This is Cauldron, to our knowledge the first student literary and art venture to break publicly the long spell of creative silence of "K's" students. Cauldron intends to represent as many levels of student creativity as possible, drawing on the products of class work in addition to those of individual effort. The material in this issue has come our way partly from response to a brief but earnest publicity campaign and partly by acts of procurement on the part of the editors.

Many questions arose in the planning of the magazine. Who would finance it? When should it appear? Would there be enough material? Who would run it? The last question was the easiest to solve. There has been excellent student participation in Cauldron. Financial matters were momentarily taken care of and soon other questions were resolved, with the exception of the one unspoken: What of the future? Cauldron, which has many untried possibilities as a channel for student work, invites both student and faculty suggestions for a still uncertain future. Until then, however, why not turn the pages and see what the present offers?

The Editors
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Words, it is said,  
are fossil poetry  
and (handle them carefully!)  
fragile  
as a fern-frond petrified.
I jumped up and down on the pavement. I kind of jerked on my mother's arm and then pulled it after me as I ran around her one way and then the other way.

"Just how old is your little boy?" the woman asked.

After my mother pulled me to a stop and made me stand up straight, I looked up at the two women above.

"Oh, he's going on five," my mother answered. She held my arm tightly, so I smiled up at the woman. But I started jumping a little.

"And how old is Lawrence now?" my mother asked.

Who was Lawrence? I couldn't see Lawrence. He pulled the woman's hand behind her back. He hid behind her skirt.
"My little boy's seven now," the woman answered. She coaxed Lawrence around from behind. "Don't you want to come and talk to the lady and that other little boy? No, no, Lawrence, don't try to hide." Her arm led him forward. He groped. At first he made a funny awkward motion as if he was falling; then he caught himself and walked forward with a crude stiff step. Lawrence didn't giggle like a boy playing hide-and-seek; Lawrence didn't whine as if he was tired—his face had no expression. I wondered why Lawrence didn't open his eyes. Again, Lawrence groped. He grabbed at a paper sack with his arms.

His arms. His limp arms! Why were his arms so small, so tiny? His limp arms seemed to dangle from his shoulders. They were withered and shrunken and made his head seem huge, fat. Lawrence was odd. Lawrence groped.

"Lawrence certainly has grown since the last time I saw him," my mother said. Lawrence didn't smile; Lawrence didn't jump up and down—he grasped the woman's hand and brought it close to him. I wondered how the little diseased hand felt to her.

"Lawrence, why don't you give the other little boy one of your cookies?"

The skinny fingers groped in the paper sack. The bag was crumpled and old and brown. The shriveled fingers pulled out. It was a cookie, an oatmeal cookie; only it wasn't. It was like dry shriveling skin, wrinkled and diseased.

"Go ahead, take the cookie," my mother said. "M-m-m, I'll bet that tastes good."

She pushed me forward and she smiled. They all waited; they all watched, all but Lawrence—he didn't open his eyes. I forced my hand toward the cookie. I didn't look at Lawrence. I bent my head and looked at my shoestrings. Slowly I felt forward for the cookie. My tense fingers clamped close; but they also touched the deformed fingers offering it. I shivered, turned cold; instantly my fingers jerked; I pulled them to my side. The cookie was still in my hand!
"It's simply amazing how quickly children become friends."

The cookie was cold, cold and dead; but dead as if it had once been alive. It was like a little morsel of his disease, a little cake of dried wrinkled skin. Lawrence groped.

I held the cookie away from me, not letting it touch any part of my clothes, trying to use the least amount of skin to hold it. With my clean hand I jerked on my mother's arm. The cookie grew warm in my hand.

"I'd like to talk longer but I have to hurry home to make supper."

When we left, Lawrence was groping.

"Aren't you going to eat your cookie?" my mother asked, but I didn't bring it to my mouth. As we walked the cookie grew soft and slowly slipped from my fingers and fell to the ground.

"Oh, look what you've done. Now you'll never eat it." We stared at the broken bits and crumbs.

But we didn't stand gazing for long; my mother pulled me forward and we hurried off somewhere. I looked back and could still see the crumbs abandoned on the sidewalk. The cookie got smaller in the distance but it didn't change. I wanted it to disappear but it lay scattered there as if it would always be there whenever I turned to look.

Why didn't the woman notice what was wrong with Lawrence? She acted as if Lawrence really was a little boy. She even touched him. When I touched him, I couldn't scream, I couldn't wake up. Maybe the rain would wash the cookie off the sidewalk.

We had turned a corner but I knew it was still there. Lawrence was still somewhere, too. Lawrence still lived somewhere like a deformed gnome with a bog of cookies, offering a cookie to each child, feeling the terrified chill of an accidental touch,
knowing that his foul gift would be thrown away in the street. I wondered how soon it would rain.

Lawrence had known how I felt when I touched him. Lawrence wouldn't cry, though; he expected it. It had happened to Lawrence before. It happened all the time. Lawrence knew what people thought of him. Lawrence knew that no one wanted his cookies. Lawrence never laughed.

Why did Lawrence do it? Why did Lawrence show himself? Why did Lawrence give cookies? He never laughed. Rain would just make the cookie soggy.

Lawrence had to give me a cookie. Lawrence had to see if I would eat it and think it was good and forget about how he was. Lawrence never laughed. Lawrence was waiting for someone who would actually eat his cookies. Lawrence was hoping someone would grasp his hand and not wince.

I tugged on my mother's arm. I had to see him again. I had to eat his cookies, I had to clasp his hand firmly.

"No, no, we're late now. I'll get you another cookie when we get home. You'll see Lawrence again some other time."

I never did.
walk eggshell gentle and tightrope quick
smile morning cheerful and painted mask bright
but be careful as you balance down the life that is not living
for the splinters of your heart betray you,
alone
at night.
The wind,
The cool evening wind,
Hums overtures in the withered,
Ungrazed lute strings,
Vibrating in suspension
Till the chord changes
To high screechings of staccato choruses
Sung to chimney cracks.

Plaintive bleats
Crescendo from the fold choir
Tended by the reposing master,
Who blows minor accompaniments
On fashioned reeds,
His lengthy baton lying aside.
I was in the small South Asian kingdom of Nepal. The high snow peaks of the Himalayas rose in the distance, but in the valley it was hot and the air was heavy with the dust and the smell of the bazaar, for the monsoons had not yet come. Naked brown children played on the steps of a Hindu temple. A crude image of Kali, black goddess of death, watched over them, a painted grin on her grotesque face and her feet stained with the blood of sacrificed goats. A holy man stood near the shrine. His face was painted with cow dung and red powder, and his dirty uncombed hair was gray with ashes. Around his neck hung several necklaces of holy beads, nearly hidden by his long beard. He wore nothing but a ragged robe and in his hand he carried a tall staff which he used as a cane. The people in the bazaar paid no attention to him as they walked by the shrine. For, to the Nepalese, a Hindu holy man, or "sadhu", was nothing out of the ordinary.

But in a small house on the other side of the bazaar, there was another type of holy man. This man wore a clean white coat and in his hand he held, not a staff, but a stethoscope. He was one of the Christian "holy men" from the mission hospital, and he was called a "doctor-sahib" rather than a sadhu.

Until I went to Asia last year with my family, I had always pictured Christian missionaries as religious fanatics who carried Bibles wherever they went and spent all their time wandering through the jungles converting natives. Now, after having lived among these missionaries for a year, I have much more respect for them. I can appreciate the practical work which they are doing and their success as representatives of Christianity. Teaching the ignorant, healing the sick, and feeding the hungry, the missionaries in Nepal have become living symbols of the love and charity which are preached in the Christian religion. It is
not Bible-quoting and hymn-singing which have earned them their reputation -- it is hard work and a sincere interest in the problems of the people.

In Nepal it is necessary for the missionaries to be much more than mere preachers. In fact, according to the laws of the country, they are not even allowed to be preachers. Proselytizing is forbidden by the government, and until 1950 Nepalese law punished anyone who left the Buddhist or Hindu faith to become a Christian. Today a Nepalese may become a Christian if he wished, but a missionary cannot legally try to influence him to do so.

Health is a major problem in this underdeveloped country, and I think it is in this area that the missionaries have the greatest influence upon the people. With modern medicine, the doctors can perform feats which, to the uneducated, are no less amazing than the miracles of the Bible. Lepers are cleansed, the blind are made to see, and the lame to walk again. Dysentery, elephantiasis, and malaria bow down before the modern drugs, and cholera and smallpox immunizations are beginning to compete with religious charms to ward off disease.

Where there is so much that needs to be done for the people, the missionaries cannot help but make important contributions. I went out to a small village of Chapagoan one day with a missionary doctor. He held regular weekly clinic there, and as we bounced along the road in the jeep-ambulance, children ran along beside us imitating the siren and greeting their "doctor-sahib." The clinic was held in a tiny dirt-floored house in the middle of the village. It opened at nine o'clock in the morning, and the doctor was kept busy all day diagnosing illnesses, giving injections, passing out pills, and treating infected sores. Some of the cases were easily treated -- one boy needed only a cake of soap and a bath to remove the caked dirt which his parents thought was a skin disease. Other patients needed x-rays, blood tests, surgery, or hospital care, and we took them to the mission hospital in the ambulance.
Patients were encouraged to pay for their medicine if they could, but in such a poor community there were few who could spare rupees. One old lady with no money proudly handed the doctor an egg as payment for a typhoid shot, and other villagers brought grain, fruit, or gifts which they had made for him.

The reputation of the Christian doctors has spread to all parts of the country. Those who have been treated at the hospital return to their villages full of praise for the white man's medicine, and the word spreads fast to other villages. People from the hills or jungles who have never seen a doctor before in their lives, will travel for over a week to carry a sick friend or relative to the mission hospital where they have heard he will be miraculously cured. And any white man who treks into the hills is looked upon as a "doctor-sahib" and is called upon for medical advice whether he is qualified or not.

It is not only the Nepalese who are benefited by the mission hospital. American government employees and their families who are stationed in Nepal are also frequently ill, and they, like the Nepalese, look to the missionaries for their medical care.

In working with the people of Nepal, the missionaries have to overcome many difficulties. The religion and superstition of the Nepalese often create problems. A friend of mine, for instance, took his small children to the hospital to be vaccinated against smallpox. Then he had to spend the rest of the day at the temple making offerings to appease the god who was supposed to control the smallpox epidemics. When a patient in the hospital is very seriously ill, doctors seldom have the chance to save him, for if he is a good Hindu, his relatives will take him down to the sacred Pashupati River as soon as they believe his condition is critical. There he will lie with his feet in the holy water until he dies of exposure, if not of his original ailment.

A lack of good hospital equipment is another serious problem which the missionaries must face in their work. Customs regulations and government import laws make it difficult to bring the necessary drugs and supplies into the country. Much of the
equipment which they do have is impractical because electrical power is so uncertain. Patients who come to the hospital for x-rays are often sent back home because the electricity is off and the machine will not work; and more than once in the middle of an operation, power failure has forced the surgeon to continue with hardly any light.

In spite of the problems they encounter, the medical missionaries obviously get a great deal of satisfaction from their work, for they are able to see its immediate results. However, they must pay for this satisfaction with many personal sacrifices, for they have dedicated their lives to a job which pays them very poorly in a material way. Their salaries are small and they enjoy none of the special import or postal privileges of the government employees. Their standard of living is much lower than that of an average American. They live with rats in their houses, and they eat food of poor quality from the local bazaars. Those who are stationed in villages often go for months without talking to another Westerner. There are no television sets or movies for entertainment, and reading or studying at night is nearly impossible because of the poor electric or kerosene lights. The missionaries and their families run a great health risk, for they not only work with sickness, but they live in the midst of it. Unlike the government employees, who have their little American colonies apart from the natives and the bazaars, the missionaries live in close contact with the people and are exposed continually to their many diseases. The missionaries cannot afford to get homesick, for they may work for five or six years before they are granted home leave and can go back to visit their friends and relatives. And during their tours of duty, they have difficulty in maintaining close contact with their homes because, without Army Post Office privileges, they are unable to get mail in and out of the country regularly.

Enduring all these hardships then, what rewards does the American medical missionary receive for his efforts? Spiritually he is rewarded with a much better understanding of the people of Nepal than can be attained by the government worker. Living and working among the Nepalese, he develops a close understanding of their customs, their religion, and their problems. He learns
to speak with them in their own languages, and he can look through the dust of the bazaar and see the beauty of the country. He knows the Nepalese as friends, and they look upon him as a brother, not as a little cog in the machinery of the United States Foreign Aid program. But most of all, the reward of the missionary lies in the knowledge that he is helping others to enjoy a better life and that he is doing so in the name of a religion in which he sincerely believes.

Christian or non-Christian, one can only admire these men and women who are willing to devote their lives and talents to this work. And any American, whatever his religion, owes them respect and support, for they are doing an important job not only as missionaries, but as goodwill ambassadors from this country and as humanitarians working unselfishly to help others toward a better existence.
FAREWELL: A TREATY

When Time unlocks us (Think it not disdain!) That we should meet again and as we stand Should view our stocks, this gaol, would bring the pain Of shame recalled too plainly. Understand: I shall stay in the north of town, and thou in the south. I shall have to myself again my mouth and hand; thou, thy hand and mouth.
I wanted to write a poem one night
but knew not how to start;
I silently chided my Muse and decided
I needed a wounded heart.
So I brought out my heart from my innermost part,
And while I was all alone,
I knocked it around but eventually found
That the thing was as hard as stone.
Amidst all the din had a stranger come in
(When the poem was all that mattered),
And turning to leave, brushed the heart with one sleeve,
And it fell to the floor and shattered.
Writing a half century apart, August Strindberg and Jean Genêt both express in non-realistic terms the reality of the human situation. Yet the results each achieves are quite different. An examination of certain aspects of two plays, Strindberg's *A Dream Play* and Genêt's *The Balcony* should reveal something of the nature of each playwright's view of reality and make an evaluation possible.

*A Dream Play* and *The Balcony* parallel each other in the choice of characters who, in the expressionistic tradition, are nameless representatives, types—a Bishop, a General, a Lawyer. In both plays they revolve around a central figure, Agnes, the daughter of Indra in *A Dream Play*, and Irma in *The Balcony*. However, it would be a false assumption to say that because their choice of characters is the same, Strindberg's and Genêt's treatment of them is also parallel. To begin, Strindberg's characters exhibit a puppet-like quality. They speak, but their speeches have little effect on one another. Nothing is changed by what they say; they utter platitudes only to be answered by platitudes. On the other hand, there is an interplay in the characters of *The Balcony*. They are shown to have a certain degree of awareness of each other. Whereas the Lawyer in *A Dream Play* expounds at great length about his own misery, Carmen in *The Balcony* laments the anguish she causes others—she perceives her effect on others.

To say that the characters of *A Dream Play* and *The Balcony*, though of the same type, act and speak differently is not enough. One must examine the background in which they are placed in order to get at them as characters. The setting of *A Dream Play* is strange and symbolic; it is suspended in time and in space. Against this background of an unworlly world are played characters
who draw their words from everyday life, who building on their own reality, propose generalities about the whole of human existence. The Lawyer talks of marriage and divorce and concludes, "It's misery to be human." The Newlywed philosophizes, "Happiness consumes itself like a flame. It cannot burn forever, it must go out, and the presentiment of its end destroys it at its very peak." The Lawyer, the Newlywed, the Poet, Agnes all speak in these pseudo-philosophical terms. There is little true dialogue between characters; rather is consists of clichés about the human situation, clichés uttered by non-human—because-typed characters.

In comparing the characters in A Dream Play with those in The Balcony, a curious thing takes place. Genet's cast, the Bishop, the General, the Judge, the whores, all who are supposed to be playing types of people, come off as being more human than the types in A Dream Play. An explanation for this might lie in the fact that one knows more about the characters in The Balcony. They can be placed in a certain context -- the "House of Illusions" to be sure, but at least a more concrete setting than the clouds and symbolism of the daughter of Indra's world. One difference between A Dream Play's setting and The Balcony's is that the former makes use of symbolism and the latter of imagery. In Strindberg's play the door with the four-leaf clover in it, the Growing Castle, the Chrysanthemum all symbolize identifiable ideas in man's life. In Genet's play, however, the objects are not significant in themselves but meld to create an image.

Another level at which comparison is possible is that of action and plot. A Dream Play is structured around the daughter of Indra's visit to earth, around her different encounters with suffering humanity and her return to Indra. The plot consists of a collection of individual testimonies of suffering humanity, presented in no particular order. Were one character to be introduced before another, it would make little difference to the plot, for the plot is based not on characters or on action but on symbolism.

The Balcony's meaning comes directly from the action of the play rather than the diction or the symbolism. The plot is car-
ried by the force of the idea and the action of the revolution going on outside while the brothel remains safe. Then the tables are turned and the people who were just acting the roles become them, with the proprietor of the brothel as their queen. It is the force of this frightening picture—a picture of a society ruled by hollow men, illusionary beings—that carries the plot.

Though differences between A Dream Play and The Balcony can be found in characterization and diction, setting and plot, there is yet one common basis for the two plays—the way in which they treat reality. Both plays go beyond reality. The Balcony takes place in a "House of Illusion" where men act out their dreams. The "House" for them is an escape into a world where they are given power, yet are not powerful and freedom yet are not free. The world of A Dream Play is similar to this in that it is a distortion of reality. The multiple dreamer, Poet, Lawyer, Officer, lives outside time and space and has only symbolic guideposts to help him orient himself to the universe. He looks for meaning behind a mysterious door, in a growing castle and a blooming chrysanthemum. He is shown as having multiple reality.

Thus the two plays are distortions of reality, but both necessarily are grounded in it. The "House of Illusion" has context in which it is placed and against which it is contrasted. It does not stand alone as a fantasy world but rather as a world encircled by the reality of a revolution. Just as The Balcony is not all fantasy, A Dream Play too has links with this world, links which are found in the exposition. In arriving at generalizations, the characters of A Dream Play give background in their own experience.

That both authors distort reality, that both find a basis in this world, has been shown. But to what conclusions about the nature of reality does this bring one? In that Strindberg's plot is static, in that his characters do not react to each other, in that the main character speaks about the nature of the human
situation in long, weary passages of poetry, in that symbolism replaced dénouement—A Dream Play presents a view of reality as being analyzable. Though Agnes continually asks the question "Why this wretched world?" she herself answers it in her speeches, saying that humanity is made to suffer. Thus through Agnes and the expressionistic devices of the play, we are shown the world as being forever changing but always bound to the same pattern.

Through Irma in The Balcony, the same point of view is presented—that man will always have his dreams and will escape to illusion and fantasy. Yet if the content of the message is the same, its terms are different, for they are at least not stationary. The plot moves forward even if it does come back to the starting point. Therein lies the difference between A Dream Play and The Balcony: the former is a statement about reality, the latter an acting out of it.
Airman 1st. Class Moore fumbled ineffectively with his wallet, in search of the ticket stub, while the light, round conductor towered infinitesimally above him. The train's wheels ground into the rails, digging for momentum. The conductor's black shoe tapped the soiled maroon of the carpet, his stubby fingers extended in tired impatience. Dry, dazzling sunlight fell mechanically through the dusty panes, flickering between the flashing power poles on Moore's wrists and hands. Thin and fidgeting.

"It's here. Just a minute." His voice cracked with disuse in that harsh first moment and then fell again into its own low, grinding monotone just when he did not need it. The conductor spotted the red cardboard among the small heap of paper scraps that had accumulated in Moore's lap. He picked it out quickly, punched it, and then as he moved off down the aisle released it to fall, now equally useless, back among its companions.

The train lurched into a slow, flat, brilliant turn—into the red sun of four o'clock. The conductor jostled slightly in the
aisle, his shiny pants alternating shades of gray in the dusty lightpokes turning down on the car from the south. "Tickets. Tickets, please."

Moore gathered up his waste paper and began stuffing it back into his wallet, thinking: Glory. I will conquer. I will. I want to and I shall. Glory. Thinking: if Richie's car is there, I will get to the airport by six-thirty. Plenty of time. With his eyes, he followed his thumb through the slim thickness of bills between the leather flaps. And they'll be gone from Richie's by ten-thirty at the latest. Ten-thirty. All night. Ten-thirty and then all night. Glory. He stared ahead firmly, contemplating as he leaned forward thrusting the wallet into his left hip-pocket.

Turning, he squinted cautiously into the light and saw the desert rolling monotonously by through the dust. Rolling and rolling endlessly. No change, he thought. Endlessly rolling on to glory. Riding high. Riding... He shuddered. To glory. To GLORY. Rolling Phoenix toward him, the desert moved but did not change. But still he saw it coming. Phoenix, Richie's, the airport, the girl: his mind raced on ahead of the train and saw it all. It made him walk faster than flight through the terminal before he got there and made him watch the door open and her come out on that platform and wave before the plane ever arrived.

He winced, feeling his stomach contract. He stared out through the dust trying to cling with his eyes to the landscape. Cactus. Red stones. A bush. But it would not wait. He turned back into the car and looked about, pulling at his collar. After awhile he stood up and, stepping into the aisle, strode slowly and uncertainly up toward the front of the train.

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Haystacks Calhoun, on the road—the come-back road—to glory, sat omnipresently in the cool, crisp air, amply filling the pair of seats to which his ticket entitled him, and gazed up the aisle at the trim, little thing. Clear beads of sweat stood refreshing
on the several large folds of his brow. Outside the window the icy condensation, swirling in the drowsy gusts over the nebulous shape of an uncertain landscape below, turned slowly toward him from the west.

He watched her coming down the aisle toward him bending in seat by seat with pillows and other things, friendly and reassuring in her gesture. He watched her exquisite legs come trimly together below the strict, neat line of her skirt as she stooped. He watched the line of her bust as she stretched up to reach more pillows from the over-head compartments. He grinned with anticipation. From him rose the lazy odor of clean, swollen flesh and the deep and regular sound of consummating respiration. His complacent six hundred pounds occupied the space, technically intended for two men, with patient and unclimaxing ease.

"Are you comfortable, Mr. Calhoun?" When she bent in to him, her voice was immediately an intimate crescendo of hospitality. Haystacks enjoyed her closeness, watching the shape of her smiling mouth, watching her brown eyes move. He absorbed her neat, crisp fragrance close up. "Can I get you something to read? --a pillow?"

He grinned more overtly, bringing his fat hands together in his bulging lap. Color came to his previously white forehead. "Naw."

Then as she was withdrawing, pivoting to cross to the other side of the aisle: "Haw long before we git teh Phoenix?"

She turned back pleasantly, almost eagerly, looking on her left wrist for a watch that was not there. "We're scheduled to arrive at six-forty. That's Phoenix time."

"Hits just past three naw." He leaned forward to squint over his stomach at the huge, goldplated ornament banding his stout right wrist. For a moment he appeared to calculate.

"Phoenix time is one hour behind Kansas City's, so I guess we should be landing there in about two and a half hours." Her
a smile deepened slightly.

A look of accomplishment came on his face. He reclined once again into his seat, grinning thankfully up at his hostess. "You kin call me Haystacks."

She grinned back, giving a short, deep little laugh that made her eyes squint as she began moving away again. "All right!"

On her way back to the front of the aircraft, she stopped to ask him again to be sure and ask for anything he might need. She wanted to make sure he was comfortable. He grinned and nodded. He watched her short, quick steps up the aisle and through the curtain.

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Deep in the thick smoke of the club car, Airman Moore clung to his glass of whisky soda and rocked hypnotically in his seat, jostled by the madly volatile crowd and by the slow and irregular oscillation of the car. Deep in thought, he felt neither the vulgar intimacy of his fellow passengers -- big men in charcoal suits, hard looking women, other men and boys like himself in blue --nor the steady pitching of the car. He felt nothing of the physical instability about him and yet he felt uneasy. He felt weak and nervous. He felt his strength draining from him. Staring blankly into the smoke, he saw the written words. Every, he imagined, mundane line of their letters: His three and her two. Weather's getting just awful...good old K.C....no snow plow...love to.... meet me... He thought: I will do it to her. He thought: I will show her one hell of a good time.

"Hey, Buddy."

One of his fellow airmen bent over him with a wild, sarcastic look. "You don't look so good, Buddy. Better get some..." But he was gone again into the chaos of arms and torsos before he had finished and before he could hear Moore's mechanical reply inch barely audible between his teeth and through his motionless lips. "I'm all right."
He sat still in trance for a whole long minute, not moving his face, not breathing. Only then and of a sudden did the man's words register in his mind. He looked about him quickly, with a sort of frantic orientation. And then with his free left hand got a cigarette from his jacket and lit it in one habitual motion.

He relaxed. Physical things. He took a sip of his drink, surveying the car. Glory. His eyes came to rest on certain of the women in the car. Tracing, with his eye, their contures, stopping just where the material of a dress grew taut on a hip, following the abrupt tangent of a leg, he thought: I have really known some. He sipped his drink and drew upon his smoke with casual regularity, thinking: Glory. Thinking: this time...

He finished his drink and got up to order another. He could feel his strength coming back. He moved with agility through the crowd. When he saw the mechanic he wanted to hide, but it was too late, so he decided and made the first move. He placed the half gone cigarette between his protruding lips and, making a sign of recognition with his eyes, extended a hand to the boy forcefully, over a man's hip. He said, "Hello Tommy boy."

"Hi ya Don baby," the boy said, coming out of the crowd. He smiled, switching the hat in his hands so he could shake. "Ges' you hitting do big city too? Man what's wrong wid do Air Force anyhow?" He held his hat in both hands, grinning. "What you got going baby?"

Moore felt the uneasiness returning. He did not want to answer Tommy's questions, so he looked away and said, "Look. Let me buy you a drink." He could see some of the boy's companions off in a corner at the other end of the car sitting, like Tommy, with hats in hand, watching.

"Nah. We ain't drinking 'til tonight. Thanks..."

Moore fidgeted. "What are you jet mechanics doing on this God forsaken train, anyway?" Evasively. Thinking: I am rolling.

Moore thought: No. Tommy got whiter and farther away, and his
voice rang. A charcoal man bumped him, but he hardly felt it. No, really...

"Don't put me on now baby." Tommy's hoarse chuckle pealed and rang, and Moore's ears rang. The people in the car moved but they made no sound, as if they all listened. Tommy's face was a leer now. Moore thought: No. But it was too late. He tried not to hear not to see not to think. But he thought: you cheap, lousy...


"Buddy an' Alvin an' me an' dat guy Sammuels from piston workshop. We going on da town." He inclined his head a little, giving Moore a knowing wink. "You know man. Wrestling an' den over to Oscar's. We been holding off a long time baby." He grinned. "You know?" Moore saw the look of cheerful, yet definitely animal, cunning come into the boy's eyes. He saw it coming. That look: full of knowing and questioning, admiration and contempt. He looked furtively away from him and them back, but again it was too late. Tommy said, "What you got going baby?"

Moore shifted his feet and swallowed. It had come back to him. He felt the air closing in slowly. When he tried to speak he found his mouth had dried up. "Oh, you know me, Tommy." Thinking: No. and Tommy seeming to recede very slowly from him. The air he breathed becoming rarefied. "The usual thing."

Tommy's black eyes shone. He was grinning a big white full smile, holding the hat in his hands. "Sure Don baby. I got ya." His voice seemed to ring slightly. Moore began looking about him a little frantically for an ashtray or a place to deposit his cigarette, fumbling with his glass. "Ain't you a cool one though." White teeth. "Christ I bet it's just like I always hear. She really sompan aye baby?"
Lucky sonsofbitches all you moving guys. Two-bit whores anyhow. You think of us guys down there tonight damn your lucky...."

Up from below Tommy's white full terrible leering smile, from below his leering black eyes: the hand. Out of the mist with the people all listening and moving but not hearing, it came up to grip him by the shoulder. Physical things. Moore tried to cry out No! but there was no sound and then he had to turn around and go pawing through the coat sleeves, pushing through the silent, moving people, flying, seeing the sign finally and then making the abrupt right turn.

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Haystacks saw her coming back out of the ladies' lounge, with a firm hand on the latch as she closed the door behind her. She was pale. Himself calm as ever, he watched her coming up the aisle uncertainly as the aircraft rocked and pitched under her.

Most of the passengers were reclining in vain attempt to maintain their equilibriums. All of the children were whining and whimpering, their mothers looking distressed. On the front wall a light shone dimly behind the glass pane: FASTEN SEATBELTS PLEASE.

She stopped here and there, bending in to lend a word of encouragement or a hand or to receive a sack of somebody's lost agony in exchange for an unviolated one. Occasionally she reached above her to acquire and administer a blanket. An old man's mess had just been removed from the floor in the rear. The air-conditioned air was nauseous.

She smiled sympathetically if wearily at him as she passed. Their eyes met in a brief exchange of their mutual embarrassment at this minor tragedy. Her look, however brief, was almost passionate. It communicated the pity she felt for his embarrassing position. So he did not see the unfolded air mail sheet slide from her clipboard, and only discovered it lying out in the aisle when she had gone on.
He strained immensely reaching over himself toward the leaf. He groaned, for once in tune with the other passengers, his face reddening, his pudgy fingers wiggling anxiously at the limit of their extension. When he had finally gotten them around it, breathing with ecstatic relief, and before he could turn to call out to her or even before he could regain his balance, he saw:

February 10, 1962

Dear Billy,

Here I am on a new flight to Los Angeles. I miss you. It is getting a little rough, turbulence you know, so I'm going to stop now and finish this in Phoenix. We lay over...

She received the letter gratefully, stuffing it deep into the congestion on her clipboard. "This must be so hard for you; being the only healthy person on board!" She tried in vain to appear vital. But, although her neatness still well symbolized the company, it was obvious to Haystacks, who had been watching her all afternoon, that she was strained and tired and worried.

He smiled sympathetically up at her from the comfort of his two plush and partially reclining seats. He said, "You ought teh set a spell, Ma'am."

She returned his smile, almost sighing.

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The desert began giving way slowly to the rising edifices of a suburban civilization. Through the dirt on his window, Airman Moore watched with dull foreboding as the sleek perpendiculars of buildings jetted up with increasing frequency from the flat and slowly revolving landscape before him. The soiled window emphasized for him the calm of his own reflection. He sat perfectly still, his hands lying beside him, his neck caught on the top of the straight, hard leather seat, his head turned toward the window, reclining.

The sun swung away by immeasurable degrees toward the far horizon. The train was coming into Glendale, and some of the
passengers were already up gathering their things. So there was also increasing activity within the car, and this also Airman Moore perceived with an almost indifferent, bland anxiety. He twisted in his seat, surveying the car. Then he turned back to the window.

He felt clean and empty inside. A strange calm had settled upon him, dulling the once high potency of his secret ambition, his secret dread. He felt purified now; calm and dry and impotent. Empty and new. He felt nothing.

He saw the back streets of Glendale obscure the last of the desert from his panorama. The paintless, gray wood of farmer's produce sheds reached up from everywhere toward the declining sun. He watched the traffic on that street, clogged with trucks, moving minutely as it swept by him. He thought: six-thirty. I'll just have enough time. I'll change. Early supper...

He could not project his dull thoughts much beyond the present. At the far end of the car, the squatty conductor appeared again. He descended the aisle slowly, calling out intermittently in his severe monotone. "Phoenix City Station, ten minutes. End of the line.

Moore stirred himself, finally sitting up and turning himself back into the car. He jerked his brown valise down from overhead and sat with it on his lap. Several passengers were already moving up the aisle toward the exits. With his eyes, Moore followed them passively, as if he were sitting on a very high precipice and they were his imagined self-image making repetitiously the downward plunge which he must so soon make himself.

The train rolled on into the valley, into the flamingo and adobe canyon of the city. The sun was declining more rapidly now and so it was as if the train descended into a gray darkness. Deeper and deeper it went, slower and slower, into a pale, salmon evening that foreshadowed already the coming of a long, long, night-less dawn.

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She sat across the aisle from him in the vacant seat. She had
been sitting there for some time. They had been talking. Talking about the weather for one thing. The winters in Wisconsin, where she was from, and Iowa, where he was from. The snow each had left in Kansas City, and the sunshine that lay ahead for both in Phoenix.

The turbulence of the hour before had subsided for the most part, and passengers were resting comfortably. Their babies were still sleeping. The air-conditioned air was clean and fresh, if yet a little pungent.

Leaning in with his gross arm extended, Haystacks handed her the napkin, smiling abundantly. He pocketed his fountain pen. "Ah don't know as yeh kin even read it."

"I surely can," she said, holding it up before her. "Haystacks Calhoun." She filed it carefully among the papers on her clipboard. "And thank you very much for it. You must get tired of signing autographs for people like me."

"Naw't lately, Ma'am." He chuckled a hoarse, little chuckle, folding his hands in front of him, out of his own sight. "Ah been retired."

"But this Phoenix deal sounds like it will get you started again, don't you think?" Her expression at once interrogative and sympathetic and full of hope.

Haystacks grinned and, looking down a little, reddened. "Yes, Ma'am. It better be real good, Ah clue yeh."

She told him she was sure it would.

They sat looking at one another for several moments. The roar of the engines dominated their ears. Then Haystacks moved and began searching in his many and large coat pockets. "Can't y'all come en see me t'night?" Not waiting for a reply, he produced a book of green tickets from his inside left coat pocket and said, "Here, Ma'am, yeh take these here tickets en come see me t'night."
"No, really, Mr. Calhoun. I can't. No, you keep these." She had already accepted the booklet he had forced so suddenly on her. "No, really. I want to buy a ticket to see you wrestle. Can I pay you for these?"

"Naw, Ma'am." He folded his huge arms, not allowing her to return the booklet. "You take them tickets an' give 'em out amongst yer crew. An' you keep a couple fer yourself. G'wan naw."

A look of extreme gratitude then came over her face. Her eyes shone slightly. She reached out a hand and laid it on Haystack's huge forearm. "Thank you, Mr. Calhoun. Thank you so much. We'll all be there rooting for you. You can count on it."

Again there was silence, left for the roaring engines to consume. Haystacks waited for the blood to leave his face. He still grinned, looking over her shoulder and around at the passengers. Then he said, "Ah bet yer g'wan to write back home all about meetin' ol' Haystacks, ain't yeh?"

"I surely am," she said. "We really don't get a celebrity on flight very often."

They laughed in unison. Haystacks chuckled so deeply that he almost lost his breath. He choked and wheezed. Tears leaked from the corners of his deeply imbedded eyes. He sighed.

She got up immediately and bent over him, offering to get him something to drink. "Naw, Ah'm all right. You set back down." With a soft, huge arm, he directed her back toward the seat.

"No, really I must go anyway." She glanced briefly up toward the curtain at the end of the aisle. "You want some dinner before we land, don't you?"

"We git fed too?" He smiled, anticipating the pleasure of this new possibility. He said, "Well, Ah can't contain yeh from yer duties then, Ah dawn't reckon." They laughed.

She said, "I imagine you're pretty hungry, too. It's capon today, I think." She looked at her clipboard. "And I'm sure there will be plenty of extras, if you want seconds." A smile.
"You can eat and then we'll be landing in Phoenix in about an hour."

"Aw right." She started away, and then he said, "Ma'am." She turned back.

"Yes?"

"You come back and set with me after dinner, if ye kin. You come back and tell me all about yourself."

"I'll do that," she said, smiling deeply. "Just as soon as I can."

They exchanged that look of mutual understanding again. For a moment there was a stillness in which even the passing time seemed to participate. Then the engines roared again, and she turned and walked up the aisle. Haystacks watched the girl's legs carry her away, swinging in those sort of rhythmic motions under the no-longer-quite-so neat line of her skirt. It was easy for them and yet they carried the weight of the world. He smiled. After she disappeared behind the curtain, he layed his head back into the plushness of his seat and closed his eyes.

Tommy Krazeano stood outside the boarding house, on the edge of the city, waiting for his three friends to emerge. The six o'clock sun was just now beginning to mix with the dry, amber dust of late afternoon. It was warm. With his trench coat over an arm, he paced once more to the end of the walk, looking up. As he was turning back expectantly to face the door of the boarding house again, he saw the airplane circling. It caught his eye. Christ, he thought. Winding down and down its helix through the warm, winter dusk, the plane appeared strange to him. It did not streak, as he knew planes to do, rakishly towards another landing. Rather, it seemed to him somehow to be settling down to earth on wings of some new glory.
PERPETUAL MOTION

The weary day undressed itself of light
And fell into its sleep somewhere in space.
The other hemisphere passed on the night
To mine; then, plunging into black, the race
Through Time begun at dawn continued while
The Earth, a spinning Janus, turned one face
To dreaming. Through a smouldering cosmic pile
Still spreading, growing outward at a pace
That only God could keep, the planet found
Its way, which man had just begun to trace.
And on through heaven, still without a sound,
The planet spun with gyroscopic grace.
Day then returned to celebrate the same
Old ritual, eternity by name.
OH! TANNENBAUM!

Gray light is whitening into day
The little fires are dying on a dying tree
Crimson, Indigo, and Orange
Morning air fading into pungent cooking smells.

Gutted boxes occupy the chairs
Their former perpendiculars now rudely torn
Their glittering contents bleeding profusely
Dribble from settee to sofa-bed to floor.

The edge of time is torn too
Days and hours and ancestors melt together again
Our fathers blend with those of Presidents
Stroked with love into the cauldron of a dying, drying year.
The old spends itself again in living sacrifice
Out of which is born material and regret and new time.
FAMILY REUNION: A sonnet on the politics of kinship

Off-centered talcum kiss of love or duty;
The hypocritic polish of the young;
The spinsters all remark the children's beauty—
The common family platitudes are flung.

Two camps appear at once: Youth battles Age,
Their war intense, but fraught with subtlety,
Caught in a battle which they have to wage
With those whose inner selves they'll never see.

Smoke fills an upstairs bathroom. Yellowed, cold,
A great-aunt's photographs display
The faded visage of a child now old.
The air is chilled by what we cannot say:

The esoteric, empty, babbling flood
Of relatives whose only tie is blood.
Mrs. Stuart sits and is content, with her dark, heavy robes gathered around her, in the huge chair which was her husband's, when he lived.

Always the room is dark, smelling of old books, and you cannot hear your steps in the muffled air.

When you come, the maid will take your card, and then come back to say that Mrs. Stuart will receive you, or that she will not receive you. And if she will, the maid silently ushers you to the parlor, where Mrs. Stuart sits, immovable with the furniture.

Then for twenty minutes or so you talk of the neighborhood news, which she hears only through her few callers, and when it is time to leave, she never rises, but only nods.

When the maid opens the massive front door for you, the welcome freshness of outdoors rushes in like a spring flood.
have you seen the man, who, every morning,
walks smiling into the cemetery
with a handful of wild flowers?

39
Like a tired sprite
The waning year drifts out
Among the dead and sodden leaves
He shed upon the earth when last he danced.
He goes out lonely, with many a backward glance
And a vague wan smile
Expecting the coming snow.

His long lean fingers on my soul have played
As on some grand aeolian harp
The music of his seasons. Now the tones
Are cold, the chords are calm and bleak
And dim, in tune with graying skies
And high thin winds along the empty streets
And his weary dragging footsteps as he goes.
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