

The Dusty Road

Our child--
youandme.

A fist
is
not
a
helping hand.

Claude

Addiction

Oh George! George! No, no! No, I don't believe it, George! Why us, why us?

I don't know Martha. I just don't know.

Oh, but is it true, George, is it really true?!

I'm afraid so, Martha. Just look at him--sitting there, staring blindly into nothingness. Our own son.

Oh George, where have we failed? I've tried to be a good mother, God knows I've tried. And you, George, you're the finest father a boy could have.

Well--God knows I've tried, too. Why, when he was just a kid, I took him out to the sandlots. Why, I gave a dollar and a half during his first Little League collection.

George, do you think it could have been his failure to communicate with his schoolmates?

I suppose that could have driven him to it.

Or, maybe, George, that young Ashley girl. The Saturday nights he spent at her house.

I don't know, Martha. I really don't know.

The demonstrations, George! The demonstrations!

What's that, Martha. What did you say?!

He must have picked it up from one of those DAMNED hippie demonstrators.

Now, now, Martha, calm yourself. Watch your language. The windows are open and the neighbors might hear us. I'm sure the students had little to do with it.

I'm sorry, George, but I really don't know what to do. What can we do?

We must do something, Martha. It is our responsibility. Just because he's made a sorry mistake and taken the wrong road is not reason enough to desert him when he most needs our help.

God knows, George, how often I've tried to tear him away. But it never worked. Every time I turned my back to him, he "turned it on," as they say.

Well Martha, we have no alternatives. We must break him of this addiction at once, and totally, and forever.

I guess you're right, George. That's the only thing to do.

I'm glad we're finally agreed, Martha. We'll give the black and white set to your mother, and move the color set from the living room to our bedroom.

Gene Gousie

There were these chickens - "a chant of chickens they were haggling and heckling and they were haggling and I say Jesus danny we can't drive no more, no more." And wild-eyed and wine drunk he stepped on the brake like a foot organ. "They haggled my brains I say too much." A panel truck, a Nash, years older than Danny, took a stop right on the dirt road and settled in the dust. He pulled out a deck of cards, a bottle of wine, crossed his leg, ran his hair back with his hand, and tied his shoe later while Danny didn't move more than he had to. He and Danny gazed on that figure on the parapet three four hundred yard down the river while a boat was in it. Danny didn't move about - "you say you cain't hear them chickens anymore. Well listen up I hear them here, hear them in my sleep, driving this truck - right here I hear them, I always hear them, and if I didn't git 15 cent for them a piece I run them off the cliff." Danny kept looking out; he wore a tight blue work shirt and loose grey pants and yellow mustard stains. While Danny was looking, he, the other, the driver, broke Danny's silence and hammered him with his elbow and said, "we'll be haul-assing now." In the roared-up dust they dispatched.

"Seven miles he said seven" - off to the side of the road, a stillness, a graveyard. Danny was looking straight. He, the driver, roared with a fit of laughter, drunk of the last tossed out bottle, and the fit loosed as he shifted in neutral and coasted downhill. "Chet says I got to take it easy. You're sick as I'm drunk, and I figure if you took a throttle now and then you'd be fine, It's those chickens babbling."

The truck resembled the last frieght out, alne. This man, the policeman, took interest and hot pursuit and in 5 minutes he was unable to see the truck through the dust and lost interest. The panel truck was in the next town before it was seen again. It was going fast until it stopped:

"Where's the Alma Hospital you know?"

They were mum.

"I got this sick boy here you know. I got to git him to the Alma Hospital." They loosened their tongues, wetted their lips but were silent. "I'll hook you if you don't tell me. I got this sick boy you know." "I know," one says, and sees Danny, a big boy to be sick, staring at him.

Then git your mind to it and tell me."

"I cain't."

"Why not? You just said you can."

"I never said no such thing - he's sick."

"I know."

"Git him gone, he's fevered."

"I know." He didn't.

"I don't know."

"Don't you live around here - you says you know?"

"Oh."

"We're just day hands for the weeding season."

"Oh" He left

They were then in Poomfret.

They overheated in the next town. At a gas station a prostitute smiled at them. Danny must have been in pain. He didn't smile. Down in Coggleshell a man spit and says a mile or two down the road, but he wasn't sure. And later when he lite up his last stogie he was stopped by a police car. The policeman suggested to take them the rest of the way in his car if the man's so sick. The officer sensed when he laid hands on him that he was dead and then felt his heart. He closed Danny's eyelids and got the stretcher. The driver was amazed, but he didn't feel that sorry for him. "What do I do with my chickens and my truck."

"Chickens" the officer said, "you ain't got none."

"Oh, I thought I took the other truck."

Michael Paul

Ash Wednesday

Here nod and moan
Zion's saving time
after the scarce joke
shafts of hammered iron
pleasure to bone, fix
(for a sum) the untravelled
arm onto nailloud
leaf lifepipe. The
King of Spots, crowned, humored
underground, expires there.
Who could want more?
Un-noisy and boring
the mourning, and our
brows coaled in spring.

Mike Kilgallen

What exuberance a single flame has! Is it any wonder that it has been so often used as symbol for the life of man? The Greeks Anoximander and Anoximenes, saw all life as a diversification of the cosmic fire. In the East, those, perhaps most perceptive viewers of man, the Hindus, saw man's soul as being a divine spark; purifying, epehemeral in its existence on Earth, but eternal when re-united with the highest fire.

And what more perfect symbol could there be? Observe the flame: flicker, dance, shout, scream for air. If it's fed it grows; never however, forgetting its hesitant beginnings. It never betrays its heritage — its heritage of vitality. Even the most fully developed fire is never static, never so dignified that it remains stagnant. The flame never becomes ashamed of its nature- to dance. More hypnotically than any full-breasted, swaying-hipped woman it undulates its streamlined body, luring as persuasively as the Sirens of yore, any unsuspecting, but kindred soul.

Perhaps it is the similarity which attracts us. Looking deep into the prismatic levels of a flame aren't we often surprised seeing our own mirror-image? Is not the dancing, undulating, flame our mistress, our brother, our selves? We delve down into the depths, infinite, seeking the core, the heart of the flame, only to be frustrated. Everytime we approach the center, the meaning lodged hidden in the vast corridors, flickers, transforms, and ultimately evades us.

Can we not see that we can never learn the secrets of this obliquely transparent enemy-lover-friend until we understand the mysteries of ourselves? And the fire teaches us how. For us, who are so estranged from ourselves, it is more a teacher than a symbol. For by symbolizing what we should be, and are not the flame taunts us, but benevolently, telling us how to learn, how to understand ourselves, telling us to dance!

Michael A. Rybarski

The Murmuring Undertones

The murmuring undertones bore me,
Of what learning I do not know
Lost in a barrel of ignorance,
Intelligence bores me.

This form of life is honored,
Praised and glorified unto me
But how can one appreciate that,
Which he knows no better, no worst.

Waste, oh such a waste,
Anything to avoid the inevitable death
Torture, hate, and senility,
Oh what a waste.

But what is this fragrance
Such different smells
My mind begins to wander
My body drifts.

Colors float in my eyes, my mind,
Sights I never consciously dared to visualize
Life seems so much better,
Hate no longer pervades me.

Drowsiness, what terrible relaxation,
Almost evil
My family watches in absolute horror
Damn.

What happens?
The colors fade, oh no
Life again enters those raggaed gates
My eyes clear.
The same, never changing
The hate, always the same
My mind, forever dead.

r. koussa

From Under A Rock Hopefully

April comes, the etherised wrestles back to consciousness,
Little girls in red boots plant seeds,
They will grow while everyone sleeps.
Warm, moving, remembering everything
Like Socrates before the ship of Delos came in.

A business man at the gym
"Me and Bob onto you two."

Ladies with no make-up on buy ribbons
"Puppy-dog tails are in this year."

"Humanities major, hunh? Their eyes meet
The man in the elevator smiled at the boy
They saw each other at last.
"Another round!" The bartender opens a new
keg
The City is now real, sounds come from the
homes.
Song from old Italian tenors, chant from
School girls in plaid uniforms

"Have you heard, some doctor in Alaska
Has discovered a cure for paralysis."
Babies speak their first words, mothers listen,

Gold Vermillion sun on the rise, casting
A Beam to humble green earth
Someone told the pretzel man of a
Lily that had sprouted up through the
Pavement down on 42nd street.

Kevin Pettit

Material

If anyone would like
to
contribute any material
either
poetry, prose, or
photography
for publication in
THE ALEMBIC
please, bring it to
Stephen 112
or
Call

Michael A. Rybarski
751-1651

William S. Hillman's Fall Down
(Simple Schizophrenia: a Socialization Phenomenon)

He started leg up for the certain-sure sign
Spirit wheezed from spirit run,
Line far further than knees might hold,
He lay-fell down 'mong the dirt, the cut, the bleeding.

The hill grew snow-slipp'ry bigger
Hill, the keeper, willed less and less.
The moaning silenced to soothing his sores.
Deeper. Deeper. Down the up was he already.

The harpies, the flies,
The stench and light's lack,
The excrement and the jewels:

Together they took to ripping his flesh-black.
As one sucking straw they sipped-up his blood-white.
Hot, sweaty at the communion of the saint martyred,
Their swelled bellies they filled.

From altar to floor a small fallen tear
Shrunk by the air
Remains only by stain to remind

Charles J. O'Neil Jr.

The First Commandment

Whose goddy stink is more quick made
going to defend us from
the Kiev import trade
Hell, upside, the assembled special
Automatic 1 o n g bomb e r
Than collegial payloads
Mystic huddle-heaven
Soul-sewn shadow pisser play
Holds our blinkage
To a reach-pinch-screw
Or you?

Mike Kilgallen

electric candles mourn our martyrs
 painting frozen portraits
 across whitewashed walls
 paving ancient roads gold
 with water colors
 that fade in the rain

enshrined in ivory sepulchers
 of superficial soap
 once again to rise
 on rouged cotton-candy clouds
 scattered by just a tear or two

Gene Gousie



St. Valentine, 1971

harts ME hert, OE heort; akin to L cervus hart, Gk keros, horn
 cards ME carde, modif. of MF carte, prob. fr. OIt carta lit., leaf of
 paper, fr L charta leaf of papyrus, fr Gk chartes
 hearts and cards
 for another
 child's mother
 and my lover
 and
 me.
 Valentine, Saint, d.c. 270, Roman martyr priest, possibly by association
 with a pagan festival . . .

Paul McNeil

Markings

From Shell
 Make the receiver tell a plan.
 Ear the lie made loud.
 From lighthouse
 Take the eye's aid to land.
 Shake the Cross, die the man.

From driftwood
 Scrape the clinging sea-sand.
 Break the offer, the human hand.
 To raw water, heave it back.
 Driftwood drift.

by Charles J. O'Neil Jr.

Arts Calendar

March 1—20	Rhode Island College--Exhibit of banners and drawings by Norman Laliberte, Adams Library Gallery.
March 2	R. I. Philharmonic Orchestra Children's Concert---Francis Madeira, conductor. Veterans Memorial Auditorium. 10:00 a.m.
March 2	Rhode Island College and Rhode Island Chamber Singers, Room 138, Roberts Hall, 1:00 p.m.
March 2—9	Rhode Island Junior College--Painting exhibition by Debbie Gordon. Art Gallery.
March 3	Rhode Island College film series--THE ENTERTAINER. Mann Auditorium. 2 and 7:30 p.m.
March 3	Salve Regina College film series--CIVILISATION:V, THE HERO AS ARTIST. O'Hare Academic Center, 9:00 p.m.
March 4	R. I. Philharmonic Orchestra Children's Concert--Francis Madeira, conductor. Veterans Memorial Auditorium. 10:30 a.m.
March 4	Barrington College and Brown University--Concert of compositions by Donald Erb. Sayles Hall, Brown University.
March 4, 5, 6	Rhode Island College--THE TEMPEST, presented by the speech and theatre department. Roberts Hall Auditorium. 8:15 p.m. (T E. \$2.00)
March 5	Barrington College--Concert of compositions by Donald Erb, Easton Hall, Barrington College.
March 6	R. I. Philharmonic Orchestra — Lorin Hollander, pianist; Veterans Memorial Auditorium; 8:30 p.m. (T.E. \$2.50 balcony or floor).
March 6—28	Old Slater Mill Museum — Exhibition of Blacksmithing and Iron Working Tools.
March 7	Warwick Arts Foundation and State Ballet of Rhode Island An Afternoon of Ballet, Herci and Myles Marsden. 3:00 p.m. Warwick Veteran's Memorial Auditorium.
March 7—19	Open Painting Show, Providence Art Club, 11 Thomas St. violin and harpsichord. Main Gallery 3:00 p.m.
March 7	Museum of Art, Risd- Museum Concert, Bach Sonatas for violin and harpsichord. Main Gallery 3:00 p.m.
March 10	Salve Regina College film series CIVILISATION: VI Protest and Communication. O'Hare Academic Center, 9:00 p.m.
March 10	Museum of Arts, Risd Gallery Talk: The Exhibition and the Artist. Susan P. Carmalt, 2:00 p.m.
March 11—16	U.R.I. Dark of the Moon. Quinn Theatre, 8:30 p.m. \$1.00 students.
March 11 — April 4	South County Art Association Bannigan Sullivan Retrospective. Helme House, Kingston.
March 13	Looking Glass Theatre- Saturdays in the Park series, 1:30 p.m.
March 14	Brown University Orchestra Concert- Sayles Hall 4:00 p.m.
March 15—26	Rhode Island Junior College Invitational Black and White Juried Exhibition.
March 16	The New Music Ensemble, Brown University, Churchill House, 8:30 p.m. Students free.

—Dark Woody, Bright Brassy, Quiet Quality.
You people of night, play pass the ticket this way.
A tablet for your date or see her there. Thirty-dollar pants and shirt! “Ten dollar wardrobe, coat included.”
—“Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls—bums and whores—gather ‘round; I’ll tell you a story.”
—“Louder the music,” “Gale says that she is . . . ,”
“Dig it man,” “A beer,” “Da, Da, Da, La, La, La . . . ”
Hah
Hah
Hah!!!!
—Time of your life, enjoy it. Tomorrow again we’ll meet. “Certainly I played ball.” Talk to people, stare at the girl. Laugh with friends, buy one more.
—Later. A darkened room. The shadow of a picture—Lennon was here and that’s alright because the mayor was here. So I’m here, let’s see the fun of a New York time . . .

Thomas E. Stripling

East to See

Skif dip.
Strain hymns to haunted houses out.
Stretch Sway.
Inhale exhale the ocean organ live.

You a captain yourself instruct.
Compass, map, star away of mars,
From pandora far.
As blind Orion grow east to see. East!

Charles J. O’Neil Jr.

diabolos
for h. w.

my flesh i bite off,
furrow by furrow, from the fingertips.
slowly,
i grow toward my death,
from within. i am
a mighty and lingering disease;
my soul is a carcass
of lovewelts. i care for none other,
for nothing.
wretched in ignorance,
i am weak in my well-being.
i chew my soul into shreds
as one would
a piece of raw meat.
vampire!
being-between-worlds!
i rise with the dead
and live with the dying.
i am deadweight,
groaning and falling under the daylight.
my worth is somewhere,
lost in coffins.
diabolos!
i search the mirror
and find no one in the darkness.
eyes
roll into oblivion,
in my netherland!

Skyles Rhys

Runaway

Walk--
carom pinball
Myth-scrambled brains
past arms
Paralyzed;
to the hole
Separation needed.
Walk--
next dime
Too many words unheeded,
emerge pinball
Unneeded.
carom pinball
carom,
Away--

I had finished
eating green grass
and drinking blue skies

I was ready to sing
with you
not songs of pure poets
in nature’s gardens
but rather
uncleansed melodies
searching,
not being

Gene Gousie

Nixon is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down on park benches. He leadeth me beside the Still Factories. He restoreth my doubts in the Republican Party. He guideth me to the path of unemployment for his party's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of Soup Kitchens, I am still hungry. I do fear evil for thou art against me. Thou anointest my income with taxes, so that my expenses run over my income. Surely poverty and hard living will follow me all the days of the Republican Party, and I shall live in a rented tenement all the rest of my life.

The Republican 23rd Psalm

So now they know. They know they should have never done it. They went along with Nixon in '68 because he was tough — on the kids and on the blacks and on the Reds. But now they know, that most of all, Nixon is tough on them.

The Republican 23rd Psalm comes from a factory. It was distributed by a local. It is passed around by workingmen. Workingmen do not like not working. They do not like not working for the same reason they do not like kids with long hair and mothers on welfare. They have a sense of America and what it is. They knew it, but grew up without it during the depression. They went to war for what they had to have and came back determined to have it. And what it is is not easy to say. They might say freedom or liberty or something else. But what it is is making it. The Pilgrims did it and the Revolution got it. History has it. It is really simple to understand. Building America took sacrifice and endurance and work. The workingman is proud of it and part of it a he wants to work. And in 1968 he saw a threat to it all. He saw it on campuses and in the blacks and reacted. It was in his gut, but his gut was wrong.

Bill Moyers wrote a book called *Listening to America*. He went across the country and listened to people. One of them said:

I told my friends two years ago that they were votin' for a depression when they voted for Hoover's party, but they were more scared of niggers then they were of not working. That'll teach 'em.

So he learns, but it is hard. There is one textile mill that stayed in New England while others went South. It employed a good amount of people in its town. Now the mill has no more third shift.

At Christmas the workingmen were lucky. The mill closed down for a three week vacation. One man who worked there for twenty-one years does not work there anymore. Others remain. One who remains is named Oscar. He has been there for thirty years, and he is glad of it. He says he will work till the day he dies and he means it. Oscar is about five-feet-three and weighs about one-hundred pounds. His chest is just big enough so it collapses to make his stomach. His voice would squeek if it were not so coarse. His left hand has only half of its little finger because one night when Oscar was working overtime his hand did not move as quickly as his machine did. When he comes to work he puts a little baseball cap on his head to keep the felt out of his hair. He wears his gray work pants and blue work shirt and crepe-sole sneakers everyday. In his lunch box he carries his coffee in an old coke bottle. The sandwiches his wife makes must be soft. Oscar does not have any teeth.

It might seem as though life has been hard to Oscar, but he doesn't think so. Two year ago he said: "We are lucky now. The pay is good. The hours ain't much. I can remember during the thirties we would work twelve to fifteen hours a day and get thirty-two cents an hour. And we were damn lucky to get it too — and we were grateful. That was the depression you know. Times when no one could work. — If you could get a job, you took it, no matter what, you had to. Now we get good money and work good hours." Oscar, in 1968, was paid \$2.42 and he could work 48 hours a week.

Time has passed a little in two years and time is little harder. And one might wonder how Oscar might feel today. It is not too difficult to say.

Oscar knew who ran the mills when he made thirty-two cents an hour. You could see it in the way he looked at the white-shirted engineers when they come around to check production. You could see it in the punch-out line, the night a man who used to proudly call himself a Republican tried to cut the line. He got bumped back to Oscar and Oscar bumped him too. The man was the last to punch out. They did not mind him, they just did not like the way he talked. You could see it in the way he talked of the depression and the ones who got into it and the great man who got the country out. Oscar talked about it and you knew who he blamed. It was those from Hoover's party — those who paid him thirty-two cents an hour, and those who rode away from the mill in their Cadillacs just about the time Oscar would come in for the second shift. You could see this in all these things. But most of all you saw it on that June day in 1968 when he took his transistor radio from his lunch pail and heard that Robert Kennedy had died. He cried. He was crying because his friend was dead.

So now it does not seem that they have many friends around. They were wrong once, but they will not be wrong again. Because their faith in America endures; they know that just like they got the man from Hoover's party in the first place, they can get rid of him in 1972. And they are talking like that now. The power in Washington will try to explain itself with quotations of the cost of living index and concepts of inflation control. But they need not bother. Their fate is sealed by their past and by their truth — and the workingman does not worry much about concepts. He worries about things like whether he can afford to put a new muffler on his car or if his wife can have a new pair of glasses or if he should take his boy to the doctor or not. And when he worries about these things the workingman does not care too much about what the hippies are doing at college or what the Reds are infiltrating, or what the welfare mothers are pulling. The luxury of these worries comes only when he gets his check on payday.

David Roach

Adagio con Gravita

Dream 1

I ear harmonica fast played.
And then eye stone wall
Neatly layed 'round a red barn —
Decayed, aching-down as the neighbor-building home.

Dream 2

I vision from frosted window to within,
Where a smoked-black place for fire,
(Formerly red-brick stone),
Shows sunless, cold.

Realization

Then alone, sitting listening, standing shrieking!
Now dancing, now shivering, fearful in sweat!
The stones with names wimper the name of me,
And from the drawer take I the ticket.

Murder of Self

The conductor takes his hands to my throat.
The box car stops dead before my pit.
The final sight saw I were the snakes.
Silver they forced to fill my sockets full-blind.

Burial

My car they pushed slowly
The last few inches over the snow,
Till the choice was to fall only.

Loam came solid-hitting-thud, liquid-dribble-trickle.
Solid-hitting-thud, liquid-dribble-trickle.
The grinding sharp stab of a single spade's thrust
fell less and less and less listenable.
The final distant pats-for-packing tolled leaden
from the shoveler's boot.
Done.

Now only brain could squirm or move.
This, at least till the box would dust.
Then the snakes.

by Charles J. O'Neil Jr.
