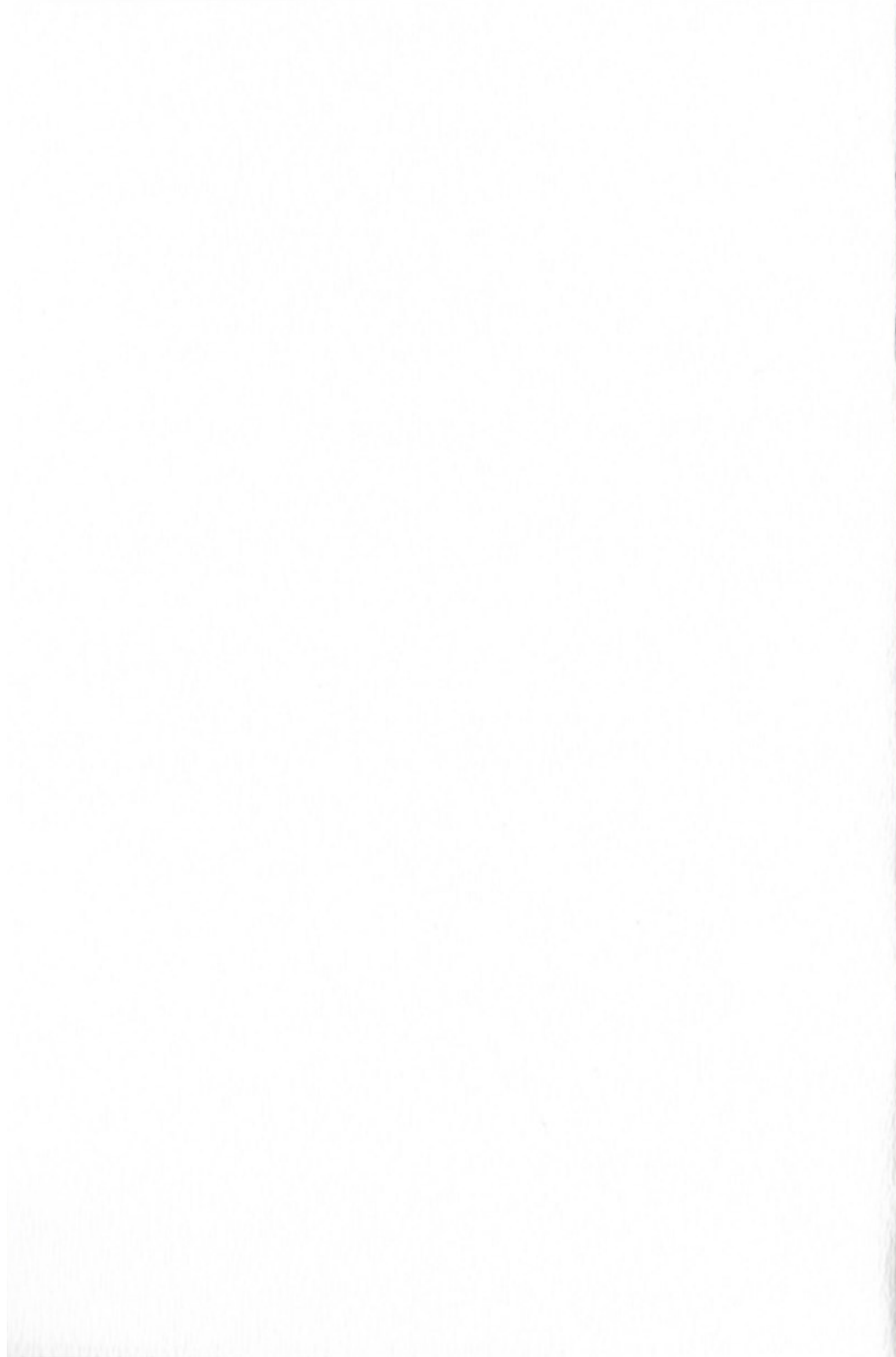




The Trinity University Review



The  
Trinity University  
Review

A Journal of Art,  
Literature and Opinion

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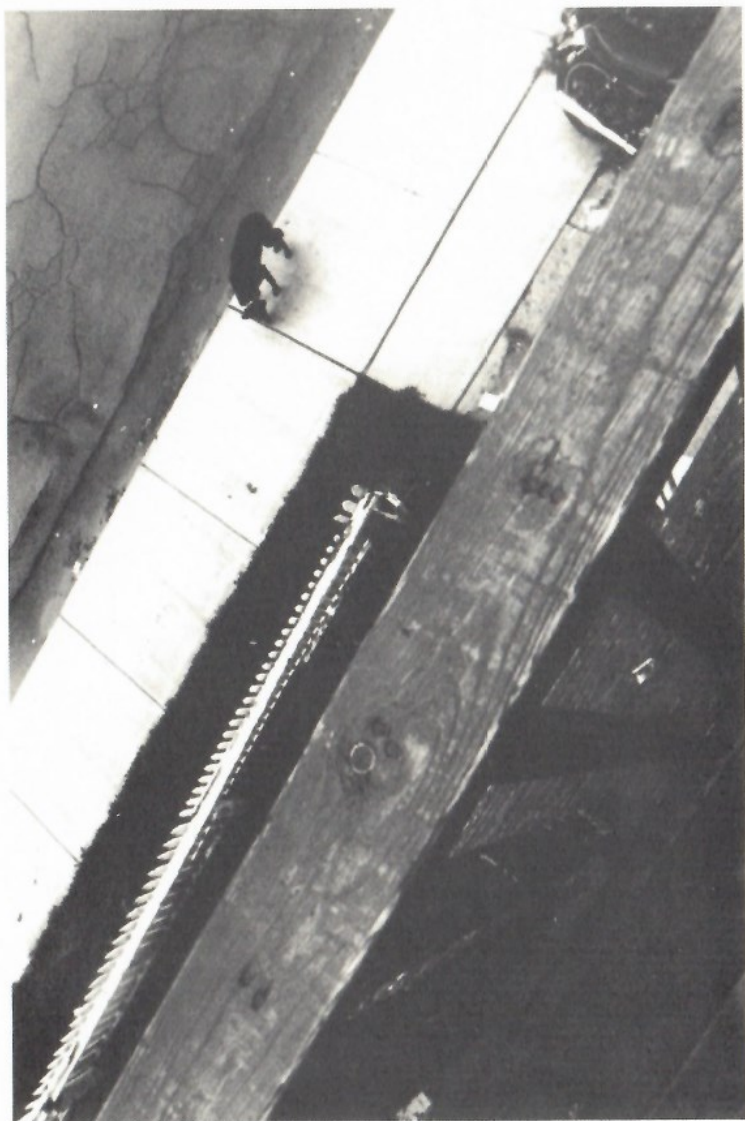
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David Maltby

## Lunch

They sat tight in a booth  
In a cheap restaurant where the waiter  
Was fey  
And served their love with disinterest  
She looked out of the window  
Hoping the sun would catch the bottled  
Red of her hair  
He looked at her and smiled  
His manly smile  
Through an unshaved face that showed the world  
That he was  
A  
Freedom  
Rider

Her blue eyes saw the smile  
And laughed  
Crinkling prematurely at the corners  
Like swallows' tails  
The waiter having achieved  
A date in the kitchen  
Served them their soup of the day  
In bowls that lived a chipped existence

The spoons were of stainless steel

JOHN IDE

## I am awake at once in the blackness

The rain leaps upon the roof,  
jabbering on cheap mission tin:  
the clamour of the monsoon at last.  
My little Ann must be frightened;  
I turn to comfort her  
but her cot is no longer here  
and I see she is married and gone

The quick steady rain slanting  
on the grey slate vicarage roof –  
a day of listless picture books,  
of turning to Robert: 'Yes we shall have

tea soon; don't play with those;  
soon Mother will be home with sugar buns'  
(yet Mother is away still  
although her daughter lingers here,  
caught in a gnarled body,  
awake at once in the blackness)

A black whirlwind to carry Shiva and Vishnu,  
come with crimson eyes to demand atonement  
because for thirty years I taught  
*barrajan* girls to shun their gods  
for the knowledge of reading books,  
for gym at nine and *Hymns of Praise*,  
for acquaintance with the fates  
of British kings and British queens.  
What offering can I make?

The dank rain of an afternoon  
in 1921  
when my father took me aside  
into the grey fastness of his study and said  
(his hand like a lover on his papers):  
'one cannot afford to send a girl to Oxford  
when there is also a brother to see to.  
Would you risk Gilbert's chance in the world  
for something of no use to you?'



In anguish my mind cried  
‘Then I shall go to India’,  
although I stood there  
mute and twisted and sharp thin  
bone inside my blue sack dress

and ‘oh my dear you do see’  
(his hand on his papers unfurled  
as if pleading)

I was a thin burnt tree unbent  
in the grey wind of his sorrow –  
ugly and slight and pitiless  
I flung his ‘my dear’ as a rock between us  
and offered no sign of release

‘Then I shall go to India’  
I said at last with effort –

and came back only for Robert’s funeral  
five years later and left still pitiless,  
with a schoolboy photo for the mission house wall.

Now the room is dark and correct.  
I have my television; I have the bronze monkeys  
from the Armaneggah market.  
The matron comes to see me  
and asks if I want dark bread or white  
for supper, whether my room is warm.  
Do I want anything?  
I want nothing, only to go to India  
(to spite my father in part I think) –  
that strange land where I have not been.  
I shall rise soon from this clammy armchair,  
when the ache in my back subsides;  
I shall go into the garden outside,  
the garden of India where I shall  
pluck the ripe coloured fruit  
from the trees and walk on the  
soft jade tapestry of grass where  
the gods of the earth walk in silk

with pomegranate juice running  
pink and red down their chins

I shall lay at the feet of my father  
pomegranates of love, betel nuts,  
and jasmine at his wrist;  
for company a fat and happy baby

(but the baby was weak and thin  
and he died before her christening  
at the shabby mission church)

I shall arise now and leave this blackness  
I shall walk with my god in the garden  
I shall pick white lilies for Shiva

ELIZABETH ELBOURNE

## Tears in the Scenery

Opening her eyes  
to the summerlit fields  
scattered with warmed over flowers  
she watched the trees go by  
and played with the scissors  
like they were chopsticks  
and her legs were the plate.

DORIAN V. THIEL



Tim Dallett



Joanna Pocock

## Pariah's Common

I used to have a little cat, and she always bit me when I cried. I told her whying and ling that whenever the sun set the night rose and to cover this with blankets was an obscene crime like tolerance, adolescence, and small mirrors. Candles lit his way as he walked into the labyrinth, but they soon were all extinguished in light of the rising Dow Jones industrial average. This he said to me in the canyon of Wall Street—one of those places where the sun never shines, I note.

I used to have a little falcon, until my mama told me what it meant to play with falcons, so now I just play with myself. The streets here are dark, I think, but not too dark. A perfume vendor stops to watch me. He has a girl in red on his arm. She is black – how it surprises me as his whores are always white. He explains to me that this bit of midnight is cheaper. He is a poor man now. Prejudice is beyond his means.

I used to have a little fish, until in a fit of benevolent passions, I fried it in a frying pan. My baby sister was disappointed – she missed its pretty colours. But I told her that to cry into the fish tank was useless for, there, it was already wet.

I used to have a little snake, but Joja said she didn't like the way it played inside her so together, we spliced it between strips of dirty celluloid and watched its progress through the projector. Curtains drape all the walls. There are curtains without windows and windows without views.

Mary keeps a piano in her pool and sometimes on rainy days I play her piano thus preserving the object within its function. He likes how the bright lights blind him. He likes how it binds him. I pour a bit of cream into the cup – it comes forth a lovely colour. Mama, why's it red, Mama? It's strawberry, my dear. It's strawberry, says she.

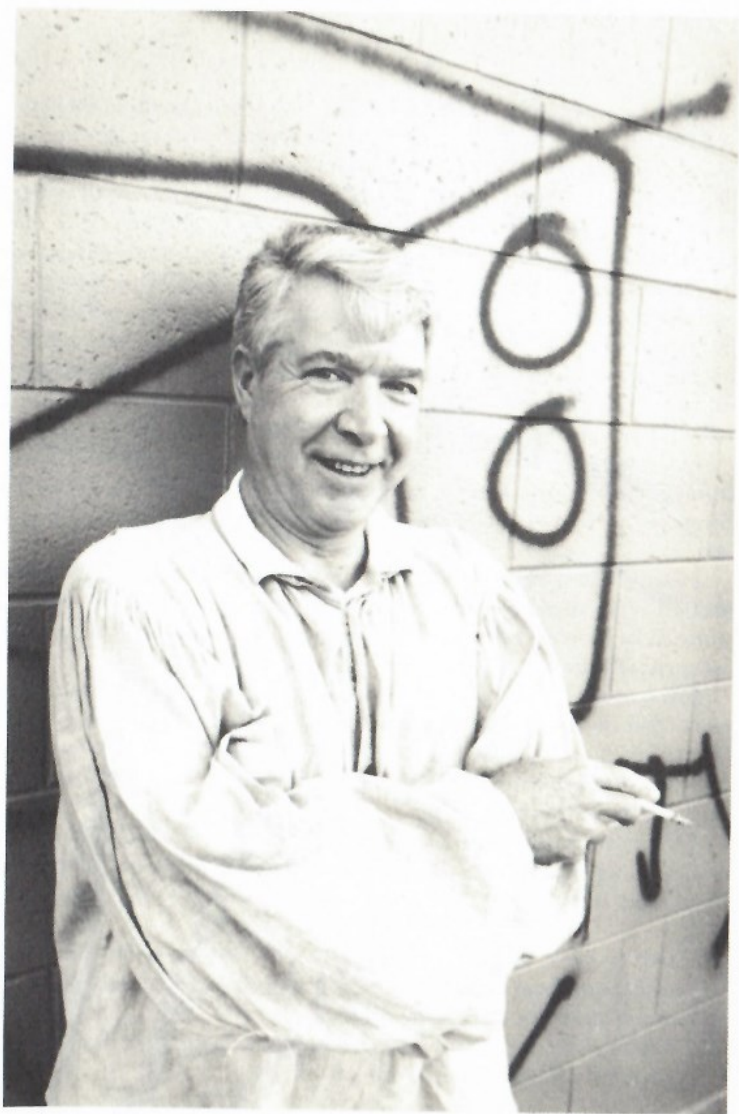
Chill in the factory in Kreuzberg. Holger slips a key into the corner of his mouth. She says, *t'es bien joli, mon petit con*. But he doesn't understand the significance of *con*. Your mouth without a key, says she. His mouth without a key.

I used to paint pictures on the t.v. screen. Papa used to tear pages from books and place them in his typewriter. It is better like that, thought he, hurrying because the water was getting cold.

I watch quietly as they put the knife in a plastic bag. Banal desires.

It is my blood's pleasure in a little cat.

HEATHER TAKAHASHI



## Interview with Timothy Findley

Timothy Findley, author of *The Wars*, *Famous Last Words*, and *Not Wanted on the Voyage*, was recently in Toronto preparing for a two-month tour to promote his forthcoming novel, *The Telling of Lies*, published by Penguin Books Canada. On a relaxed Sunday afternoon, Houlahan and Opper met with Findley at the Amsterdam Cafe.

REVIEW: You've published in practically every form possible. I was wondering if there's any particular form you prefer to write in now, which interests you more than the others.

FINDLEY: Yes. Very much the novel. The other form that I'm interested in that I've not had enough experience in is playwriting, which I really love and want to do more of. But once you start making your living, especially in one form of writing, then you get caught up in the – 'Well, we need another book now' – and therefore, because I'm a slow writer, I don't get the time to sort of do the plays, so the plays have to very much take second place, which makes me sort of sorry. I've got one sort of three quarters finished that I'm hoping to get to again when this next two months is over.

REVIEW: Given your position now as a novelist would it be easy enough to get that play performed? I know it's very difficult for a basic Canadian playwright.

FINDLEY: It's not so hard for me to get it at least paid attention to. I wouldn't for a minute say it's easier to get it performed.

REVIEW: I guess there's a kind of ghost that haunts novelists who try to write plays, that condemns the play to almost certain failure, or just sort of people burping and saying: 'Yes, how interesting.' I guess Henry James is the best example.

FINDLEY: Yes, of course he is. He was the one always with the great motto: 'Dramatise it, dramatise it.' I'm always being told that my work as a novelist is very filmic and also theatrical. I think I haven't written enough as a playwright to discover what sort of playwright I am. That's the problem. I honestly think I do have a talent for it and therefore I'm not concerned with the example you just mentioned, although I recognize that that is a classic problem.

REVIEW: Has anyone shown interest in filming any other of your novels, apart from *The Wars*?

FINDLEY: Yes. *Famous Last Words*, *Not Wanted on the Voyage*, and *The Last of the Crazy People*, too.

REVIEW: Has anything come of any of those projects?

FINDLEY: Something is in the process of coming about *Famous Last Words*.

REVIEW: That would make an excellent film – and everyone gets a winter in Europe.

FINDLEY: Yes. And I get to play Mauberley!

REVIEW: One thing that struck me about your fiction is that it doesn't

appear to brood too heavily on Canadian themes – muttering in the wilderness and drowning in lakes.

FINDLEY: No, it doesn't at all. I'm a great fan of Atwood's and I find her a great writer, very provocative, wonderfully evocative, too. But I am not that way oriented at all, and I think that perhaps she is less and less. At any rate, my own feeling is that the Canadianness in me comes about through my posture – that is to say, I am sitting here at this table. This is Toronto. I see from where I am. I am in Canada. My view of the world is Canadian, by necessity. But it seems to me that it would be madness for me to comment on that.

REVIEW: In Toronto, the rumbings about *The Telling of Lies* have been quite distant, but I gather that it is quite different from *Not Wanted on the Voyage*.

FINDLEY: Oh, absolutely different, and probably not the mystery that people are expecting. There is a murder, there is a sleuth, but to me it is very much a book about politics.... I don't, in this, follow the format of the whodunit slavishly, but the layout is there, the process is there.

REVIEW: Do Penguin expect that it will sell?

FINDLEY: Yes, they're very excited about it – I think otherwise they wouldn't spend the money sending me on this great long tour: two months and every little dot on the map is being covered, which I'm going to enjoy once I get doing it, but it's very intimidating also. It's alarming.

REVIEW: Does that mean that there is, in effect, two months out of your creative life?

FINDLEY: Yeah. I've started writing again in my mind – and of course you can't write in a car, and you can't write in an airplane. I distrust anyone who can. But I write in my mind in both those places. The PR for the book you've written coincides with the recuperation from that very book. As a writer, you go into a sort of slump – a post-natal slump – after the whole process of writing and delivering. Then you get a rest and your brain starts delivering again, and that's exactly when they phone and say: 'Now, this is what you're going to do for the next two months.' Which is sad timing.

REVIEW: Do you find that difficult then, talking obsessively about something you've psychologically transcended?

FINDLEY: Yes, although I still have lots to discover about anything I've done after it's over. That's when you discover what the unity was about. But that sounds very grand – but I'm sure you know what I mean. You don't really know all those things as you're doing it. When it's over, you slowly begin to think: Oh, I see, that works for the following reason, or doesn't for the following reason. I wish I had known that, I could have made it better.... You find all that out when it's too late.

REVIEW: It strikes me also that your work is very elegant in a way that is not that common in Canadian writers or modern writers in general. Do you find that kind of smoothness hard to achieve?

FINDLEY: Yes. That's the harshness of doing the work. The craft of doing the work is the demand you put upon yourself and it on the page. And I put a



very large series of demands on what appears. It's not something I even know anything about ... this is very difficult again to explain. That's what's in me. It's the voice that's saying: 'No, it isn't right yet.' And you recognize when it's right. I can't really tell you why I recognize that it's right; I only know that the first twenty-five times I do something it isn't right. The twenty-sixth time it will be.

REVIEW: Do you write longhand or are you a direct-to-disk author?

FINDLEY: I did this latest book direct to disk and didn't care for it at all. I never will again. But I will always do a second draft that way. I found that creating the first draft on the word processor you're given such an easy opportunity to spell it right, get the punctuation right, make it look better, and you're also seeing it shape up on the page in a way that you don't really see on a typewriter. You're constantly saying: 'Make it right now.' And the first draft should get written as fast as possible from one end to the other so that you see what the hell it is you're on about.

REVIEW: Do you have time to read?

FINDLEY: I never read when I'm working, except for research when I need to. All my reading is done in between writing assignments. Then I read masses. I read a lot then.

REVIEW: Mostly moderns? Or do you still read the classics?

FINDLEY: I'm not immensely well-educated, which is neither here nor there. I still have a lot of the classics to catch up on. And I very much enjoy all of them. There's nothing like knowing, recognizing, seeing what the great writers have done with what, after all, is a very small sequence of human events that any writer is given to write about. It's all the same. You know, we're born, we live, we die, we fall in love, we do all the screwing in the world. That's all there is to write about.

REVIEW: Have you ever regretted turning to writing, away from being in the theatre full time?

FINDLEY: No. Not a bit. I was very glad to get off the stage. I enjoyed acting in some ways, but hated the experience of being in front of an audience. I don't really care for it. Now, as a writer, I have to, in a sense, act being another person, because to get up as yourself and do that is the most terrifying thing in the world. There's nowhere to hide. You're there with only your words.

REVIEW: Recently the *Varsity* published an interview with John Metcalf in which he complained that Canadian writers had to wait until they were senile to be recognized by the Canadian public. Do you agree?

FINDLEY: Of course not. I mean, I recognize John Metcalf and he is not senile. I don't know if he recognizes me or not ... it's a path I wish he'd get off because he's so immensely talented. He's a wonderful writer. And maybe he shouldn't get off that path, because maybe that's what stimulates the wonderful writing. Of the cantankerous personalities in Canadian writing, Metcalf is the most appealing to me, because he does it so well. But I don't agree with him for one second.

REVIEW: If you had to go back to twenty years ago and think: Yes, I'm

going to be a writer – is there anything you'd do differently?

FINDLEY: I don't think so, except maybe one thing. I think that – and I may be quite wrong about this – but I'd like to think that it would have been wonderful to have gone to university, to have had a grounding in reading and someone pointing the way. It would have been very good for me and would have cut a lot of corners that I have had to spend a lot of my time rounding. But I can't say that I'd do anything differently. No, I wouldn't do anything differently at all. I'm evolving the way, obviously, I'm meant to.

MARK HOULAHAN AND KEN OPPEL

(With thanks to *The Varsity*)

## Sunday All Day

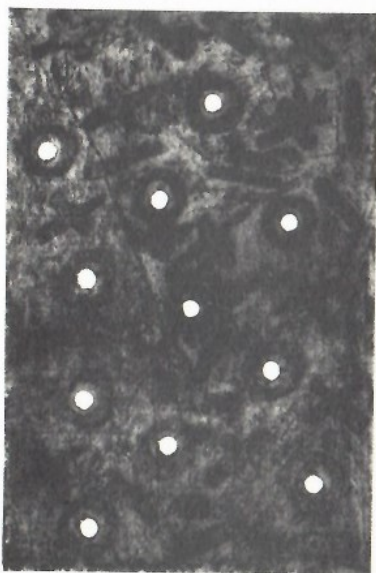
Grey, rainy Sunday in Vancouver  
When umbrellas, not people, walk  
Like artifacts from a mourning catalogue  
The inclined streets.

The sad man in the drugstore  
Makes the clerk nervous.  
She doesn't smile her usual  
For the paper I've come to buy.  
The sad man's skin needs a wash;  
He wears a dirty wedding ring bandaid,  
Needs a shave.  
He's buying lather, a dollar razor  
And hair spray or gel or dye –  
Whatever it is his wife,  
If he has one, told him not to forget.  
'Hang on a sec.'

The clerk avoids my eyes.  
I wish she'd take my money  
For the newspaper and let me go.  
Our eyes meet and I'm sure we think  
The same thing: has he really got a wife?  
This man, in the creased brown corduroy jacket,  
Dirty cotton trousers and down at the heels  
Running shoes.  
A can of peanuts, bag of chips, he puts  
On the counter. 'Least I remembered this stuff  
For the kids,' he says.  
'\$34.98,' says the clerk.  
He goes on talking; the clerk looks uneasy.  
I no longer feel sorry for him;  
I'm frightened.  
The clerk and I watch him  
Whip out his wallet, twisting his shoulder to me  
To conceal its contents.  
He hands her a Visa card.  
'\$34.98,' he mutters.  
'Yes,' says the clerk.  
She doesn't bother to check his number against  
The list people usually make jokes about,  
Saying, 'They haven't caught up with me yet.'

Her felt pen nib squeaks on the carbon form.  
'What's the date today?' he mutters as he signs.  
'The 20th,' she replies. 'Sunday.'  
'Sunday all day.'  
She slips the yellow form into his bag.  
The sad man goes out the door, whistling.  
I look at the headlines  
Expecting to see something about  
Christian charity or the current unemployment statistics  
In bold type  
Find only the usual accounts of earthquakes,  
Floods, shootings and sport.  
The clerk and I exchange something –  
Maybe just money. I follow the sad man out.  
The street is full of umbrellas, puddles,  
Overcast and rain. The sad man is gone.  
I look at the newspaper.  
The ink comes off on my fingers.

DAVID COPELAND



Linda Smyk *6th State IV*

## Charm

I asked whether the rain would come today. She only stared at the ashtray and the tiny storm her cigarette was making about her fingers. I had been sure she hadn't been listening. And then suddenly came her little gasp, the flight towards the windows, and the chair wildly whirling about the cheap tiled floor. The windows were reached and the scratching began long before the chair stood still. Scratching as if there was no getting to what was on the other side. Only brushing by as closely as possible. And then she stopped. Nothing had changed outside. It was still empty as always and perhaps the sun had moved a little closer to the canyon wall across the interstate. She just walked over, picked up the chair, and sat back down to light another cigarette. That night it rained like nothing I ever saw and we had to go out and patch the roof in the morning.

DORIAN V. THIEL

## The Place I Like

In the southeastern part of Poland, in the city named Lublin, there is a small university. This is a singularity: a private, church-supported school. The university consists primarily of one large building from the nineteenth century, with a pretty courtyard inside. This big courtyard is, probably more than anything else, a center of the university. It is covered with grass. There are also flowers and a few small trees.

I used to enjoy sitting down on the grass and simply being there. I would look at the white, high walls with many old windows enclosing the courtyard. I remember the warm southern sun, my friends with open arms, whom I would meet there, and girls whose lips I would kiss without saying unnecessary things.

The courtyard was also a place where I would watch various events. Some days it was a performing area, whether for an experimental theater or a jazz group. A circle of bursting-out-laughing people gave evidence that Brozek, a wise as well as witty person, a theology graduate, had told his new story. Sometimes the rector took a walk through the courtyard. He was a tall man who almost always wore black; a monk who, it was said, had a lovely mistress. Another time, there was a strike. Students, who occupied the university, were reading books and discussing topics of politics and philosophy. Some of them were playing the guitar and dancing in the courtyard at that time. Once I even saw Lech Walesa there as he met Czeslaw Milosz, who had then just received the Nobel Prize in literature. That day the courtyard was full of excited people. Many others watched the event from open windows. The sun shone as warm as joy that day.

If you could realize my one wish, place me for one moment on the courtyard, since I lack that sun, those arms, and those lips.

JAN KORAB



David Maltby



Linda Smyk *Tonal Mask*



## About the *Living Water*

I am I, the son of the mild ones.  
Mingled am I and lamentation I see.  
Lead me out of the embracement of death.  
— from Turfan fragment M 7

### 1. *Neume*

If there is, beyond the pale  
moon, I or another, there is  
a love unspoken, which speaks.

In the nave I heard it first,  
whispered obscurities  
under rock, buried from the start.

It was a time, or a place,  
or both. A catastrophe past  
or prophesied, lost to sleep.

I was young, desiring  
only a sublime ecstasy,  
the *suf-sea* breaking

in uneven plain-song. The chaos  
of erratic rhythms, a pause  
before the cock crows day.

### 2. *Heimarmené*

As I said, I was young.  
It was later I turned to song  
and to dreams: the writings

of traders and thieves, mystics  
all. Here I weaved mystery, for  
there was nothing to recall,

the birth before The Birth lost  
in an immaculate knowledge;  
the holy dust of strife that settles

the feverish with unearthly  
peace. Dreams corrupt desire:  
in still water the moon

conceals depths. This pale muse  
circling archeipelagoes  
with a chant inarticulate is

the unstilled song that sinks  
between the wave, is death.  
You have heard this before –

this, the catalogue of evasions,  
the laughter of languages  
strutting presumptions.

3. *Xēnos Kaloúmenos*  
The lunacy that woke me  
from dark slumbers called me  
by name, filled me

with terrible purpose.  
It bade me leave dead Egypt  
to compass the deceit.

This bare board lay swaddled  
in dank reveries,  
in groaning repetitions.

My voyage, my ship, my poem,  
patched against the *Aeons*,  
scorning the teeming garden, wary

of the moon, the fallen  
siren so entrancing  
in her blank shiftings,

turned in the blank eye  
of the inventions  
of the lunar shade.

4. *Peniel*  
Infested four-rigger  
of rocking half-rhymes  
and the anonymous

shiftings of as, common  
to all such invention.  
Rounding The Horn, tacking

against the Easterlies  
and weaving a furrowed wake:  
froth of turbid water.

Dawn beyond the noise,  
beyond the commerce  
of the wayward powers, here

dumb tongues flap the breeze.  
Here the futile stylus  
must turn in the wind.

If this dawn beyond  
horizons cannot be written,  
or etched in stone,

it cannot be named.  
Passing over this *Tibil*  
the light appears and greets

the lost traveller.  
No chiarascuro  
exists in such light.

#### NOTES

1. *Living Water*: In Mandeian (gnostic) writings *living water* is flowing water of sublime origin. It is probably taken from the *Old Testament* (Gen. 26:19, Lev. 14:5).
2. *Neume*: The *neume* is a short recapitulation of an air in a mode.
3. *Suf-sea*: Literally a reference to the Red Sea, in gnostic speculation this is allegorically the exodus of the *pneuma* [spark or breath] from the world. By the subtle vowel transition from *suf* (reed) to *sof* (end) it could be interpreted as 'sea of the end', ie. of death.
4. *Heimarmené*: A gnostic term meaning roughly 'the oppressive fate'.

5. *Xénos Kaloúmenos*: An untranslatable greek phrase. It plays on a double ambiguity, that of the noun *xénos* meaning stranger, guest or simply the dangerous guest, and that of the participial form of *kaléō* which indicates that the stranger/guest is either called upon or calling.
6. *Aeons*: The demons that oppress the dark (that is, this) world.
7. *Peniel*: The name Jacob gives to the place where he wrestles an angel until the break of day. Gen. 32:30.
8. *Turbid water*: A Mandaean term meaning literally troubled water or 'the water of the abyss [of chaos]'. This is the original matter of the world of darkness with which the *living water* mingled.
9. *Tibil*: A gnostic term for this base world. It is probably taken from the *Old Testament* 'tévéł'.

LINCOLN HOBBS

## Haikku

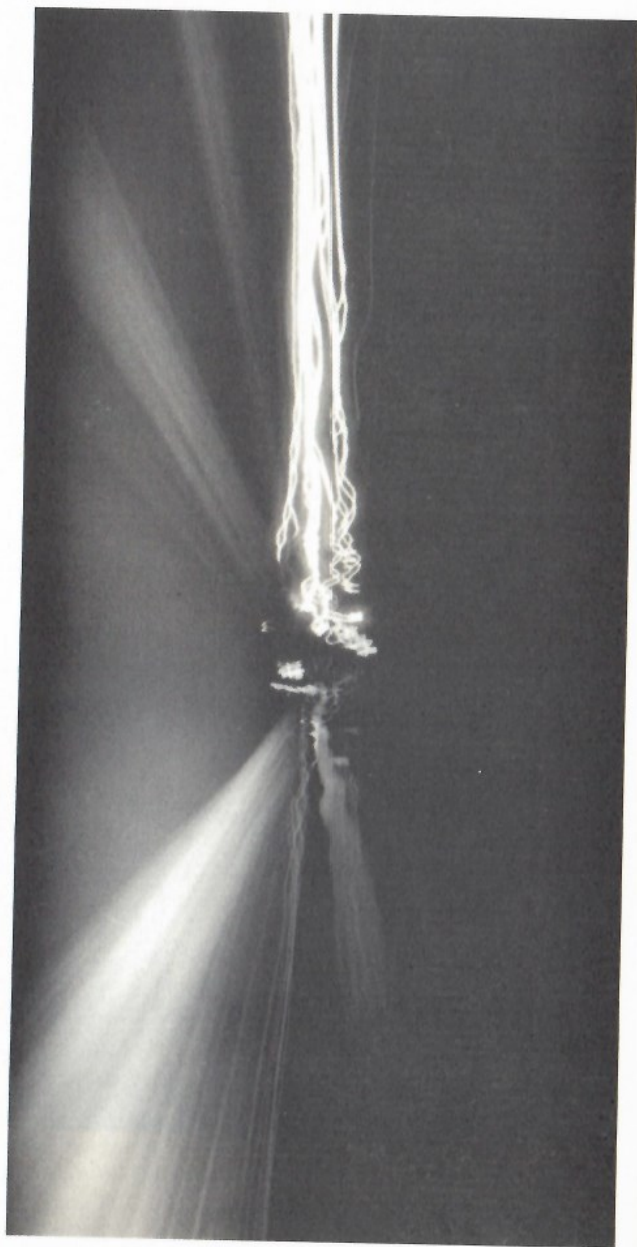
Moon in shadowy  
Splendour, laced up with the tips  
Of hard black branches.

With each gust of wind,  
A hidden painter spreads clouds  
Across the red sky.

JOANNA POCOCK



David Maltby



David Maltby

## Conjugating the verb 'to be'

Looks at twenty are money at forty  
Is health at fifty, is sex at sixteen  
Are toys at seven, a job at twenty  
Is 'to be' and 'have' and not be a 'has been',  
Is the essential urge to sum up God  
In a grunt: the all-saying, all-knowing cod-  
Philosophy.  
'The verb "to be" never  
Takes an object,' Mom always said. "To have"  
Does,' said Dad, 'And always tries to agree.'  
'Yes, but the verb "to be" never will have,  
Never could, never should, never EVER  
Takes an object - NEVER the verb "to be".'  
Slow nights she licks the soft wax from my ears  
Dancing our broken sign-language stammer;  
Says, 'Why ... did it take us so ... many, many years?'  
'Well, to begin with,' I say, 'My parents taught me grammar....'

DAVID COPELAND



Hilary Cook

## A Course of Studies

They'd get the ice cream vendor at the end of the street to tell them where the Protestant Cemetery was. If nothing else it would be an excuse to get out of the heat under the shade of his stand. Gwen wondered why it had been set up facing the monastery at the end of a dead end street; perhaps the monks were fond of *gelato*.

Roger was uncertain about asking the man for directions. 'We'll have to buy a cone or something, won't we?' He fingered the hundred lire pieces in his pocket counting his change.

'No we won't. Just go up and ask him. He'll be glad to tell us.'

Roger started off towards the stand. 'Aren't you coming?' he called back to her.

She was squinting at the light meter trying to find the exact setting for the camera. 'No. I want to go back and get a picture from the hill.'

He felt like a child being sent off on an errand. He made a joke to take the edge off his mood: 'Try and fit the Emmanuel monument into the picture. We want to know we've been in Rome.'

'Okay.'

When Gwen came back to the street, fastening the case on the camera her father had given her as a wedding gift, Roger was nowhere in sight. It was the first time they'd been separated in two weeks of travelling and Gwen felt curiously out of place. She thought of her family, remembering the last time she'd been to Rome with her father. Her grandmother had gone in for an operation the night before. It was still too early to call home and find out how she was.

Gwen heard her name being called. She looked to her right and saw Roger waving from the ice cream stand. He was sipping a Coke and listening to the vendor explain something.

'I was really thirsty,' Roger said as she came up to him. The ice cream vendor smiled, showing an even row of scaly teeth, and asked in broken English if she too would like something. Gwen shook her head, no.

'Well, did you find out where it is?' she asked as they passed out of the shade into the hot, mid-afternoon sun.

'Well no,' Roger admitted. 'He wasn't sure.'

Gwen gave him a sidelong look wondering why he'd wasted the price of a Coke on the old man.

'He seemed to think we had to go back this way - down that hill - and back the way we came.'

'But Roger you know there's nothing down there. We knew that much before.'

'Well.' He stopped to consider things. Gwen kept right on walking. 'We could try going this way,' he suggested as he caught up with her. He pointed towards a sloping street lined with lemon trees that ran away from the top of the Aventine Hill.



'Well alright. But I don't want to have to walk much farther. My feet are sore enough as it is.'

'But I thought you wanted to see the Cemetery – and Keats' and Shelley's graves.'

'I do. If it's not too far.'

The sun disappeared behind a cloud. A long shadow swept across the street with the breeze. The lemon trees darkened. Their rich, heavy scent rose in the air like waves of heat from the asphalt.

The street was empty save for a small boy who sat beside his bicycle at the foot of a driveway. He was licking an ice cream cone and spinning the back wheel. Roger saw the broken chain that lay beside the bike. He started towards the boy.

'Where are you going?'

'C'mon, let's give the kid a hand.'

Gwen smiled tolerantly and slipped an arm through his, holding Roger to her side. He gave her a sharp look, then relaxed and let himself be led away. The boy continued to stare at the turning wheel, fascinated by the shadow its spokes made on the hot, black pavement.

He was always doing little things like that, Gwen thought, smiling at her husband. He'd be late for dinner, then come in with a bunch of roses he'd bought from some girl he'd felt sorry for, selling them on a street corner in the rain. At the Market he bought ridiculous things – tuna for sushi, endives, or kiwi fruit – that she didn't know how to cook, use, or prepare. When they were first living together, during the year Roger took off from university to work in the bank, he'd squander his pay cheque in a record buying spree. He'd coax and bait and tease her until she was forced to give in and listen to them – all the newest groups: the Clash; the Cramps; the Cure – and then he'd be annoyed to find her listening to her 'old stuff'. After several months she'd persuade him to take most of the records down to the Vinyl Bin, or one of the other second-hand stores, to see what he could get for them. And then he'd spend that money on more records or tickets for a concert.

She found her reactions to his impulsiveness a means of measuring the change in her feelings toward him. What she had found compelling in his enthusiasm at first became cloying when they were living together. Marriage and the trip had made the difference. She felt things beginning again for them.

Yet being with him all the time, with no real time to herself, she caught herself feeling guilty at not being as involved and overtaken by things as he was. Unlike him, she couldn't feel drawn to the beauty of the Acropolis – not when it was hot and muggy and there were hundreds of whining children scampering over the hot, slippery, white stones. It was just a ruin to her; to him it was wholly intact. He saw its beauty, past and present, at once. He was in love with the idea of beauty; he was in love with love. She thought of those lines of Shelley's he was so fond of quoting about the 'unentangled intermixture of love and light'. What did that mean? It was all so vague and tentative. And yet she loved the look in his eyes when he said it. It was like hearing his smile in the

darkness of their bedroom when his eyes were fixed on the ceiling and some strange new idea had come into his mind. She tightened her hold on his arm. He smiled, turning to her, and squeezed his hand on hers.

She wondered what he was thinking. More and more she found it difficult not to feel older than him – especially when she was tired, coming home from a day of practice teaching, and he was waiting for her at the door, ready to spring some argument on her, rehashing some discussion he'd had in the college but-tery that day.

He argued every issue as if it were a question of principle. Everything was a point of honour with him. There was so much he felt compelled to defend. Gradually, she'd come to see that defensiveness was his way of hitting out at the world. People at the bank were corrupt; they'd been bought off; they lived for money.

And what did he live for? – dreams and a love of proving himself in debate. He took up one philosopher only to reject him for another. She was tired of hearing Kirkegaard's leap of faith confused with the Clash's lack of political commitment. Yet it hurt her to think other people might feel the same way about him and not take him seriously.

He studied Freud and analysed her dreams, her friends' dreams, then grew tired of it and pronounced the whole thing a sham. People saw him do that and then saw the way he argued the point and they either dismissed it or gave in to him complacently thinking it was useless to argue. They couldn't understand why it meant so much to him. He was like that with their marriage; there was no point in trying to convince people that they were only travelling, that it wasn't a 'honeymoon'. They didn't care; it was just a quibble over words to them. Their marriage was different: she felt secure in knowing that and saw no reason to lord that fact over other people. Past a certain point you couldn't convince people – past that point they began to wonder why it meant so much, if, in fact, you weren't really lying.

But it wasn't his fault. No one else knew how deeply he felt about their marriage or any of the other things he argued for. It was hard for him to live by those principles. They wouldn't give him credit for that. They couldn't see that none of his convictions meant anything to him until he'd acted on them, until he'd made them part of his life.

'Hunh. Now which way?'

They had reached the bottom of the hill. A broad boulevard stretched out before them. To the right was a traffic island and past that an ancient Roman wall. An enormous white pyramid made of lime, or some other smooth white stone, lay beyond the wall.

'That way, I think.'

'What does the guidebook say?'

'I wonder what that wall is,' Gwen mused.

The guidebook remained in her purse. Roger smiled wanly and looked along the line of her arm towards the wall. Her fine, long blonde hair stirred with the breeze. The mole on her cheek stood out against the lightness of her

tan. 'There's only one way to find out.'

They started off against the traffic toward the median strip. Cars whizzed past them. Their exhaust fumes hung heavily in the humid air.

'Maybe we should have another look at that guidebook just to see where we are.'

'Oh Roger you know what Daddy says about those guidebooks. That they're all written by blind old men for old women looking for cult-cha.'

He laughed. 'Alright, have it your way. All the same, I think I'd better go and ask someone.'

'Let's hope we have better luck this time,' she said lightly.

He didn't bother to reply. She watched him cross to the other side. She sighed and turned her back on him and took the camera from its case. She snapped the picture, pushed the film forward, then turned back to look for Roger.

He was talking to a young, smartly dressed Italian woman who stood by a bus stop bench. She was dark-haired and olive-skinned with a cold, pinched face. One hand rested casually in her light, khaki skirt while her other hand cut at the air, pointing and gesturing expressively. Gwen saw Roger smiling, saw him kicking the toe of his shoe against the sidewalk. The woman responded to his smile. There was a quickness, and eagerness to please, in her gestures. Roger was saying something. His Italian was so much better than her own, Gwen thought. A stinking diesel bus passed by them. The woman's face was guarded, sullen now: an inscrutable mask. She looked put-upon and busy; she hadn't any time for questions. Then a smile teased at her mouth.

Feeling guilty watching them, Gwen turned away. She stared at the wall noting the discoloration in the centre. The lighter side was the older of the two. Narrowing her eyes she could make out its cracks. Roger came up breathlessly behind her.

'Well?'

'She wasn't sure,' he began. He was breathing shortly from the run across the road. She thought of his allergies.

'You shouldn't smoke at all, you know.'

'No. I'm glad I'm not here. Anyway, she thinks we're right on top of it. It's right near here.' Seeing the absent look on her face, he asked if she had taken the picture.

'Yes. Look Roger, we're not getting very far asking people in the street. Why don't we go into a shop or a restaurant - I saw a *trattoria* just up the street. They'll be bound to know and we can get some lunch while we're at it.'

'But Gwen, we're right on top of it.'

'Roger.' She gave him a tired look and touched his arm. 'Please. We won't stay long.'

'Well, okay. But just for a half-hour, that's it.'

'Sure.'

They started up the street to the restaurant.

'Roger, do you think we'd have any room in your pack for that book I

brought back from the Uffizi? The catalogue, I mean.'

'I thought you were keeping it in yours?'

'I was. I mean I am. But with those figurines we bought in that shop outside the Bargello and my Anais Nin books and that necklace you insisted on buying for your sister, there's no room left.'

'But my pack's nearly full as it is. Don't forget there's my Klee book. And then there's the catalogue from the Acropolis museum.'

'Oh Roger, are you still lugging that thing around? It's so heavy and you know you'll never look at it.'

'Ah Gwen, there's so many beautiful pieces in it. And you know how long I've wanted to learn something about Greek art. It's important to me.'

'Roger.'

'Ah, Gwen.'

'You can always buy a book on the subject back home. I'm sure Edwards or Acadia will have something.'

'But it wouldn't be the same.'

They stopped at the restaurant's window and Gwen bent to examine their prices.

'Well, if you're sure.'

'I know. It's just that the Uffizi book is important to me, too. I've been thinking I could use it as the basis for a course of studies on art when I'm tutoring little Alonzo this fall.'

'Alright. Come on, let's get a move on.'

'Oh Roger, don't sulk.'

'I'm not sulking,' he snapped.

She fell silent.

There was a humid dryness in the air: he could taste it on his lips.

She saw the light reflect in his serious blue eyes. There was a still, lazy charm in his square, smooth face even when he was angry. She tried to think of some way to make things up to him.

It was a long walk back to the hotel. His throat was dry. A trickle of perspiration made its way down his back to his waist. He wanted a cigarette, but remembered the promise he'd made her in Athens to give up smoking for three weeks. He walked on trying to ignore the way the worn toe of his left shoe pinched his baby toe. He made a quick recounting of the money they had left, wondering if he could afford to get it repaired.

She was quiet - pointedly silent. He didn't have much patience left for her bad humour. It was her fault they'd missed out on Shelley at the Cemetery. By the time they'd found the place, after her lunch, it was closed. They saw a stone directing them to Keats' grave through a set of rusty iron bars. 'Well, that's another day wasted,' she sighed, walking away. She just left him standing there knowing, eventually, that he'd follow.

'Stop pacing.'

'Sorry.'

He dropped back into a red vinyl chair near the wardrobe and put his feet up on the table. The chair cushion stuck to his legs.

The phone rang.

'Ello, *Signora* Harte? This is the desk.'

Gwen frowned hearing the name and the man's struggle with the 'h'. 'Wilman is my name,' she corrected him.

There was a pause at the other end, then a muffled sound as a hand went over the receiver.

'Ah, *si*, but you are with *Signor* Harte, *non è vero?*'

'*Si*.' She pronounced it clearly and distinctly.

'*Alora*, I have tried again but we cannot get through to Canada.'

'Thank you.'

'Excuse?'

'I said that's alright. Thank you. Look, will you try again – in about ten minutes, say?'

'*Si Signora. Signorina. Bene Grazie.*'

'*Prego.*'

She set the phone down in its cradle and looked up to see Roger staring at an ugly print of a bullfight hung above the bed.

'They couldn't get through.' Her fingers drummed gently on the top of the headboard.

'It's probably just a bad connection.' He came and sat down beside her on the bed. He took her hand in his. 'Stop worrying. I'm sure she's alright.'

'I suppose.' She looked from their hands to his face. 'But we don't know for certain. It might be malignant. It could be anything. She's old, Roger – too old for an operation like that. Even if it's nothing she might still die from the shock.'

'Gwen, listen. You're not doing anyone any good by sitting here tearing yourself up.'

'What do you know about it? You've never had anyone – oh God, Roger, I'm sorry. I shouldn't take it out on you. It's not your fault.'

'It's not anyone's fault, Gwen. You know that.' He sighed, feeling the tension ebbing between them. 'Come on, let's go downstairs and have a drink.'

'No. Not now.'

'Gwen.'

He made a tragically worried face trying to coax a smile from her. She looked at the telephone.

'Now look who's sulking.'

She smiled at that. Turning, she reached out her hand and drew the back of it down his cheek. He kissed her forehead and moved back to look at her. Her eyes were large and wet.

'You go. I'll be down in a few minutes. Just as soon as they put the call through.'

'Sure?'

She nodded.

'Maybe I'd better wait.'

'No, go ahead. I'll be right down.'

He got up and started to the door, catching his wallet off the end of the bed as he went. Closing the door he saw that she wasn't watching him any more. She was staring at the window, listening to the sounds of the traffic outside the railway station next door.

Roger swivelled right and left on the barstool gratefully inhaling a cigarette he'd borrowed from the bartender. He knew he should feel guilty about breaking his promise to Gwen but the circumstances seemed to permit it. He wondered if she might smell the tobacco on his clothes. He held the cigarette at arm's length, letting its smoke drift back towards the rotating fan in the corner.

He thought of Gwen and how happy she'd be to talk to her folks again. She missed them so much. She kept their letters stored in the bottom of her pack. He was sure her grandmother was alright. It had caught Gwen at a bad time – that explained why she was so upset. Travelling wore her down. She tired easily. She was always looking for a place to stop. Her energy was all mental; physically she just couldn't keep up.

He rolled ash from his cigarette on the edge of the glass tray. Could there be something in it? – her tiredness and irritability? He smiled to himself and sipped his drink. No, there wasn't much chance of that. When the time came she'd have it all planned out: go at it like an invasion campaign. She wanted kids: just two of them – no more, no less, that's what she'd said. She wanted to have the first one before she was thirty. That would be in five years – ten for him. It seemed a long time. That was the only time he stopped to think of the difference in their ages – when he thought of having kids. They had an agreement: he had to finish school first. If something happened, well, that was that. He thought of the bank and frowned.

Of course the worst thing would be having them young, when you wanted to travel. They'd argued about that: she was all for dragging them along with her all over Europe. That was madness. He thought of a couple they'd seen at the Acropolis, taking two small children in a stroller up all those steps in that sun. It was crazy: the kids weren't getting a thing out of it and the parents weren't either. They spent all of their time wrangling away at one another and making constant stops for the baby who did nothing but howl all the time. And then there was the little one – Timothy, wasn't it? – who kept going off into the bushes trying to get himself lost.

No, the only reason for taking a pre-planned disaster like that on your hands was money. Gwen didn't understand that. She had an irresponsible streak about things like that – not just money, but things like keeping their health insurance payments up. She'd let that lapse. He'd have to do something about it when they got back. She got it from her father, he suspected. He'd lived in debt for so long that it didn't matter to him anymore. The idea of living off the educational grant didn't bother her at all. He felt guilty about it. It meant that he'd have to work for a least a year after finishing school. She said

the default rate was enormous on those things, that the government gave out the money never expecting to get it back. But that wasn't right. Not to his way of thinking, anyway.

He finished his drink and looked around for Gwen. It had been fifteen minutes by his watch. The bartender was busy preparing a gimlet for the woman on the stool next to him. He hadn't seen her come in. He smiled seeing the book protruding from her purse. It was a thick, paperbacked history of art. They'd seen one just like it in a stall at the Louvre. It looked brand new. He doubted that she'd ever cracked the covers.

She was in her early thirties. She was slim with red hair and dressed in skin-tight, white cotton pants and a sheer mauve sweater. An ankle bracelet flashed between her pant leg and the strap of her white, open-toed sandal. She pointed her toe and her calf muscles tightened the pants at her knee.

Roger asked the barman for another drink. The woman looked up hearing his voice. Roger smiled and tried not to look too obvious.

'I noticed your book. Did you get that at the Louvre?'

She blinked, then glanced at the book in her purse.

'That?' She clenched her fist and stabbed at him with a crooked forefinger. 'A friend gave it to me. He wants me to get interested in art.' She laughed harshly at this.

'Oh.' Roger blushed for her sake and wondered how to back out of the conversation. The woman touched her necklace. It was made of imitation gold and joined in a scrollwork name. Several fine freckles stood out against the necklace on her thin, white chest. She leaned down to her purse for some cigarettes and Roger saw her collar-bone tighten through her sweater.

'Is it much help?' He laughed uncomfortably as he said it.

'No. Should it be?'

The bartender set a rye and ginger between Roger's open hands and turned to ring it up on the cash register. Gwen touched Roger's shoulder. He started. She wasn't looking at him, he realized. She watched the woman on the barstool lighting her cigarette, then turned away.

Roger stared at Gwen and wondered if it were wise to introduce them. He didn't know the woman's name. The bartender set the bill in a water ring beside his drink. Gwen took it up without a word.

'You got through?'

She opened her purse and took out her pocketbook. 'Yes. She's fine. I thought you'd promised to give it up.'

They looked at the smouldering cigarette in the ashtray. The woman next to Roger blew her nose noisily on a crumpled kleenex. Roger looked back to Gwen.

'Come on. We're finished here.' She handed the barman two bills. 'Let's go somewhere and eat.'



Joanna Pocock *Two Figures*



Wind as crisp and cool as Sundays  
I remember walks among  
Snapping sticks and moulds of late summer.  
I and fevered wasps dizzy  
with smells of apple ferment  
on leafy grass.  
Sun a cooler sparkle  
Skies a clearer blue  
No haze to muffle birds and leaves,  
distant sounds of hammer and axe  
While inside my mind I am as other Sundays  
of late breakfast and reading,  
walks and cameras  
Raking the lawn on endless afternoons.

RACHEL LEANEY

hot and grey  
the august afternoon  
is so heavy  
the wind has trouble moving it.

difficult to define  
in her old navy trenchcoat  
her eyes wait empty  
as if she might spot  
the long lost cat  
in the parking lot across the street.

laura smokes anxiously  
unaware of her beauty  
and the margins in my notebook –  
we speak of nothing  
and decide that it will rain.

HILARY COOK



Basil Wieland *Bad Moon Rising*



