

## The American Inferno

The sun is beginning to set and the oncoming dusk seems all too dark and hazy. The twilight of every society is potentially threatening and its prevailing darkness rests, whether we want to realize it or not, on the minds of all its individuals. Our various styles of life which are manifested as the amalgam of our basic desires and society's values, are curiously powerful in their interreaction and their impact on society. We should agree on the axiom that whether we are actors on the stage of life or not, our thoughts and deeds are the very fiber of the concept "society." The energy inherent in our apathy or our concern will both permeate and influence the direction of our society.

I wonder if our society has not become too forlorn. If this statement is true, we ought to study our social face and where required lift it. If there is disagreement, I ask only that tolerance be given to what I am writing.

If our society has lost its direction we should analyze the cause of this social infection. In order to find the cause it would be necessary to examine the different strata of our society. I would like to introduce a superficial analysis of our society by inspecting (the different strata) its various characteristics. I have placed the characteristics in the concentric circles of Dante's Inferno with each circle representing a different social section.

"Midway this way of life we are bound upon,  
I woke to find myself in a dark wood,  
Where the right road was wholly lost and gone."

The inner circle of society's inferno is inhabited by the workers; so great in number and so indigenous to all societies. They stand as the innermost crust in our social inferno due to a contribution that is the matrix of our continuity. Their situation has constantly changed; the machine once servile to man now casts an awry shadow above him. Regardless of this fact, they seem possessed of the same nature. They swarm to their factories; confused and hopeful, complacent and worried, honest yet watchful. Their days are marked by the endless pressure to procure food, clothing, automobiles, and the entertainment that will fill their time on earth. When these commodities are challenged they would immediately shout for change, yet if they are plentiful their smile is endlessly present.

This circle is surrounded by its concentric brother, the soldiers. The suffering of these men has constructed the protection of our present society. They are a great force in our society; being taught that killing is a tactic, not murder, if one wears a uniform. Of this fact no person is proud, yet from their victories we sense a deep pride and from their defeats stem hidden, spiteful lament. They have won the wars and consequently they have secured our land from foreign occupation. Ironically, they must send their offspring to foreign lands to protect the past laurels of victory, yet the taste of victory was hard won—and not yet lost. They stand in naked green with the reflection of cold steel yet their faces, angelic, scarred, tearful, reflect a strong hope that their conquest will portend social peace.

The next circle is represented by our harbingers of social innovation. This circle is filled with the educators of life; the high browed yet intelligent strata of society. They spend endless hours at the podium spouting the knowledge that contributed to the construction of our present fate. They are powerful; possessed of a knowledge and experience in their lectures, yet instructing in an age of different experience and greatly needed instruction. They dot the lives of everyone; captivating a moment of our past in either a good or evil sense. They discover various directions and our past corridors of life echo with their concern and regret. They have tried, succeeded, failed, and they have left us with the message that it will soon be our turn to direct.

The next circle is the church. They are educators also yet their purpose is directed at varying intentions. They were once a revolutionary body striving to pace themselves in our society. Presently, its influence is indelible yet it has swayed from social change to social harmony. It is void of a once characteristic urgency and now we are faced with the admonitions of sin. They are sincere, hopeful, and possessed of a benevolent nature. They help us bear the frustrations and violence of life with a less painful grimace and they concern themselves with the passions and desires that could undermine our potential benevolence.

The next circle is our youth. I had intentionally hoped to place them as the outermost circle yet our obese and crippled political system has become too political. Our youth is undeniably present in some measure in every social crevice; our universities, business, and every corner of society. They exist filled with the burning knowledge that regardless of their own individual deaths they will someday be left with the responsibility of deciding a social direction. They are the expedient hope of what everyone desires; a better society. They have been mesmerized by the TV, hopeful of success, afraid to lose, possessed of different deficiencies—an odd fit to the awaiting social vacancy.

The outermost circle of this concentric circus is our ubiquitous political system. It is difficult to assay the power of this system in our bewildering inferno. It is an impenetrable mass of power whose control supposedly rests on the consent of the governed. They represent a way of life too obscure for the common man, yet too

frustrating for the challenger. They hope that they are helping and they have contributed greatly to our achievements. Mr. Nixon, Mr. Agnew—different names yet I have seen their motives all too often. They subtly rob the wealth of a nation in order to reheat the fire of a past ideological struggle. They are too powerful, too amorous. They have been overfed with the confidence of a past era and their political boundaries are indistinguishable. The pinnacle of their power is greater in strength than the base of their support. They are seemingly self-perpetuating; a force feeding on the hope of a lost era and denying the tides of social change. They are blindly refusing the statement that "You can't go home again!"

I have not listed every area of society that claims a characteristic circle. We have also been without the wisdom of a Virgil. We are vulnerable to the pressures of every social circle and in fact we could easily experience all of them. We are naked and blind; groping in a braille-like manner for some recognizable hope. We are both frail and strong in our personalities, and although it is hard to admit this fact, it is easily discerned. Individually we hope to change our situation but we are overwhelmed by our apathy. We try to turn ourselves away from our impending destruction yet our social maladies are too great. An identification with our country's actions is inevitable and we can only alter this by social change. Whether we are the soldier in Viet Nam, the educator, the student, the worker or the priest, we are in the same predicament. We are caught within a self-perpetuating system and our needed change will not come from apathy or indifference. The defects of our society are found everywhere; no person can claim innocence, yet we are responsible to decide a commitment, if any, towards our lingering social problems. If we feel weak in our actions it is due to a loss of a once promised influence that has been inculcated in our government. The present need for change will not evolve from without and our apathy can only contribute to our deeply entrenched position.

Sam Miller

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 Canonized

General St. Claire  
really did care  
who won.  
High in his saddle  
driving 7000 human cattle  
into the inhuman battle.  
The enemy line was bending  
St. Claire foresaw the ending  
just one last offence  
and his victory would be immense.  
Regrouping his forces  
he counted his losses and found  
only one blue clad ally,  
. . . himself.  
"Six thousand nine hundred ninety-nine  
honorable deaths",  
he proclaimed as he led his troop  
over the blue and red field once  
green.  
Reaching the front  
he found the enemy had run.  
This his greatest moment,  
he dismounted a black stallion and  
gingerly  
stepping over  
the bulges,  
the puddles,  
the pieces,  
he found a small patch of green  
and planted his victory flag,  
sweet victory!

Tom Magner

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 Nightshade's Obligato

The buzzing, lightly  
trembling street lamp,  
casting my shadow  
thrice one night,  
blinds  
the orange, dawning  
bright sun casting  
hazy, anticipating shadows  
before the sad, long  
silhouettes of dusk,  
and dies at the sun's  
elusive noon.

Paul McNiell



If poets were a commodity which could be produced by following a certain formula, then one would have to say that Sylvia Plath was a combination of a certain amount of Emily Dickinson, intermixed with touches of Edgar Allen Poe. For Plath's composure certainly resembles the restraint, the serenity with which both of her predecessors wrote of things traditionally held to be horrible. Miss Plath has the same fascination with Death that characterizes these other two poets, and she brings the same underlying tension to her discussions of the macabre side of life. But poets cannot be created by combining certain elements, and for all the similarity between their themes, Sylvia Plath is a very different poet than either Miss Dickinson, or Poe.

Sylvia Plath's poetry as represented in her volume *Ariel* first may produce in the reader a kind of awed paralysis. One just doesn't know how to take these poems. They're clever, they're restrained, they fascinate like a cobra about to strike, slowly undulating, changing before its victim's very eyes, but most of all they challenge the reader to view the world through a glass darker than one he's ever dared look into before.

The first facet of Miss Plath's vision is that she is primarily concerned not with the centre of life, but with its marginal situations. For her life itself was one great duel with Death. Life is a vast tightrope everyone of us must walk in order to stay alive. And what most fascinated her about this tightrope was the crystal definition it gave to Death. While life was a constant blur, a vague uncertainty, Death seemed to offer complete peace. In her poem, *Tulips*, we can see just how great her desire to escape the constant challenge, the constant threat which life poses was. She says:

I didn't want any flowers, I only wanted  
To lie with my hands turned up and be utterly empty.  
How free it is, you have no idea how free—  
The peacefulness is so big it dazes you, . . .

These lines reveal the great sensitivity she possesses, a sensitivity so refined that even the tulips are "too excitable" for her.

But another aspect of her poetry equally as impressive as the sensitivity of her perceptions is the quality of the control which she uses to describe them. An example of this superb, half-a breath, then-squeeze type of control can be seen in these lines from her poem, "Cut":

What a thrill—  
My thumb instead of an onion.  
The top quite gone  
Except for a sort of a hinge  
Of skin,  
A flap like a hat,  
Dead white.  
Then that red plush.

Perhaps it is this control which adds to her insights the power which makes them so chilling. For her perceptions of life appear at first to be so macabre, that they seem completely devoid of reality, but slowly and strangely the images and visions of this poetess sneak up on the reader and suddenly overcome him, so that he feels he has never read anyone *more* real.

Intellectually, a reader can realize that the sensitivity of this poet is so rarefied that it borders on the insane, yet emotionally, the reader must be won over by the great control which Miss Plath uses to express her vision of life. She convinces us that the world is so much dross, heavy, slow, paralyzed. And as these lines from *Years* show, Eternity would be no different:

O God, I am not like you  
In your vacuous black,  
Stars stuck all over, bright stupid confetti.  
Eternity bores me,  
I never wanted it.

Where, then, does Miss Patch find redemption, hope, or any kind of perfection? Not illogically, the poet finds it in Death:

The woman is perfected.  
Her dead  
Body wears the smile of accomplishment, . . .

And unfortunately for her readers, Miss Plath took her poetry too literally. She committed suicide February 11, 1963.

Michael Rybarski

#### Stew

It took an old woman  
to say  
from her rocking chair:

"That stew ain't  
no good  
unless heatin' on the stove  
or chillin' in the icebox.  
Outside o' that  
it'll just  
get itself mouldy."

Paul McNeil

. . . through the magic of television  
we will now witness the end of the  
world.

a small white daisy  
being crowded by weeds  
can still smile at the son

The problem with us happy people is  
that we're only funny n laughin' outside;  
while thunderstorms are goin' on inside  
n the louder the thunder inside the  
funnier we seem outside.

Here I go again  
marchin' backwards  
through rusted turnstyles  
toward mumbleing subways.

J. Patrick Ellis

#### Today Is Rain

The day before  
white pidgeons would  
CLASH  
on the blue

Now they combine  
fly around bird  
dull  
with the sky

I haven't the need  
to feel the cold breath  
which hides my sight to trees.

smile sun,  
today is rain.

Gerard Egan

#### hope & consolation 1971

war deaths — this year's -ization +  
exponentially escalating troop withdrawal  
depletion configurations = successful  
restoration of the geo-political balance  
of objective power.

Dear:

In behalf of the Department of the Army,  
I regret to inform you . . .

" . . . at least he was part of a two-week low as  
opposed to last year's six-month high . . ."

Good, then I won't cry.

Neil C. McNeil

#### Outer Flight

The noise  
of a moon shot,  
trembling  
around the world,  
might abort  
the subdued conception  
of our small-time wars;

but not  
the premature agony  
of a mother cat,  
licking the empty dust—  
her litter,  
silvery-metallic, space-suited  
on the moon:  
still, slimy with afterbirth.

Some umbilical cord  
of inner space,  
needed to tie  
the ship to our creation;

else  
flies the machine,  
our grip on things  
lost.

Paul McNeil



## I.

Chased. Falling,  
The sidewalk rips her knee skin.  
The raw wound screeches,  
And the chaser-devil pounces.

Like this, a government of guns  
Will scrape the skin of a soul.  
Then, to be free will be  
To want to be left alone  
To lick the scab in private.

And the artist, a skinny hemophiliac,  
Won't heal even to a scab-point.  
Always wound open,  
Dirt will be in the blood  
To infect, to agitate, to make art.

Sleeeeeeep, sleeeeeeep.  
Stay asleep till twelve.  
I don't care cause nobody does,  
So kindly GO TO HELL!

Like this, a nothing-governed state  
Will blanket us one from another.  
Then, to be free will be  
To "take or be taken,"  
Or "Kill the alarm, don't wake me."

And the artist, a bored fatman,  
Will be insulated from the truth,  
As a gloved hand from the cold is.  
But waste bears boredom  
Bears discontentment, bears art.

## III.

We are short of the truth.  
The truth is in a precise society,  
Where deception, the hopping frog,  
Is caught and squished like a pregnant grape.  
Discipline, seasoning of the soul,  
Is sprinkled to assist taste.  
Art, the mirror,  
Is unwarped by a false motive,  
But is truth made.  
And the artist? A perfect Greek mesomorph.  
There is no one image to give you,  
No place to take you to to show you.  
There is only the *feeling*, that as we are  
We'll never fully climax.

Charles J. O'Neil Jr.

## More or Less

## Confectioner

Your more to you  
Is only more if it's more than I.  
And the use of your more—  
To make me less, oh!

Such a shame—  
You make me beat back.

And when done,  
You to you will be less than I,  
And you will be as dead  
As you tried to make me.

Such a shame—  
You are already less to me.

I must know you breathe.  
If physically you leave,  
Spiritual as well will.  
Though growing,  
I'm small still.

Till I can tell another,  
Unless I be a father,  
I must know you breathe.

Till this isn't my need,  
Keep your living going.

Charles J. O'Neil Jr.

Charles J. O'Neil Jr.

## As a Seed

## For Existential Mariners

I got tossed wrong and  
I fell to the sideland  
Of a New England corn field.  
While my sames grew together,  
Wild hay raised me near a wall.  
Those in the field jeered:  
I rooted firmer.

Then the farmer came and  
I'm the only stalk standing now.

Angst.  
Ship sour-black, lead bird hanging,  
Decks expose men dead.  
The gestalt to the eye pains  
As ammonia the senses stings.

Aid!  
Genesis pre-built, but becoming to be.  
Never now what was,  
The bow is your own.

Shoot to obliterate or to wake to love.  
If first wrong-shot, back pull the arrow.  
Let all the world's birds breathe.  
The bow is your own!

Charles J. O'Neil Jr.

Charles J. O'Neil Jr.



Thursday Night

I saw a man  
in the library tonight,  
who sat near to me  
and proceeded to read a magazine.  
He didn't sit back  
on the seat like most  
but sat haphly hunched on the edge  
with his feet put somewhat apart.  
He made all sorts of noises  
as he sucked on a cough drop  
and breathed loudly  
thru his nostrils.  
He reminded me of someone  
trying to take a shit,  
and reading a magazine  
to help him along.

Forgive me mister  
whoever you are.

Gerard Egan

Balder

As I saw the sun  
winking at me from above,  
I stretched towards it  
my arms;  
I began my dance  
dating from the days of  
Primitive sun-worshipping pagan tribes.

And so I felt like the Pied Piper,  
disporting through  
the streets of Hamlin,  
followed by rats.  
Or children.

Gary Bortolot

The Death of the Amerikon Achilles

Come one and all to this Arlington vault  
Embracing the remains of the Amerikon Achilles.  
Within, his warrior spirit abides  
As the soul of his forefather in the second realm of hell.

Young Achilles once breathed of brimstone and fire  
Fearlessly killing in the heat of the combat.  
Weapons of war he mastered to perfection,  
As great Achilles once cast his Pelian spear.

Clad in olive helm and garb, boots of ebony  
Tiny trinkets adorn his green uniform.  
While brandishing a gun forged of cold blue steel  
Young Achilles charged across the plains of Ilion.

Death enveloped him like a shroud  
Charging into the hell of battle.  
Comrades and enemies fell all around,  
Cardboard blown down in the wind.

The Amerikon Achilles in his frenzied charge,  
Stained with human blood  
Met face to face with the horseman of death  
Concealed beneath the cold, clay carpet . . .

"AND THE SOUL FLUTTERING FREE OF THE LIMBS  
WENT DOWN INTO DEATH'S HOUSE . . ."

The great Achilles of Homeric fame  
Will be remembered for all time.  
Being eulogized, all know his name,  
In both ancient and modern rhyme.

Now, here lies the Amerikon Achilles  
Alone, and unknown in his coffer,  
Who will remember his glory and fame (or even his name)  
Or anything he had to offer.

J. C. Osborne

Childhood's Dream

I lay down to sleep on the cool damp grass  
as it tickles my arms, legs and feet.  
Soon, in my dreams I witness  
the transition.  
The atmosphere presses  
at my body—it's hard to breathe.  
The moist verdant coolness  
becomes warm, warmer, warmer . . .  
I become a vapor  
free in the air around me.

I melt and flow; I blend  
into the universe,  
as I decompose  
a net of reticulum  
catches me . . .  
surrounds me . . .  
adding to my microcosm.  
As I expand I  
dominate all.

After conversing with the stars,  
discovering that  
they are not so far away after all;  
I decide that they are not  
very nice people.

Gary Bortolot '73

People don't see the SUN  
the MOON  
They just know it's there  
People don't see the shaven Rasputans  
Trying to catch a subway  
somewhere  
They don't see the gutter man  
pass right on  
They don't see a siren, a scream, a paperboy's voice  
pass right on  
People don't see a grand central  
grand no more  
They don't see the pretzel man  
only the pretzel  
People don't see whores or flesh stores  
They don't see a topless town with topless joints  
They don't see the money makers all wound up  
They see themselves—a world of them  
Oblivious to ALL

I see  
and more  
Jesus, What a cornucopia of decayed fruit!

Joe Piergrossi

The wind,  
the moaning, sounds  
of spring wind  
filled his ears  
as he made the journey.

He hiked his lips  
over her mountainous breasts  
leaving a few red flags  
where he'd been  
all around them.

Down and across and around  
the flat lands  
where the grass  
that's small and golden grew.  
all on the plain  
the young man roamed.

To the oasis  
at the head of the valley.  
and there their thirst was filled.  
and replenished.  
for the journey  
they slept.

Gerard Egan



THREE POEMS

1. *Psalm*

He will hold me up  
 if I let Him  
 Carry me back  
 and home  
 Where I ride on  
 a little pallet  
 I worked up  
 out of clips and straw  
 If I lean back quickly  
 He may let me fall  
 I will catch me  
 with a new way of twisting  
 till I win a prize  
 for falling clean and true  
 and knowing all about it.  
 Look to the left  
 neither to the right  
 The patient is resting quietly  
 he will sleep either way  
 leaning or falling  
 Carried in that good lap  
 with a treat of spoiled milk  
 God do not let me go  
 Take care  
 it's not like turning me loose  
 I've gotten used to the stairs  
 no vertigo now  
 But I don't know where You are  
 And I walk with my feet hung down  
 peddling the air with my feet  
 Are You holding me tight  
 meaning—am I?  
 But how can I hold  
 what I do not know to hold  
 or to love  
 where You lie in me clumsy?  
 I am warm and weaker now  
 Take care of me please.

2. *Nocturne: Charles Street*

Oh, my head and hands  
 have wounded trees  
 and little girls  
 Have opened eyes of rocks  
 where salt was once  
 before the body shrank from love  
 Small talk about Venus  
 how she wont turn much  
 her face burned up on the sun  
 her bottom cold as books  
 brought in three times a week  
 and laid on the window-sill

We'll dig up Max  
 and let him play for coffee  
 I wonder why the walls  
 wont let me love my old friend  
 Johann Sebastian Adderley  
 who crawls in knocking sin  
 and wonder drugs and falls  
 at my feet like a burglar  
 We'll mention death and God  
 go under kicking His Name around  
 my five dry wounds

3. *Magdalene*

It was a green flask in her hand  
 with a stain on it like copper  
 Earth underneath  
 the stain till the hot liquid  
 called it to be green  
 and to be a place  
 where perfume could make a stand  
 to sweeten somebody sometime  
 He was there  
 before she knew who He was  
 and let her cry like a little girl  
 the mascara ran a little  
 and she had to wipe it off His instep  
 In the second act He got up  
 and fought this guy  
 to save a worthless name  
 Then he turned around  
 and gave her His own

"Peter and The Aberration"

—dedicated to my brother  
 Lillian without whom I  
 would never have developed  
 a limp . . . and to Peter's  
 mother Martha.

Peter Mitchell had a *giant* Chiquita banana which he worshipped every day and of course he kept it refrigerated (so it would stay moist). It was the most beautiful banana in the world with its soft smooth yellow skin and you won't believe it but this banana didn't have a blemish (nor any teeth marks from a hungry person) just an oval blue sticker with its brand name on it. One day Peter sat down and cried; he was twenty-five, rich but he wasn't married. He lived a lonely life worshipping his banana but a banana isn't too good company cuz bananas don't talk, walk or do anything constructive. So Peter cried louder. He opened the refrigerator and hugged his banana and really loving it he kissed it right on the blue seal. Suddenly to Peter's amazement the banana turned into a beautiful girl, a perfect girl (pimple free) with a figure that was kind of cosmic. He stared for a moment and then shouted with joy, "Will you marry me?" The stunned Banana-girl stuttered and paused, but knowing the care that Peter had bestowed upon her while she was a banana (which was the result of a 2000 year old family curse) she answered, "You bet your ass." Pete was so happy he ran at her and kissed her square on the mouth. BANG! she turned back into a banana. Pete cried, "What have I done?" but being so sexually frustrated started peeling the banana trying to figure out a way to carry it up to his bedroom.

J. Patrick Ellis

Media #7

Commercial:

(two beautiful, semi-hippy, young people  
 of the opposite sex gazing into each  
 others eyes chewing gum)

GIRL: Arnold, I love you  
 BOY: I love you too, Helen  
 GIRL: Arnold, I love you  
 BOY: I love you too, Helen  
 GIRL: Arnold, I love you  
 BOY: I love you too, Helen  
 GIRL: Arnold, I love you  
 BOY: I love Boupee gum because . . .

ANNOUNCER: Help Arnold ladies and gentlemen and finish the phrase "I love Boupee gum because . . ." in twenty-five words or less and you may win the White Cliffs of Dover—or you may decide to fly to Tierra del Fuego—or you may take a oneofakind ride in a chariot with the Vice President of these United States. You may even decide to forget that you won the contest and receive at no extra cost—a whole years supply of Hemmeraide toilet tissue made by the same people who make Boupee gum.

So remember:

"Don't grab anyone's Boupee  
 Go out and buy your own"

J. Patrick Ellis

A GOOD PASTIME

Today you can go to America  
 Admission there is free;  
 And, 'oh', so is called the land!  
 It just dawned on me.  
 Anyway, you can ride it  
 You stand, and feel it seep from under you;  
 and, it's free!  
 Or maybe you like hide and seek?---just let go hands!  
 Sorry folks, the Statue of Liberty is 'OUT OF ORDER'  
 But there are always those enjoyable times for you;  
 The times you get to see the waters, in colors---  
 and, it comes extra thick  
 and, it's free!  
 America is a good pastime.  
 And at mid-day you go to replenish your supply of air  
 Then back at play---to wonder perhaps why America  
 buys such unlively animals---and,  
 in bunches!---and, wonder why  
 America has turned the heat so low;  
 and, wonder AMERICA.  
 It makes you giggle.  
 America is a good pastime.  
 And everything there is free;  
 But you mustn't stay too long  
 For fear of awakening them.  
 America is a good pastime.  
 Seats are limited so  
 Please stand in line for tickets!



John and Marion  
bought a dog.  
He was a mongrel  
his nose was wet  
his coat shiny  
They named him Zabu.

They taught him to do  
all sorts of doggy tricks  
but they couldn't get him  
to fetch a stick  
They tried hard  
they even gave him  
doggy treats  
But he refused to fetch  
God knows they tried  
to teach him this  
the most important trick  
to them.

Zabu did not want to fetch  
he became mad  
when they tried  
to force him

One day John began  
scolding him  
because  
he wouldn't fetch  
He got carried away  
and chased Zabu.

Zabu was gone.  
Marion cried.  
John was angry.

Soon after a Lion  
escaped from the Zoo  
He ate John  
who was on his way  
to school  
Marion cried  
and Zabu came home  
to fetch sticks for her.

J. Patrick Ellis

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Downtown Yet Not Spring

Two degrees to freeze and I'm freezing.  
I sit my ass down on a bench;  
a bench kin to winter toilet seats.

People shop past my eyes  
like bees to flowers  
dropping pollen in the money machines.

"Love Story" is in all the windows  
but I haven't any money.  
Why doesn't spring come around the corner?

Gerard Egan

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I Knew A Little Midget Man

Little midget man  
Trying a life somewhere  
Dejected Rejected Projected  
a queer

Little midget man  
Plodding a life somewhere  
A stockman in a lonely town

Little midget man  
Fighting a new life somewhere  
Open yourself to a new day

Joe Piergrossi

---

In the night I stand  
and breathe the evening  
into my lungs, into my veins.  
The moon rises watchman for the resting sun  
and I'm alone to the stars  
that owl above my head.

Gerard Egan

red worm

for i a sore and suffering worm  
too hot on  
these leaves your green body is more than  
mist on you this is me oow

not for a while yet  
i am lost off this green  
land oh you are not a land  
you blush you are an amazon  
as black as hair as sharp as green as leaves  
the sea is nearly your color

my red skin  
comes in the air over your treetops again  
my worm again and again for you

—in memo (rousseau, hen)ry

skyles rhys

Before my hands full  
to original powers  
count on cigarette  
sore one-to-five fingertips give  
again in silence hours  
six-to-ten, the alphabet  
safe as I mislay a shovel  
buried my numeral name and adjective  
face with merds of air from zoos.  
The hours of my palms, a penny pays  
each second hand if days long to live  
where four and twenty command ten  
and more, cant roll the sun  
set up the sky or touch twenty-five.

Michael Kilgallen

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1969 Political

White on black,  
World City D.C.

Word wary  
compurgators of the innaugural  
oath,

Stand beside him,  
Latest victim,  
Guides them,  
Through the ni-i-ight by the li-i-ight from ab-o-o-ove.

skycostwarstinkingrisingmaking  
On my honor I will do my best to do my duty  
Bloody  
Honor:  
vain, violent Vietnam.

Anti-mythic element,  
the modern mushroom atom,  
musty-smelling plants  
of death,  
lurking.  
Beneath Washington Obelish,  
a policeman is falling off his hors.

Paul McNeil

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To Go

A funnel with sides of electrified guilt  
Sucks us, makes us live *don't*.  
Never narrow enough for it,  
We grow narrow down the funnel,  
Till down too far, we touch a side and die.

To be our own,  
We must be funnel-free.  
But by knowing alone,  
The funnel won't release.

We got to decide  
To leave what is the funnel's,  
And snap the lock  
Of the trunk with our maps.  
Maps read and decided,  
Then we have to act.

This choke-hold:  
We got to break it to breathe.

Charles J. O'Neil Jr.

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My KITE reached the SUN  
Today  
I pulled the ripcord—it floated UP

Between the sandy grass I sat  
A turtle rock my sitting mat

People look up to see my SUN

Taken aback with my playing  
God

Joe Piergrossi