



CURARE

WINTER 1994

ISSN 1077-1255

Volume 1, Number 4

\$4.00



C U R A R E

Rage-o-rama - A Column for the No Future by J.D. Rage

As I get older (and turn into a wrinkled crone) (I am going to have to seriously adjust my thinking regarding the beauty of wrinkled crones) (Ah yes, they are mysterious, intriguing types, most likely witches, definitely persons who are no longer interested in sex for no other reason than they had so much of it the whole idea has become passé, obviously persons with a dark delicious past, have Bad Posture only because they used to be a fan of a punk rock band of that name - but I digress), I find that more projects are reaching completion. That is to say, Curare, conceived as a quarterly literary magazine, is with this issue, actually a quarterly literary magazine! Of course, we couldn't be perfect, because that's boring, so we have two Winter 1994 issues, one Late Hard Winter of 1994 and one Warm December Winter of 1994 issue. Fortunately, we forgot to indicate the season on the first two issues, so no one will ever know that we were too lazy to do a Summer 1994 issue!

The cover picture was a surprise, even to me: Polar Bear at Rest in the Bronx Zoo. Until I printed it, I thought we had a Polar Bear up on a cliff flopping out a burly arm from between the crevices. What we really have is a Polar Bear head in full relaxation, obviously sleeping upside-down, dreaming of fat shiny Salmon leaping through the rapids. Nice job if you can get it. Kleinsleep should look into hiring this bear, I would buy a bed from anyone who could guarantee such sweet dreams. Maybe this soft mattress conditioning of ours needs modification.

Dean Snider is the first Curare artist to make it on over to the other side. I met Dean only briefly, at a time when I was so stoned all I did was play a part in an all night band and drug scenario that Dean, who was not wracked with disease at the time, ran away from, probably in total disgust. From a personal point of view, Dean was one of the few living persons to attend a gig played by my most favorite old band, Baby Boom. Now that he has passed over, the number dwindles and that always makes me feel a little dwindled myself. Oh by the way, Dean, the magazine could use a little help from above, or below if that was your afterworldly direction. From another personal point of view, some days I feel jealous, some days I feel sad at the loss of another good creative genius, some days I just don't know what the fuck is going on here.

Recent times have been interesting. Once I again, I do not take it lying down. Over the past few months, I have been to Provincetown, Massachusetts during Women's Week, Salem, Mass., where I saw a monument to a witch who was pressed to death; Jack Kerouac's grave in Lowell, Mass., which was for the first time ugly, covered with mud and fertilizer, guarded by a rotting pumpkin, the usual American flag listless and bedraggled; saw the bust of Nero in Wooster, Mass.; bought a new gold-capped conure parrot named Nero who was born one day before my own birthday; didn't use any drugs and/or alcohol; watched my longtime companion Madison the Oscar fish die of old age and gave him a beautiful send-off in the Reservoir near Ken DiMaggio's haunts in Connecticut, in a body of water hereafter to be known as Madison's Creek; drove in and out of New York City on my first solo car flight in an American car no less; played the slots at Foxwood; met and hung out with new friends Dona and Axel; had Thanksgiving dinner with Jan, Arthur and Rori; went shopping in Manhattan with BeBe Bullet and spent a day at Englishtown Fleamarket with Suzan; got a new devil reaper tattoo, put out a fresh book of poems by me called Relentless in less than 48 hours; read at the Poetry Calendar benefit at Cafe Nico on Halloween in fangs; had the plug pulled out on me while I was reading a poem at an art opening by a rabid Russian anti-feminist who deserves to die; and so on ad infinitum. Life is too short. I haven't got the energy to do this. Thank the Higher Power that I am not in a band anymore.

This issue of Curare will be out on New Year's Day, 1995. Fitting, as it will be one year old. I'd like to thank all the great and even greater contributors to these pages in 1994. Without you... as the old saying goes....Enough sloppy sentimentality. 1995 will see the editors here at Venom Press trying for grants and prizes in order to soften the blow to their own pocketbooks. We will send to any contest, we don't give a shit if they think it's too weird, or disgusting, or wild, or sexual, or imbecilic or what have you. It's time for the weird, disgusting, wild, sexual and imbecilic to triumph. The world is weird and disgusting etc., and the job of any great publication is to provide a true reflection of the mess it is surrounded by. Contributions are gratefully accepted. Good-bye Dean, Good-bye Madison, Good-bye Aaron, Sleep well all the friends I will not meet here because of the plague. See you later in the ether all you sweet alligators. *Blessed Be from the House of Rage.*



Poison Pen - by Jan Schmidt

OCTOBER 15, 1994

This morning Jane Sloan called to say that Dean Snider was dead -shot himself out in Point Reyes, California. No, Dean didn't have some flirtatious relationship with death, or some hateful anguished relationship with life. No, he had Parkinson's disease. Dean told us all that when it got too bad, he would kill himself. Thursday, October 13, 1994, he decided he had enough.

Dean and I go way back, to College in the sixties, acid parties, rock-n-roll, and politics. We fought a lot: he was the romantic type with out-dated ideas of female behavior. I was just as romantic, but I thought women figured differently in the whole scheme of things, more active-like. He was incredibly attractive, always had plenty of girlfriends, reminded people of Paul Newman, olive skin, roman nose, handsome-manly features.

We lost contact with each other for a while. I was running around Avenue B in the Lower East Side and he was making movies and starting and building the No Nothing Theater at 30 Berry Street in San Francisco. Over the last couple of years we began regularly talking again on the phone. He told me about the Parkinson's Disease, how crippling it was. He shook a lot and had to stop making films. He switched to computer art. He became even more alive than ever, teaching, speaking, reading poems, contacting old friends.

He told me about how he had tried to kill himself with an overdose when he was first diagnosed. He had passed out from the pills and laid there for a day before his girlfriend found him. He described the effect of lying unmoving for more than twenty-four hours - black and blue from head to foot with bedsores from laying in the same position.

Another time he told me about how much he used to relate to the psychotic patients he loved and cared for in the institution for the criminally insane where he worked once as an orderly.

One time we were talking about a mutual friend from the old days at College in Madison, Wisconsin. "John Iversen," I said, "remember how he went to Wounded Knee during the 1973 siege/occupation. John called on the telephone with communiques and we mimeographed and distributed them."

Dean said, "Yeah, I remember. Do you remember how he borrowed that guy's van for one day and then decided to drive to Wounded Knee in it? The guy kept calling for his van, I kept saying I didn't know what happened to John. Then the guy called and said he saw his van on the news. It was sitting on some road near Wounded Knee all shot through with bullets."

I cracked up. Dean was carrying a piece of some jigsaw puzzle that was my past. I totally forgot that part of the trip. It's one of the things we have friends for, to tell us the truth, to remember what we forget. He once showed me how to use a rifle. He put it in my arms, helped me shoot it off the back porch of some house in the woods we were visiting, taking acid.

Jane said that in the last month Dean had been hanging out with some video-maker who was taping him all the time. Dean quit talking to his other friends. He began to dissociate himself. Finally that Thursday, the guy drove Dean out to Point Reyes, took a still camera, a videocamera and lights. About ten that night he called Dean's girlfriend and told her he couldn't find Dean, what should he do? Carol was pissed, didn't trust him. She said, "Find him."

He says he went and found Dean, dead. He photographed Dean's body. The coroner confiscated the stills, odd cold stuff, I'm told. Some people think this guy even filmed the shooting and hid the tape. They are afraid he pushed Dean into killing himself so he could have a completed art

piece. Some old friends of Dean's think he was some avant-garde Geraldo, just in it to capitalize on Dean's death - to use his death to make a name for himself when he markets the footage.

Dean's friend's are upset, it wasn't Dean's way, he was totally into being non-commercial, into not distorting things for personal gain. But part of it was Dean's way, the part that gets people all worked up, he loved that.

And me, like any ghoul from some afternoon TV talk show, I'm obsessed with his last minutes. I want to know - how did it feel to make that decision - the moment when he put the gun to his head and said this is it. Not tomorrow, not five minutes from now. It's now. Good-bye world.

And I'm pissed. I wish he would have called me, told me more, gave me more of himself. I remember when we were so young, and he visited me at my parents. It was one of the first times I ever sat around with my dad and drank. Dean and he knocked back the shots. We all thought it was so cool.

In the last couple of years Dean gave me the gift of himself in ways he never could before he got sick. I'm grateful to have had that time at least; he was more intimate in the face of illness and death than in the rest of his life.

He sent me a couple book-length manuscripts on expensive paper of his writings and computer art. We published a number of pieces in Curare. He always signed his movies and poems, D.S., but I arrogantly decided to use his full name. However, being the non-spelling person I am, I wrote his name Snyder, not Snider as it is. Dean never said a word. So I apologize now, Mr. Dean.

I called John Sloan in California to talk. He told me about the memorial service. On Monday morning his friends gathered at Dean's favorite junk food place, Happy Donuts. As he requested, Carol, Dean's girlfriend, had hired a Chinatown Marching Funeral Band comprised of a half a dozen Irish musicians playing drums and horns. The Band and the mourners paraded to the No Nothing Theater at 30 Berry Street. The band wanted to continue to play for free when they found the memorial was going to show his films. Dean's girlfriend's sister's kids sang a song with a flickering film projector as the spot light. Michael and Maryann Rudnick showed a film they made about Dean in the few days since he passed. John Sloan did a performance. They ended the memorial with a few of Dean Snider's films. One was made up educational footage of fetus's and embryos. Dean loved using found footage. He had laid the sound track over it of Elvis Presley singing, "Are you lonesome tonight."

Yes, Dean. I am lonesome tonight.



Madison's Creek

RANTIN' & RAVIN'

Susan Sherman

WHY I WALKED OUT OF PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT AND CRIED ALL NIGHT LISTENING TO THE RESULTS COMING IN ELECTION EVE.

I was just sitting down starting to write about why I and my friend Colleen had walked out of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert, when the election results began flooding in over the airwaves. I mean flooding as a literal description, not a poetic figure of speech, because I began to feel as if I were drowning, the air in the apartment getting progressively thicker and heavier until it began to occur to me that maybe the two incidents were somehow bizarrely connected--the image of Jesse Helms dancing on the stomach of a corpse made of brightly painted tennis shoes with red and green and yellow platform soles in the middle of the California desert (the only one I know) waving a scarf and shouting, "Hurrah. Hurrah. We've won. Hurrah." as the tennis shoes come alive as tiny red and yellow and green J. Edgar Hoovers and Robert Doles and Barry Goldwaters emblazoned on a psychedelic school bus plodding through two hours of the Australian outback as Newt Gingrich in a skintight jockstrap waves divorce papers in front of his cancer-ridden wife along with Alfonse D'Amato and Strom Thurmond and all the other gangsters of American hypocrisy singing in tandem in the background, laughing at an electorate that is either too apathetic or too hip to vote, leaving them in charge of people's lives who don't have the luxury of refusing to cast their ballot.

Not that I have great illusions about the Democratic Party. Still I'm not stupid enough to believe they are "all the same." Only two nights before I had been to a benefit for Karen Burstein. Listening to her speak, I actually dared for a moment to partake in the communal hallucination, given the current political climate, that an "out" Lesbian with decent politics (the two not necessarily going together) could be elected to state office. Forgetting how much we are swayed by image, the perception of reality, counterfeit goods.

Cut to the trio of actors who starred in "Priscilla." It is the Donahue Show. But it isn't about the movie or cross-dressing or being transsexual or gay. It is mostly about he..ter..o..sex..u...al actors who are brave enough to play queers on the screen. (They should try it in real life if they think playing the part is brave.)

Yes, we are all heterosexual, the actors from Priscilla recite in unison. No, we don't think it will spoil our career, but we are willing to take that chance. Yes, we are heterosexual. No, it wasn't so hard to play a gay man, at least not after the first week or so. That was the hardest. And what did your girlfriends think? (You do have girlfriends, don't you?) Yes, we understand so much more now what it is like to be gay. Donahue suddenly grabs at his mike as if it were his crouch and scampers madly through the audience self-righteously chiding those straights who won't "get" Priscilla.

And I am thinking about the gay women and men, the straight women, and, yes, the straight men who won't "get" the movie either. I am thinking of my parents leaving the movie "Raisin in the Sun," tears streaming down their cheeks over the injustice dealt that "fine Negro family" (it was in the Fifties) who couldn't live where they wanted, as Mom and Dad get ready to go back to their own house in a "restricted" area of LA--meaning no African-Americans etc. etc. (with notable exceptions) allowed. Nothing in writing. A "gentlemen's agreement." Just like the one that keeps them and any other Jew out of most of the other parts of LA. And I wonder just how many people would welcome the real Priscillas, not the heterosexual, misogynists of movieland who cheerfully depict the straight and "gay" boys (the straight boys playing gay) in "Priscilla" bonding over the stereotypical ugly women--dyke-"looking" in a particularly repulsive bar scene (we never find out if she really is) and inept woman-of-color wife who wants so much to be a dancer too, much to her husband's disgust (at which point Colleen and I walked out, missing the so-called redemption at the end of the picture).

But then maybe I'm being too PC. Why shouldn't I laugh at the same old tired jokes at my expense? Be a good sport. Be happy when anything remotely positive is shown about being queer, regardless of the content or context. Like that sinking feeling in my stomach as the crowd at the Gay Pride rally a few years ago (Was it two, three, four?) screamed and cheered for a Marine who had declared openly he was gay, had consequently been fired and now was publicly fighting back. A career officer who was at great pains to describe how atrocious an act that was after he had served his country so valiantly, had gone to Vietnam and risked his life to fight for his country when so many had backed away from the conflict.

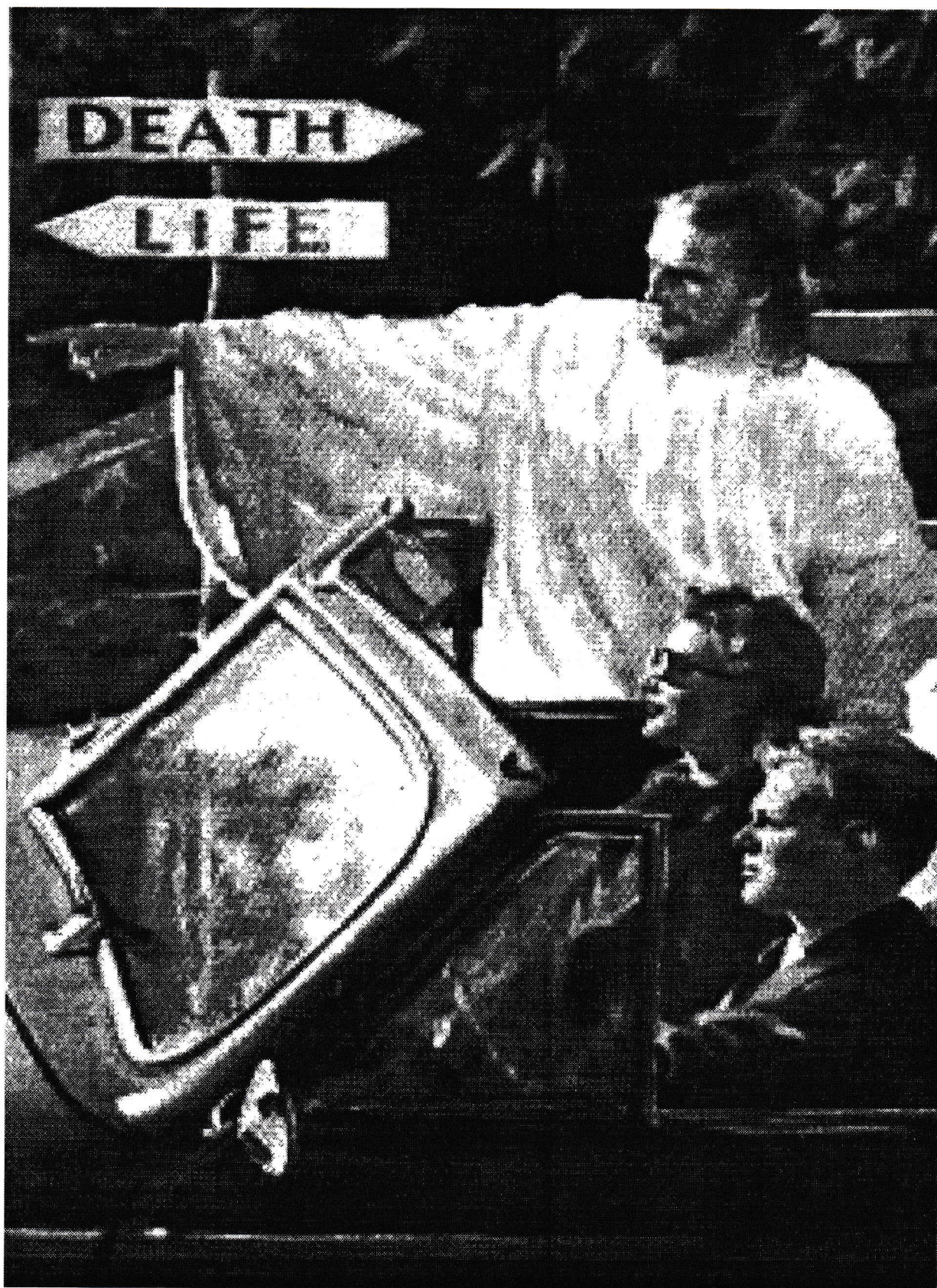
Is this what I had come there for? To cheer a man we had barely more than a decade before justly condemned. I felt the applause aching to come from my own hands and I felt confused and sick and then words like image, nostalgia, fear, started swirling through what was left of the right side of my brain and I began to make the connection between the Marine officer and Newt Gingrich and Priscilla and why the straight world at this particular time is so caught up in the image of the MALE/female, female/MALE in popular culture.

You see, I personally don't believe that in any real way our culture is "looser," more accepting of transsexuals, transvestites, lesbians, queers. I think (and not necessarily in this order) that depictions of cross-dressing, "gender bending" etc. are popular among American audiences and moviemakers because (1) They're a way to prove you're hip (2) They answer charges of homophobia (3) provide something titillating, like a new sex position, and (4) continue to keep women and queers in their place. Remember it is easier to accept extreme images of what a queer is than to accept people that look pretty much like you do.

Most important is the issue of nostalgia--not for the past, but like all nostalgia, for a world that never was. Paradise Lost. The lost Eden. When men were men, and women, women. There was ORDER and everything followed Plato's idea of justice--everything thing in its right place. The world of a thousand lights. The world that George Bush and Robert Dole et al. promise to restore to us with their Contract for America.

So if women aren't acting the way we should, they can dress up male ACTORS to play our part. As long as it's all an illusion, a brand of Hollywood special effects (a magician's trick, a rabbit pulled out of a hat), actors playing men playing women in the cozy roles we have grown to know and love. As long as reality doesn't get too close. As long as the cross-dressers are also bizarre and funny and you can dream your erotic, exotic dreams in the safety of the movie theater. After all "Tootsie" was the most feminist film ever made, Dustin Hoffman the biggest and best feminist, and these men, let's face it, are a lot better women than the women in the films, and we know they're not gay anyway, are they?? Oh, no, it's been in all the papers, and it's always been a tradition in the theater anyway for men to play women's parts (and do a much better job) and even if women were allowed, which they weren't--like Kabuki, or Shakespeare, or the Greek tragedies, or Chinese Opera or the all "girl"/boy shows at those fancy ivy league schools or the Navy--like in South Pacific on the stage. And the "masculine" guys can laugh and get off on it and slap each other on the back and pretend what big tough men they are.

A poet "friend" I saw last summer after a period of many years of separation said she had always thought of me as being someone lost. At the time her remark really hurt, but considering it now I wonder, in this country, at this particular moment, who in their not-so-right-mind would ever want to be found...



Computer Art by Dean Snider

Internship Directory Listing

**SAN FRANCISCO
ART INSTITUTE**

804-C EIGHTH STREET
SAN FRANCISCO CA
415-397-1715-7020

Sponsor

Name of Organization DEAN SNIDER

Address 1182B VALLEJO STREET

City SAN FRAN Zip 94109 Phone (415) 929-8020

Contact Person DEAN SNIDER

Description of Organization ARTIST. (RESUME INCLUDED).
HABITUAL MALCONTENT & PERINEAL NARE-DO-
WELL. CAN BE A REAL PAIN IN THE NECK, BUT
IS WORTH IT. HAS BEEN AROUND THE BLOCK.

Internship

Title of Position ASSISTANT

Description of Duties WILL BE THE STEADY HANDS TAKEN
FROM ME BY PARKINSON'S DISEASE (IS NOT
CONTAGIOUS, THOUGH MY ENTHUSIASUM IS).

Qualifications MUST HAVE A HEAD (WITH BRAIN) & A HEART

Hours per week 6/12 as per Starting Date IMMEDIATELY

Duration of Internship no. of units SEMESTER

Application Procedure/Deadline CALL ME, TODAY.

Comments I AM EDITING & NEG CUTTING MY LAST
FILM (35mm). YOUR HELP WILL BE REPAID 10FOLD.

Signature _____ Date 1/28/94

Print Name D.S.

Dean Snider

AN ASTRONOMY OF LOVE

THE NIGHT LASTS LONG
AS THIS ALISTER SIMS, ME
ENTERTAIN OUR CHRISTMAS STORY "GUESTS
10 THOUSAND TIMES RETOLD

I EXAMINE EACH SECOND
AT ARMS LENGTH
BY THE TELESCOPIC SIGHT
OF MEMORY

I KNOW THE MISSING MATTER
PHYSICISTS LOOK FOR IN VAIN
FOR I HAVE NOT SEEN
BUT EXPERIENCED EACH ATOM

MY RECALL IS SELECTIVE
BUT TOTAL
1, IN THE GREAT PRETEND PLAY OF DEATH: SLEEP
DRESS REHEARSE LIFE, ACTING ALL THE PARTS

IN THIS INFINITE INSPECTION
OF A LIFE LIVED
I AM LEFT WITH AN INTIMATE AWARENESS
WITH ALL THINGS, LIVING AND INERT.

THESE MERE MEMORIES
EVOKE EMOTION
AS MASSIVE
AS ANY NEUTRON STAR

HEAVEN AND HELL OCCUPY MY ATTENTION
BUT BOTH ROLL AROUND IN THE SPHERE OF MY THOUGHTS
RATTLING WITH SPACE LIKE TWO DOTS IN A THOUSAND UN-
ABRIDGED BLANK DICTIONARIES

THE FORMATION OF ALL THE STARS
IN ALL THE GALAXIES
IN ALL THE UNIVERSES
ARE ONLY EVENTS UNWITNESSED

THEIR PRESENCE
NO MORE AMAZING
THAN THE EXISTENCE
OF MY NOCTURNAL MATRICULATION

I EMOTE
AT THE SPEED OF LIGHT
TO THE POWER OF MAGNITUDE OF ITSELF
AT THE THOUGHT OF REMEMBERED LIPS TOUCHING MINE

SURELY
IM AS CONNECTED WITH THE COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS
AS I KNEW I WAS THEN
WHEN LIPS FIRST MET

I AM WONDROUSLY LOST
IN THE VOID OF THE UNIVERSE
NOW JUST AS BEFORE
NOT DISTINGUISHING REMEMBRANCE FROM EVENT

THE KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY
TO TELL ONE FROM THE OTHER
DELIBERATELY FORGOTTEN
NEITHER NECESSARY OR NOT

USELESS TO ASK WHY
THIS UNIVERSE OF EXPERIENCE
EXISTS
EXISTENCE, THAT WHICH IS

ALL THE WORDS
OF EVERY LANGUAGE
UNABLE TO GIVE FULL MEASURE TO
AN ASTRONOMY OF LOVE

LOVE, A THING
LIKE MATTER
IT, NOT CREATED
SO TOO NEVER DESTROYED

BUT FOR ALL ITS PLEASURE,
ALSO BEING WITH ONES LOSSES
GRIEF, AGAIN GREATER GRAVITY
THAN ALL THE STUFF A-SPACE

HOW MUCH MUST
MY CLOSED EYES CRY
OVER THE MORTAL ACTIONS I HAVE TAKEN
AND DIVINE THINGS TAKEN BY GOD FROM ME

BUT EACH ACTION HAVING ITS TWIN OF EQUAL SIZE
AND SO GRACE, GOD'S, AND HIS CREATURE'S
RAIN A BILLION SUNS SHINE ON ME
FORGIVEN, AND ONCE MORE AGLOW

AND EACH OF THESE STAR MOMENT MEMORIES
LIGHT MY HEAVENLY SKY OF EXPERIENCE
WITH MORE THAN REFLECTED LIGHT
THEY SHINE A REFLECTED LIFE

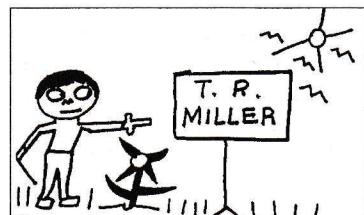
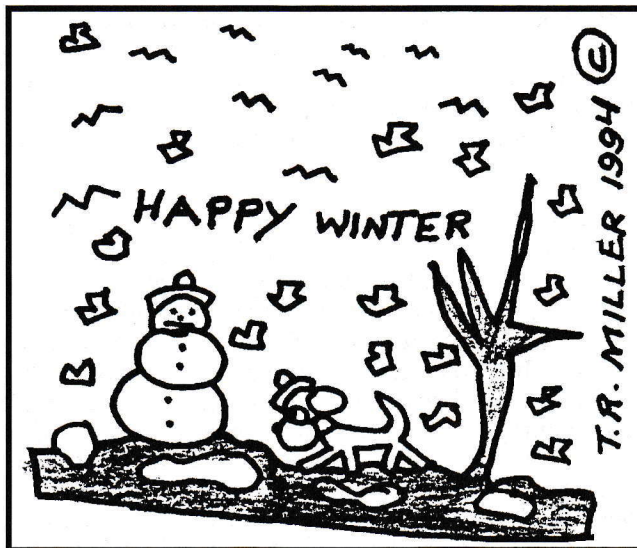
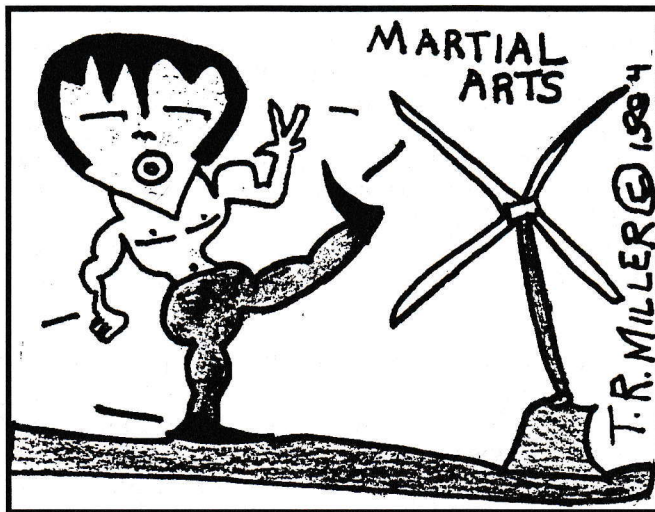
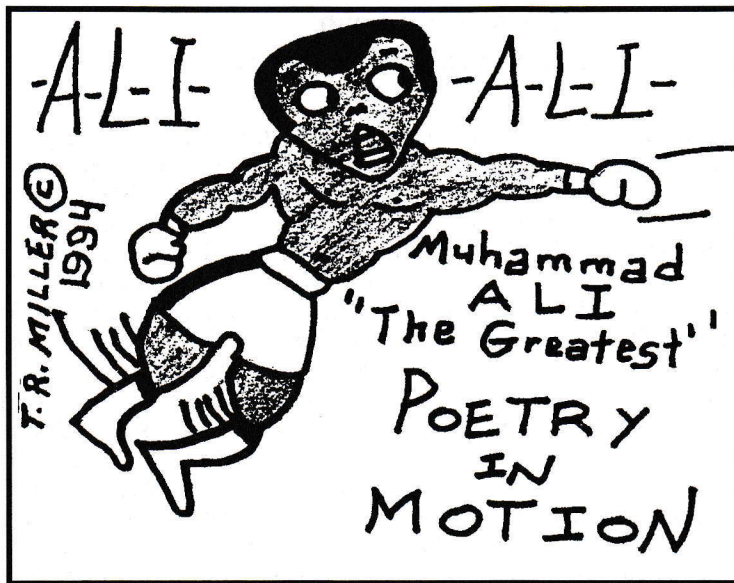
MINE

David Huberman
THE BITTER BITCH OF THE EAST VILLAGE

The whole affair started at one of those East Village highbrow events. Some play I can't recall except that it had an all-woman cast. The play was terribly boring; I dozed through most of it, except when one of the actresses, who was pretty hot-looking, showed off one of her breasts. It was the kind of breast that men like me fall in love with. It made me wish she'd show off the other one -- two breasts are better than one. Her scene in the play was brief, and I noticed she could barely speak English properly. It couldn't have been more than five minutes before she left the stage. The play got pretty boring again, and I went right back to dreamland. I woke up when they were applauding the end of the play; I must admit, I did get a nice nap out of it. Then the following week, I was invited to see another highbrow event -- an opera-ballet type of dance piece, the type of high cultural performance art I hated. My friend was in it. He was always lending me money -- no way could I escape this one. I arrived at the performance space, and there collecting tickets was the actress who couldn't speak English properly with the one nice tit. I'm sure the other tit was nice too. I took a better look at her other features. She had short-cropped black hair, big eyes, big lips with that pouty look, and a beautiful butt. She was hot except for the big, thick black-framed glasses she was wearing. It was an attempt to make herself look ugly and cultured at the same time. But these thick glasses couldn't hide that cunt face. Her face resembled a giant vulva. I knew she wasn't American by her accent. I figured her for French or German; she turned out to be Italian. As I went to buy my ticket she gave me a dirty look. It was one of those "I am superior and you are a measly cockroach" dirty look. I've gotten those looks before -- many times. It always means the same thing and always by people with over-inflated egos hiding huge inferiority complexes. Well, at least she knew I was alive. After the performance, which was another boring affair, as I was leaving, she gave me another dirty look, which changed midway into puzzlement. I figured I would never see her again, so I stuck out my tongue at her. This she liked, and she approached me and asked my name. "Roy," I said, "Roy Lowenstein." "Roy Low-en-stein," she sort of sing-songed the name in her broken English. "Monique!" she exclaimed. "Monique?" I repeated, puzzled. "German?" "No!" "French?" "No, I'm Italian -- would you like to go home with me?" I was taken aback. She was fast -- too fast -- but I wanted to see that other tit. "Yes," I said. "Good," she said, in her foreign tongue, "We will go back to my place. I live right across the street from the theatre."

This was way too fast, I said to myself, but what the hell -- I'm just a regular horny American male. Her place was what you'd expect of the East Village -- a small studio flat, probably overpriced. There were theatrical posters from the 30's all over her walls. She changed into one of those see-through blouses and brought out some red wine. I told her that I don't drink. "Never?" she asked. "I had a problem at one time." She just nodded her head. Then she said, "I am the Goddess of the Dark. I want you." She was getting kind of spooky, but I figured from the first time I laid eyes on her that she would be kinky. She looked at me like some wild beast. I just sat there feeling horny. Time seemed to stand still. Then she said, "I'm not what you think I am, but I want to fuck you." She slowly took off her see-through blouse; both her tits were milky-white. Her nipples were erect, they were "magnifique". She walked slowly to me and I realized she was drunk. I could smell the liquor on her breath, but that didn't stop me from being as horny as hell. I started to suck on her tits, but she said, "I have a little surprise for you." "What -- what is it?" I said, with a sexual lust spreading through me. "Watch," she said.

She nonchalantly took off her pants and shoes, spread herself on the bed, and staring right at me was the most beautiful cunt I've ever seen. "Eat it," she commanded. "Yes, yes, yes, Goddess of the Dark!" I screamed in animal heat. I tore at my clothes, until they were all off except for my socks. I never took my socks off for anyone. I sprang into bed with her like a panther, ready to lap the juices out of her cunt, but shock of shocks -- in that perfect cunt of hers there rose a giant pulsating red cock! I couldn't believe it. I was dumbfounded. It seemed to have a mind of its own. I felt like I was in the movie "Alien," where the alien opens its giant jaws ready to devour you. The huge red cock was getting bigger and bigger. It started shooting semen at me. It became a snake ready to strangle the life-force out of me. I screamed in terror. She was yelling, "Eat it, you cocksucker! Eat it!" "What are you?" I screamed. "What the hell are you? Where are your balls -- you have a cunt, and a cock . . ." She tried to get me in a scissors position, but I was fast and had already jumped off the bed. I grabbed my pants and my shoes and made a beeline for the door, when I looked back for one last glimpse of that red pulsating cock and big hairy cunt. I saw a bitter expression on her face, and I screamed, "You're a human monster, do you hear me!" And she replied, "I am the Bitter Bitch of the East Village."



Cartoons by T.R. Miller

HETEROSEXUAL FANTASY NUMBER 2

It was a sultry day. There had been sun earlier and only a bare threat of rain. The blue-gray sky was still bright and the evening crowds were scattered types. The couples, the friends, a single here and there. I watched with barely an interest in anyone. He was: almost past the glass front as he casually strode and then I glanced up to see him turn back. My first look was to see the shoe front appear - he wore very lovely shoes with a white inlay and sweet brown uppers and stitched soles. The linen pants relaxed, pleated and then the soft well-defined arm which held the strap of a brown, butter-soft leather knapsack over the shoulder of his sun-browned, beautiful self/body. A very white T-shirt graced the chest so round he had no hair and I thought I must stop this gaze upward but alas, I partook of a face which was as gorgeous as the rest of him. Not so young and one is knowing of age at my age. He was a well-to-do man on an afternoon of art leisure perhaps as he met my eyes straight on. I: could not smile or frown he caught my looking. He took in my own slightly muscled, decorated arms crossed over the skulls on my stained T-shirt with cut-off sleeves. My offbeat posture a reflection of casual disdain I relax into. Some hardened feelings allowed his passage by my desk and then began to rationalize how I could entertain the softness of an encounter with a man as pretty as those women I much rather ravish. Perhaps though in this late afternoon warmth I might beckon, even caution him that I must direct... that letting me lead the sordid dampness into a wet matter of opposing forces our touches could become heated glances into very different lives; structures of desire. I was almost going beyond my own practical ideas of lust and especially sex with men when he returned to the desk with a softly-voiced question. I handed him the gallery info and he passed with only a hesitation, maybe a little knowledge of how vulnerable he looked to my predator eyes. I watched the leather soles reach the sidewalk where he paused, a kind of feminine indecision, while I put my own thought processes in order - thinking about hammers, nails and the roar of motorcycles passing into the coming twilight.

BETTER OFF DEAD

There was never anything normal about Rachel. No matter how deceptive she could get with her not so straight looking work clothes, the kind that made people think she was just a little bit over the edge, she was very familiar with the inside of a loony bin, the bottom of a bottle and the complete loss of bodily control that comes from kicking a habit cold turkey. She had seen a ghost, spent seven years possessed by a dead punk star and lived with a man she secretly felt had killed her dog. She really only liked stockings after they had big holes in them and she cried when the landlord painted the outside of her apartment building, eradicating the graffiti of upside-down martini glasses, Pep Girls by Sioban and the prehistoric but cuddly EAK monster. She got her first tattoo at the tender age of forty-two. She had diabetes, asthma, alcoholism, addiction and schizophrenia for diseases, to name a few. She often heard a deep disembodied growl coming from the inside of her, so loud that even the word "roar" could not describe it. When it was going full blast, she sometimes thought her skull might shatter from the sound of it. She went to sleep to sweet lullabies provided by bands with names like Flipper and Disincarnate. She was fascinated by death, and was always imagining bloody decapitations, stabbings, and flattenings. Her dreams often conjured up a vision from a photograph she had once seen of a construction worker whose head had been squashed to the point where it was just a pile of that stuff that comes mushing from the back end of a fly when you smash it, sticking out of and dripping down over the corpse's white T-shirt. The sight was messier than if the guy had run his brains through a meat grinder. This was the kind of thought that was always lurking around in Rachel's mind.

Charles was definitely on the weird side, even though everyone said he looked just like what he knew he was, an intellectual. Anyway, he liked the term better than egghead or bookworm, which some insensitive types might call a guy who reads huge tomes on the musty goings-on of the Roman Empire and other points BC. He attributed this penchant to his interest in his own heritage, being of Sicilian background. But the fact that Caligula, an abomination of nature, whose antics delighted him, was from those times, may have had something to do with it. Charles was not diagnosed with any diseases, but he harbored a slight problem with the concept of reality. It was like he had a tattoo over the inside of his eyeballs; and that was how he looked at the world. He loved the music of Morbid Angel and Cannibal Corpse and fantasized becoming a serial killer who would leave the hacked up remains of his deserving victims strewn across the USA in heavy duty plastic Hefty Bags. He dressed only in clothes of the deepest black, trying to become the embodiment of an absence of color.

These two misfits were never formally introduced, somehow they just seemed to drift in the same direction. If Rachel could have been, she would have been Vampirella. If Charles could have his way, he would have long flowing hair, and some twisted biker tattoos on powerful biceps. Instead, Rachel resembled Pollyanna failing at her Halloween witch costume and everyone thought Charles was a Jewish philosopher, with his tightly curled hair and thick glasses, but he gave himself points for the possibility that he was considered left wing. Unknown to their business associates, both of them were anarchist, head banging, chain rattling ghouls, entirely obsessed with the trappings of death. Rachel's fondest memory was dissecting a formaldehyde cat in Anatomy lab and she always wore a button that said something like: "I'm a mess" or "Come near me and I'll kill you" or "Step right up and risk rejection". Charles often toured the countryside looking for eerie graveyards, he especially liked ones that were desecrated by senseless vandalism; for these expeditions he wore a black leather motorcycle jacket, its back panel painted up with the likeness of Arthur Rimbaud.

The reasons for all of this could probably be dredged up during intensive psychotherapy sessions, that would certainly drive them to suicide. Such trauma would be pointless, since they already knew the answer. They were here by mistake. Somewhere before time, they were flatlining it and quite happily so, when nothing abruptly melted away -- leaving them to be sucked into the human whirlpool. It was a condemnation and nothing else, this place was the center of Hell.

It was a good thing that they fell in together. It took some time, because they might as well have had their emotions stored away in lead boxes, but they became true friends, wandering around the East Coast and the East Village, taking bizarre photographs and writing twisted poetry;

struck with amazing raw ideas, they discussed piercing, silver spray painted skeletons and necrophilia.

There are not too many men like Charles, Rachel figured as soon as she saw that shadowy circle appear to burn into the grass at her feet the time he took her to see that old tree. Secretly, she was skeptical that he really existed and she considered that he might be an impostor, behaving in a devilish way only as a trick. Once she exposed to him the riot going on inside her mind, once she let her demons out to play, he would ridicule her without mercy.

I've never met a woman like Rachel before, thought Charles, a woman who thinks like me, who wears jewelry made from wolf claws, rattlesnake heads and blue metallic chicken feet and who is covered with tattoos of the grim reaper. Sometimes his paranoia got the better of him and he imagined that Rachel was really a serial killer. Had she rejected him as a victim because she liked his taste in music, death metal? Or was she just waiting until he let her see into his darkest soul?

Rachel gazed at Charles over the glass tabletop at the Dominican restaurant where they liked to go for rice and beans. Was there anything to be read in his deep brown eyes? All she could see was something that looked like the reflection of a distant bonfire.

Charles smiled when he saw the waitress bring him his chicken and rice. Rachel was sitting across from him in her Slayer Uber Alles T-shirt, moving her head to the music she heard inside. The restaurant was blasting its Latin jukebox as loud as it would go, but he could see that Rachel was listening to something else.

It was almost completely black in the basement poetry space. As their eyes adjusted, they could make out gloomy columns up on the small stage. Rachel climbed up and plugged two cords into an electrical outlet on one of the ceiling beams. Now there was light, but luckily not enough to destroy the atmosphere of decadence and decay. Even though the place was moldy and corroded, this was the way they liked it - reminding them of the inside of an ancient coffin. Everything always had to be morbidly compared; death was such a fascination, but why wasn't anything good enough that had to do with living? There was always something missing, something so bland or conformist or cowardly about plain life without the hope of experiencing the act of dying and wondering what might come after. Rachel pondered this as the poets slowly filed in through the blackness and sat in the mismatched chairs and on the rickety gray benches. She didn't want death to come fast like her grandmother always prayed for, to die in her sleep; but she didn't know what she did want other than awareness of death's pursuit.

Charles read first, he was too hyper to sit in the chair waiting today; after he read he would calm down and could pay attention to the others. He was always waiting for someone to say the thing he had been wanting his whole life to hear. He would know it as soon as the words hit his ears, it would be the magic answer he needed to keep on going. He had already found bits of it in the work of some poets, mostly already dead, nobody he could talk to, and he felt it in the music, the death metal, the black metal, so he liked it banging into him until even his veins felt supercharged; and he searched it out in any obscure club that would dare to offer its audience such evil invention. His poem was a killer; the audience clapped with delight. As he jumped down from the stage, he saw Wordman coming towards the front.

"Wordman!" Rachel said excitedly to Charles when he took his seat. The angry poet began to pace in front of the audience. He took his poems from his red bag and ripped them to shreds. He went over to the cement wall and started to smash his head against it with extreme violence. "I hate myself," he ranted over and over in a scalding scream. A quiet seized the room when Wordman stopped. He bent over and picked up the ruined manuscripts. "Oh well," he sighed, "I remember most of this one." He read about horrific little fat boys and aging uglies who try to hit on him at parties, hot looking women who turn out to be men and a host of other scabrous ruined characters. Rachel and Charles cheered the Wordman when he had finished reading. He looked up from the ripped scraps of paper and let them flutter to the ground. Charles bent down to retrieve them. "Leave them there," Rachel told him, "can't you see the paper is all blank?"

Wordman hiked up his pants and glared at the audience. "You liked that, did you?" he challenged. "There's nothing there to like!" "Nothing!" "You know, I have to do something about this place here. It's overflowing with morons and imbeciles, who laugh and applaud at the horrible tragedies of life." Wordman's face was turning purple as he sputtered, "This mockery must end." He pursed his lips together in disgust and marched out of the basement into the streetlife of the Lower East Side. When the door opened up, they could all hear teenaged voices yelling "bodybag" "poison" "higher power". Wordman turned around in the doorway and waved

both his fists at the poets. Blood was still trickling from his forehead where he bashed it on the wall. "I'll show you; I'm coming back to blow this place off the map."

Rachel got up next. She knew the Wordman better than anyone there. So far, whenever he had threatened to damage anyone, he had only harmed himself. She silently predicted that Wordman would never commit suicide, because he couldn't stand to lose the pain. "I'm not going to slit my wrists," she said, "I am a poet, not a multimedia production." She pulled out a knife anyway and stabbed it into the wooden floor of the stage. In the poem, two dogs killed themselves in a fight that took place inside a parked car. Rachel loved the part about the fine mist of blood sprayed on the inside of the car windows and when she looks in the mirror to find her neck ripped to shreds and blood on her teeth. I always read them better when I love them, she thought.

Charles was nodding and clapping loudly when she took her seat. She felt humble and that was good; like she understood it wasn't really her writing that stuff, that she was just a messenger, taking dictation from the muse, so she couldn't really take any credit. Charles was relaxed and now so was Rachel. They were almost happy. The next poet got up and began to beat on his African drum. It started out slow with no words, and then began to build. The beat picked up until the poet's hands were blurs and his voice raged out of him as he bellowed his desire to take his lover's last dream. Charles got lost in the possibility of this, serial dream snatching. Rachel let her heart wrap itself around the wild rhythms of the drum.

Wordman rushed in the door waving a metal tank. "You know what this is?" he screamed. The drumbeat went on. "You know what this is you dumb slob; you don't even know, do you? Well, let me tell you. This is a tank of oxygen." He turned a nozzle and they could barely hear the sound of the element rushing out of the cylinder Wordman carried in his hand. He threw it on the cold concrete floor. "But you do know what this is!" he said as some of the poets began to scream and stampede for the door. "This is a lighter!" The drumbeat went on. Wordman pushed the flaming lighter down toward the oxygen tank on the floor.

A flash of hotness, not much really Rachel thought, but it was close to volcanic. A display of light and fire raced through the basement and incinerated the layers of colored cloth that had encased the columns in ungainly fabric sculptures. This is excellent, Charles decided as he was consumed in orange and blue flames. Rachel enjoyed the echoes of the poets' screams. The drumbeat stopped.

It was over. Wordman had blown up the poetry show. Everyone was dead, Charles thought, not daring to open his eyes. Not even daring to find out if he still had eyes. The poet drummer was charred upright on the stage, Rachel could see. She was looking at the Wordman who lay in a heap of black leather at her feet. He seemed peaceful and she thought she could make out a blackened and sooty smile on his scorched features. He was dead, the drummer was dead. She didn't want to turn around. She knew she was still alive, and shook her head in exasperation. It's always the one who wants to die the most that is left alive. She was afraid to turn around. Charles was behind her, and she couldn't hear him. Maybe the explosion had damaged her ears. She brought her hand up to her face. It felt like a well done roasted marshmallow. There was hard crusty and there was oozing, there was a real lack of definition. There was smooth and rough. She didn't want Charles to be dead. If she had to live, at least let her live in some good morbid, decadent, intelligent company. Don't let anyone off so easy.

Charles was able to move his hand. He brought it up to his eyes and could tell right away that he only had one. The other side was empty, just a socket. The one that seemed all right was glued shut. He pried at it and it started to give. "Rachel," he said. No reply. He said her name again, but a lot louder, because he was getting a little scared. This was a big deal, a tragedy, a six o'clock news and mini-series disaster, and he lived through it. He couldn't face the aftermath alone. If Rachel was dead, and in a way he hoped she was, since she always seemed to want that more than anything, he might decide not to survive. It should be easy enough to give up the ghost after what he had just been through. Wordman, you gave your best show tonight, your ultimate statement on the condition of poetry in NYC. You won't hear this but. . . Charles tried to clap and wound up hitting a stump against what felt like exposed bone. Wow, he thought, I must be bleeding to death.

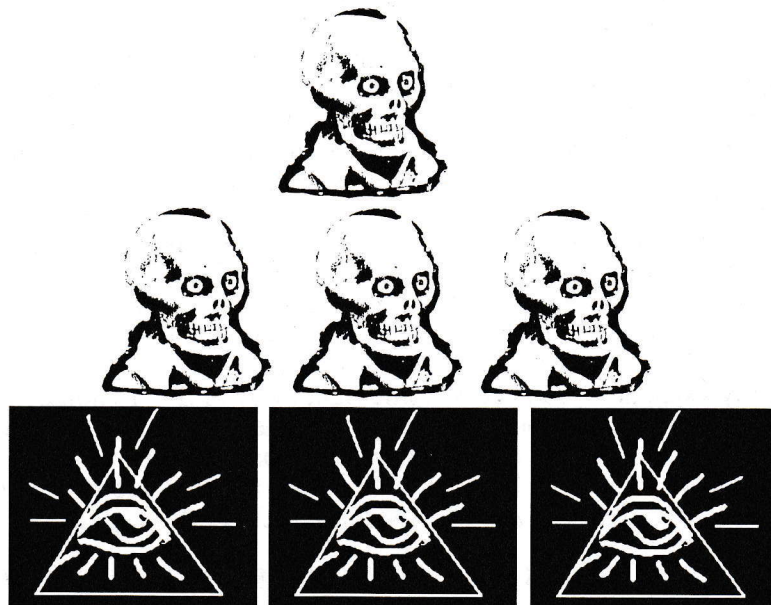
Wow, Rachel thought, spying a severed foot that was possibly her own, maybe I am dead. If I'm not, it probably won't be long before I am walking off with the grim reaper.

At the same time, Charles and Rachel turned around on their chairs. He pried open his eye and looked at her melted, bubbled face, a mask of horror, red with large places where the jawbone and cheekbone showed through. She gazed at Charles. The eye was the same one she had stared into at the Dominican restaurant only a few hours ago. That was all she recognized. The half a

face remaining was smoldering and blistered. A gaping eye socket, a cut away view of his teeth and shredded lip skin added to his sardonic grin. They started to laugh hysterically and would have rolled in the aisles had they not been welded to their seats. "You look great," they said to each other in unison. "A dog collar here," Rachel giggled, "A hockey mask there," Charles howled.

The firefighters had chopped through the debris and pulled them from the wreckage. As they were carted up to the waiting ambulance, they saw the suffocated bodies of the poets piled up near the door, and took a last look at Wordman. After the sirens wailed them toward the burn unit and intensive care, an exhausted fight fighter was heard to say, "I've been to a lot of fires, but I never saw anything still alive so gruesome in my life as those two monsters we dragged out of here. We should have done them a favor and shot them each once between the eyes, to save them from the miserable life they have waiting."

Nothing could have been further from the truth.



ellen (windy) aug lytle

jungled

it's 6:30 a.m. and only thin streams of light are beginning to bulge above the industrial skyline of dark tribeca-

walking oddie every morning at the same time and almost always taking the same route is dulling us- but this morning on one of the lamp posts that this welsh corgi has somehow missed lifting his short leg on every other day, i spot a small black and white flier printed on someone's laser or ink jet...'mac' i hope...(because i've always wanted one and still do)- GET READY FOR ANYTHING/... it says... BE READY/ THIS IS AN URBAN JUNGLE-

quickly i look down the deserted street- any rats out of hiding any people skulking in doorways?- what if i just ate? what if i walked around like most americans with a full gut...have you ever been shot or knifed on a full stomach? have you ever died on a full stomach ? ...

when hank died the medical examiner said all he had in his belly was raspberries and cream which he had eaten five hours before at his parents apt- he couldn't have known it was his last meal- he couldn't have known we'd never be together again either- that we'd never go down on each other or drive in the old metallic/green caddy with the top down and the heater blasting- and he never would have worn those tan loafers with the huge hole in the sole or that middle of the week grey suit...BE READY FOR ANYTHING...

be lean, be hungry, be on your toes like a prima ballerina; there's no life left for the lazy or uncertain- be alert be on the prowl before someone prowls you...GET HUNGRY AND STAY THAT WAY otherwise you might not be prepared for the scare; the bullet in the pistol waiting just around the next corner or the cab driver, trucker, jersey hot rod, speeding around hudson or greenwich street corners- and how about another midnight telephone call from your sister in florida screaming; GET DOWN HERE... mommy's sick and you need to come right away or mom's home alone because the housekeeper flew the coop- or mrs.---, your husband's incapable of driving home from work because he's plastered and passed out on the filthy floor of the parks department compound- or worse yet oddie's been run over because michael let him off the leash and now he's bleeding to death in the lobby ...GET READY/ BE READY FOR ANYTHING/ AT ALL TIMES/ THIS IS JUNGLE WARFARE...

THIS IS THE URBAN JUNGLE/ THIS IS LIFE ON THE BRINK OF THE 21st CENTURY...

ok and what if you do die? you probably wont be dancing one evening and dead the next- no! you'll suffer slowly like the obese blond dog in our building she's not even old but her master is- he walks with a walker while the poor gal can't get any exercise- she just sits around and waits for the old man to lift himself off the couch on the 38th floor, grip his walker and take her outside for a pitiful pee and a too quick poop- she can hardly walk for the short lead and carrying so much sedentary bulk-

she takes care of the old man, really- and the caregivers usually are the misused ones; living in the shadow of the infirm...GET READY/ BE READY FOR ANYTHING/ AT ALL TIMES THIS IS THE URBAN JUNGLE...

BINGO

15	19	41	54	65
10	22	42	46	64
1	16	FREE 6344 SPACE	47	66
4	17	31	50	61
2	20	44	52	71

6344

172



0011
GENERAL
MAY 7, 1994

THE STING
AND WHCN
PRESENT
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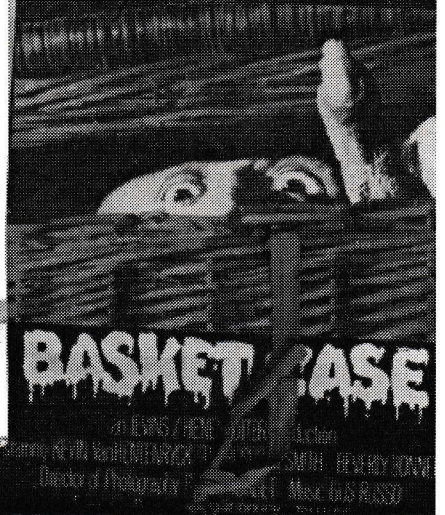
MOTORHEAD

* * *
SATURDAY
MAY 7, 1994
DOORS 8:00 PM

\$12.00 ADV.
\$16.00 DAY OF

0011
GENERAL
0011

IT COMES OUT AT MIDNIGHT
FRIDAY APRIL 9th!



ALLIGATOR PARTS TAG



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LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF
WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES
P.O. BOX 98000
BATON ROUGE, LA 70898-9000

You can't run with
the
Big Dogs...



if you pee like a Puppy

Collage by J.D. Rage

Simon Perchik

*

Leftovers from the sun that once
had seas, filled as if your eyes
and even before you were born
more tears already adrift in coastlines

and salt --what did you see on the sun
that now your skin is collapsing above one eye
pulling the darkness closer, sifts
a great river still cooling the sky

--you depend on this sweat
the way all mourners squint
looking inside the ground
for a sister-sun, a twin

making the fly-by every Spring
as a fountain, a pond
and this dilapidated shovel still wet
rusting in your eyes.

Simon Perchik is the author of Letters to the Dead, a new release on St. Andrews Press

Jim DeWitt

IVAN OF A URALS VILLAGE

is so very good at drinking with
the roughnecks, a smooth clear vodka taste
he has learned to swig too well
for so many months --
before he swings cellingward
the nearly empty bottle and smashes it
over his own head, jagged glass
slicing down across a fragile scalp
then splitting in two the flesh
of his own nose --
he does not quite realize
he is now swallowing the rivulet
of his own blood
while those hooligans are pointing at him
and laughing, to see how he's become
their favorite buffoon
his neck and chest smeared with
his very own redness
that should have stayed tight inside him

Lyn Lifshin

MESSAGES FROM THE DEAD

buried in glass jars
hidden in old clothes
folded and unfolded
so only a blur's
left some were
buried under the
barracks in court
yards stuffed in
straw mattresses
lining a tin in
hospitals cots,
old trousers old
urns in the
pathology room
on cardboard rolls
of toilet tissue
buried, found intact
some bribed guards
a few escaped with
art and messages
some at death
scribbled notes
left in sewing
machines scratched
by finger nails
on tea cups
or on the walls
of the gas chamber

Errol Miller

DOWN, BUT NOT OUT

Everybody
knows the trouble I've seen
like a sleek hambone
in a pot of turnip greens, I boil
and boil in life's bubonic stew
here a limb, there a limb
a face smothered in onions
but what the hell, Cisco, let's go on
to somewhere else, some trivial
Blue Rainbow Cafe outside of Winona
with a polished dance floor hewn
from hickory logs, I am not ready to go home
since the iceman froze into the icehouse tank
I have a more eccentric value
for this time, this place
anointed with breath's humid motion
for a little while, sipping
sharkskin soup, rowing, rowing, rowing
ever in American motion
on a greater lake, I am on
the pathway meant for me
a clean well-lighted roadway
with ultraviolet mercuric rays
tracing burned-out stars
and erotic stories I fear no more.

— Angel —
I know this woman
as well as I know
the back of my hand
In body and mind
and spirit
She is burdened with pain.
I'm no doctor --
but I prescribe
Some love...
Some affection --
Lots of understanding...
A smile each morning
A nod in the afternoon
A kiss before bedtime
and a pause...
In the right direction.

-- Tommaso

Bob Hart

QUICK

the bright smoke of autumn
school desk dullness body threat of schoolyard
vanish behind the pleasure of running
- yellow fire more happy than gash-blood is nasty -
green between the deep-breathe air

the home slaps
smart but are dumb in the run
in the fakefear tag and good-bye

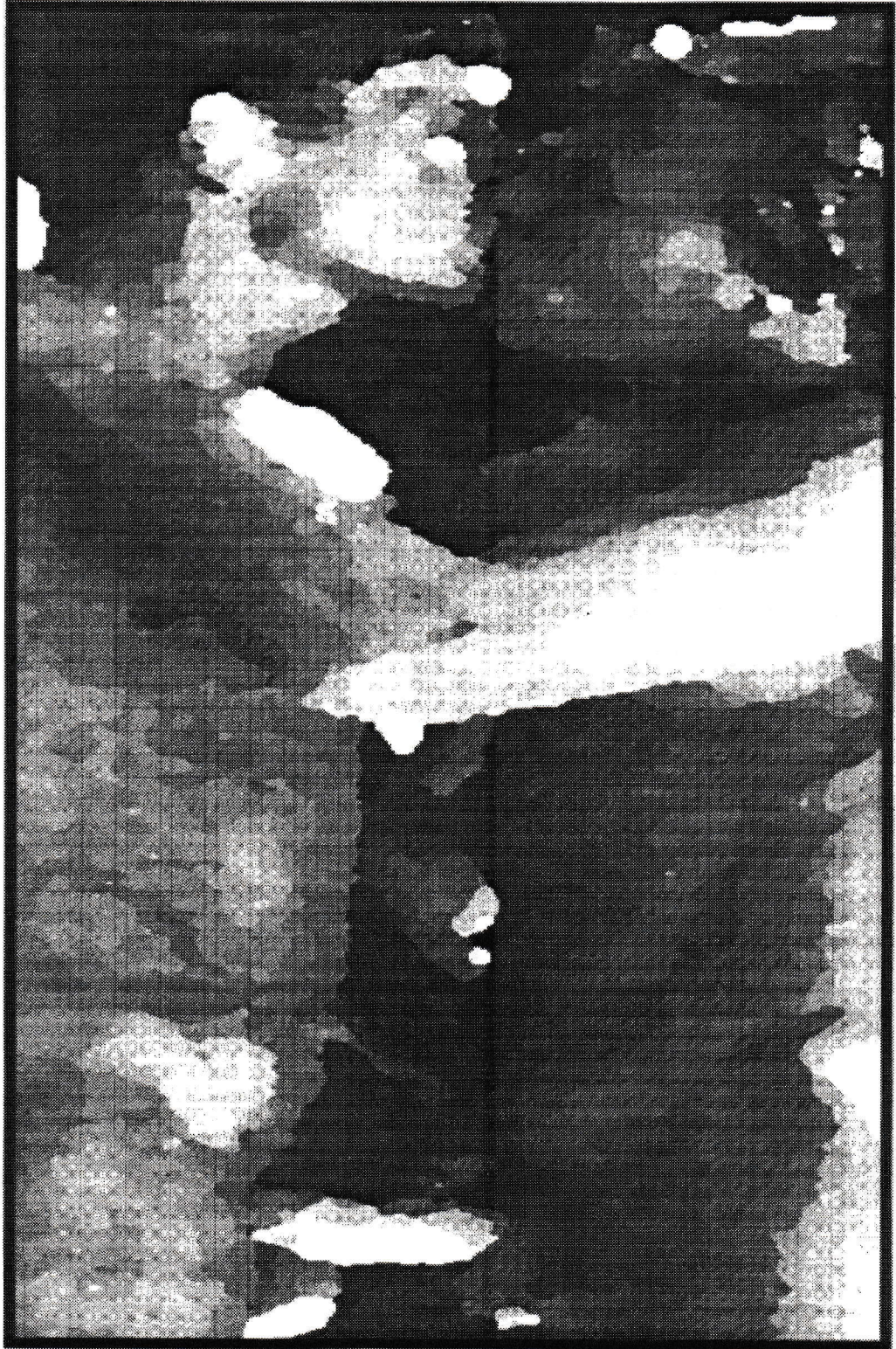
rust and raspberry burn against brimmed blue

threats frowns pains
stand still with the stupid color of gray
speedless against friends' fun faces
against the purpling rose the flame and the green

bonliz hoag

Being in reality is
like drawing my hand
through sugar
or sand
or the evening air
when it is body temperature.
I'm never sure
when the seams will open
and I'll slip between the scenery.
Where am I then?
How long am I gone?
Do I pass through the veil again
atomized, yet unseen,
to recongual, whole
unchanged for all appearances,
reappeared and firm

as Jell-O



2th is

D.S. '93

Computer Art by Dean Snider

SUICIDE NOTE

THE HARDEST FUCKING PUNCH
GODZILLA THROWS
A BODY BLOW
BARELY FELT
BY A MIND ALREADY REEALING

OBLITERATED

KNOWING
EVEN BEFORE SAYING
TO MY SELF AND THE OLD LADY UPSTAIRS
(WE THE ONLY ONES HAVING FOUND RELIEF
IF NOT REPAIR
IN SLEEP
NOW TERMINATED
TWO HOLE FUCKING HOURS AFTER BEGINNING
5:00 A.M.
THIS COLD SUMMER MORNING

IT IS A STORY WELL KNOWN BY MY SELF
I BY MY SELF

SO MUCH SO
I KNOW THE END
BEFORE THE PLAYS SEES
CURTAIN RAISE

LIKE ONE WELL VERSED
THE PAIN
RETURNS

THIS NO ACT

WHEN:

FIRST ENDING

NO MATTER HOW WELL

I FIGHT THE THOUGHT DREAMS

USUALLY THE ONLY, ONLY THING

DELAYING THE OBVIOUS

SLEEP;

SECOND

NOW:

RIGHT HAND NUMB FROM PAIN

LEFT

NO LONGER ABLE TO KEEP UP

(ALWAYS THE LITTLE BROTHER,

OR WEAKER EVIL TWIN

(AS RICHARD WOULD SAY

(I WILL NOT CLOSE PARENTHESIS

FROM NOW ON

FUCK ! SON OF A BITCH !

THE FIRST WORDS OUT OF A SCARED, PISSED, PERSON

I SWALLOW THE HUNDRED PILLS

SO AS NOT TO WAKE THE OLD LADY

ONE HOUR BEFORE

ONE HOUR BEFORE

THE LANDLORD GETS UP

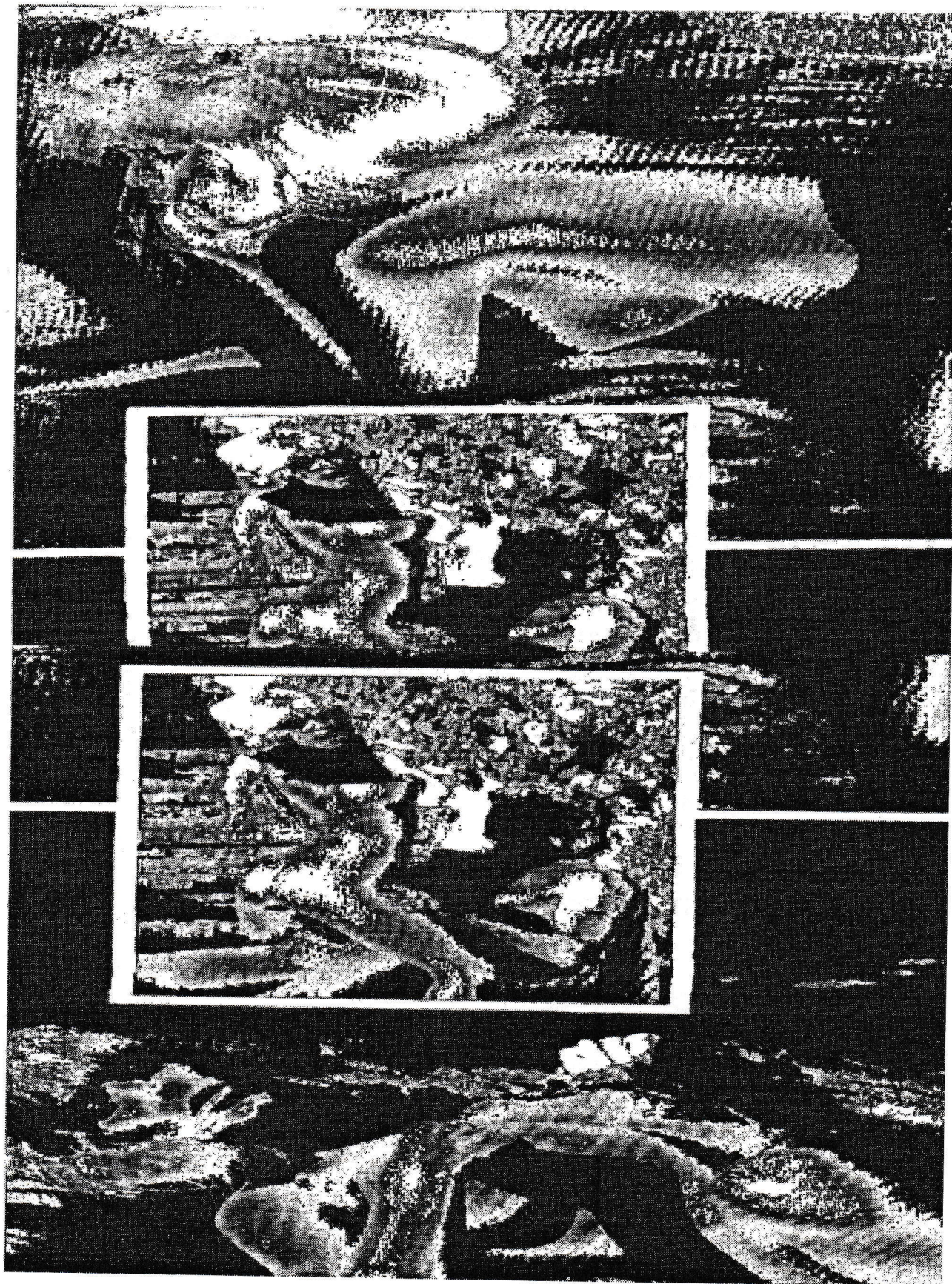
TO GO AT SEVEN

TO A JOB

THAT ACTUALLY PAYS THE MORTGAGE

ON THIS

MY PLACE OF LAST RESORT



Computer Art by Dean Snider

larry jones

(tom &) jerry & me

-- for ja, re & kk

i wish that i could remember
the name of the painter you fisted
the night we met on his
and my way out of the
"ninth circle"

where on the downstairs bathroom mirror
the story goes one edward ran
across the graffiti that changed forever
the story of the boy
who cried
wolf

i remember the shit across the sheets
i'd never seen anything quite like that
before nor have i since

although must admit
that toward that end
robert had once
tried that with me

we
then caught the
"devil in
miss jones"

I remember the painter's paintings
as being especially vibrant
off the sunday
morning warehouse
windows streaming
light over
a chelsea corner
of oversized
color fields

and i wonder whether the portrait
of you in the livingroom
you in khakis shirtless
in a leather jacket
through the seventies
isn't quite as good
as fairfield's
of kenneth

and as always i always feel
as uncomfortable as always
with this these
first name basis
bases of reflections
refractions
feelings

there was nothing angry
in your fist
and nothing human
disgusts wild men

and again as for these names
sometimes you have to read me
quite literally
as well as
literarily

and by now you know
as well as i
you were the first
if not
the fist

and as for all the rest
and hopefully at least some of
the best

my hope is that
with you and me
we're not as yet
quite

his(s)tory

(New York 1988)

Mary Winters

YOU KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO SAY

I have not punched someone
since I was a kid.

Really hauled off and hit a person
right in the kisser as hard as I could.
Of course I like to think about it

-- I have a job and a family
like anyone else -- but I do not
act on the urge, just as I would not
stick a pin in a hamster's eye.

It was a constant brawl when I was
growing up, wall-to-wall mayhem.

Hair-pulling, choking, slapping
over who owned a Ginny doll
(torn in half); alleged thefts,

forays into highly private
diaries. Verbal abuse too,
the kind that would end
a grown-up relationship
in five seconds flat.

I had the advantage of being
oldest and largest,

though one of my sisters was a real guerilla fighter

-- fast and sly. I threw
a pair of scissors at her eye
-- she's still got the scar.

Her specialty was suffocation.

You know what I'm going to say.
I miss that.

Mary Winters

MY FEET HURT AND I HATE IT

Do you know anyone who's had
bunion surgery? I saw on TV
someone died of it
at a famous teaching hospital
(turned out to be the
anesthesiologist's fault).
They chisel your bone down...
I hear some people take months
to recover, you shouldn't
have it done unless you
really need to --
it hurts like hell
and you can't expect
to wear high heels again.
Plus they grow back.

Supposedly it's hereditary
though Mom says she got hers
wearing hand-me-down shoes.
I got mine from when
my sister slammed my foot
in the bathroom door
when I was five and broke
my middle toe which is
longer than my big toe
and about at right angles.
Corns everywhere.
Whole foot's been
out of wack ever since.
Guess she got her revenge.

Charlene Cambridge

AT THE END OF THE DANCE
HOW QUICKLY WE TURN AWAY
AVOIDING EACH OTHER'S EYES
AS OUR BODIES DISENGAGE.
SLOWLY TURNING HIPS, BREASTS,
SHOULDERS MOVING SHRUG LIKE.
HANDS STILL HELD, EYES STILL
AVERTED. HEADS BENT AS IF TO
WATCH OUR FEET DISENTANGLE.
ALL THIS BEFORE THE LAST
NOTE OF THE SONG, ALL THIS
NEVER SEEING THE AVOIDED
EYES. ALL THAT IS KNOWN IS
SMELL, TEXTURE, SHAPE. THE
FEEL OF WARM BREATH AGAINST
THE CHEEK. THE SWEET TERROR
WHILE CROSSING THE FLOOR.
THE THRILL OF BEING CHOSEN,
OF HAVING ASKED AND
BEEN ACCEPTED.
ALL FOR THIS;
THIS AWKWARD LEAVE TAKING
AS THE EXCUSE FOR INTIMACY
DISAPPEARS .

SLOW DANCE (4/12/94)

I HAVE A VISION OF US
A PICTURE FROM LONG AGO
CATCH MY SHADOW!
TINY FOOTSTEPS BEING SWALLOWED
BY THE FOAMING TIDE
ROUND NAPPY HEADS MOVING IN UNISON
OOH LOOK! A CRAB!
FOLLOW HIM DOWN THE HOLE.

*FOR THE BRIDE
MAYARO (7/6/94)*

J. D. RAGE, IS A PIECE
OF SHIT, AND IF THE
TENANTS OF THE
BLOCK ARE BLIND
TO THE FACT, THEN
THEY BELONG IN
CONVALESCING SPAS.
A MORE HEINOUS AND
ODIOUS BEING HAS
NEVER BEEN BORN, RAI.

3 BLIND MICE, WHO
HAVE THE ILLUSION
THAT, THEY'RE CON
ARTISTS BUT WHO
ARE GRAVITATING
TOWARD A SNARING
TRAP. EHE AEROLCA,
KEN DIMAGGIO, AND
J. D. RAGE. LHAMORIN.

Ken DiMaggio

THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES

Almost silent now that the leopard the
puma the lion lie in the cages skeletal
dead and in some cases half-eaten but
since the civil war began the war that one side
fights in the name of ethnic cleansing the only
race to disappear are the one hundred or
so animals in the Sarajevo zoo in the war be-
tween the Serbs and Muslims in a land far
from their native savannas of
Africa

were the first casualties of this
war

were the giraffes the ponies the buffalo shredd-
ed by hilltop Serbian mortar fire

And as the siege wore on

died the bears the wolves the tigers felled

by stray Serbian sniper bullets

or deliberately killed by Bosnian militia
target practice

And the starving few lions or leopards
that remained

fed on the rotting carcasses that stayed when
one day the zoo keeper failed to come to re-
move the dead and feed the living still
in their cages

he too

like a lot of other humans

fell in this civil war

But by midsummer

several months after the Serbs took their
positions above the hills of Sarajevo

only one animal was left

in a zoo that once held a hundred

one animal still alive

in a zoo long since abandoned riddled
by sniper fire and rotting with
cannibalized animal corpses

Almost silent now except for a female black bear half her normal weight and with barely enough strength to stand against the rusted bars of her cage for the zoo in Sarajevo the war is almost over with one or two militiamen who risk the sniper fire daily to bring this starving bear some bread because "People made this war," was what one of the militiamen said "The animals had nothing to do with it they're only the victims," said the other militiaman and once again the most highly evolved species uses their unique gifts of language and reason to explain this urgent absurd need they have for pursuing extinction and once again they apologize for the way the fallout from their self-destructive fight kills all the other creatures who are on a lower evolutionary level but if this so-called most-advanced species felt that way then why didn't they leave the giraffe in the savanna the bear in the forest the buffalo on the prairie the wolf on the tundra but it was for beauty not for murder that they were brought from the wilderness and to this zoo but after we beheld their grace and their nature kill them is what we did but it is always more of them and never enough of us even though we have this self-extinctive need it will be all of the leopards the lions the pumas to die and never completely the human beings and after our self genocide is over that always ends in an armistice we'll go back to appreciating beauty again which means we'll take another giraffe buffalo and lion and put them in our zoos

like the one in Sarajevo

where it was reported

that the surviving animals fed on the dead ones

and where some cages showed just jawbones and ribs and fetid rotting skin

while in another cage

that she shares with four animal carcasses

is a bear half its normal weight barely able to stand up and may still be alive

I haven't heard if her two militiamen have been killed

because even though they try to keep her
alive by bringing her bread

they also go back to this war where
they try to make as much of their own kind
die

And if they themselves should

and no one takes up their cause

the last animal in the Sarajevo zoo

an underweight female Black bear

will become the final exposed corpse

in a cage

that was built to display beauty

*

Bruce Weber

COURBET AND THE MAN WITH THE DRILL

courbet and me were hanging around lower manhattan watching all
the nine to fivers scurry in packs from the buses and subways to
their wall street area occupations sipping from our styrofoam
cups of coffee and philosophizing about the meaning of the
american class system when this city servant starts drilling
through the gutter to repair some pipes gone faulty and courbet
says he's my hero he's the one i make art for and i say how about
the guy up there on the 52nd floor in a high wind cleaning
windows how about the security guard keeping out the riff raff
how about the sanitation worker cutting her hands on broken glass
and courbet says i love all of them but the guy with the drill
fascinates me most because he's like a machine unto himself
rocking from side to side and up and down his body accepting
the contortions of his occupation and i'll bet even when he takes his
lunch break his salami sandwich on rye jumps around his stomach
i want to paint him and so courbet sets up his easel on chambers
street and broadway and sets out to picture the jerky movements
and quivering muscles of the burley man drilling through the
asphalt and when he's finished i buy his painting and hang it in
my living room because that's my role as patron to support the
creation of images of the lower classes so i can feel a part of
something bigger than myself without getting my hands dirty and
i'm going to sit here in this big thick armchair and light a
cigar and stare at my new acquisition till the man in the
painting stops shaking goes home and opens up a cold beer

Duane Locke

CARMINA OIGGAVARA

(Fragments translated from the neopostmodern Greek of
Oiggavara)

Daddy

[]

Vodka

[]

Naked

[]

Daughter

[]

Cash

A bowl of wax fruit in a spotlight and a television crew
shooting a limousine covered in cloth and parked in a dark
room. Zoom []

Moses, naked and covered with suntan oil, is breaking down
ten shoes from the cliff with the all night gun shop
and a line of chorus girls with bare feet.

[]

[]

AIDS

Adolescent with cash

[]

Legs spread

[]

[]

Cash.

Barbara Foster

MEET ME TONIGHT IN DREAMLAND

Anyone, drive to Jersey on
Saturday night

Bars close at midnight, I freak

If the Latin Casino opens
without me

Doorman, please believe my phony
I.D.

I'm drinking age in Havana

Mambo, Merengue, Cha-Cha-Cha

Tottering on stiletto heels

My brain reels

Ouch! Frankie Lane, my cinch belt
pinches

Bloody Marys send me higher than
ghost riders

Crack your whip, crooner

But don't wake me

It's my birthday, I'm dancing

I couldn't be hotter

If you lit candles on my
backside

Rhythmic orgies, sweaty underarms,
reefer smoke

The joint's spinning faster than
victrola records

I've creamed my jeans, you
dreamboat

Grant my wish or i'll D.D.T.

Autograph your smash album

With my Tangee lipstick.

Chantay Jones

SURRENDER TO DESTRUCTION

I surrendered my soul - gave it to you
to the disease of destruction I became true
Please come and get me - take me away
In this world filled with pain - I refuse to stay
With you in my system, my heart can now throb
Even though the reality is, my soul you will rob
come, come I don't care if you kill me
But for the moment, with illusions, - I wish you to fill me
Tomorrow I may find I don't like what you've done
But, tonight the alternative doesn't seem like much fun
Each night I embrace you to alleviate the pain
Still the following day, I know the attempt was in vain
Why do I continue to believe in your word
When I know what you say is truly absurd
You said you'd absorb the problems, said you'd take the blame
Instead what you did was drove me insane
I thought you'd take the pain make it inactive
Instead what you gave me is pain retroactive
It's okay, what you've done, this road was my choice
In my life filled with gloom I know you rejoice

UNTITLED

Cold days and warm nights
Passionate love and vicious fights
Is this what love was meant to be
Hearts in bondage with wills run free



BeBe Bullet - Self Portrait



Drawing by DONA

DONA

QUESTIONS ABOUT MY EXISTENCE. ALIEN ARTFORM.
THIS PLANET OVERWHELMS ME WITH THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE "NORM".
MONKEY MEN. YOU ARE NOT MY TASTE NOR PREDILECTION.
YET, I CAN "PASS". IN "PASSING" I DENY THE ESSENCE OF THAT WHICH
KNOWS IT IS "OTHER".
TO TRAVEL, IN ANONYMITY FROM "REALITY TO REALITY"
THERE IS WONDER IN ASSUMING DIFFERENT GUISES.
I ASK YOU, "DO YOU THINK THERE IS COMFORT IN "PASSING" THROUGH?
I QUESTION YOU ABOUT YOUR COMPREHENSION.
AMAZED AND IGNORANT, YOUR EYES TURN BLANKER THAN USUAL.
TWITCHING WITH TERROR. DUMB. TONGUE, LOLLING SILENT IN YOUR MOUTH.
DRY MOUTH AGAPE. FETID DROOL MAKING NO SOUNDS,
YOU LOOK INTO YOUR PRIMITIVE BACKBRAIN. DEAD EYE. SANPAKU. A VAGUE
AND UNFORMED HOPE STARTS TO FORM.
IF YOU DO NOT FIRST DESTROY US, WE MAY ALL COME THROUGH IT YET.
HOPEFUL IN THE THEORY OF DARWINIAN EVOLUTION.

.....

HARKEN TO THE KALEIDOSCOPIC NOUVEAU-ANACHRONISTIC, NEO-ARCHAIC, MERRY-
GO-ROUND CARNIVAL OF MY SOUL. THE RING IS THERE FOR ALL TO CATCH.
I SING, THOUGH NOT IN PERFECT CADENCE SHAKESPEAREAN COUPLETS,
GREGORIAN AND TIBETAN CHANTS.
I FEEL THE SPIRIT OF YAHWEH, EDITH PIAF AND THE DALI LAMA. "OH. OH. OH, THAT
SHAKESPEAREAN RAG!"

.....

IMAGINE YOURSELF FULFILLING THE UNIVERSAL MIND. FANTASY AND IMAGINATION,
ALL TOGETHER. WE ARE ONE.
JUST "DOIN' TIME IN THE UNIVERSAL MIND".
TEMPTED BY "GOD", WE SEEK REDEMPTION IN RELIGION. EMBRACE THE BRIGHT
EARTH LIGHTS OF HURDY GURDY HOPE.
I PRAY FOR US ALL. REDEMPTION HAS ONLY THE POWER THAT WE GRANT IT.

.....

BLESSED FREAKDOM OF US ALL. ALBINO HUNCHBACKED DWARVES. SIAMESE TWINS
JOINED AT THE HEAD OR WAIST. AQUA-BOY WITH LOBSTER LIMBS. THREE-LEGGED MEN,
BEARDED WOMAN. HUMAN SKELETONS. THE OBESE TOO LARGE TO JOIN THE CIRCUS,
DIE IN THEIR BEDS. LARDMAN, IN TRIPLE SIZE COFFIN, LOADED INTO HIS GRAVE BY
A FORKLIFT.

BEAUTIFUL, DIMINUTIVE MIDGET WOMEN IN BALLET SLIPPERS AND TUTUS.
THE TATTOOED MAN. ACROMEGOLY MADE FAMOUS ON THE "SILVER SCREEN".
TIRESIUS WITH PAPS OF MILKLESS STEEL. PETRONIUS DESCRIBES WORSHIP OF AN
HERMAPHRODITE. WE DWELL IN CAVES AND MOUNTAINTOPS OF CREATION.
DID THE PLATYPUS SWIM, SLEEK AND HAPPY, THROUGH THE PLEASURE DOME OF GOOD
OLD KUBLA KHAN, WHERE ALPH THE SACRED RIVER RAN?
WHAT A SENSE OF WHIMSICAL HUMOR.

.....

IT IS OPEN SEASON ON ALL CREATURES LARGE AND SMALL. TIBETAN CHIMES VIBRATE
TO THE ONENESS OF US ALL. LIKE MINDS JOIN TOGETHER.

.....

SPEED ME TO FULLTIME AWARENESS OF THE GODHEAD. THE GOLDEN RING.
LICK ME CLEAN WITH THE FROTH OF THY CONSECRATED JUICES. DERANGED.
SUCCULENT. TANTALIZING. LUSTFUL AND OPEN. CLITORIAL KISS. PINK AND PERFECT
CONCH SHELL. MOTHERMOUTH OF ALL DOMAINS.
LINGERING.
REMEMBERING WHO I AM.
I REMIND ME OF MYSELF.

.....

DEATHLY FALLEN ANGEL WINGS. SOILED WITH VISIONS OF NOTHINGNESS.
SOFT PADDED FINGERS. GENTLE DIFFERENCES.

NETHER ILLUSIONS

SLEEK, NAKED SKIN, TUFTED WITH COARSE AND MANLY HAIRS.
LITINIUS. NEITHER THIS NOR THAT. NEITHER HERE NOR THERE
PARTS OF A CONTINUOUSLY CREATING AND RE-CREATING PUZZLE.
RELATIONS ALL. WE ARE EACH OTHER'S KEEPERS.
THE SEEDS HAVE ALREADY BEEN SOWN. THEIR PODS DESCEND FROM THE
HIGHEST OF THE HIGH.
THERE ARE "NORMS", WHO WILL STRIVE TO DESTROY US.
WE, LIVING AND LOVING TOGETHER.
BUTTERFLIES IN A DREAM.

DONA

DRUNKEN. DISPOSED QUEEN. SEARCHING. HUNGRY FOR THE CHILD
SHE NEVER HAD. EMPTY-WOMBED SUCCUBIS. EYEING YOUNG MEN. SEED SEARCHING.
SEEKING TRUTH IN A NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN DREAM. KALEIDOSCOPIC SEARCH FOR A
HOME THAT WILL NEVER BE.

SHE QUESTIONS, AND QUESTIONS, AND QUESTIONS. KNOWING MULTIDIMENSIONALITY.
DOUBTING THE "REALITY" OF EXISTING ON ONLY ONE SPECIFIC PLANE AND WHO IS IT
THAT BELIEVES IN ONE SPHERE OF EXISTENCE? BLESSED BE THE LORD,
SO MANY FORSAKEN, DECEIVED BY A SINGLE SENSE OF TIME AND SPACE.

EMBRACE CHAOS. . . .THE GREAT THE ONLY. THE GREAT THE LONELY AND TO
WHOM DOES GOD TALK? WE ARE THE PIECES THAT MUST MAKE WHOLE
THE VESSEL AND CAUSE THE LIGHT TO RE-APPEAR
TO GO ON FOREVER AND BEYOND.
EVER, AND EVER, AND EVER. INFINITY, BATHED IN MUNDANCITY.
YET WE WILL RE-CREATE THE ALL-KNOWING. PERSON BY PERSON.
PIECE BY PIECE.

. . . .

WITH THE GLEE OF THE ARTAUD-INSPIRED, I SPEW FORTH MY INSANITY. TWO STEP,
WALTZ STEP, POLKA, DERVISH SWIRL, TRY THE TWIST, THE FRUG, THE HULLY GULLY
JOIN ME IN THE MAGIC THEATER. MAY BLESSINGS BE UPON US AND CURSES BE GONE
FROM OUR IMMORTAL SOULS.

MY TEARS NESTLE UPON YOUR TONGUE. COMMUNION. I BLESS THE SACRED WATERS OF
THE DROOLCUP.

WORDS HAVE GONE UNSPOKEN. PEARLS UPON THE SILENT WAFER . .

TEARS AND SPIT DRIBBLE IN RAINBOW HUES.

I SHALL SAVE . . .

YOU, MYSELF, THE PLANETS. THE CRIPPLES WHO NEED A KISS.

WE, OF SIMILAR THOUGHT. TRANSGENERATIONAL, UNCRUCIFIABLE CHRISTS . .

THERE ARE MANY NOW, WHERE ONCE THERE WAS ONLY ONE.

WE, SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE LIGHT,

HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AND SHALL CONTINUE BEYOND FOREVER.

SHIT SMEARED REVELATION. I AM HUMBLE AT THE THOUGHT OF BEING.

Paul Skiff

how much electricty
is in a radio.

how many murders,
car crashes,heroic
dishwash soaps.

none.

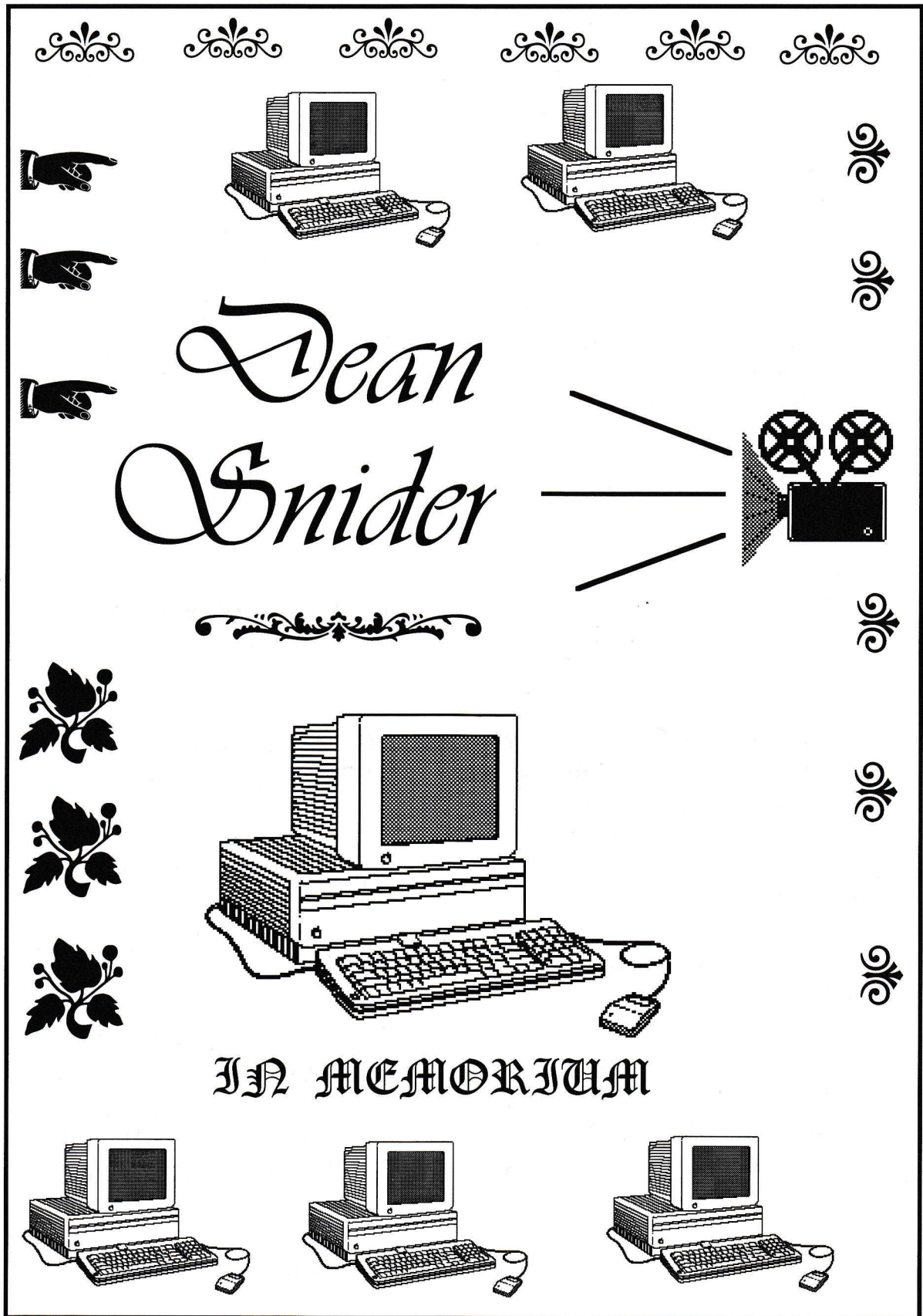
how much of my experience
is emptied by pictures
I want to become.

how much of myself
is left after all the
threats of nothingness.

how much of myself is left
if i turn the radio off.

if i listen to you
how much of the radio
do i hear.

i think i will
take you apart
and see how you work.



Dean Snider

5:00 A.M.

I DON'T DRIVE THESE ZOMBIE FINGERS ANY MORE, THEY DRIVE ME!

THE PAIN IN THE LEFT HAND GETS WORSE. IT THREATENS TO BECOME ESOTERIC, IN THE SENSE THAT I MUST MAKE IT ABSTRACT TO BE ABLE TO STAND IT. I TRANSFER THE SIGNAL, BUT IT COMES BACK, LIKE AN UNWANTED BOOMERANG.

I DO NOT LET MYSELF HAVE THE SINEMET UNTIL 6:00 AM, SO I WON'T

WAKE UP JUST FOR THAT, BUT IT MEANS I MUST SUFFER WHILE WRITING THIS FOR ANOTHER HOUR. THEN MY CRAZY QUILT WORLD OF DRUG-INDUCED NORMALITY BEGINS.

I AM WITHOUT ONE OF MY MEDICINES, TODAY BECAUSE, AS ALWAYS, THE DRUG STORE HAS FAILED TO GET THE OK FROM THE NEUROLOGIST. TO MAKE UP FOR THEIR OVERSIGHT, THEY TAKE ONE OF THREE RESPONSES:

1. THE REGULAR PHARMACIST GIVES ME WHAT I NEED UNTIL HE CAN REACH MY DR.

2. THE LAZY PHARMACIST MAKES AN EXCUSE LIKE, "I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT, THAT WAS SOMEBODY ELSE'S RESPONSIBILITY".

3. THE ETHNIC DELETED PHARMACIST TAKES THE MOST BIZARRE APPROACH: SPEAKING LOUDER AND LOUDER WHILE MOVING FARTHER AND FARTHER AWAY FROM ME, UNTIL WE ARE BOTH SCREAMING BACK AND FORTH TO EACH OTHER. SHE EVENTUALLY WINS THIS VERBAL SALVO BY SUPERIOR GENETICS AND REARING.

I MUST STOP NOW, AS EVEN MY GOOD ARM CANNOT CONTINUE.

SUCH A CRAZY ILLNESS!!!

I WORK THE WORK I NEVER DARED DO, THOUGH. THE ILLNESS MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BE AFRAID, BECAUSE HAVING IT, ONLY LEAVES ROOM TO FEAR ITS GETTING WORSE.

I EXPERIMENT FREELY WITH WHAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE PERVERSION; KNOWING, NOW NOT CAPABLE OF PERVERSION, BEING VERY EMOTIONALLY BOUNDED.

I BIND MYSELF TO STAY WITHIN THE LIMITS OF SANITY, NOT GETTING TOO HIGH OR LOW: THIS THE CURSE OF THE DEPRESSED PATIENT. OF COURSE, BECAUSE THE RANGE OF THE INTENSITY OF MY NORMAL EMOTIONAL PASSION (NOT FOR LOVE, BUT FOR LIFE) IS SO GREAT, THE CRIPPLED VERSION OF ME STILL HAS MOMENTOUS PROPORTIONS.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I HAVE ALREADY SAID (I DON'T LOOK BACK AT THIS WRITING, OR ANYTHING ELSE I DO NOW), BUT LIKE THE DRUNK THAT USED UP HIS GRACE WITH THE GOD OF DRINK, I TOO, MUST LIVE IN THE PURGATORY OF RESTRICTED FEELINGS.

LIKE ALWAYS, IN EVERYTHING I TRY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE THINGS THAT LET ME BE FREE; IN MY LIFE AND OF CONVENTION (THE THING I FEAR WORSE THAN ILLNESS OR DEATH). TODAY I MAKE "GAY EROTICISM", TRULY EROTIC, BECAUSE OF THE VIRGINAL PURITY OF MY EMOTIONAL CELIBACY. NO I'M NOT A CLOSET HOMO. I AM UNARROUSED BY NAKED MEN HUMMING EACH OTHER, BUT I AM AROUSED BY THE PASSION WITH WHICH THEY DO SO.

I FEEL NOW BALANCED TO BE ABLE TO WORK WITH NAKED MEN THE SAME WAY I DO WITH NAKED WOMEN: INSPIRED BY WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN AND HUMANKIND FEARS DESPERATELY TO ACKNOWLEDGE.

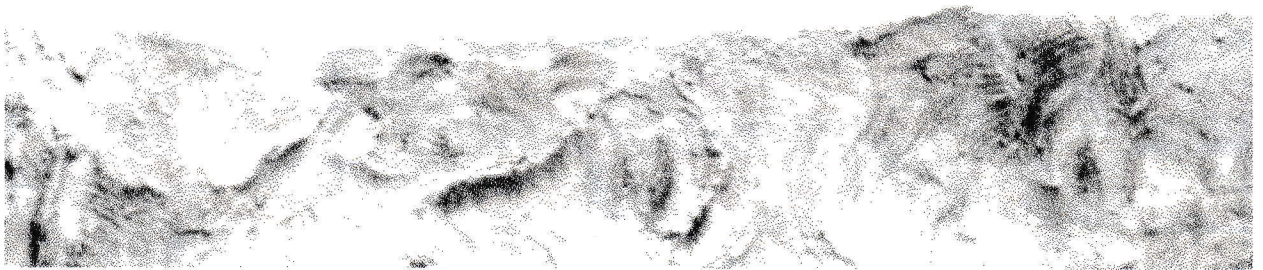
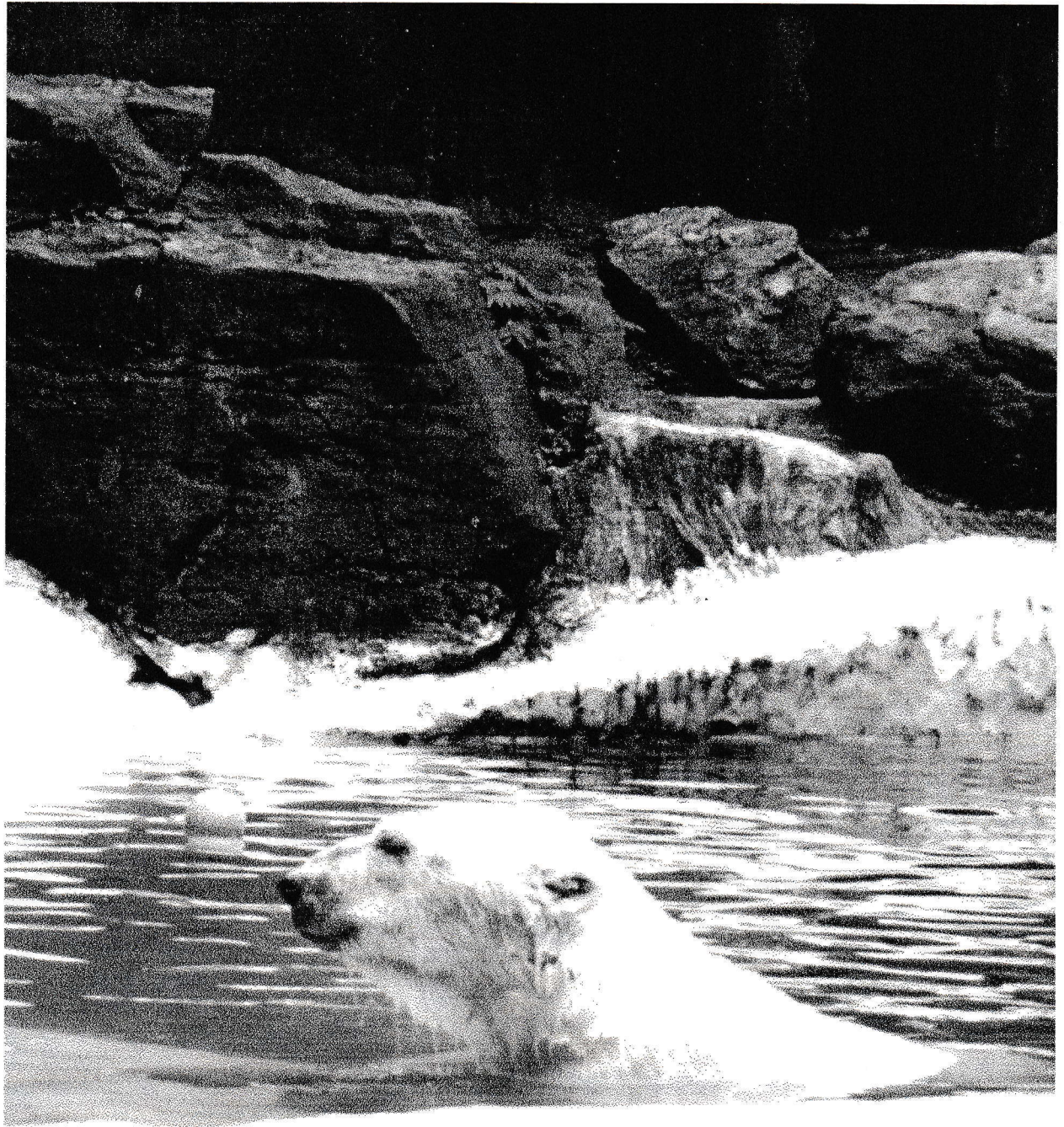
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Front cover photo: Polar Bear at Rest (at Home in the Bronx Zoo) by J.D. Rage.

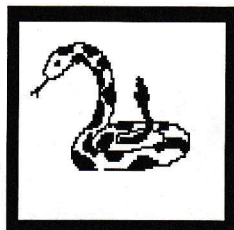
Back cover drawing by DONA.

Curare #4 is dedicated to the memory of Dean Snider who was totally enigmatic, of whom no known photographs exist, AKA: D.S. & Cool Cool Mr. Deano, wanted in two states for outstanding incidentals on a hotel bill and failing to pay the fine for an obscene t-shirt.



Photograph by J. D. Rage

J.D. Rage - Editor-in-Chief
Jan Schmidt - Editor-in-Chief
David Huberman - Sales Rep.
Ken DiMaggio - Consulting Ed.
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