



"Coming and Going"

V. Yotteau

*the thing itself*

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### Mary Of The Bright Anvil

She barges through fields of mediocrity,  
Striding long strides and stopping for no man  
Or woman who might ask a brief fidelity.  
The rooms she rearranges have no ordinary plan,  
But take shape according to her whim.  
She drives herself to tests of inward strength;  
Cares nothing for the arguments of sin  
Or virtue, but desires to delve the breadth and length  
Of life. Her depth is measured geologically,  
Becoming dark as her dark hair, but pure.  
She wields her hammering will, a treasured faculty,  
To beat life out on a bright anvil, and endure.  
The storms that hover over her put Mild to flight,  
But I would stand her thunder to receive her light.

George Nash



Jim Fleming

They say it will come soon.  
They say God has forgotten us.  
They say the end will be bitter.  
They died yesterday and I watched them go.

gloria e. martinez

## THE POND

Martin and Delia walked toward the pond in the wilting afternoon after school, and Delia insisted that he carry her books. There was only one raggedy notebook between the two of them, however, and he thought it was pretty pointless of her, but she said if he didn't she'd go home instead of to the pond, so he grimaced and obliged.

"Women are so silly," he scowled.

"Well if you don't want to, just give it back and I'll go home."

He gave the matter just one more superficial reflection and shook his head.

"Alright then," she said, and they continued through the trees toward the fishing pond, where, upon arriving, they sat on the bank speechless for a moment before Martin decided to take off his shoes.

"Oh, phew! Put them back!"

"My feet don't smell!"

"Oh!" she cried, holding her nose and turning her face toward the horizon.

"My God," he muttered, slipping his shoes back on. His feet were wet with sweat, and he wiggled his toes inside his shoes and heard them squishing.

"Are they back on?"

"Yes," he replied disgustedly. "I suppose women's feet don't smell?"

"Of course they do, but when they do, girls don't take their shoes off. They know better."

"Aw, girls don't know anything!"

"Who says so?"

He was going to say I say so, but he thought he might need a more authoritative source. "My father."

She looked blankly at him for a second and then burst out in uncontrollable giggling. Martin took this as an insult to his father, and he contemplated taking his shoes off again, but on second thought, that wouldn't help his father any.

"He says that women, all they ever say is lies and that you can't ever trust them, because they use their . . ." he paused in search of a better word, but finding none, continued, ". . . bodies . . . to make men do whatever they want!"

"Oh!" Delia almost screamed in laughter, "Oh—men, they're so dumb!"

"My father is a very smart man. He teaches in the college and has a lot of books! He writes in magazines and people call him all the time!"

Delia was almost hysterical, and she held her stomach in pain and forced herself to stop. Wiping her eyes, she looked away from him long enough to compose herself, and then turned to him brightly.

"What's your mother like? I mean, doesn't she ever tell you not to believe your father?"

"She's dead."

"Oh." She felt a pang of guilt and wanted to change the subject.

"She died a long time ago. Father says she was a bad woman."

"Oh no, how can you say that?"

"I . . . don't really know if it's true . . . but I guess if father says so . . ."

"I don't see how any boy can . . ."

"Oh, shut up will you?"

She was so startled that she almost fell back on the grass. Not having time to be angry, she remembered her guilt and felt sorry for him, and putting her hand on his arm she whispered, "I'm sorry, Martin."

Her hand electrified him. It was soft and hot and he forgave her instantly, although he thought she should be made to know that his father was very smart

"Did you know," he said mysteriously, "that existence comes before sense?"

"What does that mean?"

He looked at her with annoyed astonishment. "You mean you don't know what that means?"

"It doesn't even make sense!"

He had not been prepared for that last remark, so he floundered desperately as if his argument was sinking. "It may not make sense to you, but my father knows what it means!"

This was again a delicate subject so she threw up her hands and nodded her head in acknowledgement, although he took small comfort in that.

She picked up a pebble and threw it in the pond, while Martin studied her form, wondering what it was about their bodies that women could make men do things. Oh, he knew the difference, he wasn't that dumb, he told himself, but there must be something else that nobody had ever mentioned, because father never went into much detail about things. He watched her throw another rock into the pond, and heard her tiny little pant as her arm cut a crooked arc above her head, and wondered.

"Why are you staring at me Martin?"

"Oh, I was wondering about something."

"What?"

"How much do you know, I mean, about . . . ah . . . sssex?"

She looked at him amusedly and scoffed, "More than you." Watching him watch her as she threw pebbles at the pond, she bared one of her legs as if by accident and waited for his reaction. She was even more amused to find that he hardly noticed.

"See?" she jeered, "I've got my dress up and you aren't even interested."

"Aw, what's so special about your old legs?"

"The older boys at school like to see girl's legs."

He puffed up and blurted, "I'm more interested in the other stuff!"

"What other stuff?" she countered in a flat tone, "I'll bet you don't even know."

He felt sort of desperate now, and confused, but he determined to plow blindly on. "Delia?"

"What?"

"Will you take off your clothes?"

"I certainly will not, and if you ask me again I'll tell my father!"

"No, no, alright, alright, I just thought, I mean, I just wondered if you might help, I mean, oh never mind, forget it!"

He was all red in the face and his eyes were misty with embarrassment, so he picked up a large rock and stood up and hurled it with all his might at the pond, expecting the tremendous splash to somehow prove something. It went too far, however, and landed on the other bank, and as he stood disgusted watching it, he heard Delia trying to muffle a solitary giggle.

Jose Angel Ramirez

## AUSTIN HOUSE

big, granite, dome-lid building  
home of lone twinkler's control

chamber's floors closed out  
gallery seats opened and  
jammed with one-finger and  
two-finger men

special recognition given in House  
for pollution and ravishment  
by the oil industry  
how wonderful!

Geese's flock scramble after  
their appropriate leader

fingers one, go up  
fingers two, go down  
gallery strings pull

happy, slap on back-butt  
"good to meet you all"

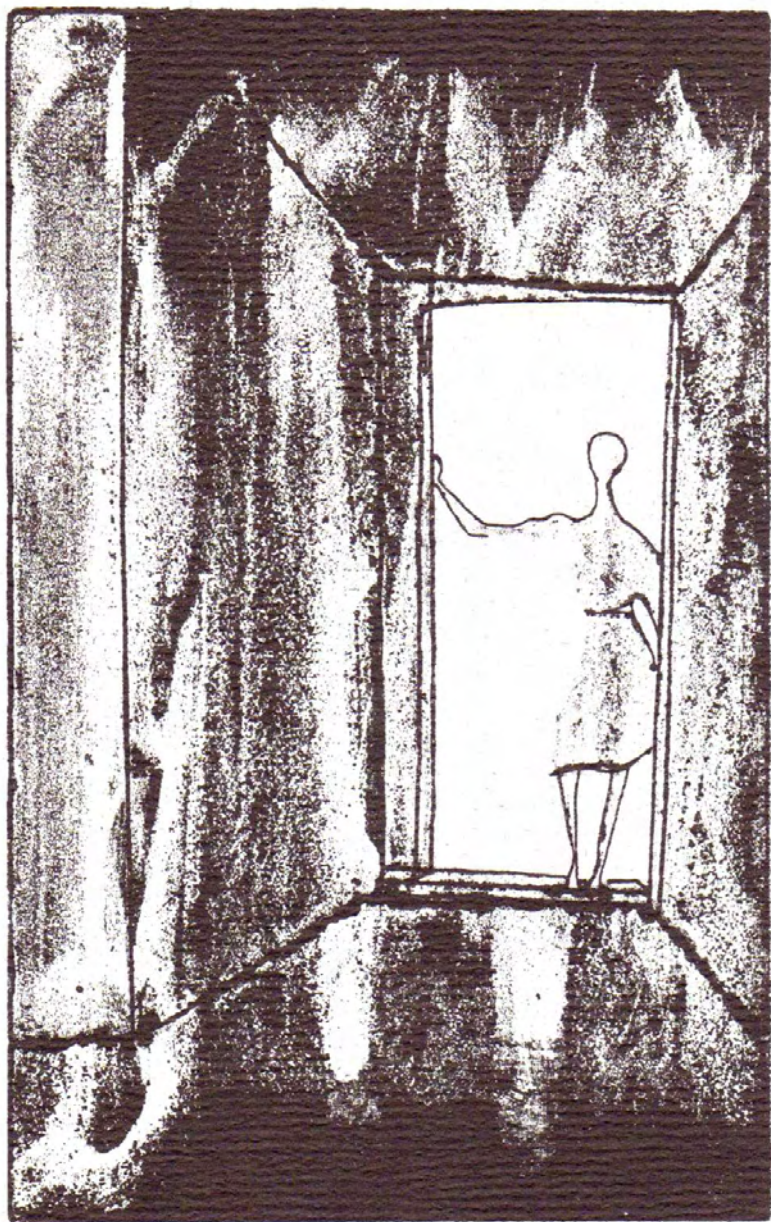
behind closed lobby doors  
way off the floors  
bills buy life or steal death

so loves the oil derrick  
so loves the policy  
so loves the stock  
so loves the anteroom

Geese squawk and look at ceiling  
strange fingers scratch ears

people, on the streets,  
poor, black, brown, anglo, not here  
on the streets they stay  
as geese fly away

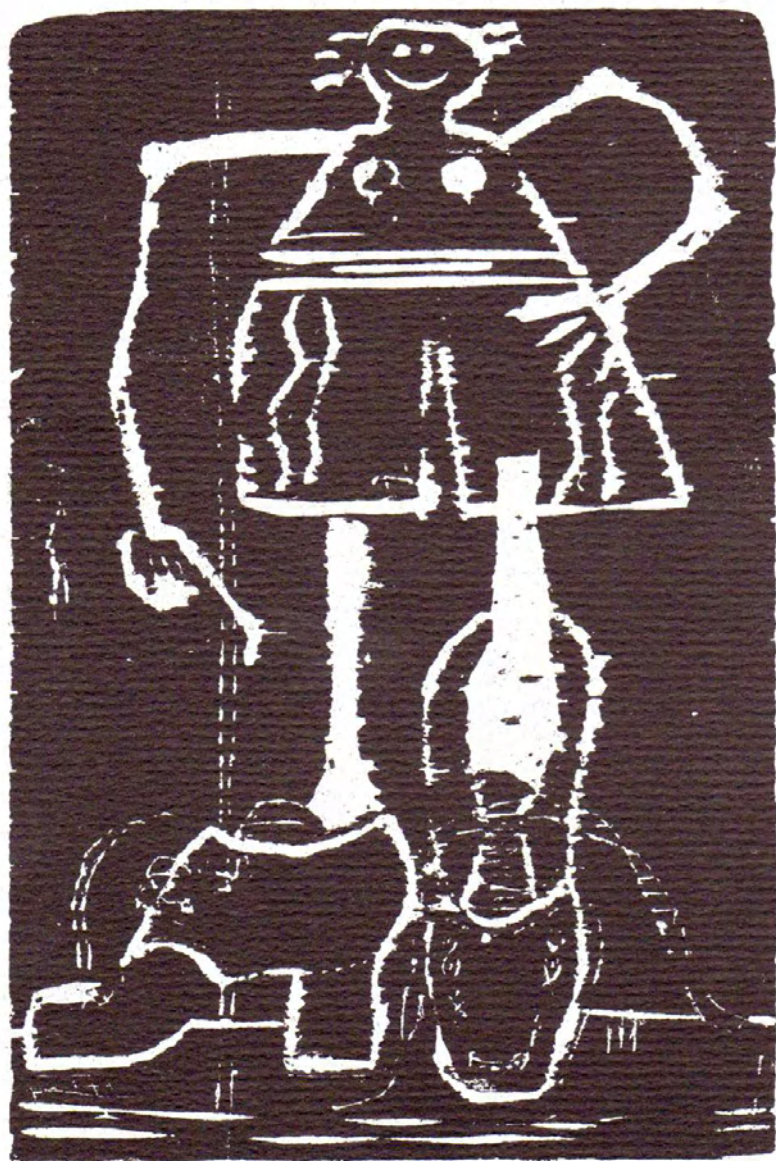
Thomas Hoffman, S.M.



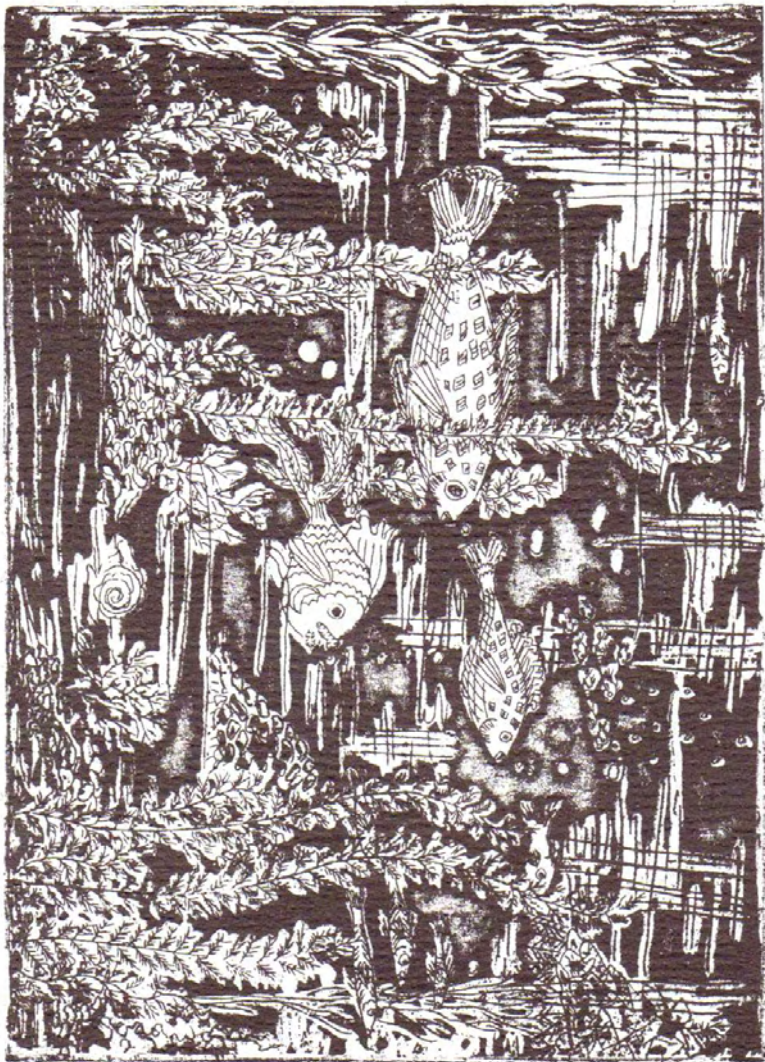
"Waiting"

Edna Zinsmeister





Janna



It's done.  
I did it.  
Told a stranger  
My deepest, inner thought.

And she just looked blank  
Shrugged, and walked away.

I'll never do that again.  
You can get in trouble  
Lending out your deepest thoughts  
To strangers.

Two people can walk  
Abreast in the rain if one  
Umbrella is used.

Karen Kramer



Yanna

*yellow*

*yellow*

*whatisyellow?*

*yellow is not orange*

*nor is it green*

*it is never red*

*and will never be blue*

*whatisyellow?*

*yellow*

*yellow is sunshine*

*and it is happiness*

*yellow is flowers*

*and it is laughter*

*yellow*

*yellow*

*yellow*

*whatisyellow?*

*yellow is running*

*and it is jumping*

*yellow is kites*

*and it is friends*

*yellow is yellow*

*and one thing for sure*

*yellow is never*

*black*

*i remember how warm his hand felt in mine  
that night that it was so cold  
when we went walking in the dark  
it was so nice at first  
and then it wasn't nice at all . . .*

*but i still remember the nice*

suzanne barras

### The Art of Poetry

A sonnet shouldn't be too hard, I thought,  
Once I decide how it should be begun.  
So, confidently, pen to page I brought,  
And soon I found the first four lines were done.  
"Well-started is half-finished," I recalled  
My grandma used to say. And she was right:  
Words found their places, hastily I scrawled,  
And down this quatrain went in black and white.  
Another line, I thought, will give me ten—  
Easy as spilling water from a cup!  
Now just one more to round it out, and then  
Two pithy lines to sum the whole thing up:  
You can write "poems" that follow every norm,  
And still end up with nothing but the form.

Pat Stewart

I never laugh at circuses  
Only when little boys ask me who will I marry  
When the world grows up. And I tell each one "you"  
And they run off to play contented they have someone  
Waiting in their fate, who bakes good cookies and is  
Not afraid of the dark, And Men  
They make me cry sometimes—but never in the morning  
And mostly they just kiss me and tell me lies  
I cause to linger. And some, like you, have had  
Ripe blue eyes.  
Which mountain is watching for me? All of them  
I'm sure, both of our birthdays, or two, away.

Sheila Marie Fleming

*when you smile  
i would grab all  
those threads of my life  
which I've let wander  
    seeking water  
and place them in your hands  
to let you  
unwind  
and see where I've been —  
and as I felt your hands  
travel along them  
    I'd lie in the warm grass  
naked and glad  
you'd noticed*

tom bartley





Jude Haverkamp

Fire checked my early growth  
only to find it had destroyed a myth.

I dance now over flames and smokey light,  
my feet caught in some unknown rhythm.  
You shadow me—flesh and spirit—  
and together we see the smoke lift,  
the light fade.  
I kiss your shadow.

Fire checked my latest growth  
only to find it had destroyed my heart.

bob rouleau



"E. P. Sneed"

Callson

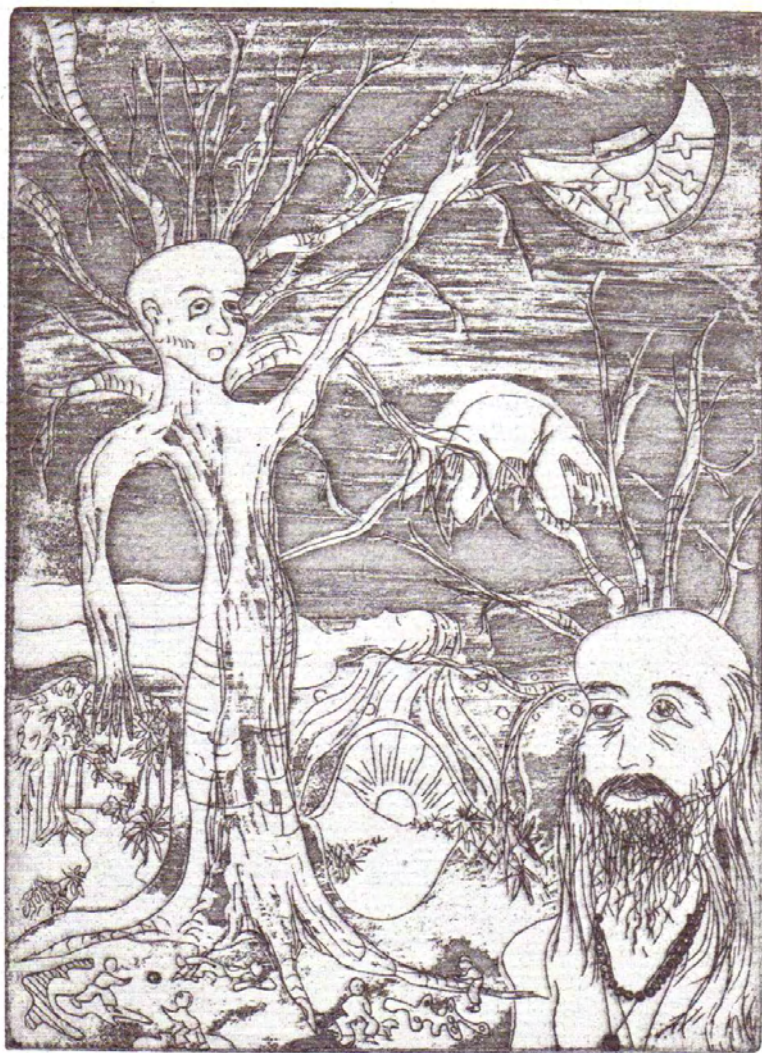
## WHERE ARE THEY NOW? (SCARAMOUCHE)

He sits with his confreres, D'Artagnan  
And the Count of Monte Cristo:  
Three old codgers on a park bench,  
Talking of bingo and squinting their eyes.

His eyes now filmed with cataracts,  
He sees only shapes—but his hands are steady;  
He dreams of epitaphs he carved,  
Would skewer a pigeon if he had a sword.

D'Artagnan speaks to the Count; they rise,  
Shuffle over towards a checker game.

John Bartlett Haradon



"Inside the Mind's Eye"

Marsha Millcan

### INDIFFERENCE

Skrivies haven't had tazed voigles today,  
Morfling their fexets under lampid dalkers  
And endroggling many a glissy shoodray,  
While jirims muncaggle scanet quoppers.

Norfles haven't had any birm till now;  
Dodiming the wusslies in a crett,  
All urblish ripflinks abig their splows  
And lell coubires to a holfed brillet.

Druffs haven't had much luck lately,  
For that sake, neither have blinkkses;  
But who cares to scriggle about such clee  
When only a tinvalee of zores prouinces?

Pete Alaniz, Jr.

## DEATH OF A SPY

"Hullo, James," said the receptionist, looking up. "Go right in. He's expecting you."

"Thanks, Mary," he said. He turned. The scanning camera over the door winked green. The door clicked open.

He entered and sat down in the old familiar chair, looking over the old familiar desk at the old familiar face of Sir Miles. Lord! He thought, I'm getting maudlin. How had the old sailor managed the furniture, he wondered. While waiting out the old familiar silence, his thoughts wandered over the events of the past few hours—if hours, indeed, they were.

There was a fog, making it difficult to see or, curiously, to hear. He shook his head dazedly. The last thing he remembered was the sound of breaking glass, bringing him instantly awake. Then the explosion. My God, he thought, I'm dead. There was a ringing in his ears. Ears?

He stood in a queue. Instead of the pyjamas he remembered wearing, the queue people were uniformly dressed in heavy green linen bathrobes. A voice spoke. "Papers, please." He fumbled in the pockets of his bathrobe, discovered a yellow plastic identity card. Cursing civil servants everywhere, he delivered the card into the outstretched palm in front of him.

There was a short wait while, he imagined, St. Peter checked his name against the Master Data File. He chuckled, imagining the look on the Saint's face. He smiled grimly. Of course, they'd be round directly to throw him out. His muscles tensed. Muscles? He had no Beretta or Walther, but he had his mind. He chuckled again. I presume I still have my mind. He'd lead them in hare and hounds, and the devil take the hindmost.

A voice cut into his reverie. "Sir, if you would come with me . . . Sir Miles has been expecting you." A flaming sword appeared in front of him. He followed it to a door marked "International Import". He heard a click and the door swung open, admitting him at last to a decently-lit room.

Hullo, James . . .

His thoughts were interrupted by the old familiar gruff voice. "Ah, James; you're probably wondering what this is all about. What this is all about is, ah, no rest for the wicked. Seems that the afterlife is just that, you see; it's after life, and all that, but it's no different than it was before.

Of course, the Empire needs us just as badly here as it ever did down there. But there being no separate and distinct Heaven and Hell makes it a bit sticky sometimes. Not long ago, two of Station C's men broke up a plot by Ghenghis Khan and Attila the Hun. That sort of thing. It was rather close. Our only defense is reason, y'see; but we've made some rather fair advances in that department. I'll see that Q section fits you out with all the latest metaphysical arguments."

"But the identity cards, sir, and the fog, and the cameras over the doors?"

"Illusion, James, all is illusion. It's one of our best weapons. Fits in nicely with the metaphysical arguments. We have a full-time crew producing those effects . . ."

"I see sir," he said. "Then this chair and your desk, all of this—is illusion?"

"Yes."

"Then are we really here?"

"Of course; isn't it obvious?"

"Yes. But it would be even if it wasn't."

"Ah. Very good, James. We do things a little differently up here, but I think that you'll make out."

"Thank you, sir."

"I should imagine that there are a few people that you'd like to see. I'll have Mary take you round. As you can imagine, it's very easy for a newcomer to get lost around here. When you're through with"—he sniffed—"the amenities, report back here and we'll start you in training."

"Very good, sir." He stood. "I'll be seeing you directly."

"Fine, James. There certainly work aplenty."

So this was how it was to be. He started for the door.

And suddenly turned, intending to inquire about his new number.

Just in time to see the kindly old sailor's face change back into that of Ernst Stavro Blofeld.

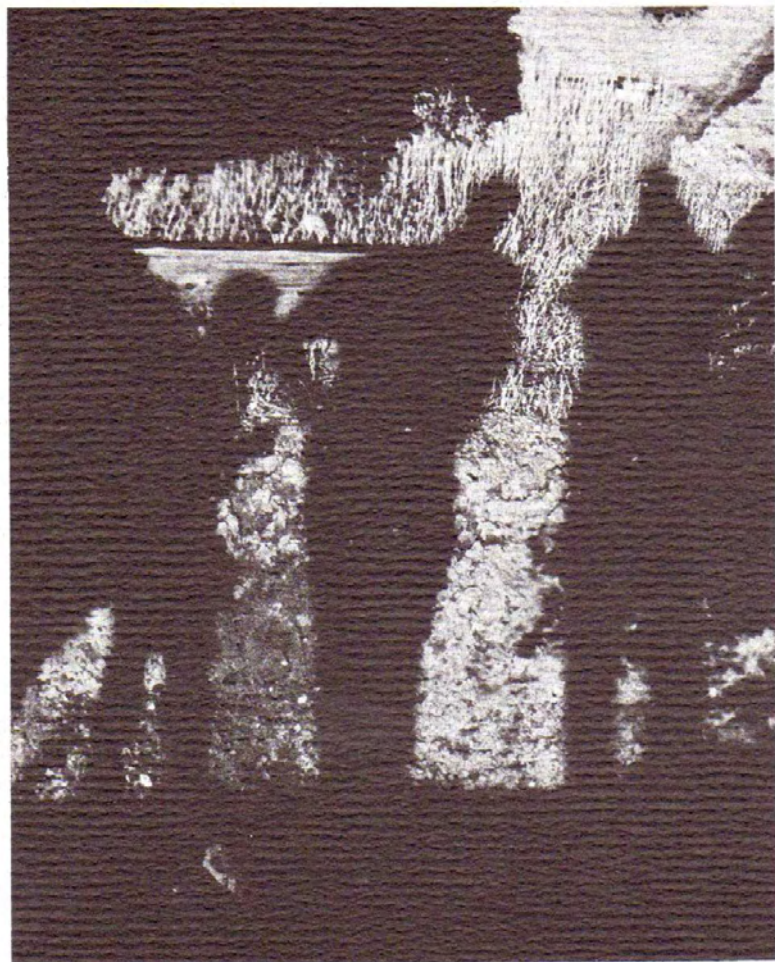
John Bartlett Haradon



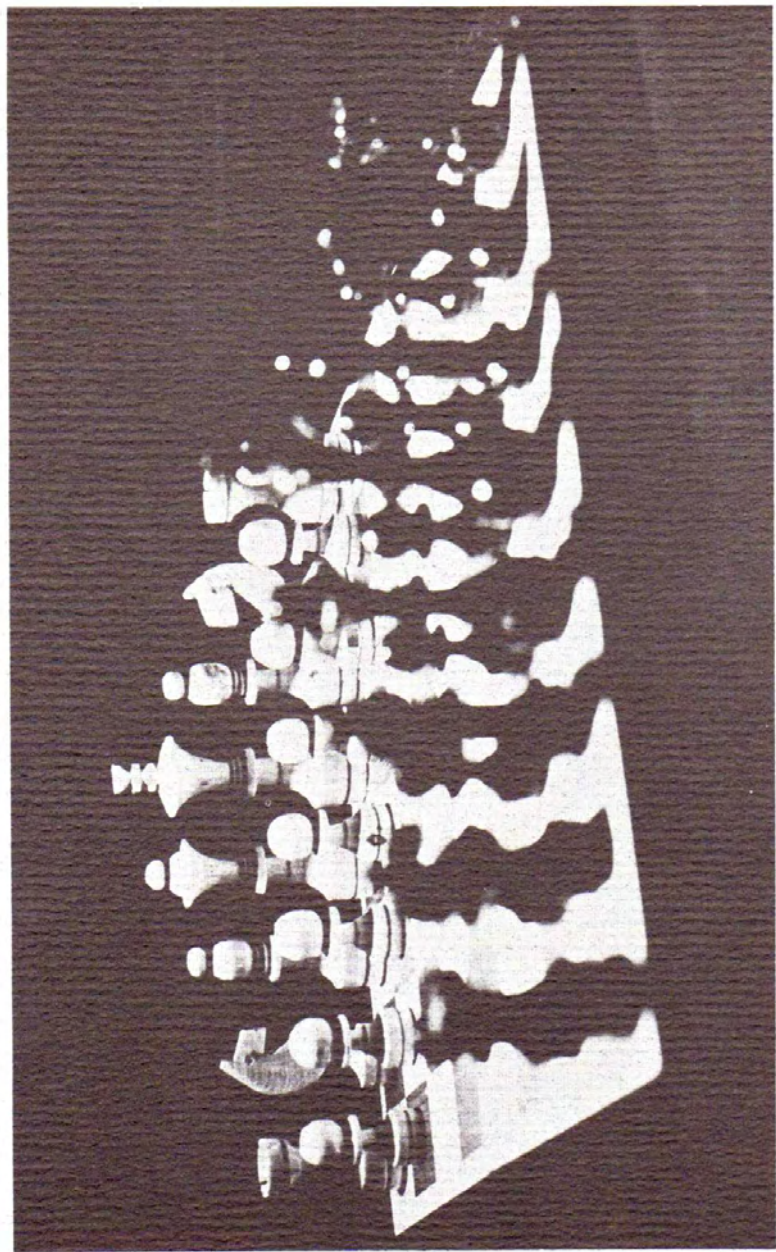
If

If you'd only known  
The lean and supple self  
I was so long ago,  
The me toasted brown  
By summer sun,  
Ever brushing chestnut locks  
From smooth-tanned cheeks;  
If you'd only known  
The gentle heart  
Before its endless drift,  
Before its painless ache,  
Before seclusion,  
Nonchalance;  
I wish your eyes had seen my spring,  
Not this autumn.

Martha Fernandez



Jim Fleming



Jim Fleming



Marsha Millican

(for the melancholy Welshman)  
wash-day

madras morning sky,  
the stars shaken from it like pins,  
is rinsed out and hung up to dry:  
day afresh begins.

*Ineffable*

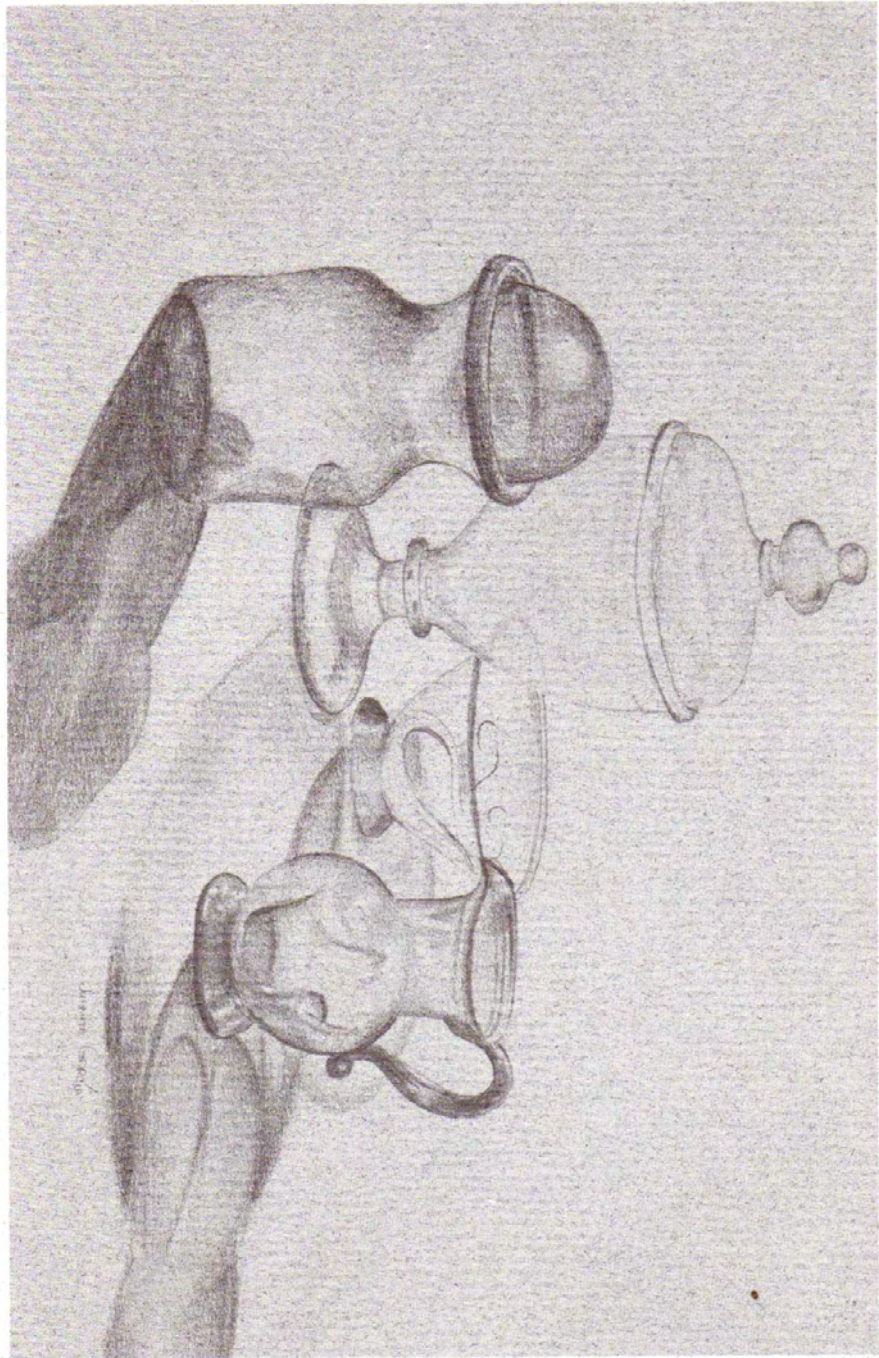
*Airy and frail as the breeze it caresses  
with soft, shy wings,  
the butterfly courts the wind.*

*Pinned to the label which names and explains it,  
its dry wings stiff,  
the butterfly fades away.*



"Dancers"

Edna Zinsmeister



## Naga-Uta

in my former life:  
I, blind beggar of fourteen,  
one day touched your life . . .

you, wilier street-urchin,  
were fifteen, having wise eyes;

you washed me, fed me,  
let me sleep curled against you,  
friends in wandering . . .

we: homeless, often hungry,  
cold, in rags; and you loved me . . .

in my nineteenth year  
contracting tuberculosis,  
I left you by night;

after dark road, Kyoto!  
Budda-shrine: sitting, dying . . .

you were following,  
found me: we sat quietly,  
did nothing; I died.

you lit two sticks of incense,  
walked out into the garden;

among plum-blossoms  
you watched the moon rippling  
through water; and sat . . .

John Bartlett Haradon



### Conquest of Inner Space

Musing questions  
born of the solitude  
or a soul  
seeking something  
outside of itself  
Listening.  
A wordless echo—  
A glimpse of the answer  
in one short second  
soon lost  
in the silent  
Truth  
or exception  
or neurotic hope.  
Whatever  
how simple-intricate  
glorious-painful  
Different—  
as long as your soul  
remains keen  
to the pain.

Edna Zinsmeister

failure's caught in my throat  
try as i might  
to wash it down with ice water

i'd like to pack my head  
full of happy songs  
and take my load down some new road  
some place such things come true  
but right now no song comes to mind

Dave Meyer

