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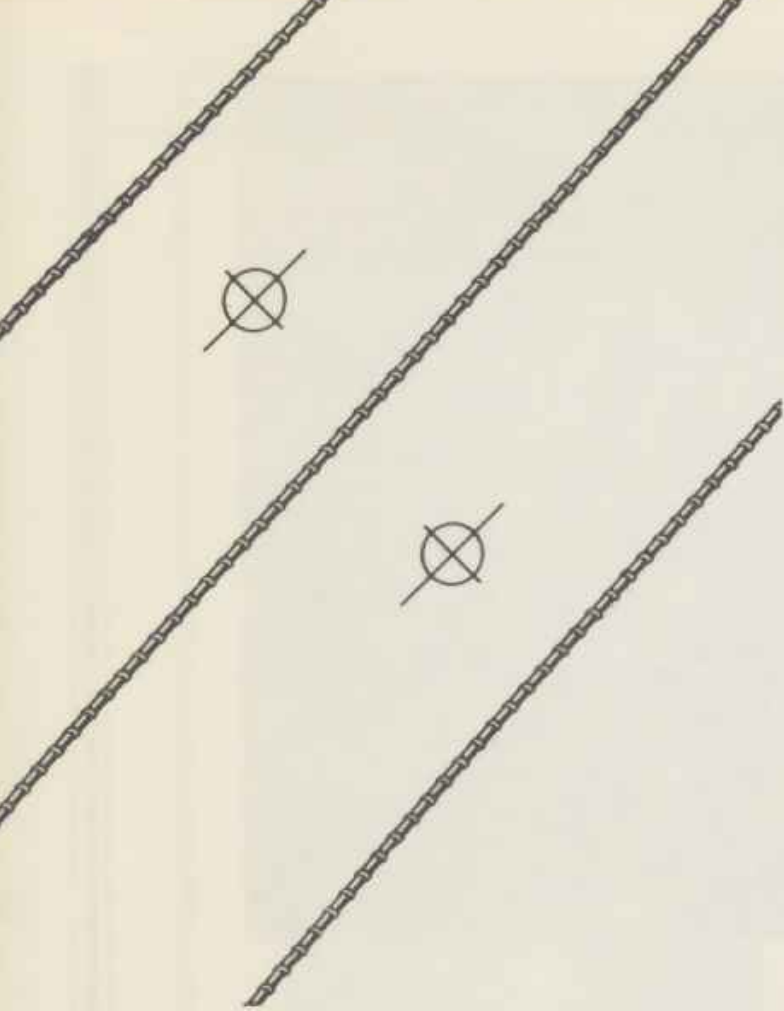
Instress

Spring 1991



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Minor Reflection

Caught between black and white sentiment,
Lodged somewhere in the soul.
Extraneous to the norm but decisive to the obscure,
Wails a certain tone audible to but a few.
First depressed by grey reality,
The black scale brings peace,
Emerging magnetic to the brain,
Where it sedates the imagination...
Draining the displeasure of the real world,
By its magnificent morbidity.
Finally, finally, escape seems everlasting.
A glimpse at the eternal creator by way of a mortal
composer of immortal songs.
Here in the subconscious, revitalized by a genius,
dwells "Jesu, joy of man's desiring," forever.

Joe Dombroski





Dead to the World (too cold to care)

There is a realm not far from here
Where worms do not persist...
Where water falls in shimmering walls,
And voices fade in mist.
There sunlight shines
 in broken lines,
And roses grow at night
 While,
Fizzling down the dead-blue sky,
The moon,
Like Alka-Seltzer, fries.

John Woods



Reflection #4

The little boy
Laughs out loud at the cartoons,
And at the sight of his mother and grandmother
mourning the death of his Uncle Billy.

John Woods



On The River

We drift along the muddied black waters of
the Susquehanna,
Depressed and inebriated.
The summer breeze is swallowed by decaying
vapors of the past.
Turbid moss, damp bark, and weeds surround us.
The oarsman's unsteady hand steers imagination
and memories starboard to the hill,
Where white stones now rearranged were disturbed
and shaken...where the dead died again.

Behind, beneath the bow, lie 12 ghosts of
the Knox disaster,
Where terror and tragedy grew out of the
watery mine.

To port, where the rippling, black waters unconsciously
devoured a boy...a baseball player...
to young to die.

Water...source of life, death, and
still running memories.

Joe Dombroski





I Am The Owl On Fire

Restless run the stars high
over ground drawing out heat
from the burning day, remembered.
Restless, I rise, - for I know
there is little to keep me here, -
Not kiss, not hand, not memory,
And there is welcome in the sky.
Upon the rail I stand, then perch,
to launch between tight trees
in a feather-cloak, to fly.
I rise in updrafts warm.
Below, the lighted windows fall away
like pitiful squares of prey
but it is to a star
I draw near.
To the brightest I fly closely
to clutch a burning token
As from my crest a flame appears
to then run wing to wing.
I am the owl on fire
a brief, and burning, and an ending - seeker.
Falling to the ground again.

J. R. Smith

Summer '90

I remember sitting on your grandmother's porch.
It is the life season.
Lightning bugs flash slowly by and the death-
knell of the bug-light zaps into the chilly
warmth of the night.
My arms are folded across my coral summer sweater,
keeping the warmth of myself inside.
I am proud of you,
loving the way you love your Nona's lawn.
You and your cousin man - laboring,
straining, sweating,
making beautiful the place you all go back to
on Sundays,
aunt-uncles, and cousin-nephews, and niece-
grandkids;
the life place with the grass being nurtured
and growing and needing to be cut.
I watch you in admiration.
I want to be with you so much,
all to myself, and can hardly contain myself.
I am comfortable to leave the silence -
awkwardness of your relatives.
Later we order Domino's pizza to come to your
overly-warm, orange-afghany living room.
I want mushrooms and no one else does.
We leave your cousin being too warm by himself
on the reclining chair reclining.
Cool darkness lurks at your bay window, and
crickets sing their life song into the night.
You shower,
and come back to led me to the artificial
coolness of your air-conditioned room.
You lie on the bed.
You want to believe you are the man you see
reflected in the pride in my eyes.
You ask me to come to you,
to help make your bed a life place.
Recoiling in the stinging cool-darkness,
I won't.
You don't have that right.

Anya Musto

Reflection #2

The girl behind the counter
Asks me what I would like,
And blushes when I tell her.
I watch her walk away to get my doughnut...
Then return to tell me what I owe her.
I press the money into her hand and half-smile
when her face darkens once more,
While she forgets to get my change.



Cat From The Rain

Loneliness crept in like a cat from the rain,
Tearing at my soul
Until it bled,
Slowly trickling until the sun dried it all,
And I withered away.

Nancy Steffan

Help

Black folds doubling and tripling,
Barriers unbroken.
Cries for help not to be heard,
But pierce the silent night.
Lone minds register the truth.
No way to change the past.

Tears flow inside,
While smiles only show.
Shadowed memories haunt the future.
Invisible hands groping images,
Reaching, stretching, flexing uselessly.
No way to change the past.

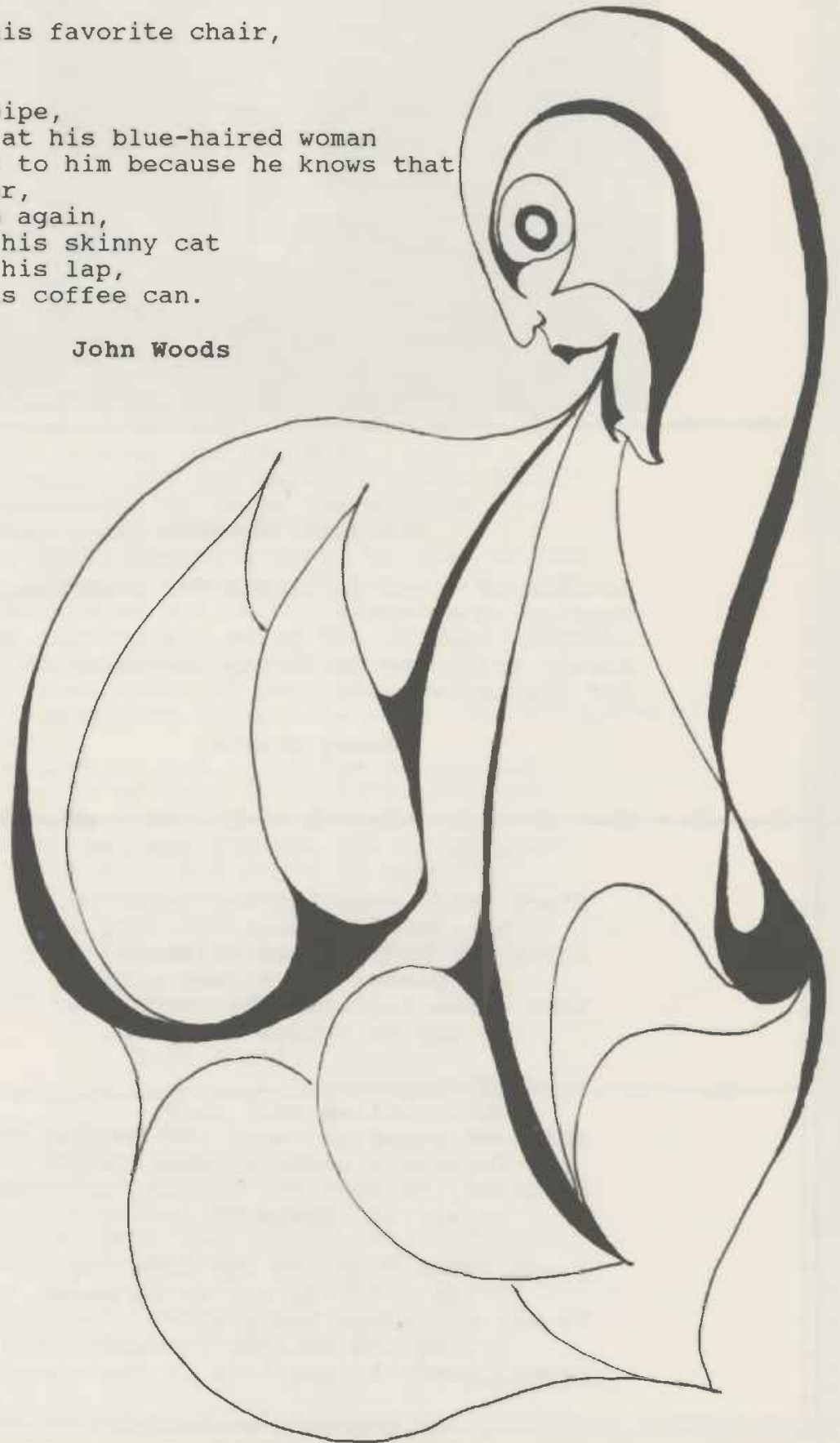
Black folds doubling and tripling,
Cries for help not to be heard.
No way to change the past?
Trying and failing forever?
Trust, comfort, and love in the moment.

Scott D. Helfrich

Reflection #3

The old man
Rocks slowly in his favorite chair,
On his porch,
On his property.
He pulls on his pipe,
Chokes his smoke at his blue-haired woman
 rocking next to him because he knows that
 it annoys her,
Pulls on his pipe again,
Strokes tenderly his skinny cat
 sleeping on his lap,
And spits into his coffee can.

John Woods



Observations

I sit in the cafe with my eyes observing;
Forms attempt to sneak by but they do not fool me.
Their outlines of theft, corruption and greed blind
more repulsively than the cheap motel's neon sign nearby.
My scalpel! Hand it to me. I will dissect these animals
and discover what is in their minds that drives them so.
I extend my hand; it is chilled by dispassion.
Forcing myself, I cut. I maintain a safe distance,
expecting disgusting complexities to ooze out.
However, finding none, I peer closer inside.
I look and see in humanity--a black shrivelled lump
of unidentifiable man.

Jill Gorman

Remembering Hegel

I do not count as an individual.
I move slowly from one object to
another.
I do what others expect of me.
My own voice is muted; I remain
stagnate.
Once my use is exhausted, I am
tossed aside, unable to
sustain myself alone.
Instead, I am suspended in air,
frozen in time,
stilled in life.

Jill Gorman

10

11



Farewell to

Red Red Revolut
Through the clo
Yellow fever fe
More than bread
Down the stairw
Down the alley,
Down the ribbon
In silence here
Defiance there,
Unclench your f
Your work is do



8

7





Arms and Bows

n Rises...
s the stars burn blue.
s a nation,
nd Jesus do.

roads you run

ts,

hn Woods

1

2



4

5



Forest For The Trees

Just beyond the man-made roar of highways
Stand in silent testament the trees
Breathing in the noxious air of progress
Exhaling life and dying by degrees
Waiting for reversal of their fortunes:
The crash that no one hears and no one sees.

Nancy Comstock

Junction 40

Here I go, she said, hands on the wheel
foot on the gas, mud on my tires,
time's winged Corvette close behind.
By the time my last friend turns forty,
she said, every damn board will be
torn from the bridge and thrown on the fire.
I'll choose, she said, when I hit the junction.
You know, dirt road or highway,
fire or ice, life or slow death.
I need more time, she said.
And more choices.





A Brief Peace

A down blanket floats
From the heavens
Bringing soft, full beauty to winter
As flowers do to spring.
Long silence and serenity
Are broken by birds and foraging squirrels
And the faint jingling of sleigh bells;
A grand sight indeed.
The white flakes floating down from heaven
Soon will cease.
And so, too, shall peace. Chris Messina

Loved One

Are my visions true to her real beauty?
Sometimes I do not see her for so long.
She is real while my thoughts are fantasy,
And my mind cannot sing my loved one's song.
Never would I fain be with another;
My prize is too precious to spoil with lust;
Though my body's weakness yearns the rapture,
That dreams I have of her may spark distrust.
But, it is my heart, like hers, that extends
A love that melts with her slight touch of hands;
And my thoughts can't confuse that which depends
On my fidelity with love's demands.

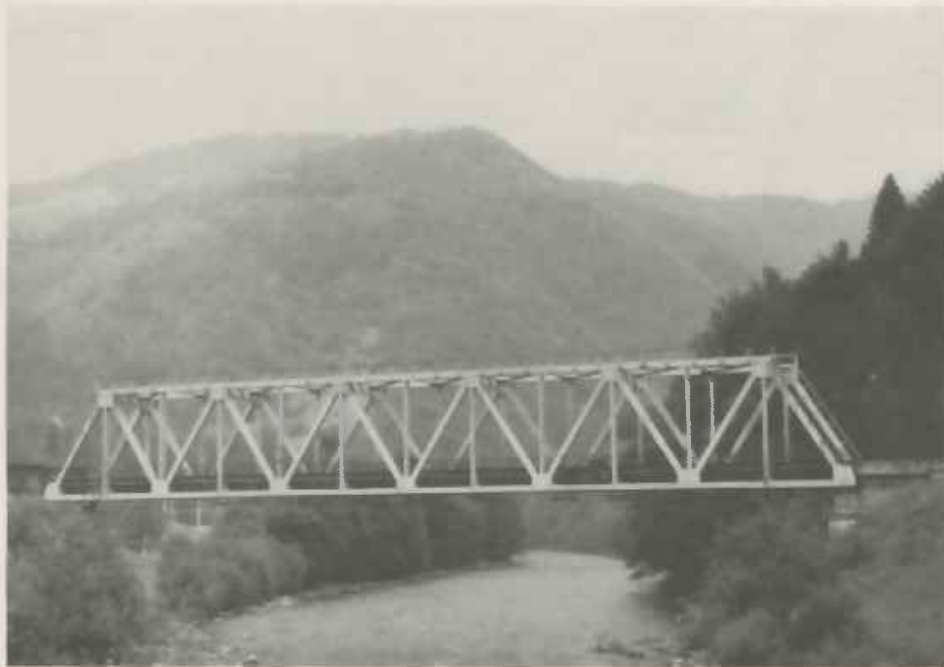
As I write with my pen my mind beholds
The precious beauty that my love unfolds.

C. Robinson

Burning Bridges

Staring back
 over the ravine,
Ashes lie
 where stood a bridge.
Yesterday was blown away
 by a mean part of me,
But today the other side
 lies buried in the
 mind's morgue,
Nothing more than a
 murdered memory.

Kevin Curcio



The Dark Horse

The dark horse gallops toward the sun to the edge of
 the earth and stops to eye the canyoned valley
 and inhales the burnt August air.
Sweat slides down his mane like glue.
He flares his nostrils and grunts,
Turns away from the edge at half trot, turns again,
Bursts toward the ridge and leaps.

John Woods

Reflection #5

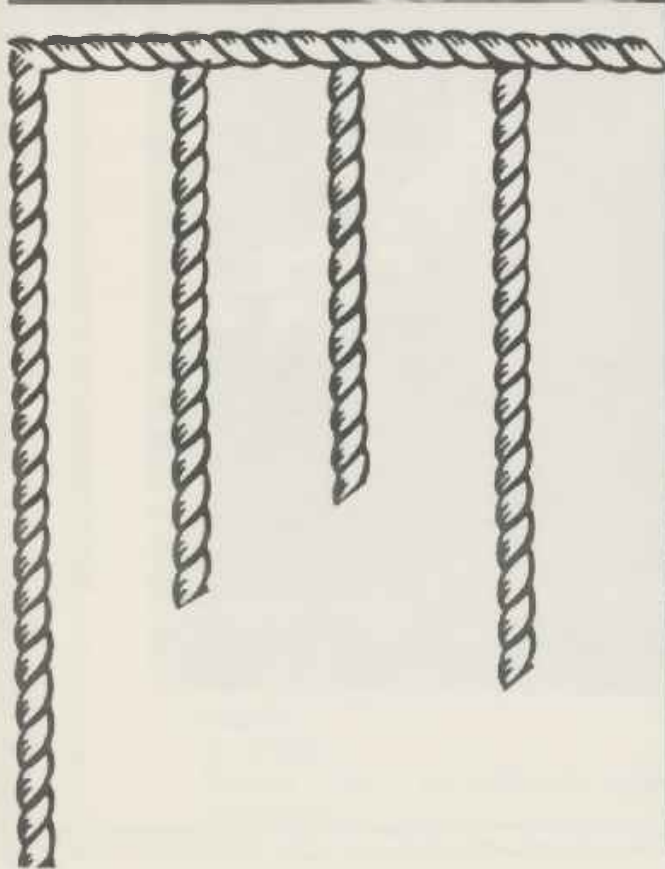
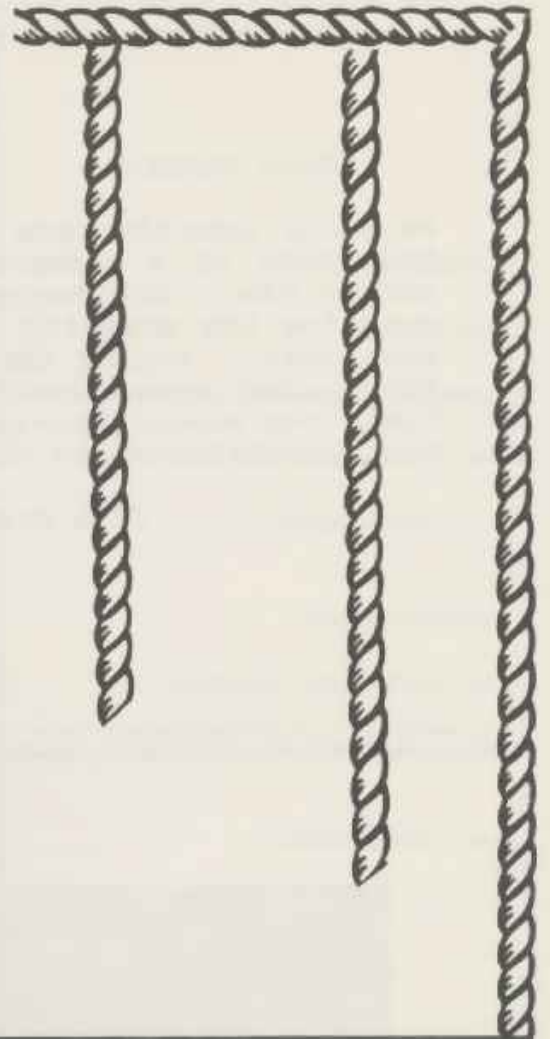
An old friend
Drives aimlessly all night,
Drinking hard and smoking harder,
Drives by his old girlfriend's house,
Many times,
Pulls off the side of the road and into the woods,
Loads his rifle,
Thinks things that I will never know of,
Points the rifle between his eyes and
pulls the trigger.

John Woods



Reflection #1

The grave digger
Fills another hole with flesh and dirt and
Smooths out the lumps with his new shovel and
Pauses briefly to admire his work...
Lights a cigarette and pulls on it and
Walks away...



Case Studies

He walks into the room unsure. Searching for stability, he grasps the image of a carefree, sensitive woman. Her laugh and smile assure him. She becomes the essence of his existence. Like a drowning boy grasping for a floating branch, his eyes nervously meet hers. Hoping for any acknowledgment from her, he receives none. Her eyes casually bypass his. Instead, they search for their own stability--in someone else. Humanity has become just a toy, trivializing an entire being by one rejected look.

Jill Gorman and Annette Holmes





I Cannot Say...

I cannot say goodbye...
The words escape me
before I begin to speak.
Like a child,
I will miss you.
You will leave empty space behind
that only you could fill
with your unique and special self.
Summer flowers blossom outside the window.
Inside the room it's aluminally-cool as I stare down at
square spots of sunshine on the olive-green-carpeted floor.
I am surrounded with quietude...
with your characteristically kind silence.
My lips move again,
painfully,
to shape the word.
My eyes lift
and you have filled the shape
of an open,
empty,
doorway.
Tears fall in silent surrender.
Goodbye.

Stairing My Way Into Emptiness

Thinking back, playing in the old factories,
playing in the junkyard,
days of the Piper's song, before the voice of the bard.
Sundays with Dad. The movies, the Aquarium, Central Park,
a time when confinement to home and "NO TV!"
were retribution for being out past dark.
Before girls, before beer,
before watching torn knuckles and flesh grow red
while stairing my way into emptiness
where once stood a grocery store window.
Thinking back, waking for Saturday cartoons
at the time he now sleeps.
Big Jim dolls provided more amusement
than running across Queens Blvd. drunk.
Thinking back, laughter was delivered
by the Piper's song of the lamb.
Remorse the response to a mother's reprimand
not "Mom, I don't give a damn!"
Where sings the Piper presently?
I think he's somewhere in an alley with his brains bashed in.
The Bard says what was punishable by confinement to hell
is no longer a sin.
 Why not?

Kevin Curcio

Brother Holden

I, Holden, walk into the night and find only
innocence in you, sleeping.
The playful instruments of your person surround you.
There I leave you lying.
In guilt I walk away from you,
and from the responsibilities as
your brother,
protector,
teacher...
From a bond that is stronger than life
and death.
The child I see,
Naive to the world of evil,
Showering in the flames of maturity,
cannot be erased from my memory.
If only your mind could remain forever
the world would find time to rest.
But reality must triumph over imagination,
your knowledge over you,
And experience over me.

Cholesterol Confessions

I eat butter. I realize this is not the nutritionally correct thing to do in 1991, but at least it is politically correct. After all, I live in a country where some people are still trying to make a living at farming, in spite of the government setting the prices so low that the farmer loses money every time he sells a gallon of milk. My neighbor's milk checks have dropped by \$2000 a month since last year.

But that's not why I eat butter. Have you ever really looked at the alternatives? Ninety-five percent of the supermarket dairy case is filled with substitutes. Margarine, of course, but also "light" margarine, imitation margarine, and now some vacuous, watery substance, utterly devoid of flavor or redeeming social value, ominously labelled "spread." Where I live, "spread" is what the farmers do with the cow by-products, to fertilize the fields.

Cow-feed additives, pesticides, and cholesterol notwithstanding, butter is real. The second-graders made some. One of the farm boys brought in some fresh, raw, live cream, and they put it into glass jars with a little salt and shook it around until the butter came. Then they spread it on bread and ate it. And it was good.

Nancy Comstock

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RAIN IS FALLING

THE COOL WATER IS RUNNING DOWN THE HILL

TO THE RIVER

FEEDING THE RIVER

TO MAKE IT FULL WITH LIFE

THE LIFE OF THE RIVER IS ALWAYS RUNNING

DOWN HILL TO THE SEA

FROM THE SEA

IT FLOATS TO THE SKY

FROM THE SKY

IT FALLS

RAIN IS FALLING

THE RIVER WIDE AND FAST

TAKES ME TO THE UNKNOWN

THE MOUNTAINS WRAP THEIR ARMS AROUND ME

THE WIND BLOWS ON ME

LIKE A LOVER WHISPERING HER DEEPEST DREAMS TO ME

THE SUN WARMS ME

LIKE A KISS

BIRDS FLY LIKE DREAMS THROUGH THE NIGHT

THE RIVER TAKES ME TO YOU

EETURNER
J.P. SCHOOLLEY '91