Dracula, is a vampire who is hundreds of years old. The leader of the heroic slayers of the monster, Dr. Van Helsing, states that vampires have been “...known everywhere that men have been.” The novel indicates that vampires have been particularly active as camp-followers of conquerors, such as the Vikings and the Huns. Dracula proudly claims descent from Attila the Hun. Perhaps there is a certain identity between conquerors and vampires. In fact, the metaphorical entry of the word “vampyre” into the English language in 1732 referred to a political despot, living off the people. As the article satirically stated “...nothing less than the Power of a Treasury can raise up a compleat Vampyre.”

The vampire is immortal, or theoretically so, symbolic of a supernatural or god-like being. Immortal figures are immortal because they have a permanent place in the human mind.

Count Dracula is from Eastern Europe and thus a foreigner to the English. The British have always feared invasion of their island and Dracula is yet another manifestation of this fear. Since Dracula is essentially a walking corpse, the taboo relating to dead bodies would relate to him, too. And, as a corpse and thus “waste,” he is

symbolic also of anality. Since his pleasures and aggression are oral, Dracula represents both aspects of "infantile sexuality" and thus is doubly taboo.

Also, speaking about the modern literary vampire, Christopher Frayling in *Vampyres: Lord Byron to Count Dracula* states, "Whether the Satanic Lord was dominating and self-destructive, the literary (as opposed to the folkloric) vampire he represented may well have had something to do with attitudes towards (and projections about) English imperialism." And in *Das Kapital*, Karl Marx used vampire and werewolf analogies in describing the "dead capitalist" who drains life from the "living labour" of his workers. (*Vampyres: Lord Byron to Count Dracula*)

A traditional vampire has no shadow or reflection since it *is* a shadow or reflection, dependent entirely upon humanity. A vampire cannot exist on its own, it must be created by mankind. A vampire is also a shape-shifter, in that it can transform itself into a number of different kinds of animals, such as a wolf and a bat.

The vampire can change itself into a mist and can also "...come on moonlight rays as elemental dust." Again, there is the moon connection to the monster's appearance. And monsters, including Frankenstein's monster and the vampire, can be born from the rays of the moon. In *Dracula*, the three "weird sisters" of Dracula, materialize from moon rays. The novel refers to "weird sisters," playing off the three witches in *Macbeth*, who in turn resemble the fates, another incarnation of the Triple-Goddess of mythology. Macbeth, like Dracula, is a military conqueror.

Like the three aspects of the moon goddess in mythology, the "sisters" of Dracula represent the dark and enchanting side of nature. The moon enchants and transfixes us with its beauty. Dr. Van Helsing states at one point, that the vampire's "...power ceases, as does that of all evil things, at the coming of day." Since the moon has the power to enchant only at night, this is another connection with the moon's influence.

Dracula is described as having a "child-brain," as well as a

“criminal brain.” Since Dracula has been in a tomb for centuries, at least during the daytime, his brain is apparently not as flexible and creative as a living, human brain. This indicates that the brain of Dracula is a more primitive brain, or a more primitive part of the brain, evolutionarily speaking. It is more an animal brain than a human brain. The “child-brain” description may indicate that this monster is perhaps a new-born, Victorian monster, and that its present incarnation begins with its attempt to change its location to London. The “child-brain” may also relate to the infantile sexuality of Dracula.

Dr. Van Helsing, in comparing this monster to a criminal, shows that some criminals, like the insane, suffer from an *idée fixe*. As Van Helsing describes it, a criminal who is predestined to commit crimes, commits the same crime over and over again. This sounds very much like a repetition compulsion.

After Van Helsing offers his view, Mina Harker states, “[Dracula] is of imperfectly formed mind. Thus, in difficulty, he has to seek resource in habit.” Like other monsters, Dracula must fall back on habitual, repetitive, machine-like behavior because he no longer has a whole, living human mind. He is the oldest part of the mind, in evolutionary terms, that operates primarily on an elementary, stimulus-response basis. In Bram Stoker’s notes for his novel, he describes the vampire doing everything instinctively. (*Vampyres: Lord Byron To Count Dracula*)

Mina Harker goes on to say, “. . .as he is criminal he is selfish; and as his intellect is small and his action is based on selfishness, he confines himself to one purpose. That purpose is remorseless.” Dracula is remorseless because he is pure will or desire, separated from all moral considerations. He is single-minded about his goals, so he can remain fixated upon the efficacy of his actions. Dracula’s will is strong, perhaps as strong as a will can be, but it is not informed by any morality or conscience. This is a description of the soulless monster.

Where does this monster, Dracula, come from? At the beginning of the novel, Jonathan Harker, a newly minted lawyer, is

traveling in Europe toward Dracula's castle in Transylvania. Harker has been sent by his law firm in England to finalize the documents regarding Dracula's purchasing land in England. Dracula has asked this law firm to find him an estate in London.

Harker's trip to Transylvania is a voyage into one of the oldest parts of Europe, Eastern Europe, which for a westerner symbolized at that time a voyage into the unconscious. In this unconscious realm, Harker confronts an image of the monster and is almost destroyed or possessed by it. Harker is an orphan and separated from his fiancée, Mina. Harker has no other significant women in his life. Mina is the only woman upon whom he has projected his anima. This type of projection is an inevitable and natural result of such a relationship. While he is so far away from her, however, she can't provide the necessary balance for him. So the monster is born. "A Mina" backwards spells anima.

The identity between Dracula and Harker is indicated by Dracula's dressing up in Harker's clothes and impersonating him in the villages. The apparent reason for this is to provide a cover for his planned murder of Harker, which involves leaving him for his "sisters." Also, this identity is added to by Harker's imitating Dracula by crawling down the castle wall like a lizard, as he has seen Dracula do. This lizard comparison also emphasizes the monstrous nature of Dracula, as a cold-blooded serpent-like creature. Other characters, such as Van Helsing, also have some common features with Dracula, but Harker seems to be the primary source.

At one point in the novel, Mina Harker is forced to drink Dracula's blood. Dracula makes her do this in order to give them a common consciousness. This is analogous to Christian ritual, wherein a person becomes one with Christ by drinking His blood. From this point on, Dracula and Mina can read each other's minds and this shows that they have become two sides of the same consciousness. That is, they are the two sides of Harker's consciousness, namely the soul and the monster. Also, since Jonathan and Mina are married at this point, they are "one flesh" symbolically.

Like the other monsters discussed earlier, Dracula is a broken off part of the self that arises after a man has become separated from his soul or anima. Usually, the monster destroys the host, whose psyche it has taken over. But in this novel, Harker has a substitute who dies for him, Quincy Morris.

At the end of the novel, which is seven years after the deaths of Dracula and Quincy Morris, the Harkers already have a son. This child is named Quincy. The Harkers' child represents a rebirth of the spirit, that almost died because of the monster Dracula's escape from Jonathan Harker's unconscious.

As we have seen, Byron was the model and inspiration for the Frankenstein monster, as well as the modern vampire. Byron had a great influence on 19th-century European culture. Bertrand Russell surprisingly devotes an entire chapter to Byron, a poet, in his *A History of Western Philosophy*. As Russell states:

When we consider men, not as artists or discoverers, not as sympathetic or antipathetic to our own tastes, but as forces, as causes of change in the social structure, in judgments of value, or in intellectual outlook, we find that the course of events in recent times has necessitated much readjustment in our estimates, making some men less important than they had seemed, and others more so. Among those whose importance is greater than it seemed, Byron deserves a high place...[H]is way of feeling and his outlook on life were transmitted and developed and transmuted until they became so widespread as to be factors in great events.

Byron influenced the way the early nineteenth century saw the monster, through his influence on Mary Godwin Shelley and John Polidori. However, what about the later part of the nineteenth century, when Hyde appeared, in 1886, and Dracula appeared, in 1897?

Hyde and, to a greater extent, Dracula have some slight resemblance to Byron, but as stated earlier, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and *Dracula* seem to be more about an imperialistic personality than about Byron. What does connect

these early and late 19th-century stories is one of Byron's heroes, who was often associated with him in the public mind. This person, who died at about the same time Byron did, is the only figure who overshadows Byron in that era. This was Napoleon Bonaparte. As Russell states about Napoleon's return from Elba after his defeat by England and the other European powers, "During the 100 Days Byron proclaimed his wish for Napoleon's victory, and when he heard of Waterloo he said, 'I'm damned sorry for it.'"

Byron and Polidori toured Waterloo in 1816, just before they went to Geneva to meet Shelley, Mary Goodwin and Claire Clairmont. Napoleon was used as a bogeyman by English adults to keep children in line. The children were told that the Giant Napoleon would eat them up if they didn't act properly. Napoleon was seen by many in Europe at that time as the Anti-Christ. Also, since he appeared on the world stage, it seems that megalomaniacs choose to identify with and to become Napoleon more than almost any other historical figure.

As Russell further states about the connection between Byron and Napoleon, "Byron was not obliged to confine himself to the Levant and the Middle Ages in his search for heroes, since it was not difficult to invest Napoleon with a romantic mantle. The influence of Napoleon on the imagination of 19th-century Europe was very profound...His ghost stalks through the age, the only force which is strong enough to stand up against industrialism and commerce, pouring scorn on pacifism and shop keeping."

The Emperor Napoleon was the greatest single imperialist of the 19th century and like Dracula was a military conqueror. When Napoleon divorced Josephine, so he could marry a woman who would give him a son and heir, he said to her, "I shall always love you, but politics has no heart; it has only a head." Napoleon, obviously referring to himself—he had said on another occasion "I am the state"—seemed to have jettisoned his soul to reach his exalted position. Napoleon did so because

he didn't believe he, or anyone else, had one. He believed that, "Men are like ciphers; they acquire their value merely from their position." This is the anti-Kantian, anti-moral position that people are mere instruments or means to a goal and not ends in themselves. However, after his empire crumbled, he remarked, very much like Frankenstein's monster, "I was never in truth my own master; I was always governed by circumstances." The Man of Destiny had become the Puppet of Chance. He finally saw what Stevenson portrayed so well in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

Behind all these 19th-century monsters stands the figure of Napoleon Bonaparte, as their model and inspiration. Will and Ariel Durant, in their volume *The Age of Napoleon* in their *History of Civilization* series, summed up modern monsters and their "father" Napoleon when they wrote, "Tocqueville put it well: he was as great as a man can be without virtue..." (p. 259)

After “The Vanishing”

by Richard Tayson

I didn't know what the movie was about
but I was angry at you for not wanting
health insurance or western
medicine, I phoned 777-FILM
and found the closest theater with a 2:45,
I put on my winter coat and said
“it's your life, not mine, I'm going to a show.”
I didn't know it would be about losing
the person you love in the prime
of your life together, I stood
on the corner of Henry and Orange
and heard the voice of Louise Hay,
her meditations you kept playing
over and over until I hoped
she became mute in some tragic accident,
I sat down in the dark to forget you.
And then the lovers were in love,
they drove into a tunnel
and ran out of gas,
they argued and she walked
into the fog and he walked
into the sun, and she thought
about dying alone, without anyone
to rock her safely in the cradle
of his arms, he drove
out of the tunnel and found her.
He didn't know that the first loss
was preparation for the big one,

TAYSON · AFTER "THE VANISHING"

the one you sometimes see in the movies
where the evil person looks sweet,
a man with a broken arm
selling key rings, someone
you could see in a convenience store
and speak with, as she does, leaning
against his car as he shows her
the key ring with her boyfriend's initials
engraved on the front, so she gets in
and feels the seat plush as a mother's
breast, he takes the poisoned handkerchief
and covers her mouth, as if with one
deep kiss, at the exact right moment,
and she faints, the way I fainted
the day the doctors told us
you were going to die. Not today
or tomorrow, but soon, and the camera
goes underground, the leading woman
wakes and is not in her lover's arms
or in her own bed, the earth
packed around her tight as her lover's
lips sealing her lips,
she screams, beats her fists
against the coffin's lid, and I don't
wait for the final credits but run
home and open the door, saying
your name over and over, bathroom
to bedroom, and you are there, naked
in bed, silent, not dead, wanting
me to touch you, palm, back,
nipple, mouth, we make love
in the uncaged air.

The Chase

by Richard Tayson

I don't remember where he was taking us
but the radio was on,
Father tapped his wedding ring
against the steering wheel
and whistled like he always did
when he was away from my mother.
Maybe we were going to get a fifth
of something or other,
up Telephone Road, I wasn't fighting
with my brother, I was lulled
by the even keel of the engine, the car
so full of sun you would have thought
life was bliss, narcotic, I was
numb when the red sports car
pulled in front of us. Father hit
the brakes, my seat belt
tightened, as if someone had reached
his hands up through the chassis
and was pulling me by the waist,
but my body lurched out of his grip
and we stopped before we smashed into
that car. The couple inside
didn't know they'd pulled in front
of us, they were drugged by the smell
of the ocean on a clear day,
I think they even kissed, and Father

pounded his fist against the horn
and said *goddamn guy's drivin' worse
than a woman*. I looked
at my brother, and the Porsche
pulled away, but Father couldn't
stand it, he leaned out his window
and yelled *whose ol' lady taught you
to drive*, and the guy
heard, his arm appeared, he flipped
my father the finger and that was it,
Father gunned it
and the guy saw us coming so he
gunned it, we flew
up the onramp to Highway 101 doing
60, the Porsche darted easily
in and out of traffic, we were
losing him but I was proud
to be on the racetrack with such a
competent driver. I remembered Father
saying *when you hit a guy
you have to lean your weight into it*,
so he floored it, we almost hit
a school bus, Father smiled
as if anger made him happy, his eyes
lit up bright as radar in the pupils
of the 6 Million Dollar Man, I was
staring at a hole in the seatcover
where Mother's shoulder usually was
when my brother spotted the Porsche
turning into the J.C. Penney Center
where Mother liked to shop.
Father cut off two cars and

GLOBAL CITY REVIEW

made a quick right, I thought
he would fly through the plate
glass store front or smash
that car to pieces, but he
slammed the station wagon into park
and jumped out like Clark Kent
bounding up through the phone booth
to show his two young boys how
to treat people in public, he grabbed
the driver's door and raised
his fist and reached in
to pull the guy out, when his face
turned blood red, his mouth
slackened, his body
went limp, as if he'd never seen
a woman before.

Chicken

by Elizabeth England

NEITHER HAD GIVEN MUCH THOUGHT ABOUT WHERE they were going so when his older brother Marshall began to jimmy the lock to the old boat house, the boy just watched and held the bag like he was told. It was March and the sky was black, and though he could always find the Big Dipper, he saw no stars bright enough to follow. He was cold first in his feet and that feeling moved through him, numbing him slowly and making his lips feel large and furry when he spoke. "Sure we should be doing this?" Marshall stopped picking at the door and turned around. On his pocket knife there was paint that he slid off with a long fingernail.

"I'm sure," he said. "Are you?" Marshall was the oldest son and had gone out often in the night without anyone noticing anything different in the morning. This was the boy's first time.

"Not so much anymore," the boy said. He heard a rustle, loud then quiet, in the thistle bed. He dropped the bag and then bent and searched the hard ground, touching some gravel and loose grass that came away easily in his hands like dead hair, before he found the cans and the paper bag that hid them. Marshall laughed and said it was nothing, just a raccoon.

"You a scaredy cat?" He was still looking at the boy. His blond hair was long like a girl's and when he tried to push clumps behind his ears, they just fell in front of his eyes so he had to squint to see things right.

"I'm not saying that," the boy said.

"What are you saying then?" His brother began picking

again. The wood was dry and splintered in pieces and each time the blade cut into it, the sound was dull and whiny as if the older boy was sawing cardboard.

“Nothing,” the boy said.

“That’s what I figured. Just help me out, here.”

When they pulled at it, the screen door came off the hinges easily without much noise, and since it was rusted and no good anymore, Marshall set it against the side of the house before trying the second one. The main door was thick and swollen and stuck in its frame and opened only when both boys used their shoulders and leaned hard into it. Mice ran forward when it finally gave away and their bodies shone silver in the dim moonlight. A few stopped and sat on their hind legs, sniffing the ocean and the wind coming off of it. Their thin fur ruffled some and then fell flat as they moved off into the sea grass. The boy hid near his brother.

“You are a chicken, aren’t you?”

“Who says?” The boy moved away. He was still holding the bag with the beer cans and he could feel the wetness of them on his chest.

Marshall just laughed and held his head up to the moon, his teeth shiny like diamonds. “Give me one of those.” His brother reached into the bag and snapped the metal cap and wore it like a ring. With his head back again, he held the can far from his lips and poured the yellow stuff down into him. The boy watched his throat open and close until he stopped and wiped his mouth with his hand. “Try some.” The can was green and white and black and had a dent on the side. The boy held onto it for awhile, holding it up to his mouth a few times before taking a sip. “It’s not going to bite you, for chrissakes.”

“I know that,” the boy said. He took a sip and then one more before giving the can back to his brother. The beer was warm

and bitter and didn't go down as nice as he had hoped, waiting as long as he had to try it.

"It's good, right?"

The boy shrugged and his brother just laughed again. "You wouldn't know something good if he came up and grabbed you."

"Who says?"

"I says." Marshall curled his fingers around the can, lining them up on the seam and then squashing the metal in his palm. He tossed it back in the bag the boy was holding and walked into the boat house.

The air inside was warm and solid like pudding as though no one had used any since last August, and the smell of things damp and molding, made them both wince. Marshall quickly opened three of the four windows and struggled with the last one, reaching for his knife again to pick at more paint. Blue chips fell in a pile on the dirt floor while the older boy scraped at the latch, stopping every so often to try and lift the window. He nicked himself with the knife tip once and the boy watched as his brother looked at the cut and then stuck the finger in his mouth. His eyes closed and his lips held tightly onto it and he sucked until the finger seemed all right again and then he bent the knuckle once and then again and watched it curl and straighten like it was supposed to do. Then he went back to picking.

There was no light from the Fredricksons' porch this time of year so the boy had trouble seeing the lantern that usually hung near the bathroom curtain. He tripped over an old tricycle and a croquet mallet which turned his foot back so it hurt just a little. Marshall looked up both times and said, "Easy, now," and loosened the window, sliding it up and down in its runners. Finally, the boy felt the wire handle of the oil lamp, its glass cracked, but still in place. He carefully lifted it down and set it on the card

table and then, in the darkness, ran his hand over the picnic bench, looking for a dry matchbook. His fingers touched a few cards, damp and curling around the edges, and a golf tee for picking corn from back molars, and when he did find matches, they were hidden in the canoe next to empty cigarette packs. He straightened the wick and lit it after a few tries and the yellow shone soft first and then caught fire. In the new light, he saw that the boat house, though older and smaller than he remembered, never changed much from year to year: big towels left to dry on canvas chairs, a *Wheat Thins* box tipped over and full of ants, his own life vest wedged under the floorboard to keep water from coming in during the winter months and all the things his father would fix one day: a diving board with no spring, a cracked snorkle and the Sears washer still missing a lid. There were at least thirteen hats of his mother's, in faded bright colors with big brims, carefully pinned to the wall like butterflies. It was quiet with only the sound of water going over rocks and the dogs running loose.

"Check it out," Marshall whispered and the sudden thwacking noise made the boy turn. He carried the lantern forward with him and saw his brother jabbing an oar tip at a large wasps' nest. Wedged against the window molding, it was an old nest, gray and unraveling, and though the boy couldn't be certain, he thought there was no chance of anything living left in it. His brother needed more light and reached his arm towards the lantern, saying, "Give it here," his hand grabbing for the handle. The boy listened for any stirring and when he was sure there was none, he offered up the lamp, standing back as he helped Marshall, the older boy's fingers now shaking, hook the wire on a nail. Though his brother was taller than him, it was not by very much and every time the older boy swung the oar, he missed the nest completely. Black marks sprang out on the wall

like bruises and the lamp, heavy on the small nail, bent the metal downwards. "Look out," his brother said. The boy saw sweat rings under Marshall's arms and knew then that the nest was still active. The wasps buzzed softly at first and even in the poor light, the boy could see at least ten of them on the rafter.

"I thought you weren't supposed to go at them like that," the boy said. "Dad always uses the spray." The boy was allergic to wasps and normally carried a small vial of penicillin in his jacket. He knew how to load the syringe, test for air bubbles and stick the needle anywhere in his skin as long as it was bare. His thigh was the best place, the muscle there was the most easy to slide through, but he knew how to prick himself anywhere, close to the elbow bone, even. If stung, he would immediately turn red and his throat would close and the saliva would evaporate in the boy's mouth. There would be time to get to the hospital, but not much, and the boy knew that in the wintertime, the path back to town was muddy and slow.

"It's fine, just stay back," Marshall said. "You got your stuff anyway, right?" He reached for a fishing pole of their father's. It was wooden with a cat gut line and no matter how much force he used, the pole didn't bend easily enough to flip the nest out of the window sill. The boy watched as the older boy climbed onto the card table and got his balance, the aluminum legs pressing deep into the soft dirt. Marshall's arms were quick-moving with muscles that flexed big and round whenever he jabbed at the nest's middle. He paused to examine the pole's end, arching the wood backwards and then forward with his fingertip, and then he looked up at the nest once more before poking into the darkness. The buzzing grew louder and a couple of wasps flew into Marshall's face before landing on the window, their slim legs unsteady on the cold glass. "You got your shot, Pete." Marshall was crouched down low and he looked up only this once to see

his brother's face. The boy looked away from him towards the nest and said, "Don't worry about it."

Marshall smiled then and stood up, swinging the pole towards the nest once again. "You had me worried there, Petey."

"You're missing it," the boy said, squinting into the corner. There were a cluster of red and green and blue buoys pinned to a beam and they made a muffled sound each time the older boy missed the nest and hit them. Soon, they crashed to the floor, one of them cracking in half like a hollow egg. "Just leave it alone, Marsh."

Only a few wasps were circling the small boat house, their flight slow and undirected. They landed on the *Wheat Thins* and two fell in the box, their wings stiff and unused to movement. The boy waited for them to climb up the wax paper liner, and when they did, there were crumbs of food on their backs and legs and when they tried to fly, they stumbled onto the table. More flew out when Marshall ripped a small hole in the nest's bottom.

"It's black up in there," his brother said. "I thought there'd be honeycomb or something." Marshall was close to the nest now. He reached his finger up and touched the flimsy outer layers and then looked at his skin covered with silver powder. When he withdrew his finger, more wasps crept out and some dangled from the fraying wood pulp by their skinny legs.

"Only honey bees have honey," the boy said. He knew that any kind of bee or wasp or hornet or yellow jacket could sting whether they made honey or not. He knew that he was supposed to knock them down and disorient them if they flew at him. He knew how to stamp until he was sure they were dead. He knew that if one landed on him, it would probably sting him and he would swell immediately. His thighs would become too bloated to walk and his hands would no longer fit in his pockets. "That's not such a great idea," he said, watching his brother stick his finger in the nest.

"I think there's some honey in there," Marshall said.

"There isn't, I swear it," the boy said. "Don't mess around, o.k.?"

Marshall withdrew his hand quickly and looked at his finger. "I think one got me." He squeezed the tip of his thumb. "One of them definitely got me."

"We should just get out of here."

All wasps had stingers, the boy knew this. They held them to their chests like daggers and if unalarmed, they just left them in the resting position. Only bumblebees died after they stung something. The boy had seen movies about all this and knew that only wasps could sting twice, three times even. If sluggish, the wasp was most likely waiting to let go of his stinger.

"Just quit worrying," Marshall said, steadying himself on the card table. Its metal top was sagging some and its legs were almost buckling beneath him. He stretched his arm as far as it would go and gently nudged the nest's bottom. It rocked a little with each push, but wouldn't fall. The boy picked up the bag and put the cans back in it, the brown paper now shredding and coming away in his hands. He cradled the beer cans and moved slowly towards the door, stopping when he felt the knob press into him. He watched the nest teeter, and listened as Marshall talked softly to the wasps, saying, "now, now," whenever one flew out and made him drop the pole between the wall cracks. It was warm in the boat house and though the boy was sweating, he kept all his buttons and zippers done up so he would have as little skin as possible exposed. He pushed the door with his backside, grinding his feet in the dirt for leverage, but it wouldn't move.

"The door's stuck," the boy said.

"It's probably from all the rain, just push." The older boy didn't turn around, but kept focused on the nest still clinging to

the window. It was tattered now, with thin gray ribbons occasionally falling to the floor.

"I think you pretty much got it," the boy said. "It's wrecked as anything."

"They're not dead yet." Marshall was on his toes, his sneakers bending and leaving the skin of his heels uncovered. The boy watched a wasp land on the table and walk clumsily towards his brother's foot, its stinger dragging behind like a stick. It suddenly fell to the side with its wings covered tightly over its heart. The buzzing went on for a while longer, even after the wasp stopped moving. Its wings flapped and rubbed over its legs and the buzzing went on and on until there was quiet and the wasp was dead. "Get me something longer and then we'll go," Marshall said, dropping the pole for good and standing still. He grabbed an old broom, but the wood handle split and gave way as soon as he swung it towards the nest.

The boy stopped pushing the door and looked for a golf club or a chair leg, but there was nothing long enough or thin enough or blunt enough to topple the nest without piercing the outer layers where the eggs were stored. Marshall kept shaking his head and saying no, that's no good, whenever the boy held up things that he was certain would down the nest. Finally, the boy found another oar, larger than the first, with a narrow, slightly bowed, paddle, and he handed it to his brother. "This'll work," he said to the older boy. "I'm sure of it."

The wasps had quieted. There were only queens alive during the cold months and they knew how to guard a nest against anything. The boy knew they would not bother anyone unless hassled and so he begged Marshall to stop, please stop.

"One of them got me," Marshall said. "Now I've got to get them. Besides you have your stuff so just relax." Marshall looked over at the boy. "I'll do the needle if that's what's bothering you."

Some queens died from the raw air blowing in and others had gone back into the nest while the boys readied themselves for another try. It was getting light outside and the fog horn's bleating was all the boy could hear this far away from town. He looked out and saw the eddy half-covered with sea foam. The smell of salt and dead clam meat was strong and though the windows were narrow, the boy hoped he could make it through one if he had to get out of there quickly.

"Hold my ankles," Marshall told him.

The boy was back by the door, leaning into it with all his weight, and the walk over to the table seemed like a long one. He watched Marshall roll over a wasp he'd just batted down. "Come here," the older boy said. "This thing's not going to hurt you." He pulled a wing from the dead body and held it up to the light.

"I want to go, Marsh." The boy looked again at the window.

"Just come here for a second and then I'll get you out." Marshall stared at the boy and fingered the wasp, plucking another wing and holding it up again to the light before blowing it like a feather into the room. Still holding the cans, the boy walked over and looked. It was a paper wasp which was the most common kind, and though it could still hurt him, the boy felt better seeing it on its back with the stinger tucked high to its chest.

"Let's go, now," the boy said, returning to the door. He still heard the buzzing and knew that at least fifty wasps were in the boat house. Marshall grabbed the boy's hood and pulled him back towards the table.

"Right after you hold my ankles. I got to get this thing down."

"Who says?" The boy was close to his brother and could smell the older boy's skin going off like milk. His hood was still being held and when the boy yanked at the fabric, Marshall's hold tightened.

"I says." Marshall grabbed the oar and stood up again. "And

because one got me. Now, hold my ankles." He smiled at the boy. "Please," he said, and once the boy gripped him, he turned back toward the nest. There were wasps everywhere and the boy couldn't keep track of their flight anymore. He saw one land on his father's golf tee and then another fly out the window. "Tighter, Pete." The boy hugged his brother to him. The jeans rubbed against his cheek and he felt the scratching and the sore that was beginning to flower there. He held tighter and tighter while Marshall leaned farther forward. The wasps prattled louder. The boy knew there was little chance of their both landing on him and then stinging this early in the season. He also knew that if stung, he had only eight minutes before he stopped breathing.

"I almost got it," Marshall said, and when the boy saw the nest move, he believed him. He waited, gripping his brother's ankles so that he felt the bones and the tendons thin as chicken wings. He watched the nest cling to the molding no matter how hard his brother hit it. The nest was there when he closed his eyes and it was there still when he opened them. It stayed up high and wouldn't come down. A swarm of wasps, groggy and light-headed, flew forward, black like exhaust smoke. The boy watched a few land, trip over one another, and fall to the floor. He let go of his brother and backed up slowly to get closer to the door that wouldn't open no matter how hard he kicked at it. "Hold me," his brother called out and the boy came back and stuck his hands in Marshall's deep cuffs.

There were a number of things he knew about wasps. If one landed near him, he knew not to move. He also knew that running drew the wasp closer so he stood quiet and still while he watched one land on his brother's back. Its stinger was dragging and then caught on the cotton of the older boy's shirt. When the wasp freed itself, it moved up Marshall's spine, stopping every few jumps to rest. It was headed for the older boy's collar and the ring of skin that circled the top of the shirt.

“Don’t move,” the boy whispered. He had a fly swatter next to his bed at home and if he heard buzzing, he awoke quickly and began hitting the air. He was a good shot, better than his brothers, and knew that if he could find something flat and thin, he could kill the wasp without it having time to draw the stinger. “There’s a big one on your back.”

“Knock it off,” Marshall said, down low and holding steady. He was scared, the boy could see it in his eyes which were round and pale blue and no longer squinty. His face was red. “Just swat it off.”

“I can’t find anything,” the boy said, letting go of his brother’s legs and looking for something.

“Use your hand,” Marshall said, still squatting. A queen was near his neck and though his hair covered much of his skin, there was some left naked where a wasp could easily crawl if it wanted.

The boy picked up logs and old baseball bats and an iron fire poker, too sharp to be of use to them. “I got it,” the boy said, rolling up an old magazine and swiping the wasp to the floor. “There, you’re okay, now.” He smiled when his brother gave the boy his special handshake, over the thumb and across the middle finger three times with the pinkie.

Marshall then stood up and began going after the nest again. “Just one more try and I’ll have it. It’ll look cool in my room.” He was struggling to get it down without doing more damage to the nest’s lining. Gray flakes dumped on the ground like ashes and each time the oar nicked the bottom, a few more wasps flew out and landed on something near, the back of a chair or a bathing suit buckle. “You’ve got the bag, right?”

“I have it,” the boy said, feeling the warm beer taken earlier from the garage freezer. There were no nests anywhere near the house because they sprayed on a regular basis and the boy would

check the dark corners just to be sure they had gotten every last one. "That's not how to do it. Let's go back please," the boy said to Marshall. He looked at his watch. The walk home took at least twenty minutes, even if they cut through the Wilburs' backyard which they could only do if the dog wasn't loose.

"We've got plenty of time," the older boy said. "Besides, I've almost got this thing."

The sound of the waves was gone and all the boy heard was the slow, drugged buzzing of wasps bothered off-season. The boy explained wasps' hibernation to his brother and though it was not like bears, the deep sleep was similar. If awakened before spring, they were not as strong as in the summertime, but they were more angry and determined to sting.

"No one's angry," Marshall said. "Just stay behind me and if one lands on you, flick it off, back first, remember."

It was something the boy couldn't do though he had practiced a few times. Once, while trying to flip one up in the air, he was stung. He knew that wasps have adhesive on their feet and when they land, they stick like gum and are difficult to remove without breaking the suction. He had trouble telling their backs from their fronts and though the eyes were a clue, he never got close enough to see anything besides the brown of their bodies.

"Like this," Marshall said, flicking two wasps to the ground with ease. His fingers were long and moved in an arc as he sent one up and then onto the table where he killed it with the magazine. The boy watched and moved toward the door. He wanted to practice a few times with a lima bean and make sure that there'd be no mistakes if a wasp were to find his hands, bare and hidden now behind him.

"Like this." The older boy showed him again, turning a wasp into a somersault. "Don't wait because as soon as they rub their front legs together, they're getting ready to let the stinger go."

The boy listened to his brother and nodded his head. He watched another one fall on the table.

"Let's just go, Marsh, please," he said, tugging at the door again.

"Like this," his brother said, flicking another wasp from his shirt and stamping it dead.

"Now, please." The boy looked out. It was low tide with seaweed hanging in clumps on blunt driftwood. The wind smelled rotten, and buried in long dune grass were gulls screaming over fresh crab guts, the shells loose and cracked. The only light was from across the bay. It swiveled red then white then red again and the fog horn still comforted the boy with its low steady bleat. A wasp then landed on the sill near the boy's fingers and was silent as it walked over the smooth wood. It jumped up in the air, buzzing erratically and loudly in the boy's ear, and came down higher up on the glass, above his face. He watched its dark brown wings twitch and splay before flying again. The boy then moved back a few yards and hurled himself at the door, the hinges only squeaking.

"I think I got it now," his brother said. There were bits of nest stuck to the front of his shirt and his skin was moist from the heat of the lamp so close to his face.

"My medicine," the boy said. "I forgot it."

The older boy looked at his brother, the oar still in his right hand. "You what?"

"I forgot it." The boy stood with his back against the door.

"You said you had it." Marshall was standing at the edge of the card table and holding the lamp and the oar and staring at the boy.

"Well, I don't," the boy said. "We got to get out."

"But you said you had it," Marshall said, dropping the oar and jumping down from the table. "Are you sure?"

"I'm sure."

"You never forget it though."

"We just have to get out of here." The boy was crying and though he didn't know it at first, he felt the drops on his wrists, uncovered just then from his shirt sleeves. His wrists were one of the places he couldn't stick the needle, the veins being too big and complicated. The hum of the buzzing meant the bees were everywhere and the boy tried to follow each one's path as it left the nest and flew out into the boat house. He traced one as it landed near him and then another would join it briefly before flying to some place new, into some crevice the boy had never stared into or explored. The wasps were too many to keep track of and though they were not as active as usual, they were still curious and lively enough to sting.

"I'll get us out." Marshall was pulling at the door with both arms now. There were wasps everywhere and he had to bat a few away before grabbing hold of the knob. "They like it quiet, right? Well, let's stay quiet then. Check your pockets, maybe you put it in there."

"It's not, I know it." The boy had only gone to the hospital twice though both times he needed oxygen and an IV dripping white stuff in his arm. Marshall had been with him and watched as they put the mask over the boy's face and told him to breathe deeply. His eyes closed and his skin was stretched and shiny from the swollen red and white patches. He sucked ice cubes to keep his throat open and later, when he could leave, he was brought to the car in a wheelchair. His legs didn't move right for a week.

"Open it, Marsh, please." The wasps were hovering around him, sniffing and flapping their wings in place to pick up the boy's scent. He held onto his brother's waist and buried his head

in the older boy's shirt, but left his eyes free to dart around the room and follow the wasps' movement.

His brother used a screwdriver and then his knife and then the screwdriver again to scrape at the hinges, the heat and dampness already swelling the wood tighter in the door frame. A wasp landed on Marshall's arm and he swatted it, flipping the insect up in somersault and then down on the ground where he killed it without thinking much. "You see that?"

The boy nodded and watched another one land on his brother. "You try it," Marshall said. "Come on now, quick, before it gets me." The boy moved his finger slowly towards the wasp, watching its front legs rub together and its stinger flat against its body.

"Now," Marshall said. "Do it." The boy flicked at it, but the wasp's feet were already planted on his brother's skin and within a second, the stinger shot into his arm.

The older boy winced and moaned and grabbed at himself, holding his hand over the welt which had come up instantly and looked already like a small mountain. "Quicker," Marshall said. "You got to move quicker." There were tears in his eyes, but they stayed in the sockets, welling up there where he could wipe at them before they fell down his face.

"I'm sorry," the boy said, rubbing his own arms. "Marsh, I'm really sorry."

"Never mind," his brother said. "Let's try the windows." They were old windows with small panes and a frame not big enough for Marshall to get through without hacking away at the sides of the house to make more room. Again, they went back to the door and pulled at the knob, loosening it only slightly. "It's coming." He pulled again.

The boy watched a wasp fly from the nest towards him. He was holding the lamp for his brother still picking at the door frame.

"One's near me," the boy said. He saw the wasp land on the sill and creep down towards him.

"Stay still and flick if it lands on you," Marshall said, using his knife to hack away at the wood. "Hold the light up higher."

The boy lifted it up and saw the wasp land. He quickly leaned over to put the lamp down and jam his hands in his pockets, but the movement wasn't fast enough. The wasp sat on the boy's forearm, just below the jacket cuff and waited.

"Marsh," the boy said. "He's on me, I swear it." He stared at the wasp and watched its front legs rubbing together. They were thin and brown and looked easy to break.

"Want me to get it?" Marshall was holding his knife with one hand. "I'll use the blade to flip him."

"No," the boy said, staring at the wasp. It was bigger than the boy remembered, with small eyes that moved all around his head. The wings were shiny and clean and poised to leave as if, at any moment, the wasp could easily release his stinger and then fly somewhere else without feeling the loss.

"Move quickly, Pete," his brother said. "Get him now. Look at his legs go." Marshall, too, was staring at the wasp and had convinced the boy that the rubbing meant something.

The boy moved his finger up from behind, watching all four of the wasp's feet settle onto his skin. The buzzing within the boat house had almost stopped completely and the rest of the queens were returning to the damaged nest. A breeze came through the window and the wings fluttered slightly before the wasp lost its balance and fell to the side of the boy's arm. It steadied itself quickly, rubbing together its front legs again.

"That's it," his brother said. "Just lift him up and over."

The boy stuck his finger under the wasp's behind and flicked it into a somersault, pulling his arm away and back to his side. When the wasp landed on the ground, he stamped and stamped

and stamped, grinding the toe of his sneaker into the meat of it. He kept digging further into the dirt until his brother squeezed his arm and said, "You got him, I'm sure of it."

The boy squatted just to know for himself and when he held the light down, he saw pieces of the wasp, black and wet on the floor. He saw the stinger and the eyes and the wings and when he touched a leg, it stuck to his finger like an eyelash.

Marshall unscrewed a hinge so when he pulled at the handle this time, the door opened easily and the boy went outside. The sun was coming through some dark clouds and shone gray on the water. The light across the bay was not as bright and the horn had stopped completely and a boat headed for the mainland was moving fast through the strong current. Marshall wiped the knife on his pants and took the boy's hand, leading him along the path that skirted the shoreline. He grabbed the bag and tossed the cans in an old dump they passed not far from home. The boy felt his brother's fingers tighten around his own when they went through the Wilburs' backyard and heard the barking of the dog that was tied up to the clothesline and was of no trouble to them. He felt the fingers tighten again when they crossed over the stone bridge and saw a few rocks give away, falling into the water with only a little splash. They walked together until they reached their driveway and there Marshall let go of the boy and walked ahead. The boy still heard the buzzing in his head though it was duller now, and as he opened the front door and walked through the kitchen and living room and up the back stairs to his room where he heard Marshall through the wall, playing music real low, the sound of the wasps had left him almost completely.

Starvation

by Linda Smukler

(How starved I must be to recall all these pitiful details a week later.)

So you said in your letter but how many details can you remember if you really try I too thought about the morning and waking up for you to see me older and lined perhaps that is why I left your hotel room so early 3:42 AM I think I was tired too and cold and wanted to get under the covers of your bed but did not want to wake you perhaps that was too intimate a gesture for what we had done and what we had done was not the intimacy of early mornings or the light of aging faces or a quiet sleep in each other's arms we accomplished something else of course and I did kiss you on the head and smelled my fingers full of you and maybe it was better that I left and walked through the yellow lighted halls of your floor walls half painted and torn with room numbers taped crookedly onto doors ceiling lights and wires hanging down claw-like and scraped your nightmare you said details you see I remember I remember how I walked into the elevators wondering if my clothes were all on and zippered and buttoned in case I met someone I did not meet anyone even on my already renovated floor was I now renovated too, as I entered my room quietly without lights so as not to wake my sleeping roommate? as I lay tossing on my bed with the smell of you? with the fact that I did not come and wanted you again and how starved I must be too when I saw you the next day you completely distracted me from what I had to do and now it is

SMUKLER · STARVATION

two weeks and your package came today and I held it with the rest of the mail against my chest and pushed it up the stairs of the deck with me behind as I might hold your back to my chest and push you forward up and into my house through the living room and onto the bed I am starved in that I found myself turning off the radio in the car and felt your head in my lap as I drove I am starved in that I kissed your ear before I went to sleep last night I am starved in that I do not want to eat starved in that when I try to pray my fingers are your fingers on the back of my neck

My Mother's Hands

by Jonis Agee

I DIDN'T MARRY NEARLY AS MANY OF THEM AS I COULD have. That's what I tell people. Some I just lived with, others I passed on by. How do you know which to do? they ask.

I come from a family of witches, women who see things. It was my dead sister, who continues to talk, who first called us that. It disturbed her, being able to predict things like who was on the phone before she picked it up, who would be Senator or President, who would be doing her dirt next.

My mother's magic was in her hands, her big beautiful fingers that could ease the pain up and out of my father's spine, and snap green beans one two three like that. Sometimes they flew out at your face like angry birds and you ducked. It was a habit I kept for years. My mother's vision was long-term, the kind that saw the no-good of a person's life, that washed its hands of you too quickly. We all fled from her truth as fast as we could, hacking at the tendrils trailing us like some widespread crabgrass across the geography.

Still, we saw our men, she never liked, fail, our lives shift under us like tectonic plates, as if she were sinking those strong fingers into the earth and stirring. My father said it came through the female line, such skill, the boys had nothing. Once though, my brother told me how he could feel the sight coming on him when he gambled, and when it left he had to stop, too. One time he waited three days, holed up in a cheap motel in Deadwood, South Dakota, his wife and kids tiring of McDonald's, the only food they could afford, until it returned. When it came, he

walked down the street and played poker for four hours straight, came back with eight hundred dollars so they could get out of Deadwood. All I could do was wait, he'd said wistfully, tapping the cigarette against the saucer and taking a sip of coffee.

My youngest sister claims she has it, but I wonder. No one brags as much as she does. And everytime something happens, she says, oh, I knew that. I wonder how come she makes so many bad decisions then. She's the one our dead parents come to though, so I don't ignore her. I'm a little jealous about all the attention they give her, walking up and down the halls at night, messing with the plumbing. I'm the one who finally told her to just ask them what they want. What they showed her was a jar of marbles, a mason jar full of old-fashioned marbles, rolling away from her. It made sense, but I didn't tell her that. She's a little crazy already. She never knows who to marry, so she marries everyone. She's flooded by men and decisions, and needs my mother's fingers to shape her, hold her like a fish petrified in limestone. When she breaks free, it's into modern waters too long past her to understand. She keeps trying to fit back into that molding stone but can't. My mother is the only one who can press her into shape.

Tonight my other sister calls to say that it's back. A few months ago she was walking down the hall at the hospital and saw a doctor she'd known years ago coming toward her. She said hello, but he didn't speak, and that was when she noticed the darkness in his face, his body. He wasn't even taking up the space he was supposed to, he was already dissolving into molecules. Her chest hurt. She worried for two days until the announcement of his death. Today it happened in the jewelry store around the corner. She feels lucky to have kept her sunglasses on. The jeweler is a friend of her husband's, but he was so dark and mean she began to feel bad. His face and fat body were singed, as if

death and dying were angry activities. When she tells her husband, he gets mad, says to stop it, stop killing people. It's not as soon as the other one, she confides. We'll wait and see.

The night we buried our father, three years ago, she laid in bed listening to Mother's chest heave with coughing, her strong hands pressed against the breastbone, as if she could force her own breath out once and for all to join her husband. They'd been together for seventy years. My sister's chest began to tighten painfully as she struggled for each breath in time with Mother. She knows where it comes from, she says, it's mother's, she bequeathed it the night she died.

I remember once as a child sleeping beside our mother, waking up in the middle of the night and trying to breathe along with her but always getting out of synch, sometimes going so fast I was panting, other times so slow I was gasping. But I'm not envious of my sister's breathing.

The last thing she tells me on the phone is about my husband who has taken up with an accountant and a sailboat and moved to the suburbs. He was dark, she says, at Thanksgiving, he was so angry at all of us, I could see he was going to be leaving soon. When you said he was going to be in boats, I thought, no, not water.

Now she wants a look at my lover too. Just a glimpse down a hallway, she insists, nothing face to face. I'm tempted, but I know that a man who could drop his seventy-five-year-old father who doesn't speak English at Target for three hours alone, just to get a break, isn't going to die soon. That kind of justice is a fantasy.

And I know he isn't going to be a husband, though he's muttered about it. I know we'll never live together, though he wants to. I saw the end as soon as I saw the beginning. That's my gift. I know men. I can feel a husband five states away, moving toward me. I know a letter is on the way a week before it arrives. All I

AGEE · MY MOTHER'S HANDS

have to do is think of a person and they get in touch with me, as if my mother's hands had found them and were leading them to me.

Tonight the thunder walks among the trees in the backyard, the lightning hits close by and blinks the lights. I wonder if I should call my husband, see if he's off the water, out of the boat, make sure he's alive, that his darkness hasn't taken him further than it should, to a place we can't retrieve him from. This week they announced that, yes, black holes do exist in the constellation of Virgo. They suck all matter into them and compress it into super-energized molecules, crushing and jamming them together so nothing can survive in its old form. I knew that, I want to tell them. My husband's a Virgo. Even my sister has seen how that darkness needs more and more to keep it going. It's just irresistible, once you touch the fringes, once you come within its emptiness.

Sometimes I know to marry them, and we're safe for a little while, before I turn them loose again, before they careen into their own blackness. Sometimes I know they're already at the edge, like my lover, and I have to pass by, taking what pain comes of such separation. Always in my heart, there's this squeezing, like my mother's hand, holding it in her big fist, sending me messages, this one, no, yes, like some signal at sea, and I can do nothing but obey her.

Scapegoat

by Sawmie Morris

Out here on the mesa there are no trees to change
colors, only the temperature drops
into a desolation
that describes the land
before it became crowded
with people, houses, roads.

Of the four of us—Mary, Jean, Louise
and I—my home is closest in.
Further out and to the west, Mary lives
and far beyond, the feral herd
of steer: their long horns
spread like wings, or waves
of sound, antennae rippling
and leveled toward the world.
(We suspect they ran renegade
from a rancher, and were abandoned
by him.)

Sometimes the herd turns restless—
for reasons we never know or forget,
despite our watchfulness—
begins to low in tongues
of weather, bellows with discomfort,
and ill-ease increases over weeks, invisibly,

MORRIS · SCAPEGOAT

until the last few mornings, the black
aura of it becomes palpable,
ready to

This time, Jean went out alone
to calm or divert the panic.
She must have walked among them
spoke in low, sure
tones as to children in danger.

When the stampede began
she must have been among them, deep
within the herd. We felt
the growing tremor in our own legs,
the sound of thousands of their hooves
beating the dirt.

Two splintered from the rest, lumbered
toward us. Louise and I ran
toward the house, she ahead of me, slow
in pace. I wanted to impress
on her that we were running for our lives.
She leapt inside in
time, but one of them caught up,
thrust his blunt-tipped horn
hard into my belly, a blow
that did not break skin

GLOBAL CITY REVIEW

but caused me to bend over
double, knocked the breath
from my body
before I could escape.

When the worst of it is over
we know, Mary and I—unspeaking,
gritting our teeth, and heading out
on foot— what we will find: Jean, gored
to death or mutilated, her body trampled
and shred into bloody shards
held delicately together
by nerve fiber, ligaments, and strips of skin,
which we with our hands
will lift and carry back.

For a while—the heavy haggard bodies,
blowing through the nose, brown with old sweat,
urine, excrement—have scattered,
their huge heads lowered,
feeding
on the yellow grass.

Grief Waits for Expression

by Sawnie Morris

His large creased hands came
from behind, shoved the stem
into a small child. She fell.
Family grown-ups and friends stood
twiddling forks, drumming fingernails.
They recall their lives
undisturbed. Wooden actors, wind-up
dolls, mouthing patriotic songs,
swinging soldier arms
to music so loud:
they would not have to hear
when she called. Raving
from the black core,
Now.

After the screaming, the crying,
vomit and spittle pressed
from her slack body's
mouth. Strangers surrounded
the circle—their palms up, facing her shivering
flesh—to contain the exploded parts
by opening their mouths
to let a balm of sound,
a single pitch flow
from the O of their lips.

MORRIS · GRIEF WAITS FOR EXPRESSION

She could not close her eyes
where she had slept before: housed
with clothing, mattress, hairbrush,
fruit. It would have been too human.
It would not have been human enough.

She wanted her belly to the ground:
her stomach: the cavern: the empty: the gnawing
that does not stop. She needed oxygen on a lunar-scape,
to hook-up, to seal her solar plexus
to the body of the earth. She slept
in a circle of pine. The stars: a distant
whorl. Pressed to the breathing
membrane of a dense Unseen,
the need for a Mother
is bigger than her mother, any
mother has ever

Upcoming Issues

NEXT ISSUE: FALL 1996 (filled), *Fish out of Water*, on alienation; displacement; the qualities that make us outsiders (immigrants, foreigners, orphans, adolescents, prisoners, the handicapped, the disfigured); situations that threaten identity; emergence (including birth).

FUTURE ISSUES: *Every Picture Tells a Story*, on the static image as a point of departure/catalyst. Including but not limited to family snapshots, billboards, children's faces on milk cartons, subway advertisements, etc. Especially interested in stories/poems that respond to art/photography.

Imminent Danger, on the situations that test the limits of our psyches and hearts, taking calculated and uncalculated risks, physical danger versus psychological danger; paranoia, thrill-seeking, getting lost; peril and risk in love and sex; danger to our health and our environments; devils, war, natural disasters, vulnerability, protection.

Global City Backlist

All *Global City Press* publications are available at your local bookstore (in stock or by special order) or through our distributor, Consortium Book Sales & Distribution (1-800-283-3572).

GLOBAL CITY BOOKS

The Breast: An Anthology, \$14.00, edited by Susan Thames and Marin Gazzaniga with Heather Ramsdell, Fall 1995

Ghost Stories, a story collection, \$12.00, by E. M. Broner, Spring 1995

House of Waiting, a novel, \$12.00, by Marina Tamar Budhos, Spring 1995

Our History in New York, a novel, \$12.00, by Linsey Abrams, Spring 1995

GLOBAL CITY REVIEW (ALL \$6.00)

To Sleep! Perchance to Dream, ISSUE #6, FALL 1995

Crime and Punishment, ISSUE #5, SPRING 1995

To Make a Long Story Short, ISSUE #4, FALL 1994

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, ISSUE #3, SPRING 1994

Paradise Lost, ISSUE #2, FALL 1993

Sexual Politics, ISSUE #1, SPRING 1993 (*sold out*)

Contributors

JONIS AGEE's books include the novels *Salvation's Sisters*, *Strange Angels*, and *Sweet Eyes*; the story collections *A.38 Special and a Broken Heart*, *Bend This Heart*, and *Pretend We've Never Met*, as well as a collection of poetry, *Houses*.

GREG BLACKBURN was born in Los Angeles in 1950. He graduated from UCLA, with a B.A. in philosophy, in 1974. He has written and published poems. After recently receiving his J.D., he is currently researching a book tentatively titled *The American Legal System as a Symbolic System*.

PATRICK CONNOLLY is a graduate of Sarah Lawrence College, where, in his senior year, he was named a Grace Paley Scholar. He is now at Rutgers, working towards his Ph.D. in literature.

SUSAN DAITCH is the author of two novels, *L.C.* and *The Colorist*, and a collection of short fiction, *Storytown*, was published by Dalkey Archive Press in April 1996.

DENISE DUHAMEL's work has appeared in, among others, *The American Poetry Review*, *Ploughshares*, and *Ontario Review*, and in anthologies including *Mondo Barbie*, *The Best American Poetry 1994* and *The Best American Poetry 1993*. She is the author of three books: *Girl Soldier*, *The Woman with Two Vaginas* and *Smile!*

ELIZABETH ENGLAND lives and works in New York City. She has a Masters degree in creative writing from The City College of New York and teaches for The Writers Studio. Last spring she gave birth to her first child (Olivia) and her first published story (in *The Nebraska Review*).

KIMIKO HAHN's latest collection of poems is *The Unbearable Heart*, published by Kaya Productions, 1995.

GENE HULT was Managing Editor of the *Denver Quarterly*, and has been published in *The Minetta Review*. A play he wrote

CONTRIBUTORS

was produced in Lancaster, England. He is currently the editor of *Sweet Valley High* in New York.

ANN CLAREMONT LE ZOTTE is a Deaf Sign and spoken word poet—and sometimes essayist—and she has had her work performed and published in many major Deaf/Disability forums, such as: *The Deaf Women's Providence Theatre*, *DAM* (Disability Arts Magazine), *The Disability Rag* and *Resource and Deaf News (USA)*.

DAVID MADDEN is director of the United States Civil War Center at LSU. He is the author of seven novels, including *The Suicide's Wife* and *Bijou*, and two collections of stories, the last of which is *The New Orleans of Possibilities*. His civil war novel *Sharp Shooter* will be published by the University of Tennessee Press in the fall.

SAWNIE MORRIS recently completed her first book of poems, *The Body of Numbers*. She owes a debt to Laura Davis and Ellen Bass, authors of *The Courage to Heal*, for the phrase “grief waits for expression.” She is the executive director of Amigos Bravos, an environmental and social justice advocacy organization for the Rio Grande watershed.

LINDA SMUKLER is the author of *Normal Sex* (Firebrand) and *Home in Three Days. Don't Wash.* with accompanying CD-ROM (Hard Press, Fall 1996). She was a finalist for a Lambda Literary Award in poetry and has received fellowships in poetry from the New York Foundation for the Arts and the Astraea Foundation.

RICHARD TAYSON's poetry has been published in *The Paris Review*, *The Kenyon Review*, *Crazyhorse*, and other journals. He was nominated for two 1995 Pushcart Prizes.

\$6.00

GLOBAL CITY REVIEW

Totem and Taboo Issue

Totem and Taboo TAKES AS ITS THEMES CULTURE AND THE individual, primitive being, primal languages, representation, the unspeakable social and psychological organization, personal taboos of all kinds, and assorted totems. Essays include one on deaf-mute existence as rediscovered in film images of the faces of two great actresses. Another entitled *Vampires, Conquerors and Other Monster Selves* traces nineteenth-century male projections in Frankenstein, the Vampyre, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and Dracula. Fiction writers range from the well-known Southern storyteller David Madden, author of over a dozen novels, to postmodernist Susan Daitch to the transcendent Jonis Agee, as well as new voices. Poets Denise Duhamel, Linda Smukler and Kimiko Hahn are matched again by newer voices in the surprises and intensity of this collection. Who were we? And who are we really? Both questions are implicit in the writing here.

ISBN 1-887369-02-3

EAN



9 0000 >



9 781887 369022