

1980

Expressions 1980

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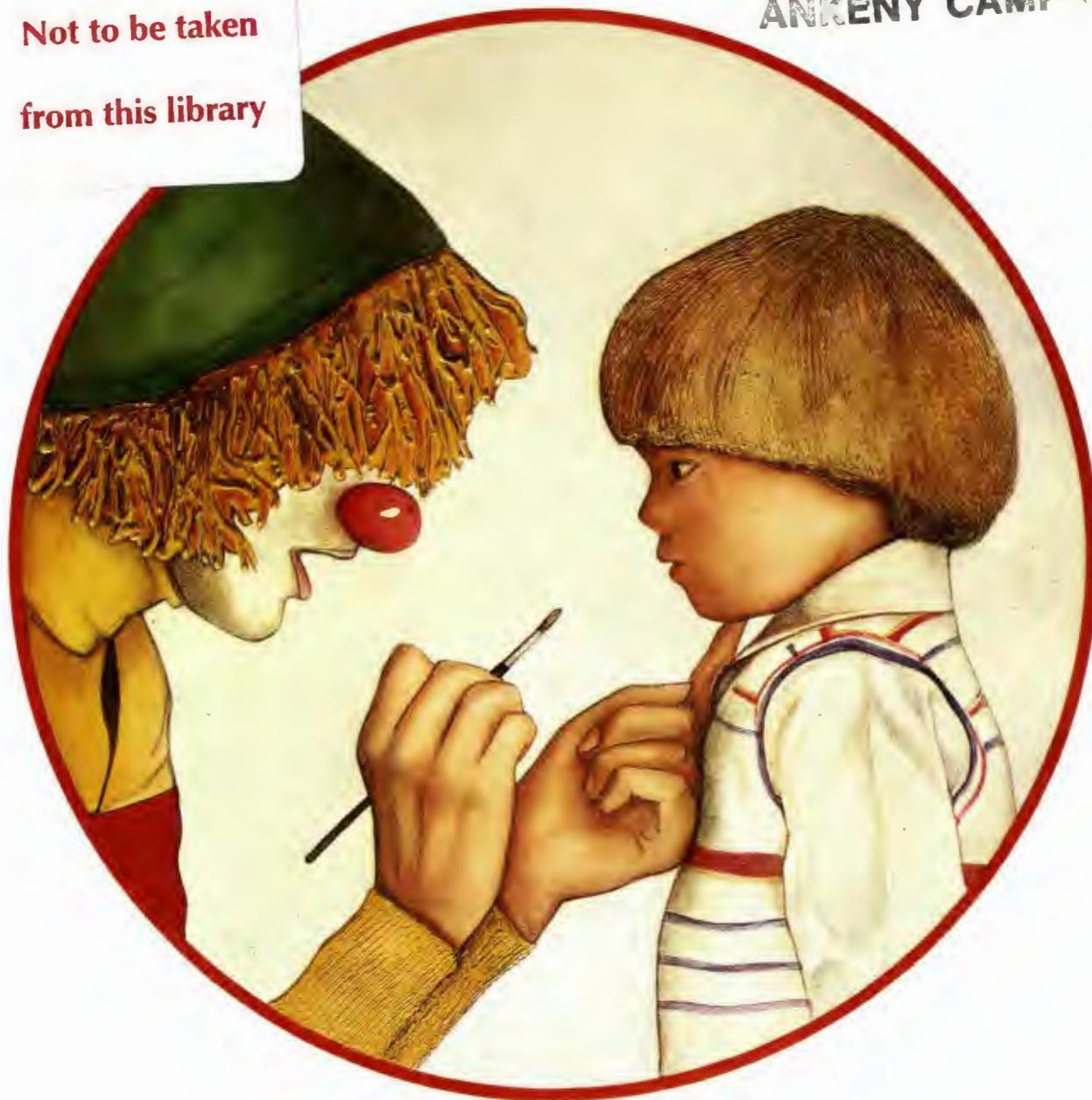
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EXPRESSIONS

Des Moines Area Community College volume 3 1980

Expressions contains selected work from the 1980 Creative Writing Contest winners and honorable mentions, Campus Chronicle Photography Contest entrants, and Commercial Art students at Des Moines Area Community College. Design,

typography and layout was done by Journalism students.

Staff members include: Lance Coles, editor; Randy Marchant, assistant editor; Don Peitzman, Alan Cross, and Pat Lippold.

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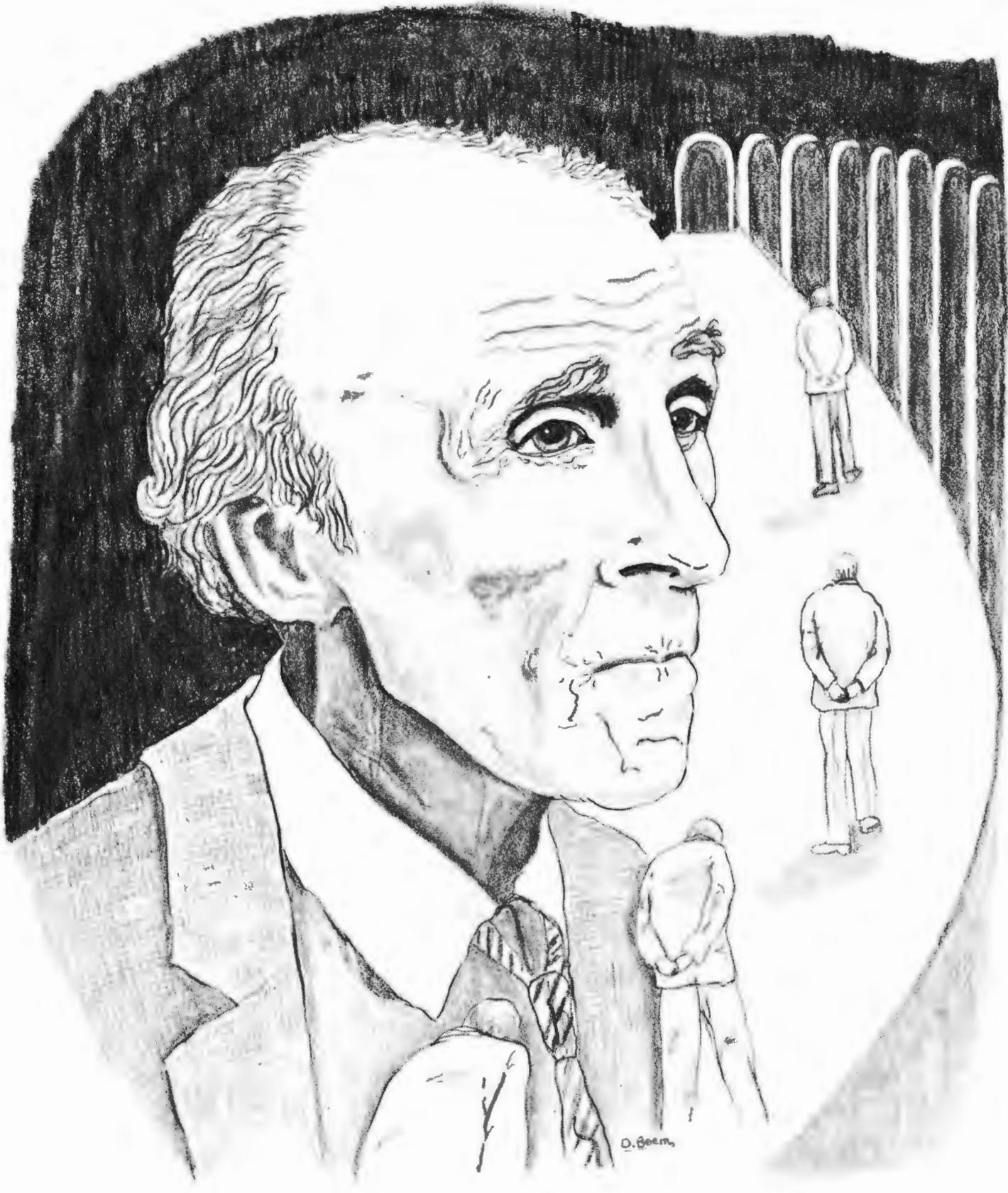
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Photo by Larry Peterson



"THE CHAMP"

My step-dad was a champ. I don't mean a bruiser although I've heard many times how he and "Big Jack" Armstrong fought bare-fisted for three hours in the middle of the street until both collapsed from exhaustion. I mean a man who could overcome anything.

He told me only once about how, in the middle of the Depression, his father had died, leaving him to take care of his mother and sister, by

changed subjects.

The wound held my curiosity and interest for many years. One day when I was at Grandma's house, she took a scrapbook out of the top drawer in her desk. She had put together an album of my step-dad's war years.

I looked through it intensely to find out more about him. There were pictures of his company and platoon and of him, standing in his uniform in front of all sorts of

in the office, it grew into a profitable and respected company.

What I didn't know until I had moved away from home was that the first few years were very tough. I remember now that he wasn't around much when I was little, but I just thought that fathers had to be away for their jobs. My mom recently told me he was working sixteen-hour days at that time just to keep food on the table. I don't remember

"A real war hero, and he wouldn't tell me!"

running the family farm.

What he did not tell me was he was only twelve-years-old at the time.

One day when I was ten, I noticed a thick, pinkish scar by his ribs on his left side. I never saw him without his shirt on before and asked about the scar.

"Where did you get that scar, Pop?"

"In the war," he said without explaining.

I wanted to know more. "What happened?"

"It's just a schrapnel wound."

I sensed I would get no more information and

buildings.

There were also many articles about him in combat in the Pacific. The scar had been won when he led a charge of a handful of men against a Japanese emplacement. For that heroic charge, he received the Purple Heart as well as the Silver Star for bravery.

I thought, "A real war hero, and he wouldn't tell me!"

Then there was the company he founded. When he married my mom, he was selling siding for a somewhat less-than-honorable man. He decided to start his own company. With mom helping

them ever talking about money, and I always seemed to get what I wanted for Christmas.

Yes, he sure was a champ, but I had to find out about him from other people. I always loved him and felt he was someone special, but he never had a chance to tell me man-to-man.

You see, the only battle I actually saw him fight was a losing one to a relentless enemy. Cancer.

I watched him wither away to a shadow of himself while he waged the losing battle. He never complained of the pain. He died a champ.

MIDNIGHT VISITOR

by Patricia Smith

Cold sleet beat against the sliding glass window. The lightening tore across the sky in a blaze of fury. The old clock in the hall chimed eleven o'clock.

The hallway was bathed in a glow as the flashes of light rent the air, half hidden objects took on different personalities as they stood shrouded by shadows. The beams overhead creaked with age and a chill seemed to invade the hall.

Only a small slip of golden light warmed the hall. It escaped from under a doorway. It seemed small and useless and the shadows of the hall incircled the ray.

Suddenly the ray began to grow, traveling up the wall and driving the shadows into the far corners of the room.

In the doorway stands a woman. She holds a book in one hand and the other lay against her breast. She clutches the book closer to her chest and turns to glance back into the other room.

Inside the room a red and cheery fire blazes in the fireplace. The flames dance and entwine in a warn and comforting dance. The golden light leaves no corner in darkness and blends with the dancing fire.

The woman turns to the cold and silent hall. Her hair is piled upon her head with whisps falling gently down her slim and fragile neck. She is wearing an old but worn and familiar housecoat the hangs to the floor.

Suddenly she hears a noise, like the sound of foot falls against a soft carpet. She steps slowly into the hall and peers up to the top floor of the house. She takes one more comforting glance at the warm secure study



Kirk Barron

and then makes her way to the steps.

She lays the book on the bottom step and stares up into the shadowed recesses of the top floor hallway. Her slim and trembling hand grips the banister of the steps while the other rises to clutch at her throat. She lifts her leadened feet to assend the gloomy steps. Her feet press solidly into the carpeted steps and half way to the top she stops.

Was that another sound, she thinks. She really can't tell for all she hears now is the thunderous pounding of her own heart. Her fingers feel the racing of her own blood as it pulses through her veins. Her other arm surrounds her waist and almost presses her body in two.

She is tempted to run back down the stairs to the safety of the study where she could lock the door and leave all the frightening thoughts outside. But she pushes herself on up the stairs.

She has reaches the top and a chill runs down her spine. She reaches out to turn the light

switch on and immerse the sinister hall in stark light. But the sound of a door slam stops her movement. She whirls around to confront her terror.

"Liz." A man standing in the darkened hall with puddles of rain dripping from his coat. His briefcase falls to the floor as he struggles to free himself from his wet cold coat.

The woman throws one terrified glance into the pitch black hall and frantically runs down the steps into her husband's arms.

"Liz, I'm all wet," he cries in amazement.

"I heard a noise," she whispers.

Her husband looks down into a pair of terror filled wide set eyes. He then looks up to the top floor hallway. "It was nothing," he says evenly. "You are always hearing things."

She smiles a little shakely and laughed. "I at first thought that."

"Of course. Lets go into the study. I have a lot to tell you." he said as he went through the door.

Liz picked up the briefcase and set it next to the hall tree. She hung the damp coat up to dry and then walked to the steps to pick up her book. Her husband's voice floated out to her as she bent over to pick up the book. He called to her to hurry and she took one swift look up and then shut the study door.

The rain began to pound against the sliding glass door in torrents of fury and lighening lit the midnight sky. The ancient hall clock chimed midnight as a large shadow covered the steps to the top floor of the old house.



MOVEMENT

Birds
Gliding through the atmosphere
Like mobiles touched
By clumsy hands.

Sweeping forward
Only to be
Jerked back

Free, yet
Attached by a
Force unknown
To them.

by Linda Tabor



Dany Siembieda



Scott Murphy

FREEDOM

Gulls fly beyond my sight, to places that I can only imagine, where they laugh and mock us, stranded in society by our own manmade limits.

Flying on forever, never having to stop, to sort things out in this confusion we have created. Flying only for themselves, not for what is expected of them. Doing what is natural, not what they are taught.

As the sun slowly sets, they fly out to find that place, where they can rest in safety, planning tomorrows adventures, unlike any other days. But I can only remember my never changing life, as I constantly think of what real freedom is, and dream of being one of them but never! I must remember what is expected of me, and my limits that they have imposed upon my soul, only my imagination is untouched for no one can tell me what to think, and they never will as long as my mind is free from influence, though my body might be trapped in this never ending circle, I know that I can keep my mind free.

by Pam Sheets

How Not To Look Like A Tourist

As a native of the Iowa Great Lakes Region, I have come to regard tourists as a necessary evil. Tourists are of course, vital to a popular area, but are often resented because they transgress the unwritten laws of personal appearance and behavior.

When visiting a place that was not intentionally built to be a tourist attraction (such as a city or a town), do not carry a camera out in the open. Especially, do not wear one of those big, hulking box cameras around your neck. If a shopkeeper spots you in possession of a camera, you may be sentenced to paying at least 25 percent more on selected unmarked items. He'll probably even bring out a "rare" stuffed "jackelope" and you'll have to endure his long, quaint story of this legendary jackrabbit-antelope crossbreed.

If you are visiting a resort area in the summer, by all means, get a tan first, then go. If you use a sunlamp or visit one of those new tanning salons (or even use the old-fashioned way), you could save a tidy sum in the long run by not being subject to price hikes. Also, you'll feel better because you'll look like a native and not just a newly-arrived tourist.

I would now like to say a few words about wearing those gaudy, flowered shirts in Hawaii: Don't wear those gaudy, flowered shirts in Hawaii. The wearer of one will meet a similar fate as the poor slob with the camera around his neck. However, in Hawaii, there are huge souvenir "malls" in which his misfortunes will be multiplied, and he may end up buying a suitcaseful of lava sculptures and out-of-style puka shell necklaces.

A good rule of thumb for men, is to dress like the people of the place you're going to. If you are visiting a metropolitan area such as New York City or Washington D.C., a good, comfortable sports jacket would camouflage yourself nicely. A tie is optional but recommended. In most other areas, sports shirts, T-shirts, and 'good' jeans (i.e., with no rips, frays, or worn areas) and corduroys are considered acceptable. Almost anything goes. For some reason, women can wear almost anything and have no trouble. However, the better you dress, the better you will be treated.

Certain behavior can reveal a tourist, no matter how well he or she is camouflaged. In New York, do not look up at the skyscrapers with open-mouthed stares. There are three very good reasons for this. First of all, you will be easy prey for street vendors selling jewelry and watches that have steam rising from them. Second, you could be victimized by a pickpocket (What will you do? What will you do?) Last and most important, you must remember that New York City has a pigeon population second only to Washington, D.C. Need I say more?

*"Garsh, this place shor
hold a lotta hay!"*

New York has its own unique no-no's for tourists. I once overheard a man (obviously a tourist) in Grand Central Station remark to his wife, "Garsh, this place shor hold a lotta hay!" Anyone could have sold him swampland in Florida with no trouble at all because he acted like a tourist.

If a cabbie senses that you're from out of town, he'll drive forty blocks to get you from 33rd Street to 42nd Street. One way to avoid this is to adopt a New York-sounding accent. There isn't any Berlitz course yet, but Brooklynese is easy, just remember to pronounce "th" as "d" or "t," "er" as "oi" and "oi" as "er." Also, add a "nyeah" sound to a regular short "a" sound. And try to talk out of only one side of your mouth like Buddy Hackett. For example, "Thirty-third Street and Lexington Avenue" would come out as "Toity-toid Street 'n' Lexintonyeahvenah."

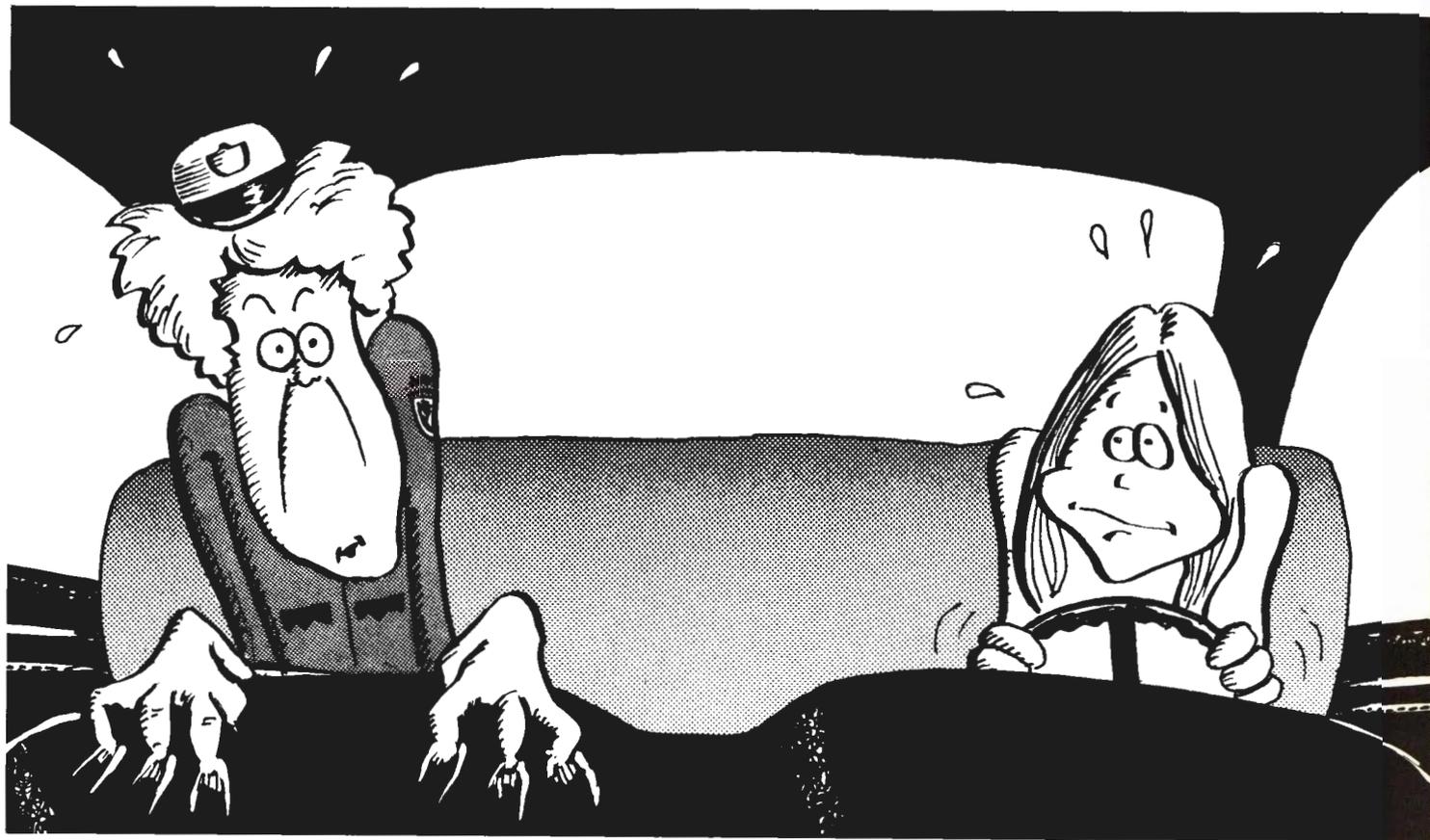
Finally, if someone wants to sell you the Brooklyn Bridge, don't buy it. This may sound obvious, but you would be surprised at how many people fall for that. That person doesn't even have the deed to it. I do. I bought it two years ago.

Now if someone wants to sell you the Lincoln Tunnel...

by Jeffery R. Roberts



Kirk Barron



Kirk Barron

The Pedestrian Syndrome

BY Lee Sparks

I have always maintained a certain philosophy about driving--fate has destined certain individuals to be operators of motor vehicles, and others to be professional pedestrians. This destiny may be determined in the same applied manner that our roles in life are decided: by environmental shaping, levels of aggressive tendencies, personality traits, and all the other psychological/sociological formulas that make up who and what we are. I theorize that the reason I fall into the pedestrian category is due to the lack of two basic qualities: commonsense, and the "Killer instinct" that seems to characterize so many drivers. Whatever the reason, I sincerely believe that I excel in the role that fate has picked for me to play.

Over the years, and residing in a number of major cities where drivers seemed to have personal vendettas against people on foot, I became adept

at judging the glint on an individual's eye when he or she was behind the wheel, before I even stepped off the curb. They always got the right of way, no matter what the state laws and regulations. I perceived it as "them" against "us" and I psychologically prepared for it as if for battle. I would map out street routes at time when the "enemy" was apt to be less belligerent, and would strictly avoid hostile territory at morning, noon, and evening rush hours.

It is difficult to pinpoint when I initially became aware of my destined role. Perhaps it was at the age of 16, when my first boyfriend made an abortive attempt to teach me to drive in a vintage 1955 Chevy. This his first car; his pride and devotion to it reflected in its spit-shined, gleamingly polished surface. Taking me to the local baseball field, which he hoped would leave me plenty of turning room, he did his best to introduce me the dubious joys of

driving. Never particularly coordinated, I vainly endeavored to synchronize the complicated dance steps of the gas, brake, and clutch pedals of the standard, with the manipulation of the poolroom cue ball atop the shift lever into the proper gear pattern. He never seemed the same after I blew the transmission out of his car, that sun-filled September afternoon.

I took and passed a succession of written driving tests, after graduating from high school and throughout my military years, in more states than most people travel through. The expiration period of the driving permits would lapse, however, before I had summoned up the courage to take the actual driving test.

Finally, I decided to go behind the "enemy" lines, I had reached the saturation point in being passively dependent on my patronizing friends and relatives to be transported from point "A" to "B". I envied the freedom

I thought others had in being able to drive where they wanted, when they wanted. I was also sick to death with having to produce sheaves of documents, in lieu of standard photo drivers license identification. Lastly, I felt a certain secret inadequacy in not having the mastery over a car that most 16 year old's have already achieved, and I felt that a drivers license would certify that mastery.

I retook and passed the Iowa State written driver's exam. To gain the experience I needed for the actual driving test, I determined to navigate the streets of Des Moines, making sure

Although I held my husband dear he volunteered for the role of sacrificial lamb.

the people I held dear were not in the vicinity of the routes I took. Although I held my husband dear, he volunteered for the role of sacrificial lamb, and accompanied me as the regulated licensed driver with a patience that qualified him for sainthood; his only betrayals of terror were a white-knuckled grip of the dashboard and set teeth suppressing the whimpers and screams of panic as I took turns at 55 miles an hour with no foot on the brake. Safely home, he critiqued my driving performance with the objectivity of a stranger, pointing out that one-way street meant that I should not turn into them, unless I was driving in the same direction of the traffic.

After a few weeks of driving and no major traffic accidents, I was lulled into a false sense of confidence. I decided I was ready to take my driving test, in spite of my husband's counseling to wait a little longer.

I was scheduled for the test on June 13th at 9:00 AM at the Second Avenue Drivers Examination Station in Des Moines. I awoke that morning, after a long, sleepless night, to find a dismally gray, pouring rain outside my window. None of my few weeks of driving experience had prepared me for this, and it was with a sense of extreme consternation that I frantically searched my memory banks to recall any bits of information regarding driving in inclement weather. Obviously, I had short-circuited because the only thing I could remember was survival techniques for being stranded in a car during a blizzard.

We drive to the examining station in silence, the rain beating an accompaniment to the rhythmic trembling of my knees. Arriving a few minutes early, we sat out in the car and I briefly tried to review what I remembered of the written exam. After my husband's reassuring, "Don't worry! If you don't pass it this time, you can always take it again," I stepped out of the car and entered the hanger-like building, while my husband had a quick cigarette outside.

Like a nervous recruit, I quickly took a place in the line indicated for license test and renewals, waiting to reach the counter where a group of blue-smocked women chatted and laughed while manning typewriters, camera, and a small teleprinter computer. To distract from the apprehension, panic and sick nervousness cramping my stomach, I took note of my surroundings. The room was large and barren-looking - despite chairs lining one wall, and part of another, stopping at a small classroom setting of students desks where the written tests were given. The room was vaguely reminiscent of an Army in-processing center. "No Smoking" signs were posted conspicuously on the walls -- their red, X-ed forms confronting me with the realization I would soon be attempting to interpret similiar traffic signs, and also creating an overpowering longing for a cigarette.

As I stood there debating whether to jeopardize my place in line long enough to steal out for a smoke, the decision was made for me by the entrance of a tall, heavily-built, grey-haired woman striding into the room, a clipboard dangling from her hand. She dressed in the familiar blue-denim shirt and navy trousers tucked into black leather boots of a police officer. I deduced that this was who probably would be determining me fit for a driver's license. It was a chilling thought. Her air of cold, dispassionate efficiency gave her the look of a prison matron or a Nazi Stormtrooper.

Reaching the counter and growling a few words to one of the blue-smocked ladies, she flipped open a large black appointment book. It was the time of reckoning. She called out my last name - "Sparks!" - with the brusque sharpness of a Parade Drill Sergeant, and approaching the counter I resisted an overwhelming compulsion to stand at attention, click my heels, and salute. With clipped words, she instructed me to go outside, start the car, and park it close to the building. I did as she requested, immediately.

While I was performing these

The room was vaguely reminiscent of an Army in-processing center.

maneuvers, my husband joined the woman - both inside the building, while I was being drenched outside in the rain, and at the window where she stood watching my efforts. Being a loquacious sort, he attempted to engage this character out of a bad World War II movie in conversation by making an insane comment on the weather and its effects on nervous drivers. She responded to this by, "If someone's that nervous about a little rain, they shouldn't be driving at all."

The driving test lasted only fifteen

minutes, but it seemed I lived several lifetimes in those few short moments. Everything that could possibly be done wrong, by Iowa State Law, I did wrong, short of having a car accident, and even that was close on several occasions. Most of that brief ride is mercifully hazy, but vivid details flicker in and out of my consciousness like images from a bad nightmare: searching frantically for the windshield wipers that I'd never used before while trying to steer with one hand; narrowly avoiding clipping the edge of a tunnel because I'd overestimated the width of the road and another car was passing through at the

"I wondered if the liquid dewing her face were raindrops or tears of terror."

same time; and the red-flushed face and symbolic third finger of the pick-up driver I'd cut off on a left-hand turn. Looking at the Examiner's face with a side glance, I wondered if the liquid dewing her face were raindrops or tears of terror. The most vivid sensation I recall is of intensified anxiety, as I sat beside that grim forbidding presence who evaluated every miscalculated action by a little 'tick' mark on the clipboard.

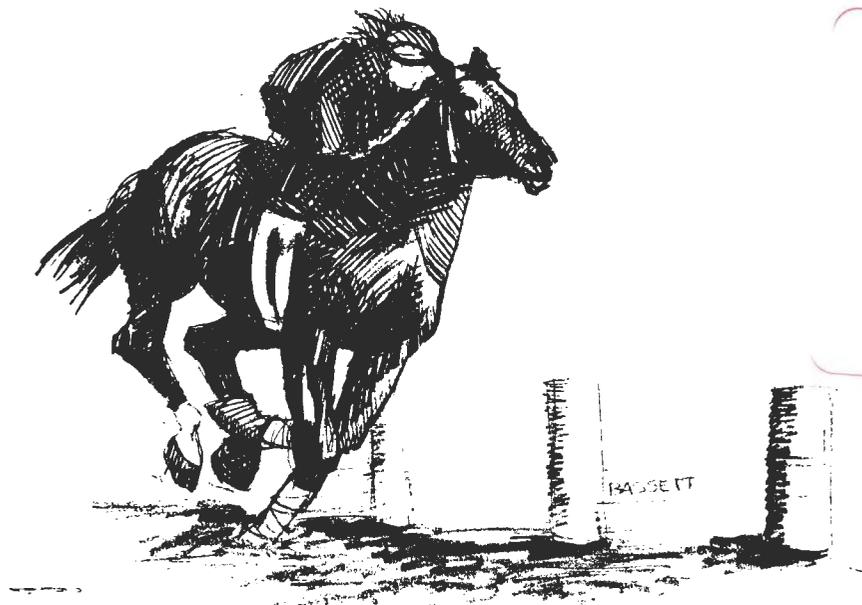
Eventually, the test ended, and I found myself in the car, parked between the narrow yellow lines of the parking lot outside the Second Avenue station. It wasn't necessary to ask how I did. Her pen, held by those liver-spotted, veined hands which busily computed points in the right-hand column of the scoresheet, told the story.

Turning in the bucket seat of the little red Chevy Nova I'd hoped to drive on my own, her growl softened. "You didn't pass. I deducted fifty-one points, besides your technical errors, just because you were so nervous I didn't know what you'd do. I have never seen anyone come that close to so many accidents! I would advise you to get quite a bit more experience before you take the driving test again," she continued.

Handing me the point sheet to review, she opened the door, and left the car. Waiting for my husband to join me for the ride home, I chainsmoked half-a-pack of cigarettes.

A month and approximately 800 more miles that I had personally placed on the car later, I retook and passed the driving test. The exam was taken in a little town, about 190 miles away from Des Moines, with a population of 263. The examiner, a friendly young woman of perhaps 25, said she'd heard of the Des Moines examiner, and that she had the effect of making even older drivers extremely nervous.

I use my driver's license to cash checks, and I judge the glint in Des Moines driver's eyes before I step off the curb to cross the street on my long walk to the bank.



THE DEBUTANTS

by Patricia Smith

The public address system blared out the number of the jumper that had just left the ring, another disappointed rider.

A rather petite young girl sets astride a large black stallion. She sets lightly, almost anticipative as she watches riders and horses vault over neatly placed jumps. One fine boned hand is raised to shield her eyes from the penetrating glare of the sun. Nervously, she brushes her auburn hair away from her face.

A tall, lanky man stands at the head of the stallion. His hand rests lightly on the shining neck of the horse. He strokes the horse's neck as he pensively watches the jumping event.

"Beth, the in-and-out seems to be the most difficult. Watch your speed and don't let Commi get ahead of himself." he turns to look up into the girl's green eyes. He sees a fleeting look of fear gleam in her eyes.

"Connor?"

"Yes, Beth."

"Were you nervous, I mean the first time?" Beth asked in a halting voice.

"Sure. Who isn't. I was so scared that I was afraid that I wouldn't see the jumps," he laughed. Then his steel grey eyes glinted in determination.

"I've got confidence in you, you're talented. Just concentrate and remember to do your best."

"Commadore and I will do our best."

"Number 225, Beth Alexander is up next," the loud speaker boomed.

"Beth, good luck. Be careful." Connor patted the stallion's neck and said, "Take good care of her, boy."

As Beth rode to the gate of the ring her back stiffened with determination. The flat smooth gree of

the ring lies before her. The banners of red, white and blue flutter crisply in the breeze like flags on the 4th of July.

The jumps were set in a figure eight formation. A single, double, a wall, then the hog's back with the coop, a water jump and in the center of the ring was the double angle. After the double angle was the Liverpool and the final jump of the set was the in-and-out. Each jump was freshly painted white with false shrubbery decorating the sides.

Beth and Commadore trotted into the ring and Beth saluted the judge's stand. Every movement filled with tension, laden with fear.

Commadore's body stiffened with anticipation. Every gleaming muscle poised, waiting for Beth's signal to begin. He felt her fear and the tension was signaled through the reins.

The signal came. Around in a big circle they cantered. Her hands guiding the big stallion in a straight and true course. Both of their eyes glued on the first jump. The fear gone, replaced by concentration.

Then like a bullet, Commadore shot toward the first jump. His long graceful neck straining to reach the jump. Swiftly they jumped over the single, double, the wall and the hog's back. The other two jumps were a breeze. Beth's mind was twirling. A flood of thoughts came at once. Listen for the tick of fault, check his speed, always look forward, concentrate, concentrate.

"Up Commi!" she commanded and he answered her by clearing the Liverpool with inches to spare.

Beth slowed Commadore down, for the next jump was the in-and-out. Just three quick jumps in succession, each only twelve feet apart.

Commadore strained, sweat pouring from his sides. The reins were wet with white lather from his

neck. Foam sprayed back on Beth from his bit. His rasping breath filled the air.

"Up Commi," Beth hissed through her clenched teeth.

He rose to meet the jump. His hocks hitching as he cleared the first jump. Again his body rose, again clear.

"One more Commi and we're home free," she whispered as she crouched low over his neck. Up again and they were clear.

"225 clean round, no faults. Time 1:05," the announcer declared.

The two left the ring and rode toward the waiting Connor.

"Clear round, Connor, a clear round!" she cried, "We flew!" Her face was flushed with excitement. Her eyes were glazed over and her voice was almost edged with hysteria.

"Let's get him rubbed down, just in case there's a jump-off."

The two of them went quickly to work. The saddle was removed. Commadore was washed down with salt water then the water was squeezed from his black coat. The aroma of sweat permeated the air. Then he was rubbed with towels, resaddled and finally covered with a cooler.

Connor walked Commadore around in a circle to cool the horse and to calm his nerves. Connor watched Beth out of the corner of his eye. Something was not right.

Beth watched as other riders entered the ring. Yet not one of them came out with a clean round. Her face began to lose its flush as the waiting wore on. Beth nervously tapped her whip. Her black jodphurs were sprayed with Commadore's white lather. Her face was paled with fear. Again and again she hit the crop against her dusty boots.

A large grey mare entered the ring with a tall young man. As a team, they went over the jumps, fear began to creep into Beth's eyes.

"360, clean round, no faults. Time.....1:05. There will be a jump-off. Numbers 360 and 225 please come to the ring." The announcement cut through the air.

The grey elected to go first and as Beth watched tension rose. Each jump was perfect. The two worked like a team. Man and horse joined together as one.

"360 clean round, no faults. Time 1:03."

"Faster," she whispered. Commi, oh, Commi. We have to do better." Beth's hand caressed his neck.

"225."

Into the ring Beth and Commadore rode. They were no longer a young girl and her horse but competitors out to win. Beth's concentration was complete. She didn't know that the audience had fallen silent. All she could see were the eight white jumps.

Commadore cleared the first three easily, they were no effort for the pair. The hog's back was next. Up Commadore rose, thud. A tick, not a fault. The bar fell back into place. Commi cleared the water jump like a champion. His body stretched, each

muscle straining. His legs outstretched reaching for dry turf.

They finally came to the last jump, the in-and-out. Beth's heart beats against her chest in fear, for as Commadore rose to clear the jump, she knew they were going too fast. Commadore landed and tried to rise again but his knees hit the top bar of the middle jump. He was gallant to the end.

The horse crashed into the jump. Beth jumped clear to save herself. She landed and looked up to see a horrible sight. Bile rose in her throat.

Commadore was lying thrashing amidst the broken ruins of the jump, a deadly splinter deeply impaled in his chest, his body convulsed in pain and his moans tortured her ears. His red blood was splashed upon the stark white rails. Pools of blood began to form on the green turf before the vet could arrive.

Slowly his convulsions, moans, and thrashings stopped. One last shudder and Commadore was dead.

Beth was stunned. No tears came, only the look of total horror was on her face. Zombie-like she left the ring.

The next day, Beth and Connor returned to Willow Pond. Beth carried with her an emptiness that not even Connor could dispell.

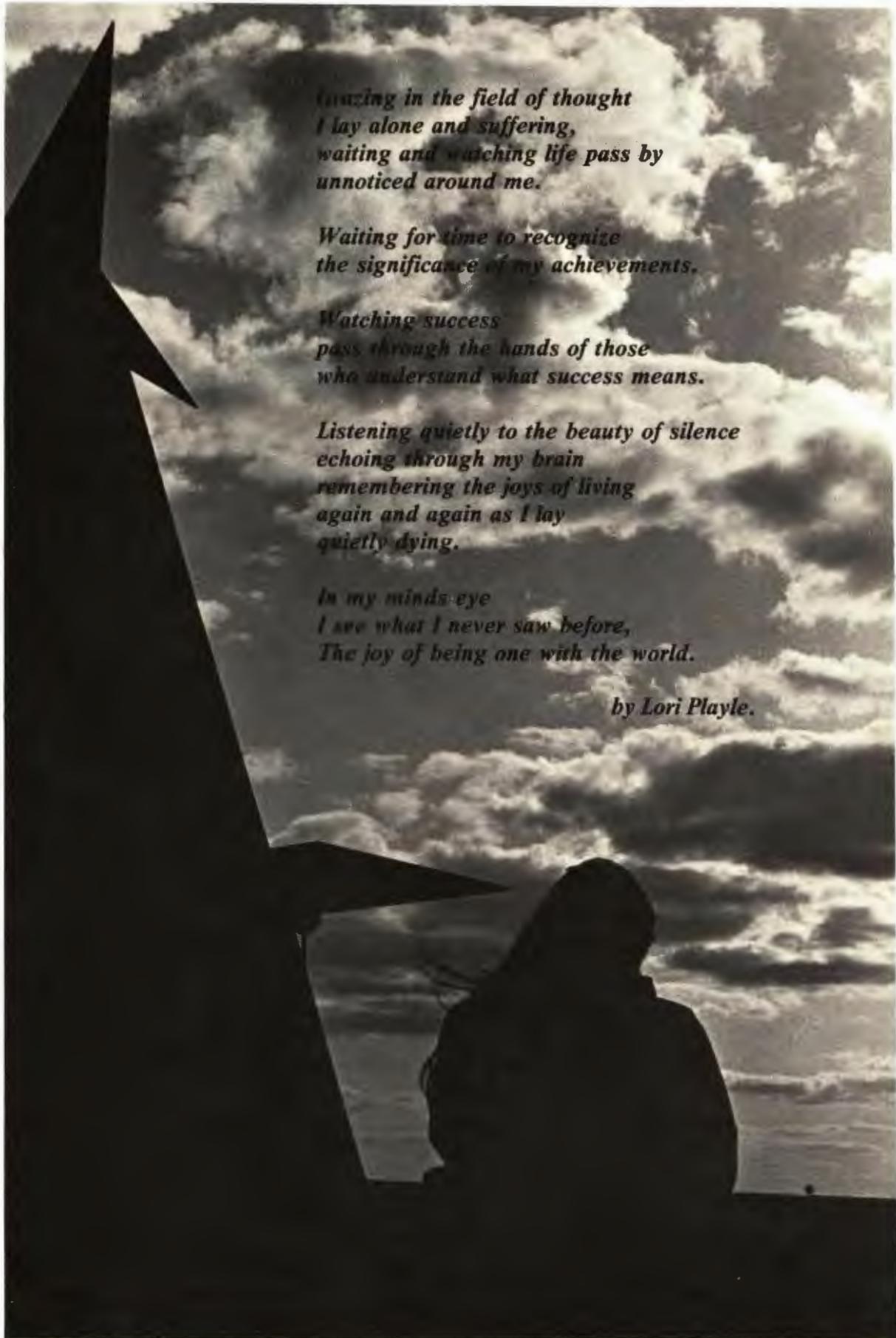
The afternoon of their return, Beth went to the barn. She stood in Commadore's stall reliving memories. Their first ride together and their debut at the Nationals yesterday.

Beth stood to the side of the alley in the barn as a very young girl lead a hugh old gelding down the alley. She wasn't even tall enough to open the large stall doors so Beth lent a hand. The girl's happiness shown in her eyes as she bedded the ancient horse down. She ran her small hand up the horses legs as if he were a champion. The gelding swung his lumbering body around and nudged the small girl companionably.

Tears spilled down Beth's cheeks and sobs rose in her throat. She knew the pain would pass and the hurt would go away eventually. She had to go on without Commadore. She wiped the tears away and walked out of the barn into the blazing sunlight. Tomorrow, she thought, I'll go horse hunting. Maybe I'll find another black stallion.



MEDITATION



*Wandering in the field of thought
I lay alone and suffering,
waiting and watching life pass by
unnoticed around me.*

*Waiting for time to recognize
the significance of my achievements.*

*Watching success
pass through the hands of those
who understand what success means.*

*Listening quietly to the beauty of silence
echoing through my brain
remembering the joys of living
again and again as I lay
quietly dying.*

*In my mind's eye
I see what I never saw before,
The joy of being one with the world.*

by Lori Playle.

Silence

by Jeffrey L. Bettis

*Silence,
deathly haunting,
like the chill of a dense fog
gripping my shoulders
It wraps around me
like a blanket of death.
The echo of the clock,
tick-tock, tick-tock,
runs through me, never ending.*

*With a hypnotic effect,
spellbound I stare blankly
at my typewriter.*

*Noise,
why can't there be any noise?
Something, anything to let me know
there is life outside.*

*Only
make the clock stop ticking.*

*Outside there is only darkness,
making me feel empty inside.
There is no more daylight for me,
I will never again experience
the warmth of the sun, without her.*

*She has passed into the
"other side of life."
I am alone once again.
I wish the silence would end.*

*Bring on the noise
so I would not have to think.
So I would not have to remember.
I miss her so very much.*

*Silence,
isn't it beautiful,
it makes me think of her.*





AN AUTUMN NIGHT AN AUTUMN N

The night breeze gently lifted the frilly white curtains of Tess' room. The light from the hall shown softly on Tess' curls making a halo about her head.

Jenny stood watching her young daughter sleep. She covered the bare shoulders against the night chill. She then bent to kiss the rose tinted cheek.

Downstairs was a sink full of dinner dishes she yet had to wash. But Jenny couldn't leave her daughter's side. Watching Tess sleep was the most beautiful sight she had ever seen.

The screen door slammed in the kitchen like a reminder of things she yet had to do. Jenny turned to go, but she turned again for one last look. They grow so quickly.

It had been a golden autumn day when the last cutting of hay was baled. The sun shown down brightly as Matt and Jenny had baled the hay. Tess had wore herself out playing on the rack.

It had been a long tiring day. Jenny's whole body was stiff from being jounced on the hay rack. Her hands were covered with small scratches from the sharp stalks of hay.

Matt had rode the tractor all day long. Sweat darkening his work shirt as he drove around the field. Chaff clung to the wet shirt.

His face, arms and neck were bronzed by the autumn sun.

Jenny walked down the back stair steps to the kitchen. She stood in front of the sink, the dishes stacked in perfect order. Stew gravy was hardening on the plates and Tess' grape juice was staining the sink enamel. A woman's life story, Jenny thought, a sink full of dirty dishes.

Through the screen door, the night air drifted, bringing the smell of hay and the promise of morning dew. The stars winked at Jenny, calling her to the door.

Outside the door lies Nick, his head resting on his front paws. The dog watches something in the distance. He lies there quiet, patient, with his eyes glowing. Jenny's eyes looked into the deepening dusk of the night.

Down by the corral there was a faint glow of a pipe. Matt stands there petting the horses and gazing out into the darkness.

Jenny pushes the door open and Nick rises with his head cocked in question. She steps out into the yard with Nick sauntering along at her side. She slowly makes her way to the corral. The crickets were singing while in the distance she heard a car rolling along a country road.

Matt's elbows were resting on the top of the fence with one foot resting on the bottom rail. He turned at the sound of the gravel of the driveway crunching under Jenny's footsteps.

"Tess asleep?"

"Yes, she had a busy day today."

Jenny joined Matt at the fence. She leaned against the top rail, straining to see through the darkness. She turned to gaze upon her husband's face.

It was darkened by the sun to a golden brown, his black curling hair touched the collar of his faded blue shirt. Her fingers caught the curls that were so much like Tess'. Her hand slowly traveled down his shoulders, down to his hard arms to caress his weather beaten right hand. She then shuddered.

"Cold?" His arm encircled her, drawing her close to his body, bringing a warm security to her. Her head rested against his shoulder, his shirt rough against her smooth cheek. She could smell the aroma of his tobacco as the smoke disappeared in the night breeze.

Matt began to talk of the next day's work but Jenny did not hear a word he said. She only listened to the sound of his voice that could be both cruel and tender.



Carol Bassett

NIGHT AN AUTUMN NIGHT AN A

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Nick's cold damp nose pushed into her hand. She began to stroke his sleek head. The horses pushed and rubbed together companionably, their sloping heads resting across the back or neck of a willing neighbor. Jenny sighed in contentment.

"Tired Jenny?" Matt's hand gently massaged her stiff shoulder.

"Yes."

They turned to walk toward the house, his arm still draped across her shoulders. She stopped and turned to face him.

"I love you," she said simply.

Matt smiled. "I'm touched, after all these years." He tilted his head and looked at her through the corner of his eye. "I'm glad you finally decided." They both laughed. "Come on, I'll help with the dishes."

Jenny laughed again and put her hands on her hips. "Not in my kitchen, I want everything in one piece." She was no longer tired. She kissed him, pressing her body close and said, "Forget the dishes." "Race you upstairs." An impish gleam twinkled in her eyes.

Both of them joined hands and ran to the house like young lovers.

by Patricia Smith



Kirk Barron

HOW TO DRIVE THE BABYSITTER CRAZY

Now in print for the first time, a complete and easy to follow guide on the ancient art of baby-sitting torture. It includes a list of procedures guaranteed to exhaust the patience and sway the sanity of even the toughest of sitters. Written in easy to read language, this simple guide is understandable to all children eight years of age and older. The detailed techniques and their well-explained expectations bring highly effective results. This surefire method, if taked step by step, will succeed in making horrid brats of even

the dearest of children. For those children who have come by many of these skills naturally, this guide will help you improve in the art of rottenness and ensure that no sitter will be able to survive more than one night with you. Take it one step at a time and good luck!

When you parents introduce the baby-sitter to you and your sister, say that the other eight baby-sitter were prettier. Then your mother will say that that isn't so and tell you to behave yourself. When your

mother inquires sternly, "Did you hear me, young man?" stick your fingers in your ears.

As your parents are pulling out of the driveway, casually remark to your sister that you hope they come home in time to drive you to school in the morning. Stare at the baby-sitter.

If the baby-sitter starts to do her homework or read a book, remember that you haven't practiced your trumpet today. If your sister and the sitter are watching television, change the channel. When your sister squawks about it, chant over and over, "You are a baby. You are a baby. Baby. Baby. Baby. You are a baby."

If the baby-sitter suggests that the three of you play a game, say "Okay," and get a game. If you lose, call the baby-sitter a cheater and stomp into the kitchen.

Return and report that you are hungry. When the sitter points out that your parents said you ate dinner just before she came, swear that they lied and that you haven't eaten for three days. If the baby-sitter says that you and your sister may have milk and cookies if you eat them at the table, put your dog, Ralph, in the chair beside you and give him a cookie. When the baby-sitter demands that you take Ralph

When the **sitter** demands that you come out of there, announce that you're going to stay in the bathroom until you die. If the sitter promises to read you a bedtime story if you'll come out, say, "okay, I want to hear "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." Then the baby-sitter will say that she's going to call your parents if you don't unlock the door this instant. Unlock the door and say, "Okay, it's open." When the sitter opens the door, squirt her in the face with shaving cream. At this point, the sitter will probably begin to cry, but don't let this get to you. Stick to the guide and soon victory will be yours.

When the baby-sitter says that you're going to bed this minute, grabs you by the arm and yanks you into your room, pretend that she has broken your arm. Roll on the floor and scream, "You broke my arm! It hurts! You broke it!" When the baby-sitter yells to knock it off and get up off the floor, moan a little and get up slowly, holding your arm. Sit on the edge of the bed, roll up your sleeve and inspect your arm thoroughly.

When the sitter demands that you get into your pajamas, claim that they were stolen. Then the baby-sitter will say she's coming back in five minutes and that you better be in your pajamas and

"When the sitter demands that you get into your pajama's , claim that they were stolen !"

from the table, maintain that your parents always let Ralph eat at the table and that you're gonna tell. When the sitter removes Ralph from the table, say, "Now, you're in trouble," and stick your tongue out at her. If the baby-sitter tells you to knock it off, look hurt.

Then, when the sitter goes to take some aspirin, take your sister's cookie!"

"He took my cookie!"

"Did not!"

"Did, too!"

"Did, not!"

"Did, too!"

Call your sister a frog-face. When the sitter appears and says that she's had enough of you and to give the cookie back to you sister, say, "I don't want it anyway. It's got her cooties."

Kick your sister under the table. When she kicks you back, put a chunk of cookie in her milk. When she yells for the baby-sitter, switch glasses and say, "Look what she did!" Then the baby-sitter will say that she can't stand it for another minute and that she's putting you both to bed. Run into the bathroom and lock the door.

in bed. Sniffle and tell her that she's mean.

When the baby-sitter returns, be in bed with your head under the covers and your feet on the pillow. When she says goodnight, declare that you are thirsty. After you've gotten a drink of water and are back in bed, remember that you haven't said your prayers. Ask God to bless the Green Bay Packers - individually. Then the baby-sitter will say, "Alright, now, that's enough. Goodnight." When she turns off the lights, scream that you are afraid of the dark. If she leaves anyway, lay there, kicking your feet and scream until she comes back. If the sitter returns with the yardstick, stop screaming and say that you think you're getting used to the dark now.

Then, while shaking the yardstick at you, the baby-sitter will say that she's going to tell your parents everything you pulled tonight and that they will take care of you in the morning. And if she hears one more peep out of you, you're going to meet up with the yardstick.

After she leaves, sniffle, roll over, sniffle; wonder when it's going to be morning.

by Diane Jolly





Getting Underway

Della Altman

"Kinnear, go with Chambers to the number four port line," Chief LaRue directed.

I climbed up the steep ladder, clutching the hollowed tubed handrails as I climbed. I bolted through the hatch to the main deck, turned left and followed Chambers to two short columns that held the number four line. We were met by six shipmates, who were assigned to bring in the same line. Not knowing what to do at first, I stood back, out of the way.

The line was secured around the columns in a figure-eight. The seven men unraveled the three-inch-thick rope, and laid it in forty-foot intertwined lengths along the deck. I kicked at the rope to keep it straight.

A sailor on the pier unhooked the ringed end of the rope, which had held the ship in its berth. We pulled the remaining line on board and finished the weaver's work.

I heard the tugboats gun their powerful engines as the mighty destroyer reluctantly moved. We moved laterally about a hundred yards away from the pier, then slowly started out away from the land, leaving wives and children waving and yelling behind us.

One of the tugboats moved around to our side and began pushing us out of the bay. I could see now the violent churning of water behind the small, powerful boat as we inched forward.

"Secure line detail!" boomed a voice over the loudspeaker.

"What do I do now?" I asked Chambers, regretting the universal question of a greenhorn.

"I don't care," he replied indifferently. From his tone, I guessed he had done this hundreds of times.

As I turned my gaze to the shore, I remembered the words Chief LaRue had spoken to me a day earlier.

"Don't worry," he had said, reassuringly. "In the Navy, you're never more than seven miles from land." Then he added, smiling, "straight down."

We moved past cottages and resorts; beaches full of land-lubbers sprawled in the sun.

I walked on the main deck and climbed the ladder to the signal bridge, the platform above the steering bridge from which the signalmen send semaphore messages to other ships. From there I could see the ocean ahead. Waves broke into thundering whitecaps as they moved into the shallow water. Further out, I could feel the hypnotic rhythm of the endless waves.

Looking up, I noticed hundreds of seagulls circling above the ship.

"Lucky birds," I thought. "They will go home and sleep on land tonight."

They must have read my thoughts, as they started heading back.

We were passing the arm of land that circled the bay on the north when Walker, a man whom I had gotten to know in my few days on the ship, joined me.

"Well," he sighed, "say goodbye to the U.S. for the next six months."

I slowly looked back over my shoulder to the shrinking bead of land where I had spent the first twenty years of my life.

Goodbye," I said, half-heartedly, knowing my voice had betrayed my fear and anxiety.

The roar of our engines grew louder. The tugboats were tailing off and heading back toward the pier. The Union Jack was lowered on the fore mast and raised on the main mast; our ship displayed the official signal of being at sea.

I turned back and stared at the endless sea ahead. I was truly underway.

by Mike Kinnear

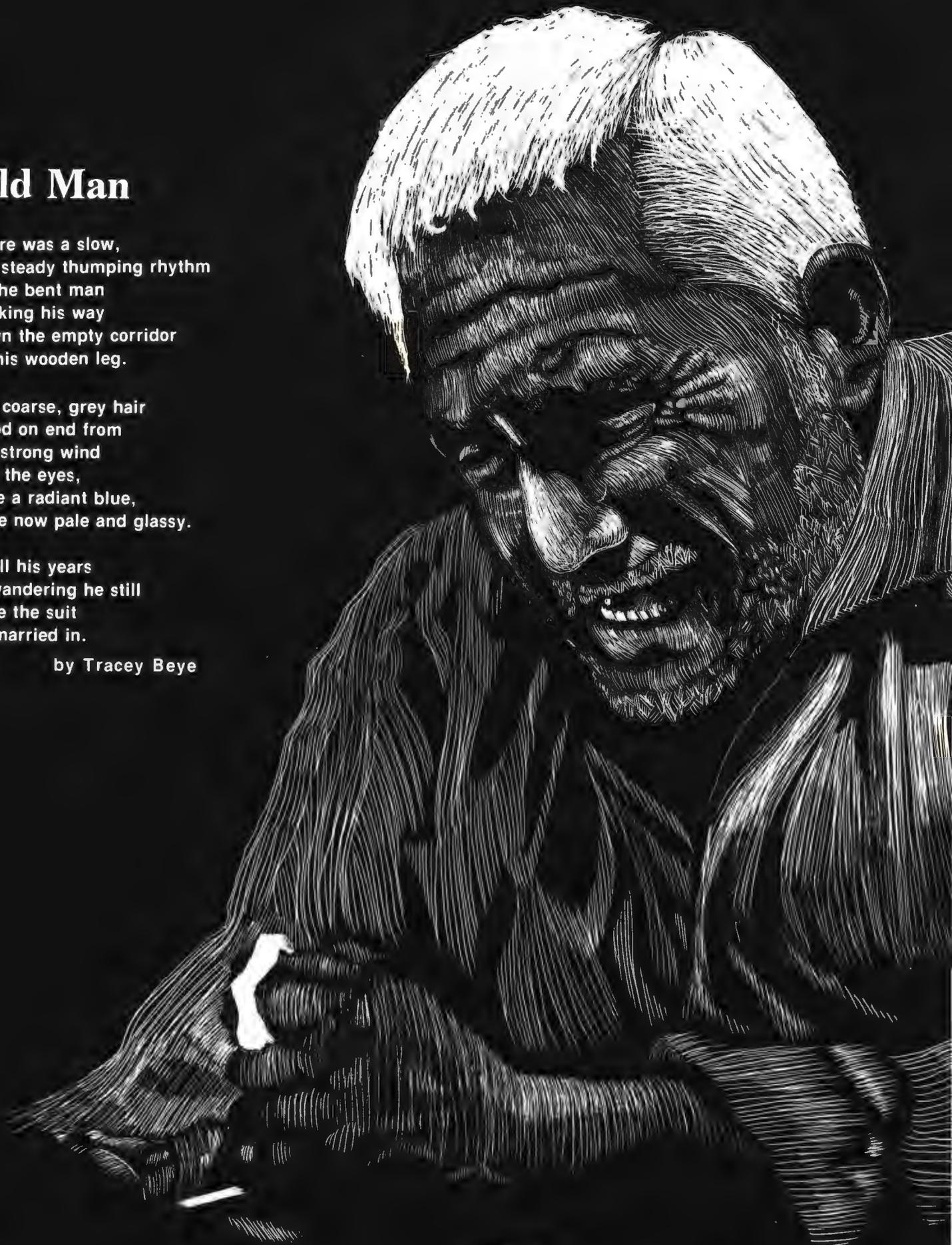
Old Man

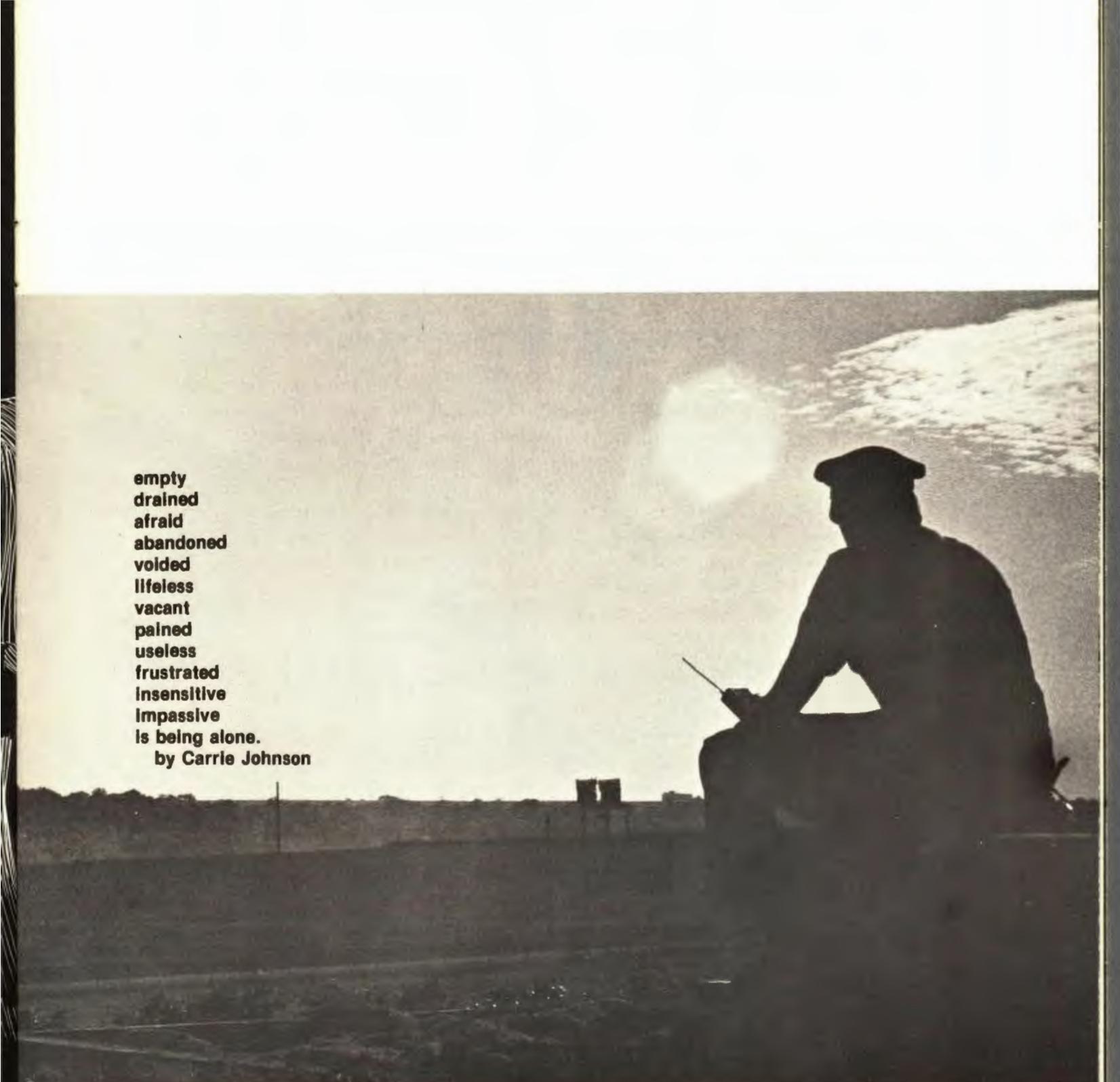
There was a slow,
but steady thumping rhythm
as the bent man
working his way
down the empty corridor
on his wooden leg.

His coarse, grey hair
stood on end from
the strong wind
and the eyes,
once a radiant blue,
were now pale and glassy.

In all his years
of wandering he still
wore the suit
he married in.

by Tracey Beyé





empty
drained
afraid
abandoned
voided
lifeless
vacant
pained
useless
frustrated
insensitive
impassive
is being alone.

by Carrie Johnson

Douglas Gunder

Having a Baby

Having a baby is tough, sometimes even for a woman. When my wife came home with the good news, my first hope was that the doctor had made a mistake. What does a doctor know? I had that same feeling when my old girlfriend told me she was pregnant as a shock test of my love for her. My stomach turned over and over, very slowly. I could feel the adrenaline rise, tightening every muscle in my body. It felt as though I had done something wrong. Nature had finally run me down and was making me pay for my alley cat life.

When I finally accepted the fact that I was going to be a father, I focused on the world around me. I was critical of every social, political, and economic move. There was a feeling of guilt. What right did I have to bring life into this world of uncertainty? Was I so selfishly concerned with my own sexual and paternal desires that I would doom a child to life of misery? Reading every headline and listening to every newscast, I was convinced I had done a terrible wrong I could't reverse. Why would I do this to my own child? I even thought of how lucky my ancestors were not be alive in these terrible times. I had made a mistake that this little tiny baby would have to pay for, for the rest of its life.

But I was only beginning to feel the pains of being pregnant. What if it's not completely healthy? Immediately, I thought of the worst. Retardation, deformity, and leukemia. What about asthma? Will it inherit asthma from me? The poor thing lying in its crib, gasping for air. It's all my fault. No, these things can't happen to my child! But the thoughts stayed a constant reminder that I have to pay a price, someday.

How will it die? Will I see my own baby son lying in a tiny coffin? Or will I see him grow up to be a good athlete with a bright future, only to be darkened by the ignorance of a drunken crash? No, he will grow up to be a fine man with a good head on his shoulders, a good woman at his side, and, I hope, no children at his feet.

The last few weeks were the worst. Can a person be growing in such a small place? What did the doctor say? How much longer? Are you comfortable? Which hospital? How do we get there? Which door? Where would I be? At the office? At school? On the road? What if I'm out of town and the neighbor lady isn't home and the cab drivers are on strike? I wasn't satisfied until I had an answer to every question.

Then it was time. Luck was with me; I was home. We rushed to the hospital and even went in the right door. After a three year wait for the elevator, we got to the fifth floor. A drill sergeant disguised as a nurse assumed command and ordered us to the delivery room. We were anxious and in pain. Then began three hours of intense struggle between us and the baby. Finally, it was over. I counted fingers and toes. Ten each. The baby was wrinkled and had no hair, but, thank God, my son was healthy.

Maybe he will have a good life after all. But don't ever put me through this again. Okay, honey?

by Mike Kinnear



THEY DON'T MAKE 'EM LIKE THIS ANYMORE!

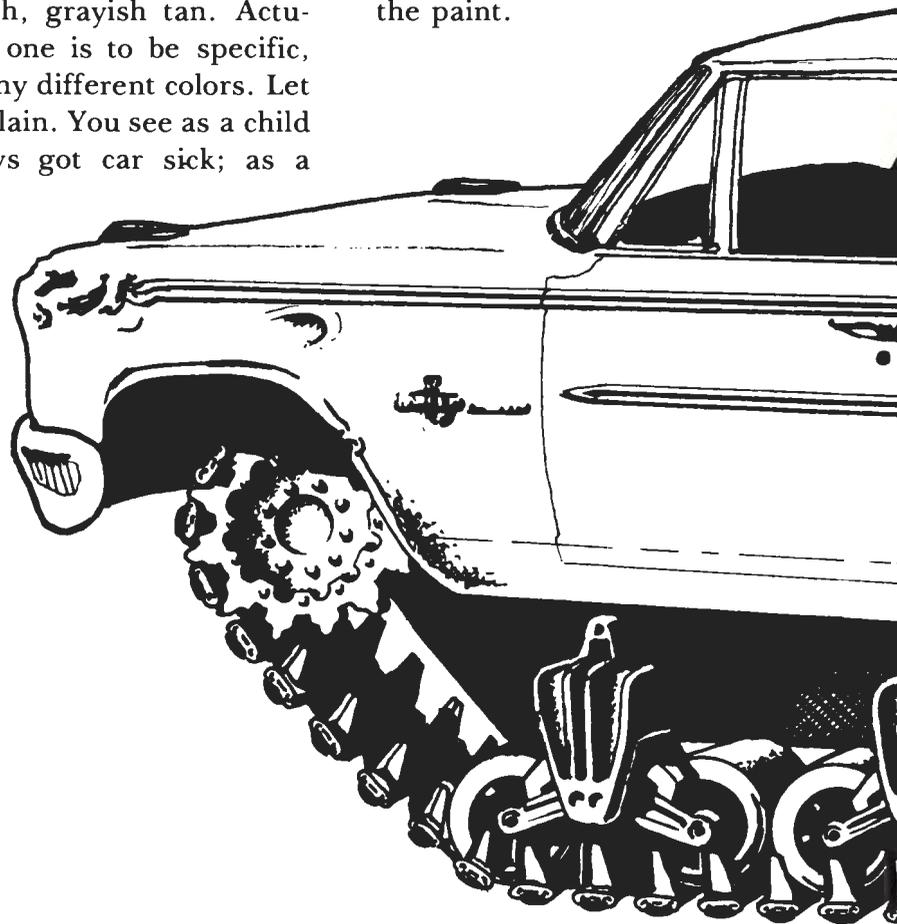
Late for work, once again, I ran down the sidewalk to my car, my feet unsteadied by hundreds of acorns which had fallen to the ground from the giant oaks which lined the street. Coming closer, I noticed my car looked funny-funnier than usual. It glimmered dully in the morning sun. I glared up at the oak which shaded my car, now lacquered with sap. Oh, well, it's ready for winter, I thought. I flung open the door, which gave a questioning squeak and lighting on the seat, let it slam shut. Quickly, I pumped the accelerator a few times, then leaving it floored, I turned the key. VOORRUUMM!!! I let off the gas a little and the motor dimmed to a whine, still idling wildly. I took my foot off the gas pedal and was rewarded with the steady putter of the engine. With my usual finesse, I yanked it in gear and was about to tear down the street, when suddenly my car started to sputter and shake - then..... silence. Angrily, I repeated the starting procedure. It only coughed. Again I tried; nothing. I eyed the broken gas gauge evilly. Damn, this piece of junk!

My first car; and if they weren't such necessities, it would also be my last. I have the kind of car one intentionally leaves the keys in, but can be sure to return to unfortunately find it still

there. For four-hundred dollars (they wanted five-hundred but I'm such a shrewd dealer) I regrettably purchased a four-doored, hard-topped, 1963, Ford Galaxy which over the course of three years has nicked and dinged its way up to fifteen-hundred dollars in repairs.

What color is this little gem? I didn't mention the color for a very good reason: it doesn't have one. When I enrolled in college and had to register my car, to my dismay, I found the form asked for the color of the vehicle. After some lengthy consideration, I wrote down greenish, grayish tan. Actually, if one is to be specific, it's many different colors. Let me explain. You see as a child I always got car sick; as a

teenager I was afraid to drive and now as an adult, I've overcome my fear, only to replace it with complete adoration. Not liking to drive, I never drove very often; consequently, I don't drive very well. As a result, my car has a rainbow of streaks from side-swiping parked cars. The radio antenna also veers a little to the right from clipping so many mailboxes; all of which could explain why someone once decided to throw an egg on my car. It left several patches on the trunk where the paint chipped off. It doesn't matter though, it's the same "color" underneath the paint.



Owning a car this "color" does have its advantages, though, I can always find it in a crowded parking lot. I just have to look for a break in the line of colors and if it's not an empty parking space- it's my car. I never have to wash it- it's the same "color" as dirt. Unfortunately, I usually neglect to clean the inside, too.

I get many complaints from my passengers that the dust blowing off my dashboard leaves them looking like Al Jolson by the time we arrive. My legs are so short that I have to pull the front seat up as far as it will go, so that my friends leave nose prints on the windshield. And despite the lovely, green seat covers I purchased at Target, the

seats are so worn and scratchy, it's like sitting on the Jolly Green Giant's hair-brush.

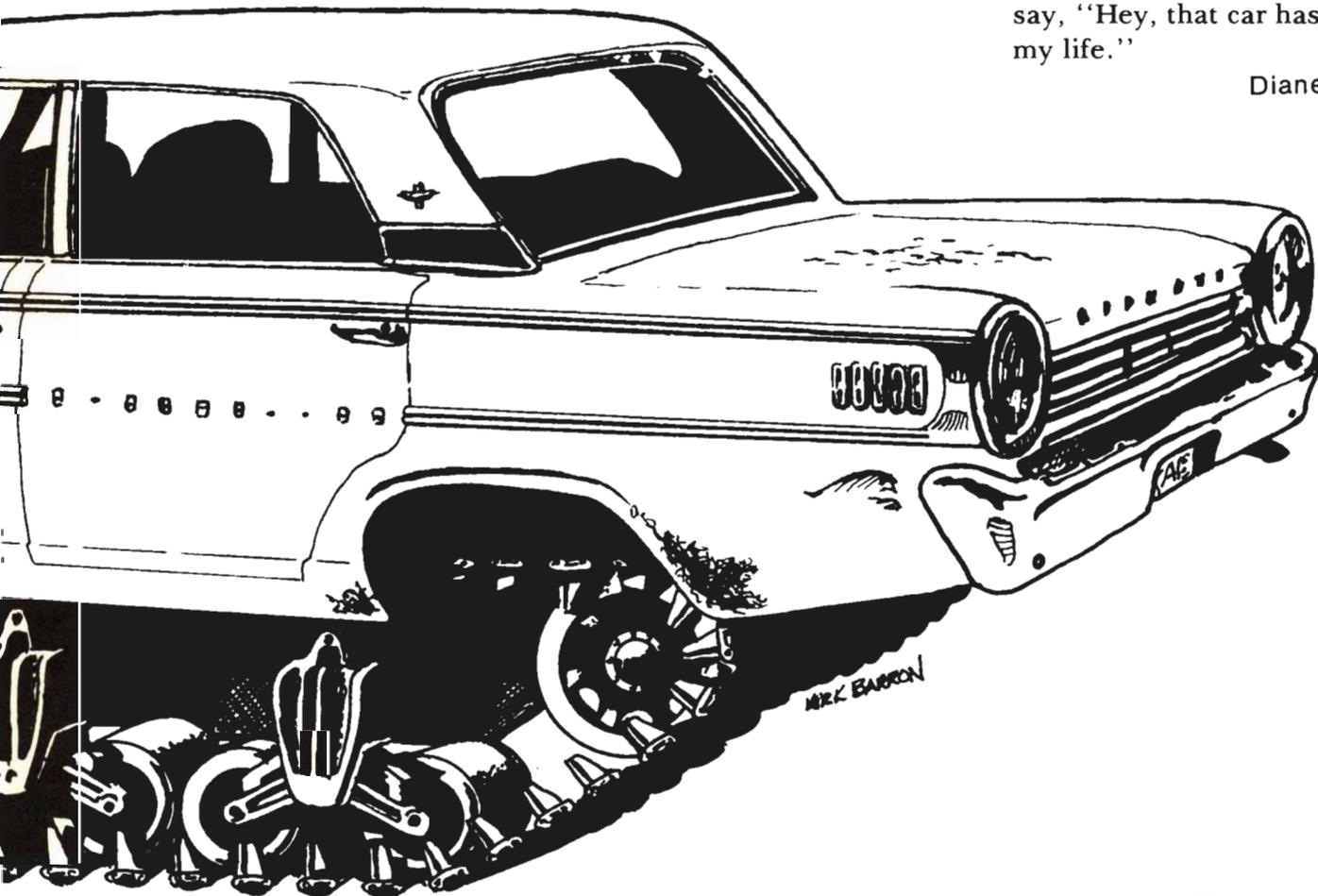
To be fair, however, my car does have a few good points. The radio is magnificent. After midnight I can get Russian weather reports and Argentinian folk singers. There's a little spot light in the spacious ashtray(it only has to be emptied every six months or every five-thousand miles, whichever occurs first) so that you can locate it in any stage of intoxication. And the trunk is roomy enough for two or three friends who might wish to accompany me to a drive-in.

Perhaps the best thing about a car like this, especially for a driver like

myself, is the heavy, solid way in which it's built. If Germany had built its tanks like my car, we'd all be goose-stepping right now. At thirty miles per hour, this car has hit brick walls, telephone poles and garbage trucks without suffering a single dent.

It has rolled over medians, snow banks two-feet high and ruts two-feet deep without a moment's hesitation. I get a real sense of power and immortality when I drive this car. It's true that when one drives a 1963 Ford Galaxy- one owns the road. I always get the right-of-way; everybody figures they have more to lose. I know that what I drive has protected me from the way I drive. Whenever anyone makes fun of my car, I say, "Hey, that car has saved my life."

Diane Jolly





MR.
TWIST
JACKSON

Terry called yesterday and said, "I think we're going to lose Domingo."

"What? Well, what happened to him?"

"When we went out to feed this morning, he seemed okay, but then he started to colic. We got him outside, and he didn't come out of it so we called the vet. He just left. He thinks he'll have to be put down in a couple of hours if his pulse doesn't drop. He doesn't know for sure what's causing it."

"I'll be right out."

I drove out there, dreading the idea of seeing such a fine horse like Domingo in pain and dying, and the memories of you came rushing in. They're still with me.

I can see you doing so many things -- standing at the fence, head held high, noble and erect; or see you running like a dream, flicking your hooves out, seeming to float over the ground. God, you were beautiful, full of grace, running and changing leads for the sheer enjoyment of it, skipping in and out, dodging imaginary obstacles.

Who would've ever thought that a big-eared, bay colt would be such a source of strength for me? I remember the first time that I ever saw you -- in the sale ring of the Blue Ribbon Quarter Horse Sale. There you stood, muscled, straight-legged, with deep blue, alert eyes and big ears twitching every which way! You looked loveably ridiculous! I swear that you'd looked me right in the eye when you came in the ring and stood at attention, lookin' calm and proud. Did you choose me? I think so, or at least it was mutual.

Few of us appreciated your attributes and after a brief bidding period I heard that you'd been sold to someone sitting above me. Imagine my surprise when the slip came up to me for signing -- I'd made the last bid.

When we went back to the pens to look you over more carefully, you welcomed me and seemed to know that I belonged to you. You were happy with me even though I'd made some foolish statements like, "... a little cow hocked -- but he'll probably come out of it...", and, "Jeeze, I wonder if those ears could be trimmed down?"

You were only five months old, but contained all of the wisdom of an animal whose breed has been relied on for centuries, solely because it chose to be. The intelligence, strength and agility of the horse could make it very dangerous to man, but it refused to use these as a weapon.

Five months old and eager to learn, inquisitive about everything. Life was brand new and exciting and everthing that you didn't understand was a challenge.

by Bev Clark

Sometimes I wonder, Jackson, if those warm days of good memories would've ever been allowed if I'd had any idea of the cold empty feelings and the desolation left by your absence. Were they worth it? Yes.

I can picture you standing by the drive like you did a few days before you died. You'd filled out your ears beautifully -- full chested, muscles rippling, the cold broken by the warm vapor of your breath puffing from nostrils like the smoke from a steam engine, tail switching, head up and looking -- at what? Something that brought out all of your pride. I felt proud because you were mine. We took care of each other, and out of respect for each other we grew. You progressed much faster than I.

The horse trailer was our first lesson together. You'd never been anywhere without your mother and had no intention of traveling alone. I should've brought another horse along for company, but didn't think of it. After we'd finally got you loaded and were just leaving, I discovered a mistake on your registration papers. When I went to the office to check it out, you decided to check the trailer out. A thorough examination proved it just wasn't the thing for you and you decided to leave.

The only way out -- to the front, anyway -- was a window, so you stuck both feet through it. Cute. I knew that I'd picked a winner!

As soon as we got home that day I introduced you to the other horses, walked the property with you so you'd become familiar with the boundaries, and then we started in on learning how to load, unload and stand in a trailer. I knew how, and wanted you to learn, which you did, very quickly, once you'd been assured that you were safe in there. From that day on there was never another instance when you did anything but walk calmly into a trailer when asked to.

We continued the loading and unloading for a few days, but most of out time together those first few weeks were spent just getting to know each other. After you came I found myself going out to the barn to check on you before coming into the house when I came home from work. Because you were always so eager to see me I'd end up staying out there grooming you and talking over all of the day's problems. It didn't take you very long to recognize the sound of the car so that as soon as I drove in and shut the door, you'd start to whinny and neigh, asking me to come to you.

Before very long you were spoiled rotten, wanting no one else to take care of you and were extremely jealous of the other horses if I spent any time at all with them. If you weren't the first one to be fed, you threw a fit in your stall,

rearing, bucking in place, the feeding order so that you were broken of the bad habit I'd given you by always taking care of you first. Finally, in desperation one night, I walked up to you and yelled, "Let's just get one thing straight right now. You are being fed because I choose to feed you, not because you are demanding it of me!" I know that horses don't understand words, so the tone might have had something to do with it, but you did settle down and wait your turn.

My grooming the other horses was absolutely forbidden. The first time I groomed one of them you started throwing one of your fits again. I kept calling to you and talking reassuringly, trying to make you see that it wasn't the end of the world. Then I sensed something, or maybe I'd heard a note of hysteria in your call, and came out from behind the horse I was grooming to look over at you. You were standing with both front legs in your feed box, stretching your head up as high as you could. It looked like you were trying to climb out of your stall. You could've pulled tendons, broken a leg or a great many things that would've crippled or killed you. As soon as you saw me running toward you, you jumped down and stood there waiting for me. I grabbed a whip and went into the stall with you screaming at you while cracking the whip. You must have thought that I'd gone mad and were so afraid that you ran to the back of the stall and stood there trembling, breathing hard with the whites of your eyes showing. I was equally afraid, but of what might have happened to you,

and wanted to scare you enough so that you wouldn't do it again. I let you feel afraid for a while, hoping that you would associate what you had done with my reaction.

I went back to grooming the other horse, who was also upset, and it wasn't long before you got yourself back into the feed box, all the while looking my way and tossing your head. We went through the same thing all over again, except that you not only heard the whip, you felt it. I knew that it was really only a hand braided string that I'd made myself, but I could still hardly hit you with it. But, to keep you from doing something that could hurt yourself, I had to.

That was when you learned that even though I had hurt you, you must still trust and depend on me. We were both quiet for a very long time, and then I said, "Come up here, Jackson," as softly and soothingly as I could. You stood in the corner, tossing your head up and down, only glancing at me. I kept coaxing you, and extending my hand to you every time that I told you to, "Come up here." After awhile you came, but shied away from the whip. Eventually, you calmed down enough to stand and be petted, and then even started to nibble on the end of the whip. I then took it and rubbed your neck with it, to show you that it was harmless. "It's just a stick, Jackson, you don't have to be afraid of it, it won't hurt you by itself." I wanted you to be inquisitive, and not afraid of anything.

As soon as it was warm enough to spend some time outside, I started to teach you to lunge. To get you going in a



circle, I went along with you and eventually lengthened the distance between us. At first you thought that I just wanted to walk fast in a circle with you, I guess, and willingly went with me. We'd gone for a lot of walks together in the past. When I'd stop to let you keep going in a circle around me, you'd look at me questioningly and come stand beside me. I had to get the whip, and after getting a pace or so from you, hold it out toward the rear of you, trying to encourage you to keep from coming in with me. It worked, and soon I found that you would increase your pace if I cracked the whip. I did this at the same time that I told you to either "trot" or "canter" and soon the words alone were enough. Whenever I had you stop I told you to, "Come up here," and when you did you were hugged and petted. I felt hugged and petted, too, when you nuzzled me. You did everything I ever asked you to do.

The only time you weren't honest with me was when your right front leg was somehow punctured. It was a deep wound, but looked clean, and seemed to be draining well. It was the kind that I thought would heal fast. When I came in the barn the next day you greeted me as usual. I noticed that you weren't putting any pressure on you leg, but kept it up, your leg bent at the knee, swinging it back and forth because you were in pain. I picked it up and put your hoof on my leg so that I could examine it. It wasn't swollen, didn't feel hot and seemed to be draining. You didn't flinch or pull back when I prodded it. I thought that it would be fine, and when you still weren't standing on it the next night I was both puzzled and worried. I again picked it up, rubbing it while talking to you. I decided that if you weren't better the next day you'd have to be taken to the vet.

When I went to the barn the next night you were standing at the stall door -- still lame. I held your leg and talked to you, it always seemed to relax you, and wondered what the vet had said and done, there was no wrapping. I went in and asked Sue about it and she said, "I didn't take him."

"Why, didn't you get the afternoon off?"

"Yes, but there's nothing wrong with his leg."

"Nothing wrong with it? he can't even step down on it and there's nothing wrong with it? he must've chipped the bone or something -- otherwise he could walk."

"I don't know why you keep saying that he can't walk. I feed him every morning and have been out in the barn twice today and everytime I see him he's standing on four feet and is able to walk."

"I am not hallucinating."

"Do you think that he might be faking? I don't know if that's possible, but I do know that when I see him he acts like he's just fine."

We checked it out by having Sue go in the barn and get the special feed that I had for you, while I came up a little later and peeked through the corner of the

door. When I looked in, there you were, pacing up and down in front of the manger and stall door waiting for you "goodies". I'd been duped by a horse.

Even though Sue took care of the feeding as much, if not more than I did, she couldnt feed you if I was in the barn. You insisted that I did it, and if she tried, you charged the stall door. Because you wheeled on her and reared, she knew that you weren't kidding and stayed away.

You'd been trained to do everything necessary to make your handling safe and easy, but I found that when you were asked to things for someone other than me, you could be a little rogue. On one of the first nice days of spring I thought I'd better get you out to play before you tore the barn down. A nice spring day and a young colt are not meant to be separated. Sue said she'd let you out and went to get you. She, like almost everyone else who saw you, liked you. She decided to save time and not halter you, only wrap a lead rope around your head and neck to form a halter. You were so eager to go out, and she'd made the mistake of leaving the stall door open, that you didn't wait for her to finish, and went out ahead of her. She came out behind you, screaming, cussing and casting aspersions on my training ability by saying, "That horse isn't trained **at all** and needs to be schooled. Where the hell is the whip?"

"What do you want to do with it?"

"Teach him some manners!"

"Well, you're not taking a whip to my horse, especially for your own stupid mistakes."

"You should be able to **at least** lead that horse from his stall."

"Make him do it right, then, but you don't need the whip."

"Well, look at him!"

All this time you'd been running up and down the lot as hard as you could go, slabs of mud being thrown from your hooves as you bucked, twisted, ran, slid, and snorted like a stallion calling to his herd of mares.

"Tell him to come up to you, take him back and start over."

"Oh, sure."

"Call his name and tell him."

After a few seconds she yelled, "Jackson, come up here," and stood there staring at me, waiting for absolutely nothing to happen.

You turned and looked, and I said, "Call him again."

"Jackson, come up here." You trotted up to her, and after she stood there not knowing what to do with you for a few seconds, you shook your head up and down and then nuzzled her. You were curious about why she'd called you.

Because Sue would be showing you in the spring, she wanted to start working with you on a lunge line. You completely forgot how to walk, trot and canter. She was trying everything to get you into a canter, but you didn't respond. Neither of you knew that I was watching. I was so shocked by what I saw that I yelled, "Jackson, you canter!" As you swung your head in the

direction of my choice, you broke into a canter. You did what I'd asked you to without question.

There are so many good memories, all somewhat alike in that they were involved in the process of growing and learning together. I try to remember those good things and hold them close to me.

For no apparent reason you had scoured during the night. I started calling the vet immediately and continued to call until I reached someone.

When the vet came I was on the phone and Sue went out with him. In a few minutes I yelled out and asked, "Is it anything very serious?" expecting them to say, "No, just a little cold."

When the vet said, "I'm afraid so," I couldn't get out there fast enough. I couldn't believe it and kept asking myself, "How could it be serious? he just got sick. He was running and playing yesterday."

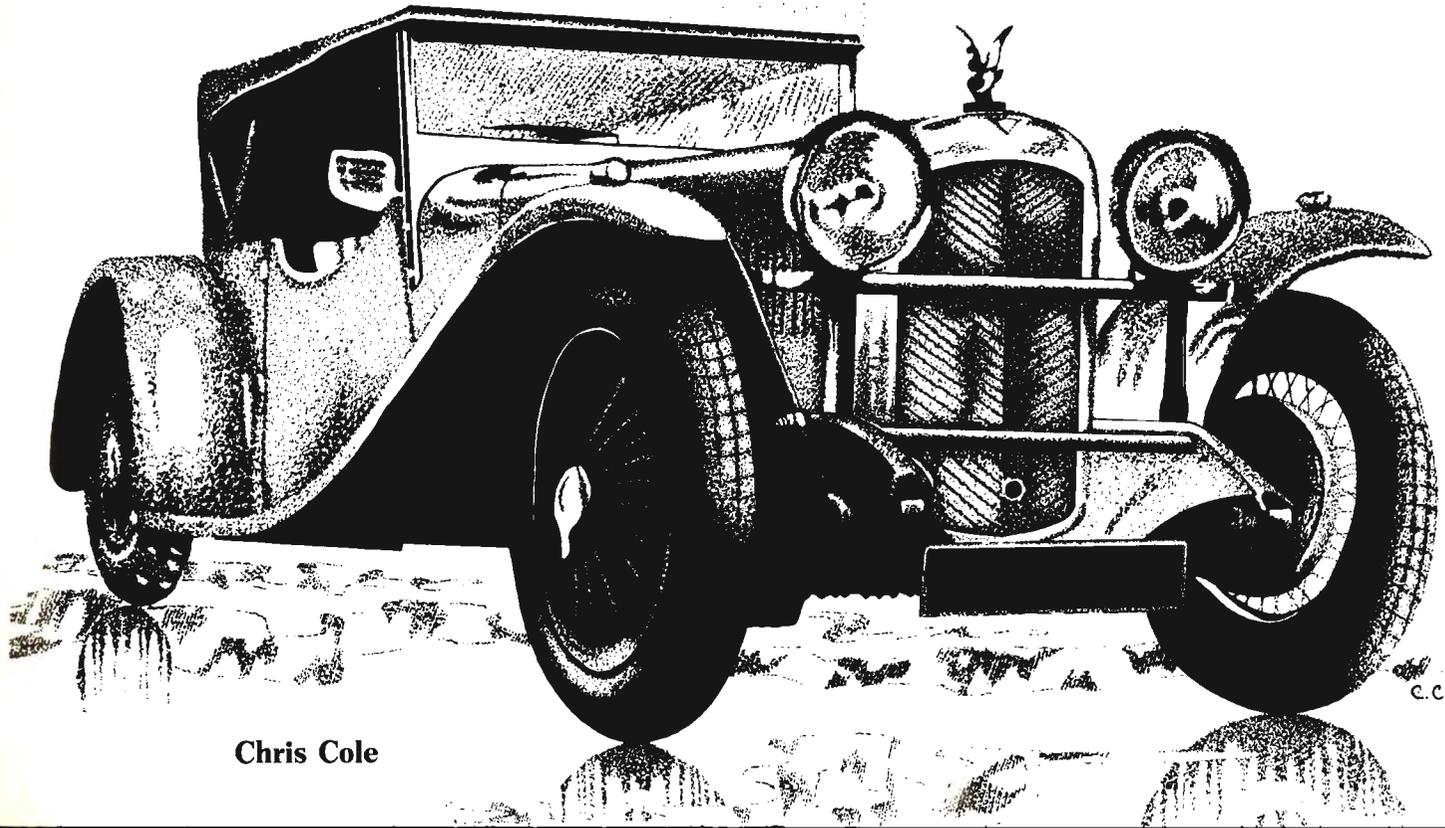
I saw you lying in the stall you'd been raised in. I didn't know it then, but you'd just collapsed there. You had roused yourself when you heard me call from the house.

The vet said he wanted to draw some blood, so he needed you to stand. Without saying more, he grabbed your lead rope and started pulling and yelling at you. I didn't know that you'd collapsed, only that you were down, and you often stayed down with people around because you weren't afraid of them. I used to sit on you while talking to you. I took the lead from him and said, "Don't do that to him." Then I looked at you and said, "Get up, Jackson, my man," and you got up. The vet just stared at us. I didn't know then what an effort it must have been for you.

I kept getting you up and having you lay back down on the other side so that your circulation wouldn't be cut off, kept talking to you and telling you that you'd be fine by spring, praying to myself that it was true, and telling you to be strong and keep fighting. Always I told you to fight. I stayed with you for seventeen hours, standing so that you could rest your head against my leg. Other friends came, too, and as things got worse, kept telling me to be careful, and stay away from the front of you because you could strike out and hurt or kill me and not mean to, But I stayed with you and held your head, talking calmly to you, quietly, just like I always had when we spent our time together after work at night.

Around midnight you were worse and kept trying to rally, trying to get up and be strong. You were weaker, couldn't get up but kept trying, like I'd asked you to. Finally, talking softly to you, while inside I was screaming in frustration and going insane, I got down beside you, with everyone telling me not to, and told you, "Don't fight anymore, Jackson. Give up and go. You'll have field to run in and freesom. Go, Jackson, you'll be happy and safe."

Your eyes cleared and looked at me, with love and trust, and you went.



Chris Cole



R.E. Stillwell

RIGHTS

by Tim Simpson

*The child, the wild, the defiled, the exciled.
They all have their rights.*

*A world full of rights, not a single has gone
rights of the ethnic, the father, a song.
We have rights on the many, rights of the few,
rights of Old Glory - the red, white, and blue.*

*We have the right to live and the right to die;
the right to find out and the right to know why.
We have the right to be lost [though we hope to be found]
the right of free speech and the 5th of no sound.*

*The wrong have their rights, [Its almost right to be wrong]
we have the rights of the law and the rights of a throng.
Even criminals have rights, they are many and long,
we gave birth to these rights to protect those NOT WRONG
Soon all will be right and wrong will be gone.*

*Then where will we be with our rights one and all?
We'll be back at day one with no right at all!*