

Spring 1968

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Moorhead State College

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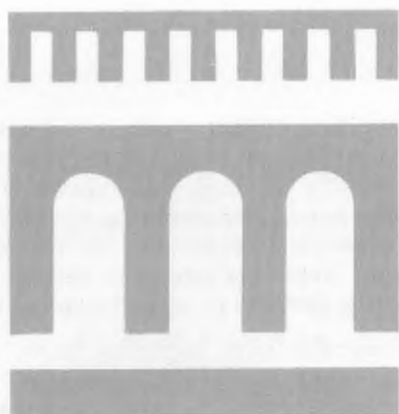
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CONVIVIO

MOORHEAD STATE COLLEGE

SPRING 1968



CONVIVIO

Spring 1968

Volume VI, Number I

FICTION, POETRY and ART
by STUDENTS, FACULTY and ALUMNI
Moorhead State College
Moorhead, Minnesota

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from the Editor . . .

The literary tradition of any group or school of individuals is sustained not in the fact of its establishment, but in the continuing creative vitality of those individuals who participate in it. These forty-eight pages, representing *Convivio's* sixth season, contain selected creative expressions by students, faculty, and alumni of Moorhead State College, and reflect our share of the successes and failures present in any system of language.

The graphic reproductions included have been selected on their own intrinsic merit, and are not supposed to be illustrative of the literature. Nevertheless, as our efforts have been to compose and not simply to compile our pages, we have attempted, so far as possible, to organize both the literary and the graphic entries with a certain degree of correlation and continuity.

We wish to thank all those who submitted manuscripts to *Convivio* for allowing us the privilege of reading their poems and stories. And we wish to thank in particular Mr. Heringman and Mr. Szeitz, whose advice and assistance have been not only appreciable, but essential to any success our publication may have achieved. Whatever weaknesses there may be belong to the students, but we are confident they are the respectable weaknesses of growth, and we hope that *Convivio* may continue to thrive and grow in future years.

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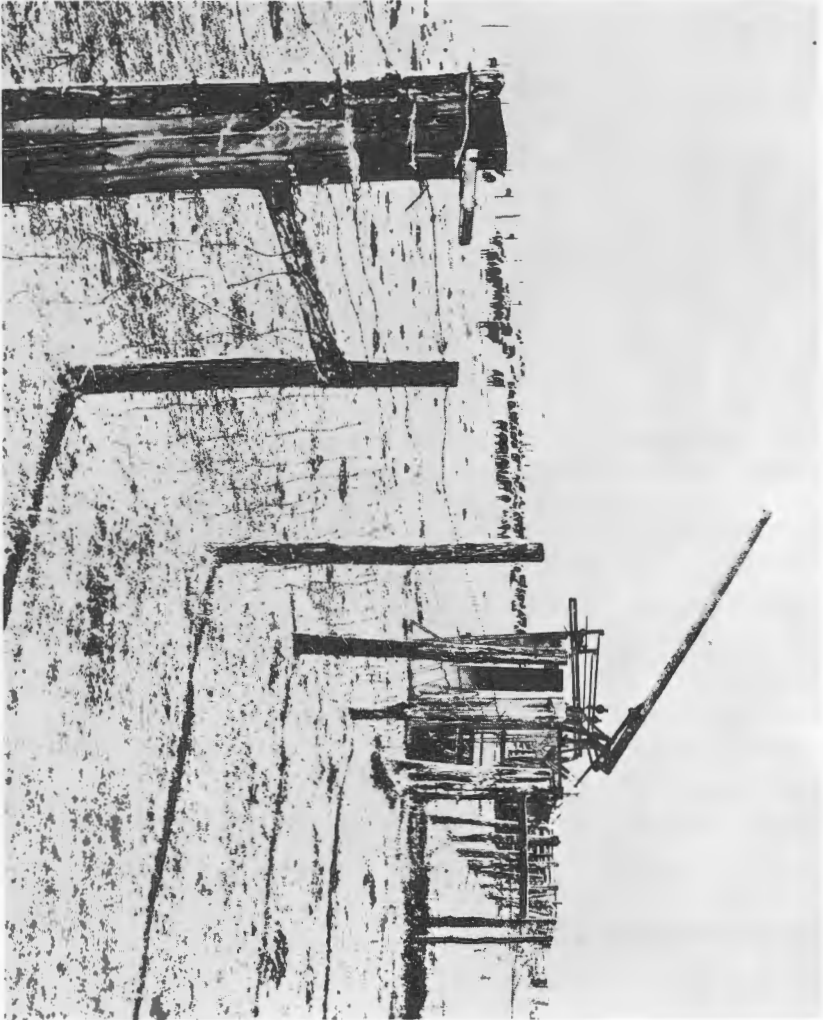
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Larry Simpson, "Sheep," solarized photograph, 8" x 10"

NOBODY GETS KILLED EXCEPT IN THE WAR

Along the wet sand Joshua ran. The gleaming sun moved under his feet — shimmering, eluding him — a white dancing reflection. Sandpipers skittered in clumps to the shore, then winged up, over the water, and swooped back to the beach. Along the wet sand Joshua rhythmically loped, coordinating the movement of his arms and legs. As along the gleaming sand Joshua ran, the seagulls screamed with hunger. The blue-black waves broke green and silver, flowing into lacy foam. Through the wavelets Joshua ran, the cold water splashing his brown strong ankles. The sky glowed brilliant blue behind the white sun. Light from the gleaming sand, the sea, the sun, the air glanced off the brown and swinging arms as Joshua ran. Pure in the sunlight, his silky flaxen hair blew thinly in the wind. From the imprint of his feet, the wind-stippled sand formed pools and sucked up salty water.

One unceasing rhythmical dance of surf sounded between Joshua's wet-with-warm-sweat temples. Slowly, as he passed over the pier on the cobblestones, a fluid weakness moved through his limbs and caught him momentarily in the brain. Aching, Joshua ran on, his lean angular face turned toward the sun until the heat and light blurred his stare and burned the ache out of his mind. Again his rhythm found him; breathing slightly, he turned his eyes toward the horizon and shot forward. As easily and naturally as a gull swoops for the glint of a fish fin, Joshua ran on through the sparkling glory of the air, his body far behind him, trancelike, running over the sand. Spaced between light and air, in the infinite abyss between electron and proton, he wound through sound without movement, in silence.

And just as suddenly as his departure occurred, the entanglement of legs, arms, spirit, eyes and feet found itself tumbling, amazed, frightened, face down upon the wet sloshing sand. Salt on his lips, legs numb, bewildered, Joshua seized his temples, trying to press away the excruciating explosions occurring there.

In the evening, composed and grave, Joshua walked into the bar, through the smoke, past the orgasmic ecstasies of the juke-

box to the pool table. Choosing a long tapered cue-stick, he turned gracefully to the pool table, and focused his eyes on the spectacle of colored balls lying on the green felt. The globes jarred and shimmered . . . "Give me a draft, here, please." The beer cooled his raw throat and glass after glass continued to cool, and finally, to please. Sharply the cue-stick plunged; the balls clattered and rolled. The eight ball disappeared with a calamitous finality which sickened him in a passing shadow of nausea.

"Joshua baby!" called the clear laughing voice behind the hand on his shoulder, "what's happening?"

"Oh, hi, Donavan," a sweet smile on the sulky beautiful face presented surprises to the grey thick air. Onthewingsofadove was insulting his ears, but he didn't think about it. Between the pools of spilled stale beer on the wooden counter, the solid frame of the pool table, the slumped and jiving bodies of unidentified faces, there was this tall buffoon who was grinning at him, as if he knew. Donavan winked . . . "Put your quarter up, Josh, let's see you run the table." Joshua relaxed.

His friend was ~~there~~—to be used, a ~~presence~~ in the empty room of his mind, to be used, to assuage the fear and loneliness. ~~An object that couldn't intrude, to be used.~~

"You look so goddamn uptight, boy."

Joshua recoiled.

"Hey, are you ready for this? I'm programmed to talk about the Infinite," Donavan grinned; his big uncoordinated arm grasped Joshua's elbow and steered him roughly to a bar stool. Joshua grinned too.

Hours they talked, the intensity of Joshua's straining face and burning eyes parallel with the transfixed sullen contemplation on Donavan's face. They talked. Beer after beer passed through their hands. Around the two absorbed men, the bar jiggled and wavered with smoke and noise.

Joshua fought against the surging emotions pouring out of his body through his voice and the gestures of his hands. "Donavan," he said desperately, "when I think, when I just open my mouth and let the words come like they're doing now, I'm not thinking about what I'm going to say, you know, I'm just talking, the thoughts keep coming into my mind."

Donavan's eyes went through his eyes, past him, away and staring.

"First there are rivers and streams, says the Buddha, then there are no rivers or streams, then again there are rivers and streams," Joshua said gravely. Donavan laughed: "An enlightened man drinks a beer, eh, and an unenlightened man drinks beer?"

"Yes!" Joshua quickly responded, his hands thrust deep in his coat-pockets, his hair tousled over his intent, sun-tanned face.

Donavan looked around the bar. "Joshua's really turned on today," he thought; "he must be lonely as hell."

With Donavan, any sympathetic insight inevitably turned into a game of manipulation.

"An enlightened man wouldn't have to talk about being enlightened . . . he wouldn't have to talk at all," Donavan held out to Joshua, his eyes gleaming. "What would he do?" asked Joshua.

"In India, an enlightened man once sat and stared at a wall for months . . . just a tiny pin point on a wall. Sat in his own defecation. Then, one day, he just got up and walked through the wall." As he said this, Donavan's face turned incredibly innocent, and his lips trembled.

Joshua howled with laughter and rocked back against the bar; he turned his face to Donavan in delight. "He just got up and walked through the wall, huh?" "Yeah," Donavan crooned, "his molecules fused, ZAP, like that, with the molecules of the wall. Anybody can do it; it all hinges on whether or not you can psychologically accept it or not. If you can, you could fuse with that bar, right now, ZAP." Donavan clapped his hands together, and Joshua's face was transformed into a fixed stare; around the edges of his eyes a total sadness hovered.

Donavan sipped his beer and looked around the room. The pool cues clicked. The rattle of a dime into the jukebox preceded the whirling whine of a western tune. No one noticed the two men, one seemingly in a trance . . . contemplative, grave . . . a beautiful sulky face slowly turning ashen and closed; the other, twirling on his bar stool, sipping beer, mischief in his bright eyes, growing drunk and knowing it.

"That's where it's at, Donavan, you can't analyze it, it's like a mental orgasm, your mind just blows, and suddenly you're out of your body and there's nothing and everything at the same time." Joshua's face was smiling, but his eyes held the swimming loneliness which had broken out of the fixed trap of discipline.

Joshua, who never talked, broken by the conversation. Now he was talking and feeling, and Donavan knew it. Donavan moved in upon Joshua's chaos of feeling and lazily remarked: "Josh . . . I have a gun . . . see . . ." and he held suddenly in his hand a small smooth revolver. Two people at the bar watched, fascinated. "It's to kill cops," he laughed, and dropped it in the pocket of his coat.

The struck boy writhed in the cold-water shock against the swirling sea of feelings happening to his blown mind and he swiftly plunged his hand into Donavan's pocket, pulled out the gun, reeled sideways, flipped the safety and put a bullet through his temples. The smile had not yet passed from Donavan's face. His eyes blazed with triumph.

THE FRESH COLOR ASCENSION OF BELTRAMI ISLAND

I come from the land of lords
and backyard chains,
where the purple death mask looms,
where patterned men,
vacuous, green-eyed,
take pleasure in throwing stones
at Jesus.

Where minds, like stony fields,
command,
and the gray sky melts
into stagnant water braids,
games, and foreign sounds.

As Beltrami island ascends into the sky
in fresh color,
the night-gods-blue
breathe gold fur into my eyes,
and I am caught up in a swirling maze
of gold, paleish drafts of light
fanned out across the sky,
then fading, fading into one.

Here there are no lords,
no foreign sounds,
only the constant colors of God,
where sun-love embraces
living lakes of blue and gold,
and those clotted dreams
of my dry blood blossoms
can seek and love again
the center of God's mind,
my mind.

Here, those gold swirling circles
of my damp undying
can touch the wind
that freshens my face
when I am warm.
No longer do I think of dead friends,
but of an old man telling me stories
and of children
playing with flowers in the rain.

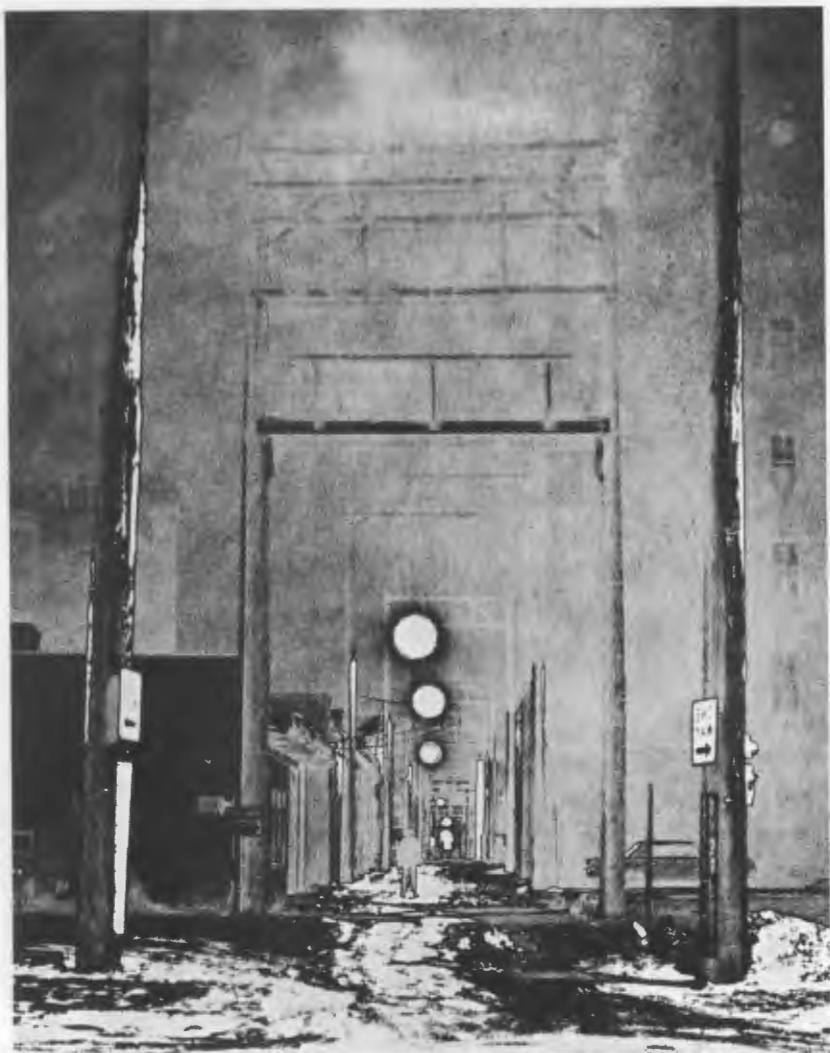
Softly feathered,
this new joy within me is cutting
like the edge of orange, fingered flames,
into the black, cool night,
while overhead,
the constellations
shudder and purr
at the moon.

COFFEE, ONE A.M.

Darkened firmament
with faint blues
and tepid grays
awaiting the rain.

You and I,
coffee, and
eyes,
fantasy-enlightened.

And tomorrow
the moon,
stealing love
from the world-soul,
will reach out
to kiss the
surface of the sea.



Larry Simpson, "ENO YAW," solarized photograph, 8" x10"

MOIRA

It was meant to be good-by;
ham sandwiches at night
in a small cafe,
walking the winter streets
of a town we did not know.
Ice and rock met in a field
with colder steel;
those rails would take us soon
across this land
to visions of warmth,
leaving you behind.

Then anguish reweave your face,
threading our lives on a different skein.

So it was finished;
your arms caught us briefly
to the shoulders of your coat.
The lights of a small station
blurred through our tears,
and the benches were as anonymous,
as hard, as the faces standing near.
You left,
and we waited for the train
that would take us back,
promising to dream no dreams,
hold no hope of the golden places.

RON

1.

There will not be again
that moment:
 the room with peeling paint
 turned silver in the night,
the blankets thrown in heaps,
 your hard warmth,
 and most of all
 the texture of our silent laughter,
 rising,
 meeting as we did,
 filling the room with our joy.
The memory of you,
 silently intent,
 as if I were
 a trembling harp
 bending beneath your hands,
 your touch,
 these remain.
And rising still,
 the texture of our laughter.

2.

Curled beside you after love,
I laugh
 as you intently explain
that we must run naked around the block
 at least once—
 for the experience.
We talk eagerly of hippies,
 the Beatles,
 your latest mind-trip,
 and how we both feel good.
It is only when you hold me,
 that I call your name with something like pain;
it is only in this aftermath
 that I touch your shoulder
 with a fearful tenderness.
I think we are careless children,
 laughing in the shallows,
 while beyond us the ocean roars deep,
 and the bottom crumbles away.

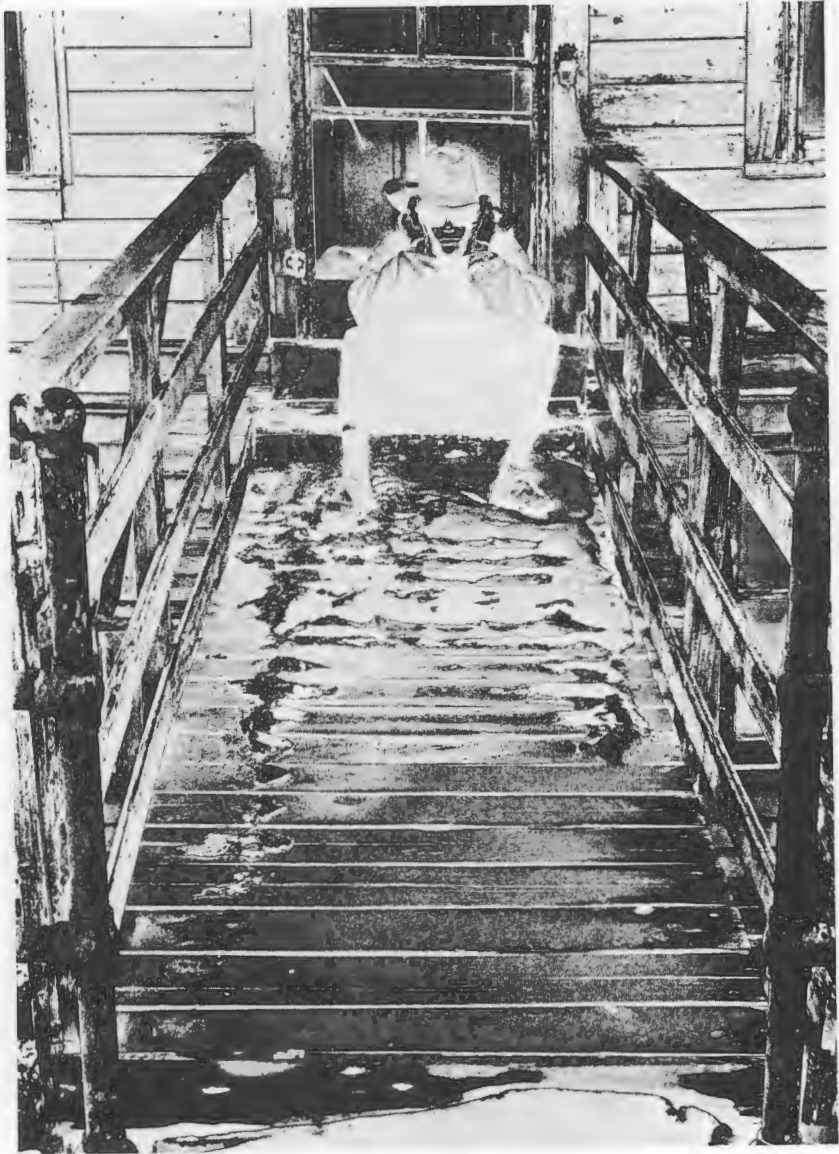
DEATH, DARK DADDY

Death, dark daddy
with a panther lissome body
crouched in the shadow
behind my eyes,

Spring, dark daddy,
and jump into my mind-pit,
run your silky hands
till you hear me cry.

Hold me, daddy,
with the touch of you upon me,
I'm aching for the smell
of darkness you wear.

Come now, daddy,
in the sun-crazed midnight,
take me, and we'll leave,
with laughter hanging in the air.



Larry Simpson, "Miller," solarized photograph, 7"x10"

EGGONYOURFACE WITH JADE

Eyes pass on faces
we both have seen;
finally finding places
where we all have been.

Point to spaces
and the instant thumb printing
lines on lace
worlds that cannot end,
but must begin . . .

That primal point,
puzzling like an egg
when finally broken;

The chick . . . simple and fluffed,
must have come, started, begun
(Jesus Christ, don't be silly!)
from somewhere . . .

But gods and heroes are dead.
Just look at the facts,
and the faces.

(. . . while eyes betray the deep,
and pass on
in Silence.)

THE GARDEN PROBABLY KNOWS WHERE IT'S AT

round the rows of roses blooming
in the sun around the garden
green and red and gardeners raking
piles of stems and fallen petals

where
the seed falls
shows us how
to pick it up
and lay it down

in and out of crowded hallways
movement is another matter
swallowed air fills undigested
spittle spattered faces tell us

where
the seed falls
shows us when
to pick it up
and lay it down

so the crowded plaster bedroom
petal lasses peddle asses
swish perfume to cover over
someplace that we all are going

where
the seed falls
shows us when
to pick it up
and lay it down

by the wasted garbage truckers
banging cans and sunday churchbells
eyelids batting pretty people
slowly turning to the roses

where
the seed falls
shows us why
to pick it up
and lay it down

THE VOYEUR

*"Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber
muss man schweigen."* Wittgenstein

He can see,
 when the picture is finely done,
 through its frame complements its perfection
 and the monogram is partially obscured
 that symbiosis is a one-way sign of finding
 that things we find know
 no better than to wear
 two-heeled shoes. See him standing
from h
 e
 r
 e
 r
 e
to h
 trying to walk barefoot?
 Then can he find
 oil, brush, and canvas . . .
look again . . .

WATER LINES

Sun and snow
 on rooftops with icicles
Sparkle and splash!

The river knows
 by its heartbeat that
Winter is passed.

It would be wonderful
 to know that the world was born
By the splash of a tear.

Helen Glover, "Bill's Dream," lithograph, 9"x10½"



THE UNIFORMS

Billy was asleep until he heard the footsteps on the porch. There was no stretching and yawning before he got up today; it was more like a bedspring had kicked him out of the bed. He was dressed and down the stairs as the footsteps reached the front door. He opened the door and greeted his young visitor with a hearty, non-sleepy, "Hi, c'mon in," then in a whisper, "but be kinda quiet, my dad's still in bed."

As Billy sat with his friend drinking his milk and eating toast spread with peanut butter and honey, his mind wandered. He could picture himself and his father in a car, but something was missing. His mind could only recall an unfinished picture which faded as he swallowed a last mouthful of milk.

Billy's mother had died several years before; he was nearly three when it happened. Billy's father did not talk about her unless he was asked directly. There were a few pictures set about the house, mostly of her alone, which gave a feeling of omnipresence to anyone who knew her. Billy's father was honest in answering his questions about his mother, except for one: "Where is Mommy?" This question seemed to draw Tim Ramond into a shell, from which he could only answer weakly, "She's gone away."

"Well, L. R., what are we going to do today?"

Billy prided himself in having a friend named L. R. Billy didn't even know L. R.'s first name; what's more, he didn't care. L. R. was about Billy's age, a little more stocky; consequently he was about ten pounds heavier than Billy's ninety pounds. He wore dirty tennis shoes without socks, blue jeans, and a short-sleeved T-shirt under a plaid, light cotton jacket. A large shock of sandy, unkempt hair partially covered his slightly sunburnt face.

The sun was barely up when L. R., who never did answer Billy's question—his reticence at times was disturbing—had

awakened Billy with his treading on the front porch. They slipped out of the house, taking care not to bang the screen door, into the now foot-high sun. Billy measured it with his arms stretched out before him, one on the horizon and one on the sun.

"Yup, she's a foot high, let's go," remarked Billy after his careful sighting.

"Where?" asked the verbose L. R.

"It doesn't matter to me; does it to you?"

No answer.

Off they ran down the sidewalk, keeping a close eye out for stink-pots and policemen. They knew by heart where each stink-pot within six blocks was, but avoiding the policeman was a challenge to the boys. For as long as he could remember, Billy had always avoided uniforms.

Back at the house Tim Ramond was trying to talk himself out of bed with numerous groans and moans and simultaneous hard-muscled stretches. "Godgodgodgod, how I . . ." and rolled out onto the floor. He had heard Billy leave earlier, but was not alarmed, because this was Saturday and Billy always left early on Saturday morning. "Ramond, tell me if you know," seemed to ring in his ears.

"Now where is that from. I just read it the other day, or did I just hear it. Ah, well, it's not important." He put on water for his morning coffee. After coffee Ramond's day was already mapped out for him. He had to fix up an old car that he had sold to a friend. As his thoughts wandered, he looked at a picture of his wife on a shelf above the radio.

"I'll never be able to understand why I did it. Damn, I still loved her right up until the end . . . just be thankful you're not in jail for it. After all, a man's freedom is far more important than a lot of hoaky sentimental feeling, isn't it . . . of course . . . I wonder if Billy has ever really thought about it. I must answer him the next time he asks the question . . . ah, but that's water under the bridge, one must think of tomorrow and not live in the past, mustn't one? . . . why, of course . . . you shouldn't talk to yourself so much, Tim, it's hard on your nerves." The conversation dropped.

Tim Ramond looked out of his house onto one of his glorious days of the future that he talked about. By this time it was late morning and the grass and bushes were losing some of the sparkle which they displayed when the boys left earlier. Tim Ramond had never seen the dew on the grass as his son had.

Billy and L. R. were on the edge of town heading toward the large abandoned sandpit cut into the side of a hill. They raced each other to the upper ledge, where they could see the entire

town laid out below with a large lake behind it stretching to the horizon. There was a small public park a little farther up the hill. They decided, that is Billy decided, to explore that before they tackled the sandpit. Again they ran, with Billy in the lead, up to the base of a five-foot granite wall that surrounded a geodetic survey plaque explaining how the lake was formed.

"C'mon, give me a hand up the wall, L. R.," Billy shouted to his mate.

L. R. cupped his hands and gave him a boost, enabling Billy to gain a firm hold and pull himself over alone. Billy didn't lend a hand to L. R., so he ran around the base of the wall until he found a place where he could jump up alone. Billy was looking at the bronze plaque:

This view reveals the effect of a major glaciation some 10,000 years ago. When the last glacier receded it left a recessional moraine, and as it slowly melted . . . formed the lake 230 feet below . . .

"What's a m-o-r-a-i-n-e?"

"What's a g-l-a-c-i-e-r?"

Billy stood on the wall and looked over the lake as it lay shimmering in the late morning sun; his mind wandered.

"C'mon, let's go," broke Billy's train of thought.

He looked at L. R. with a dazed expression, not seeming to realize where he was or who L. R. was. L. R. was disturbed by this performance of his friend, became frightened and almost left. Finally Billy grinned a watermelon smile at him and L. R. was comforted.

By this time L. R. was on top of the wall and looking down at their objective—the gaping mouth of the sandpit. Down they jumped onto the bone-splitting ground; luckily they were young and young bones do not break as easily as older ones.

They reached the top of the sandpit, stood on the firm six-inch sod that carpeted the sand, and looked onto the countless tons of enjoyment below them. Of course they had been told that this place was dangerous and that they shouldn't play here, but they respected the sandpit and the sandpit seemed to respect them. No sandslide would ever swallow these two boys. The rest of the morning they played, and Billy's thoughts did not stray again.

The fire siren whined, marking 12:00 noon.

"I thought maybe I'd have to send out a search party for you two," said Ramond when the boys came into the house.

"Naw, I can always tell when it's dinnertime," chimed Billy. "Oh, L. R.'s staying for dinner."

No comment from L. R.

They all ate heartily on eggs, fried potatoes, and toast and topped off the meal with a bowl of chocolate marshmallow ice cream. Ramond, of course, asked them to help with the dishes, but both declined, one with "Aw, we wanna go outside," and the other with a slight shifting of his feet. Ramond dismissed them. He realized there were only a few pieces to wash, and besides it was one of the days that Billy did not have to help with the dishes if he didn't want to.

They romped out of the house, banging the screen door behind them. Billy stopped on the porch steps to tie one of his shoes, long before untied, and was off again after L. R. who had disappeared around the corner of the house. Billy stopped and thought for a moment and ran around the other side of the house and saw L. R. poised to surprise him. He smiled and began sneaking toward him. "I gotta get to him quick before he gets suspicious." He stalked his prey as a cat would a bird: only one chance to surprise; if it didn't work, the result would be nothing. Billy was within a yard of his victim; he had held his breath for the last dozen feet. This was it, he broke with a terrifying scream and pounced on his awe-struck playmate with almost savage ferocity. L. R. looked up at the short-breathed attacker with wet eyes, more out of embarrassment than pain, and noticed the smile come across Billy's face. Billy began to laugh and rolled on the ground; then L. R. joined him, laughing equally hard, reveling in his botched plan. Their little striped bellies stopped jerking and they lay on their backs looking up through the trees in the backyard.

Ramond sat at a table writing eights into infinity on a piece of paper in front of him, the graceful twisted forms coherent at first, then turning into dots. Then he reversed the process, drawing dots and writing larger and larger eights.

"That's a little harder to do," Ramond said to himself. "Eights? Now that's a silly damn thing to do, for Chrissake; why don't you do something constructive? Stop thinking!"

He had promised to have the car ready by the first part of the week, so he went to the garage and jacked up the car by the rear bumper and took off the tire. "I'll put on the spare later and fix this one up a bit," he thought as he worked. He slid under the car on his back with his tools beside him.

"It's been eight years. Why can't I forget what I did . . . Because you loved her . . . But it was an accident . . . That's what you like to think. Was it? . . . Yes! . . . It could have been avoided . . . Damn you, why don't you do something instead of just talking about it. You tried it once and didn't have the courage. . . I know, but it was because of Billy; I want him to have something . . . If the police could prove it suicide, he would have to

live with it all his life, as well as not getting any money . . . You don't care about Billy, you're just looking for pity . . . I am not. I want Billy to have a good start . . . Then have an accident—only you will know.”

Tim Ramond studied the three-thousand-pound hulk of metal above his head.

Billy left L. R. at home. L. R.'s mother said he had to clean up his bedroom and would be back at Billy's place in an hour or so. Billy walked the six blocks to his house slowly kicking at rocks on the sidewalk, and, as always, avoiding the stink-pots. He was only a short distance away when he saw his father kick the jack from under the car. He heard the short scream and saw the blood gush out of the hole the hub cut into his father's chest.

Billy's young brain whirled. "The red, the red, I remember. My mother is dead. The red. My father!"

An eternity passed in a few seconds. L. R. was by his side, "My mother said I didn't . . ." then saw Billy's father under the car and retched.

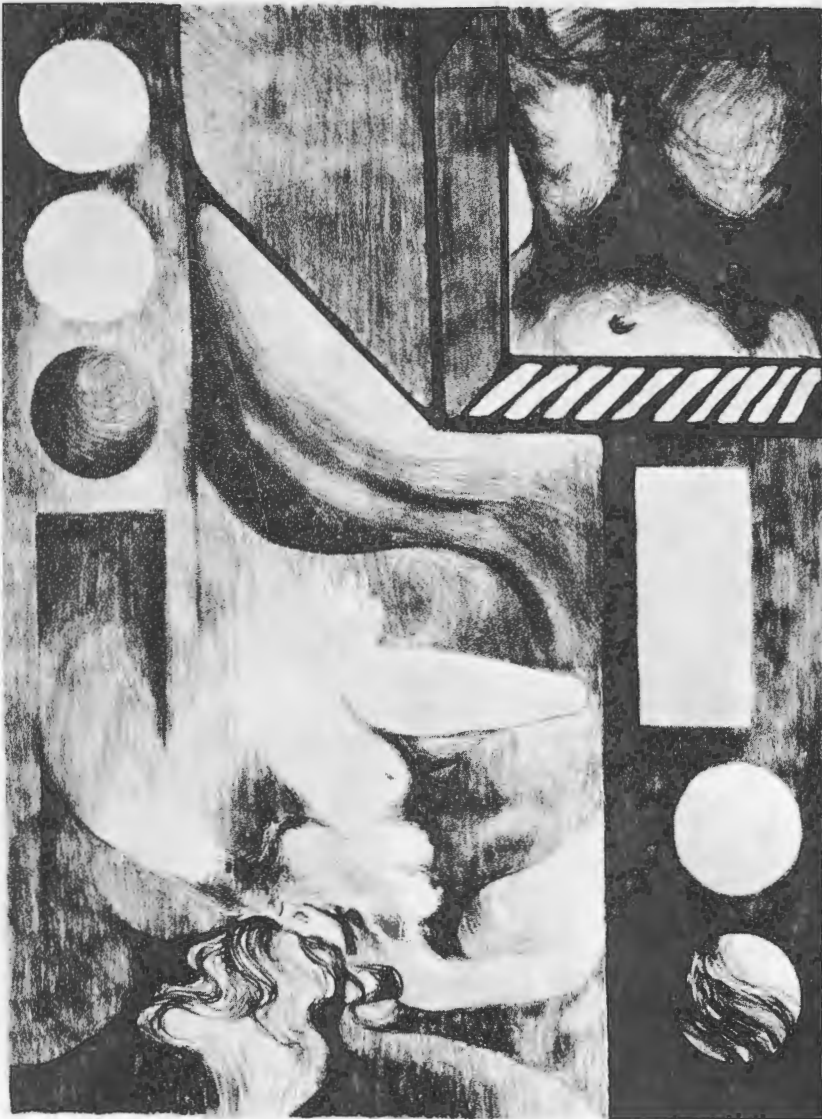
Billy ran into the house; trembling, he dialed "O" and the uniforms came again.

FAUSTUS

Faustus, why do you repent?
Know that knowledge was only lent
To you for your soul in Lucifer's grasp,
Know with your dying gasp—
"*Consummatum est.*"

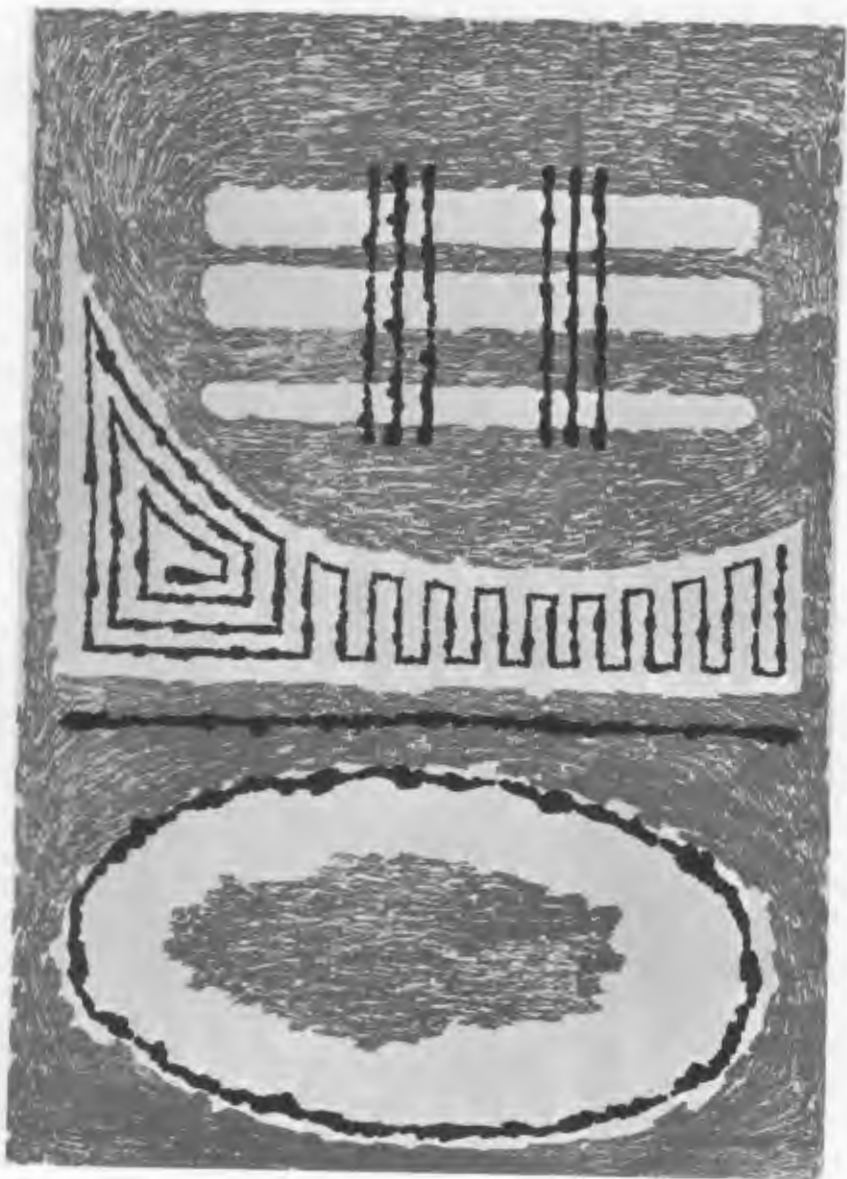
Faustus, you are a fool;
Not for the bargain you made,
But for the plans you laid,
Hoping to conceive God's grace
While you stood face to face
With Mephistopheles.

Knowledge gained? There was none;
For twenty-four years you had the sun
At your command and you played tricks on clowns.
"I'll burn my books!" reboant in your mind;
The only real knowledge you leave behind—
Twilight life between those powers,
Counting eternity by the hours.



Dolores Heggstuen, "Another Place," lithograph, 11"x14"

Pat Johnson, "Study I," lithograph, 11"x15"



FOUR HAIKU

Rain-fresh night coolness,
Droplet-covered trees in bud:
Empty carousel.

As cherry blooms die,
Unopened, of a frost death,
Grayish haze-clouds weep.

Whispering wet grass
Telling stories from a dream
Brings peace quietly.

Rocks crushing damp grass;
Stands again, is sun-beaten.
Then, a donkey's teeth.

NOW

—for Sally

The ties that rend me human
Knot in your hair
Careful of your hair

The red that spells me living
Warms in your flesh
Fertile of your flesh

The words that save me feeling
Breathe in your mouth
Melodic of your mouth

Mindful of this debt of tracery
Bearing I search mouth and flesh
Redeeming unreason
Taking and giving grace.

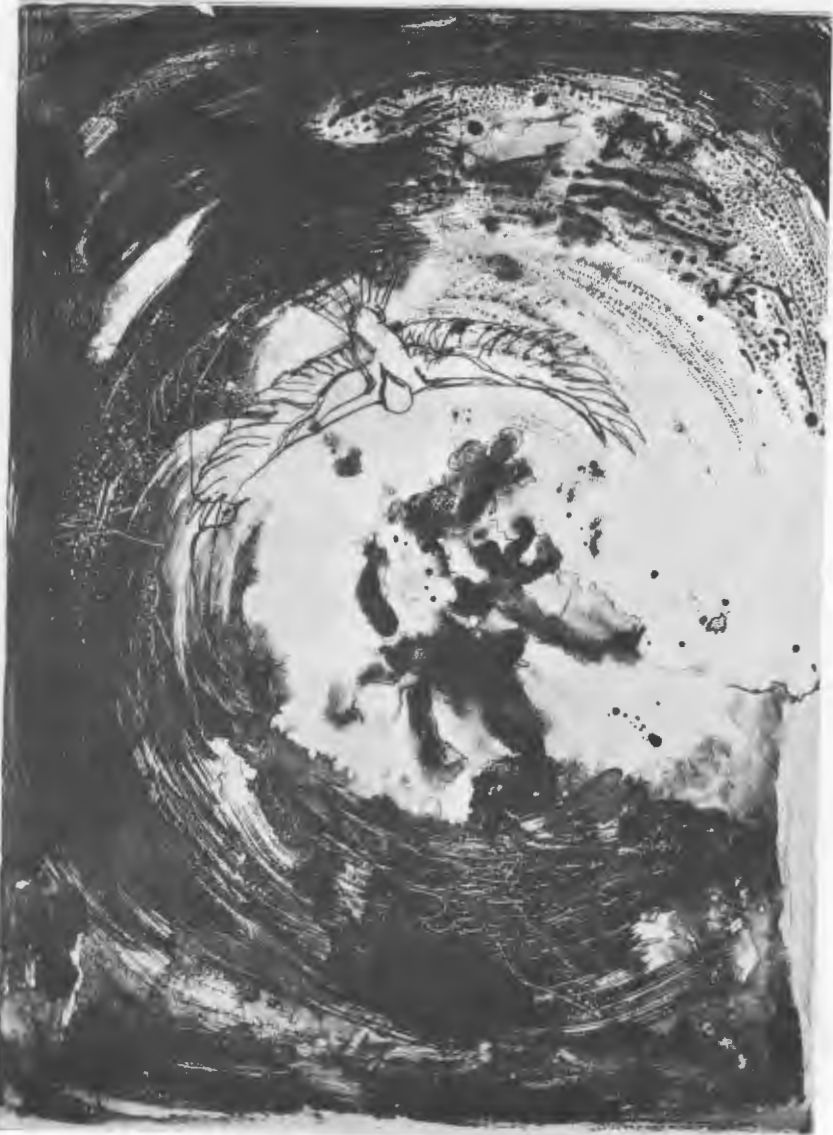
1949

**CLEAR CREEK MEETING*,
SUNDAY, AUGUST 7, 1960
WITH CHRISTIANE**

Twig-ends, stems, leaf-ends
Changing with the morning-light and the wind;
Green, wavering, sun-splattered;
Framed, caught through the doorway:
Gatherer of sun, and source,
I take the light from you through the doorway,
Gather it into the silence and, raising
New eyes, prism it back—
Through shadows and roof-beams suddenly
Luminous, immaterial—to the sun again.
Yet the green profile changelessly
Shimmers in the doorway; yet light
Remains in the silence of this meeting
Where new eyes lift, and new song.

**A silent meeting for worship, Society of
Friends, Richmond, Indiana*

Dolores Heggestuen, "Imposition," lithograph, 11" x 15"



EARLY STRAWBERRIES

"Are you coming with me?"

The purpose of my question was only to awaken her, and she was out of bed and dressed in reply before I had finished spreading the curtains to the cool, night-forgotten sky of almost morning. Through the window the wet gray air back of the cabin reflected a glance of the red we knew to be cracking the horizon of water in front. I turned toward the kitchen, and she followed silently in the shadow cast as I waded past the glow flooding in through the front-room window.

She was dressed in an oversized olive sweatshirt that extended halfway to the hem of her blue shorts. Stepping to the kitchen table, she climbed onto the chair nearest the window and waited as I lifted the pot from the stove and began to pour the black coffee into a cup. Her brown little legs hung limp from the edge of the chair, and her small plump knees looked very strong.

"Coffee or milk?"

She grinned and took the heavy cup in both hands. Lifting it to her mouth, she squinted as the steam rose to her eyes. I poured another cup and sat down at the table.

"Want some sugar?"

"Yes, please."

I handed her the sugar bowl, and she scooped two spoonfuls into her cup and then watched the coffee as she stirred it.

(Dawn was seven years old, the youngest in our family of eight, born the year we acquired the lake-side property. We differed in age by nine years, but she had grown up living the summer lake trades I loved, and had become a part of them. Her pride in those trades was mine, and we were very proud. Her few years at that time were days without nights, but her glory was the morning.)

Having finished her coffee, she jumped down from the chair as I savored a last swallow.

"Wait a minute," I whispered, reaching for the small orange life preserver on the wall. "You'd better put this on. You know they don't want you out there without it."

I held the jacket as she carefully put each arm through the

appropriate opening and quickly buckled it in front of herself. Pushing open the door, I held it as she slipped past my hip onto the porch.

The early sun, pressing at our faces through the cottonwoods, was the same we had known so often before at this hour of the morning. This blazing orange ball was the uncontested sovereign of the eons that fell between four and five A.M., humbler of all as each atom raised its honest anthem in reverent stillness. In this morn of light, the lake-born wind of its yesterday would beg back as breeze across the calm to be re-conceived in its creator's wash. Disinterested and divine, the orange fire would acquiesce in radiant benediction to the music of each element's private worship, every figment or facet of all mind folded in willing submission. We had shared these things before and leaned into them without hesitation.

Squeezing my finger in her small hand, still moist from the warm coffee cup, she led me down the tree-cottoned redwood steps and pavingbrick path toward the water. That all should organize so completely and spontaneously seemed awesome and lovely to me, and the thought, though by no means a new one, occupied me completely till we reached the lake.

Coming to the water she released my finger, and I watched as she commenced to carefully bury a few small dead fish washed ashore during the night. They emitted no odor at that hour, but, as I had witnessed many times before, some feminine impulse always moved her instinctively to the antiseptic task. She crouched by each individual and dead-eyed specimen, never touching her knees to the ground, her small back and shoulders rounded in concentration under the jacket. Carefully digging each necessary hole, she placed the fish into it and covered it with the moist sugar-sand, smoothing the grave over meticulously.

"There," she said, rinsing her hands in the still water. "Now we can go." Tugging on my arm, she lifted herself up the long step to the dock, and we moved into the glare of sunshine reflected on the lake.

I released the catch on the lift and lowered the boat till it settled gently on the water. As she stood watching, her arms hanging motionless down the sides of her padded jacket, her whole image seemed a definition of the quiet expectancy that sang in every aspect of the scene before us, her name, like the morning, as ripe as the berries that lay waiting across the bay.

I lifted her into the boat and, finding my place behind the wheel, started the engine and backed into the lake. I turned the craft with the least possible propulsion till it bowed into the glaring bay. As we bobbed lightly in the eddying water, I leaned forward and she wedged herself behind my shoulder, turning her face wide-eyed into the air waiting above the windshield.

“OK?”

“Uh huh,” she smiled as her lips parted slightly and her lashes quivered in a slight air current.

I gripped the throttle in my right hand and sat watching the expression of her profile till she became suddenly conscious of my gaze and begged into my ear, “Let’s go now.” One swift thrust of my arm lifted us to a nearly airborne state for a moment, our lunge seeming a sudden halleluia thrown from the lake toward the perfection of sky.

The initial shout of the engine soon became its own smothering silence as we rode clinging to the quiet lake, her squinting face still peering ecstatically over the top of the windshield as the fine hair at her temples feathered back over her smooth tiny ears. It was only sun and water we knew in the no-time it took to cross the bay to our virgin beach.

Our sanded bow held the boat fast on the shore as I lifted her onto the deck and followed quickly. She jumped to the beach before me and waited while I secured a section of the anchor rope to a tree.

The bank led steeply upward and we followed, one hand in each other’s, our free hands for balance pawing the gravel our feet would, with the next step, send sliding to the water behind us.

On the bank’s brink began the grove of red oaks that grew only on this side of the bay. Nestled among the roots and stumps of these favorite trees grew the clumps and patches of wild strawberries I had found years before and had taught her to know. I watched her follow the finger-thing runners of numerous plants, collecting the ripest and nicest of the tiny berries to save in her fists. The best I found I tasted; the best she found she saved. We soon had all we wanted and turned again toward the water, our treasure in handfuls of hundreds.

The knotted twigs and last year’s leaves lay thick on the ground and sounded as we walked quickly toward the bank. When I noticed her absence from my side, I looked back.

A space in the tossed tinder revealed the arc of a small oak root rising two inches from the ground and diving again into the dirt. She was standing near it, a few small twigs clinging to her knees, her hands still closed around the precious fruit. I asked if she had hurt herself. She shook her head, but I could see the seven-year-old tears beginning to well in her eyes.

“What’s the matter, Dawn?” I asked as quietly as I could. She opened her small fists and the mashed fruit dribbled between her fingers to the thirsty sand at her feet. “Here, take these for me,” I said, and poured what berries I had into her hands. She sniffled back what tried to be a sob and again carefully closed her hands.

When we had reached the boat and I untied the rope, I lifted her onto the deck with me, and then lifted her into the seat, taking my place behind the steering wheel. She sat wide-eyed but expressionless, gazing into the windshield that kept the breeze from her face. As we backed into the lake, the wind sent a cold spray of water against our backs and into the boat.

The bay had become rough and gray with the sky. There were a few motor boats on the lake, challenging for selfish diversion the stormy water. Their dissimilar roars noised with the waves pounding under our bow till we reached the dock. I quickly tended the boat and we walked to the cabin.

The others had just come from their beds and were moving about with typical gray-morning faces. Our wet return was met by various busy comments, chiding us for going out on the lake on such a morning. I took the berries Dawn had carried and presented them to the others. They were received with formal gratitude, and I was assured by the several tired faces that the berries would be a pleasant garnish to the breakfast.

I had finished half the cup of coffee I had poured when I noticed that she was not in the cabin. I walked to the door and out onto the porch.

The eight o'clock air was hanging heavy on the cabin, and the breeze from the lake told a storm-warning humidity. I paused for a moment, allowing the breeze to absorb the film of moisture that had formed on my lip, while the berries behind me slid through the wheat flakes and milk and sank to the bowl bottoms.

I walked around the side of the cabin and stood near the back corner looking up toward the road and the woodpile behind it. Beyond the portentous stack of dead cottonwoods lay the spring-fed slough that flowed into the lake some seventy or eighty yards south of the cabin. I moved unconsciously toward it, feeling the drive's upgrade pull in my knees and ankles.

Reaching the road, I found the small orange life jacket thrown heavily across a clump of broken thistle. The hand-smears of red fruit were still moist and smudged with the dust of small foot prints. I walked to the edge of the woodpile and looked down toward the slough.

She was slumped on the root of a massive cottonwood stump near the water's edge, her face pressed into her small hands, the neglected locks of her dampened hair veiling her cheeks as they fell forgotten, brushing the flies from a small bloated perch at her feet. I sat down next to her and began quietly to bury the dead fish, its sickening odor summoning the fruit I had stomached a few hours earlier. As the flies deserted their festive intentions, the heavy air was left alone with the sobs she continued to smother in the tears that collected in her hands and dripped from her wrists.

TWILIGHT ON THE RED RIVER OF THE NORTH

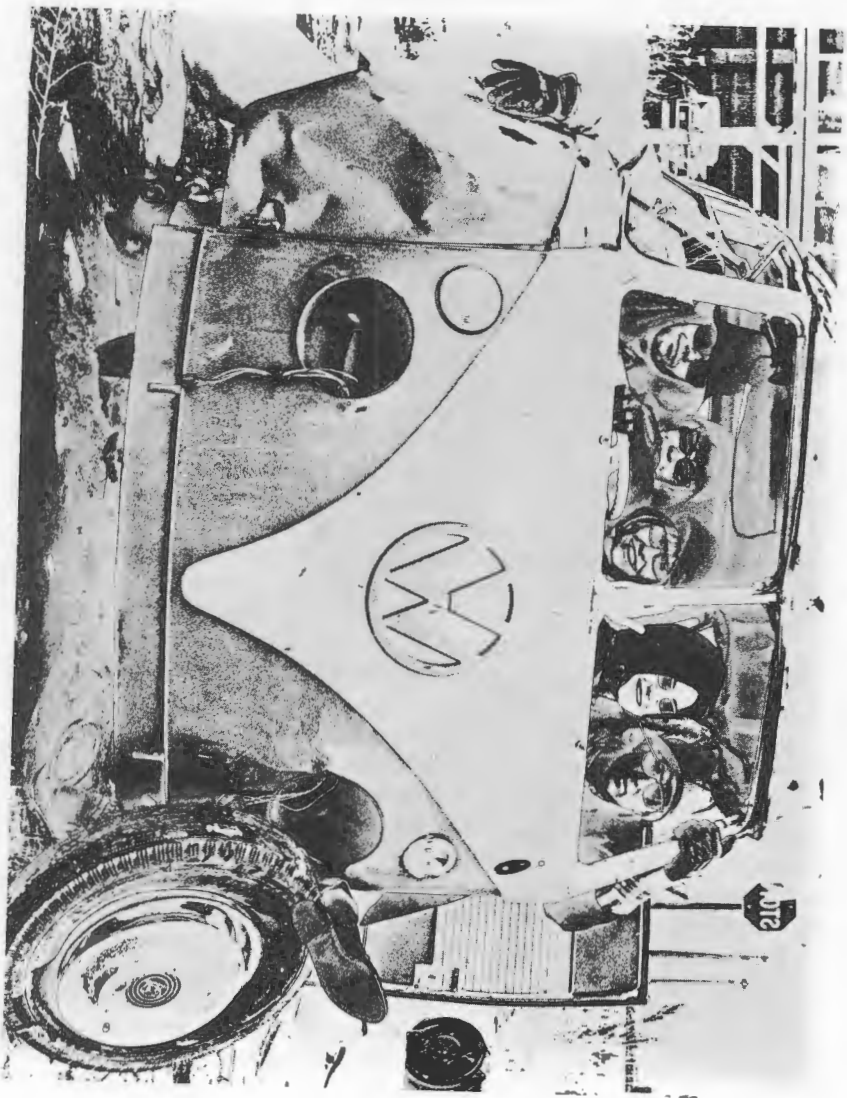
Silent at this winter's frozen side,
against her taut white face, my love, and yours,
(while underneath her snows and ours flow,
asserting in their deserts little new,
the cool red rivers in their freezing mazes)
I listen as this pulse beside me races—
this river in her wash who tells the moon
upon an icy metaphor of man;
and in its quiet throb I think it bears
a spring within its flow to swell a seed.

WHAT FLOWED IN YOU AND OUT OF YOU, MR. THOMAS?

What flowed in you and out of you, Mr. Thomas?
A new synthetic muse's music's metal tune
Mentions the question. What about your Welsh Christmas,
The words you sold for pennies in a bar, a tin
Cup of beer? Are the solos now sold the same as
What flowed in you and out of you, Mr. Thomas?

The liquor of life you loved; sick with that liquor
You lived. Should we find physical that complement?
Poet, is your pulse of too much thirst to slake or
Quench our own for life? May we by it supplement
Our thin throb? With you can those near death be quick for
The liquor of life you loved, sick with that liquor?

In you, though you are dead and dumb to our question,
We read as hope the liquid spasms of a mind
More wrought with life than lost in death; a suggestion
That drinking in and spewing forth is never blind
Intention; and that we may still take direction
In you, though you are dead and dumb to our question.



Larry Simpson, "Fill It Up," solarized photograph, 7"x9"

WE SAT HYPNOTIZED

We sat hypnotized
Lost in his graceful movement,
A thousand people holding their breath.
The poise was shattered . . .
The bull was under his arm,
Tearing open his side,
And the gore was spilling out
And out.

The thin figure staggered,
Coughed, and spit twice.
With still deft hands
He made a second pass
Toward the left,
The deadly horns rushed by,
And from the Corrida came
Drunken cries,
"Viva, viva, viva,
Matador."

While they raved
I saw him fall,
And the glistening pool
Upon the sand
Increased.
I screamed.

THE ROUTINE VOICE OF THE TEACHER

The routine voice of the teacher
Drones on and on,
Repeating the phrases of the last thirty years,
Until it becomes
An inaudible breeze
Floating above the younger heads.

They sit supported by their elbows
As if they were
Flowers growing in meadows of grass
Bent to one side
Absorbing all the blueness of the sky
And afternoon sun.

Behind the blank faces,
The wailing of the Mammias and the Pappas
And the rhythms of the Shaggy Dogs
Explode,
Bursting firecrackers.
Within the room,
Six neat rows of desks in perfect order,
The voice continues.

MAKE SMOOTH THE STREET

Make smooth the street
That-passes in front of
Precarious wooden shacks,
Forty-five percent cardboard,
And naked children happy.

The yellow trucks have come,
Henry & Henry Cement Incorp.,
With revolving cylinders
To grind stone and spew gray fudge.

Spidery children will no longer
Crawl over half-buried sewage pipes
Lying across the road,
Or bruise bare feet
On an avenue of jagged rock.

Old men who have observed
From their doorways
The ripping apart of their street
Note that the pounding hammer
Has stopped at last.

They turn again to their rum;
The sun continues to scorch
Each pathetic house,
Each piece of rock.

IN THE STREET

In the street
I thought of you,
All down the dark hill
And up the next one,
Hurrying past the lights
And raucous music.

Your face was a network of lines
And protruding cheekbones,
And your eyes were watery and dull, tired,
It was not you.

And I
Only touched the back of your shoulder,
Not knowing how to tell you
That the strong made weak
Left me helpless.

LIKE A BIG LEAGUE HURLER

Like a big league hurler
Getting a sign from the bench,
Blue fingered wind
Picks dripping leaves
From muddy puddles
And splats them against our faces.

We brush away the sticky leaves
From our glasses,
Knowing the gesture is futile,
For the only call is strike
And the shutout has begun.

Meekly we accept the ruling
Without rushing onto the field in protest;
And the trees are bare,
The days grow dark.



Larry Simpson, "Self Portrait," solarized photograph, 8"x10"

James Fawbush

ABOVE HIS SILENT HEART

As I pass **secretly along** his dead stream
I kneel in admiration and study him
While he stands **stalwartly**
Against a **merciless** wind,
Sweat **dripping**

I am **only** his dream
Half of me is all he possesses
As he searches incessantly
For a new way,
A new reason

Through actual tears I see him as a naked child
Carefree in clear waters
With his brothers and other virgins
Who don't think of clocks
Or death

Struggling with a smile I watch him in baggy wraps
Gagging on some ancient cigar
Spilling my unknown brothers on dirty bedsheets
Puking from his first cheap foamy beer

With golden eagle visage
He soars
On sheltering wings
High above my helpless infancy
Sinking strong talons
Into the memories of pain and pleasure screams

Now I stand over his prostrate form
As lugubrious tones of uncertainty
Fill my mind and the minds of those
Who moulded his life

Remembering that he wants no despondency by him
Perceiving that he cannot escape the cold flowery softness
That imprisons his desires to make us comfortable

Now I think,
Knowing that he will always breathe
Knowing that now,
 It's my turn

PICTURE

Clustered blackbird gems,
some sixty,
set in the brown,
sun-brown willow crown
against the evening sky.
The sun dies.
At what cost their color caught.

QUESTION

Do you walk sometimes
your spirit's sand,
yours-only land,
swept, smoothed, purged
by other thoughts,
and find the weathering
has made it fresh and new
to go this way again,
and that your foot-prints
are the same?



Larry Simpson, "Diane and Cassie," solarized photograph, 8"x10"

D N A

Had I one cell, one scale of epidermal
Dust from the fingertip of Cleopatra,
I'd give you Egypt—She—identical
As once upon the teeming Nile she wound
The Roman in her toil of grace. The bio-
Chemist mused—on celery—a chain
Reversing coils upon a spiral staircase
Level to link to level—Medieval
Mensurable canons that forecast
In modal numerology our chaste
Arithmetic of propagation—envoys
That speak iambic code. Ho! Mephistopheles.
Your glut of shades exchange me for one grain,
And I this dross decant—a Helena.

THE PURGATION OF VINCENT VAN GOGH

The wine glass on an oaken table
is one crystal oval
and several scimitars.
In the corner an amber shadow
leans against the wall.
In this room
even footfalls avoid
the patches of heat
prostrate against the floor.

While somewhere around Arles
the sun heaves, the grass writhes.
The wind is stricken dumb.

I AM PERCHED ON THE THIRD VEIN

I am perched on the third vein
of an infinitely falling leaf.
If two leaves should drift together
the failing distance between them
as they seek substantiation
is the path toward pain.

Should they each, after moving together,
find themselves coming out the back,
they'll see the emptiness behind as loss.
This loss is the awareness of nothing.

The nexus of nothing
in some riddles
is the will to destroy.

PROCESS OR AN ILLUSION

The climax of a seed
existing in an instant
of painful perfection
shudders with infinite intent.
Then a bud blossoms
lush and mysterious
against the presence of air.

In a profusion of words
I walk as a child
forcing the snow
with warm thighs.

about the Contributors . . .

We were pleased to open this year's *Convivio* with a short piece of fiction by **Nancy Berg**, editor of the first *Convivio* in 1963, and now a social worker in Alexandria, Minnesota. **Mike Moos** is a freshman from Moorhead, majoring in English, who was published in last year's *Convivio*. **Linda McDonnell**, a junior from Fargo with a major in Philosophy, has had some poetry published in *Zone*, a privately printed newspaper edited by another of our contributors, **Dan Albers**. Dan is a senior, majoring in Mathematics. **Dale Olson** is a graduate assistant in the English department at Moorhead State College, and was a contributor to last year's *Convivio*. **Michelann Flynn**, a junior from Fargo, has a major in Speech and Theater. **Rich Callender**, selected to participate in the English department's Honors Seminar program, is a sophomore and has also contributed to *Convivio* in the past. Currently a professor at Moorhead State College, **Bernard Heringman** has published poetry and criticism in numerous anthologies and journals, including *College English*, *Kenyon Review*, and *Sewanee Review*. **John Gidmark**, current editor of *Convivio*, is a senior from Moorhead with a major in English. **Ken Bennett** is present editor of Moorhead State's campus newspaper *The Mystic*, and is majoring in Spanish and English. **Jim Fawbush** is a sophomore from Moorhead with a major in English. **Anne Coleman**, also an English major, is a senior from Fergus Falls, Minnesota. **Mary Pryor**, who is a professor of English at Moorhead State College, has had two poems published in *Prairie Schooner*. **Ken Warner**, who edited last year's *Convivio*, has majors in Philosophy and English.

Larry Simpson, a senior with a major in Art, has exhibited his photography at the Rourke Art Gallery in Moorhead, and at Re-focus, a national photography convention in Iowa City, Iowa, where he won merit awards for two of his pieces. **Helen Glover** is a special student in Art, and has been a past contributor to *Convivio*. **Dolores Heggstuen** is a graduate student from Fargo, also with her major in Art. **Pat Johnson**, whose husband is a professor in the Biology department at Moorhead State, is majoring in Art, and has served as Art Director for KFME, educational television.

