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perspectives

We grow sick of It, bored with It, inured to It. And thus we grow into a state of mind most propitious for its use. For nausea, boredom, and familiarity are quickly transformed into a grey fall-out of hysteria, while fear—as a deterrent factor—recedes as we become accustomed to its presence, unable fully to imagine the consequences of its use.

Meanwhile, the fact, so suggestive of third-rate science fiction, becomes more starkly outlined : its release, pluralized into the equivalent of several hundred thousand megatons (which the current stock-pile could easily achieve in this decade), involves a return to pre-history. As our most crucial problem, the Bomb offers a kind of second Fall as the consequences of losing our present end-game.

Of course, we are persistently being told that the "realist" solution is our only means of avoiding disastrous mistakes, and to be "realistic" in disarmament negotiation is "to go slow" : to proceed with such caution that progress is negligible — if any at all. So day by day, while our "readiness" increases through the development and diffusion of new devices (such as Polaris), there is no counter-balancing increase in our means of controlling and our reluctance to use them. For science can perfect the destructive process; it cannot expand our awareness or improve the responses of our clumsy emotions.

In the mood of our present situation there is a close parallel to the neurotic "esprit de guerre" which grew out of the accelerating arms race in pre-1914 Europe. There is the same unwillingness to disarm; the same policy of huge armaments feeding the belief that force is the only solution to international differences; and the same conditioning of military and public opinion to the inevitability of war. It was enough then for the murder of an archduke to begin a causal sequence which made a casualty of thirty-seven million. Churchill's remark at the time is strikingly relevant to our own predicament: "Almost one might think the world wished to suffer".

page three



PERSPECTIVES: *d.h.*, 3

TWO POEMS: *Doug Chambers*, 5

THE BROKEN REED: *Richard Howard*, 6

SOUTH AFRICA AND THE PRESS: *Norman Phillips*, 10

POEM: *Mary Anderson*, 15

GRENDDEL GREENE: *Rodney Archer*, 16

POEMS: *Nicholas Pawley, Shirley Allaway*, 18, 19

PASSAGE: *Brian Metcalfe*, 20

POEMS: *Joan Hawson, Bob Dinsmore*, 24

page two

Admittedly, the assumption that disarmament is possible and hence that total war can be abolished is most doubtful, a historical untruth. In the case of the nuclear bomb it has been illogically argued that the horror of its potential effect would preclude its use. Yet how easily we forget that it already has been used: that within a month of its first detonation a modified version of the present Bomb was employed in two heartless, mindless attacks on the prostrate home islands of Japan. The evidence of the past clearly suggests that war is endemic in human nature: an enduring formal mode closely related to those of religion, law and economic organization. The fact that world war is obsolete in terms of fulfilling any social function makes it the more absurd; but its lack of utility is unlikely to have a deterrent effect on governments which still think of "victory" and "defeat" as a matter of "national prestige".

What then is to be our personal attitude? To be passive — to treat nuclear disarmament as an ill-attended extra-curricular activity of the mind — is not only to precipitate catastrophe but to demonstrate our inability to choose our future and control the science which we have developed. The increasing complexity of military technology has two consequences; it leads many to assume that the solution to survival will be technical, and it discourages their political involvement by implying that any decision concerning the Bomb will be made on a level far removed from their own experience. But the bomb has no volition of its own and will only be used if, unable to restrain our leaders, we continue to tolerate the purblind "realism" and traditional balance-of-power politics which they promote.

In the strangled cry of Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago*, Lara points out that "the great misfortune, the root of all the evil to come, was the loss of faith in the value of personal opinions. People imagined that it was out-of-date to follow their own moral sense, that they must all sing the same tune in chorus, and live by other people's notions, the notions which were being crammed down everybody's throat". In the dilemma of the Bomb, to accept these notions is, implicitly, to become an accomplice in fatalism and admit the futility of continuing civilization.

d. h.

TWO POEMS

DOUG CHAMBERS

You, dawn's David,
Awaiting your Michelangelo,
Two loves, both thine and his,
Greek mind and loveliest Rome,
Wistful woman's gaze and slender farm boy.

Do you look for the sudden apocalypse?
The flight of a Jonathan arrow
Transfixing a Sebastian — Christ
Gazing forever white on a red cross
Enclosed in a wintry convent garden
Where no nuns laugh.



I am a naked flame of melting snow,
Twisted, Tiresian, on a patch of grass,
Bared to the agonies of April's sun.
Let me but leave the prison of my love,
And sing a budding leaf of rapturous spring,
An ecstasie of violets underfoot . . .

But you and your Philomela pass by,
Two sterile loves,
And I am crucified
Again.

THE BROKEN REED

RICHARD HOWARD

"Damn," said Irene petulantly. "We just can't go on like this indefinitely, what *are* we going to do for money?" She was wearing the inevitable baggy duster adorned with blue cornflowers—Irene had always liked cornflowers—and her neglected hair was of the same characterless brown as the toast she now placed before her husband.

Dwight Masterson surveyed both with a certain dull disdain, last remnant of a once-demanding fastidiousness, before replying. "Something is bound to turn up, dear. Meanwhile we're comfortable here."

His wife, now huddled over the sink scraping her own toast, made no response. "Who are we kidding?," he thought, reading assent in the disillusioned hunch of her shoulders. Her eyes did not meet his for the rest of the meal. Their fretful nibblings were metro-nomized by an annoying little wall-clock, exchanging banalities with itself in a corner.

Suddenly depressed beyond measure by her silence and the criss-cross accusations of a peeled, threadbare oilcloth, Masterson rose, heaving his flaccid bulk into a windbreaker. The screen door flapped behind him. Irene reached mechanically to empty his untouched cup of coffee. Then she settled herself again, scratching meditatively the dimple in one puffy elbow.

The sifting brightness of the autumn morning first invigorated Masterson, then tortured him. He expanded in the warm, dry air only to realize at once his unworthiness of it. He returned coarseness for its delicacy, and soured its indefinable hope with impotent despair. So overwhelmed was he that for a second he hung trembling on the verge of wishing away his own precarious existence . . . Then his mind fled to other and kinder Michigan mornings, in the days when the world had room for him, a desk with *his* name on it. If he had seen at this moment Jones, his old personnel manager, waving the

charred corpse of a Burns cigarello as he strolled to meet him at the lake, it is likely that Masterson would have embraced him with the greatest of good-will. Yet the human thirst for self-torture drove his thoughts back to the present. Rapidly thrusting from his storm-sleeves a pair of hands already mottled with middle-age, he forced himself to admit once more that he was, at fifty-five, a broken man. He recalled with a morbid thoroughness the events of the past few years.

On the first of October, 1956, he had been working for the Selfridge Motor Car Company for thirty years. He had started as an office-boy—how well he remembered squandering his first pay-check for a suit, Richmond Brothers' best, with two pairs of trousers. In modest splendour, he had fetched, doublebreastedly, the mail and coffee—"And get one yourself, son!" Young Masterson was destined, however, for greater tasks than these. A slow but comprehensive mastery of the art of office intrigue resulted in his emerging from the depression as head of the mailing department. This achievement was shortly to be followed by Masterson's introduction to the personnel division, one noted for job security and rapid advancement. These were the happiest years of his life. With a few night courses to his credit, he rose steadily until, a mere decade later, he was proud to call himself Jones's "right-hand man".

On his thirtieth anniversary with the Company, "the boys" had held a small celebration in his honour, and he had received humbly a minute token of the Boss's appreciation "for long and faithful service". He and Irene had dined, rejoicing, at the Statler.

On that very afternoon, the final brief of an efficiency report reached the mirror-surface of the desk of Henry Selfridge, Junior. Next morning, the jubilant Masterson, on his way to work, met his desk in the hall. It was on the way out. And the notice board carried a list of suddenly-extinct positions, including that of assistant to the personnel manager of Plant Four. Masterson, forgetting even to say the mandatory "good morning" to the commissionaire, stumbled blindly home. An anticlimatic rebate cheque from his pension deposits awaited him.

He and Irene went on living, helplessly, for the better part of a year. Jobless and childless, the couple declined the half-hearted offers of a few relatives and left the metropolis, moving upstate. Their refuge on the rural outskirts of Shingleton had been termed with the unflagging optimism of the real-estate agent, "a modest dwelling". It had all but exhausted their meagre resources. Since then, Masterson had done a few—a very few—odd jobs. Mostly he did nothing. His wife had found her career in the lethargy of middle-age.

The present's timeless grey flooded and confused these outlines in Masterson's mind as he became half-aware of the sky, now overcast. He found himself in one of those chilling darkneses that scar even the most perfect of autumn mornings. The lake, without the sun to excite it, had calmed. He stood on the shingle, a contemplative question-mark, seeking answers in the ghostly brilliance of the water.

He was so immersed in thought that his wife's cries failed for some time to attract his attention. With a numbing chill, he awoke to the reality of water, sky and Irene, who was shaking him frantically: "Dwight, there's a fire on the other side of the lake, and they want you to go out and help. Unless it's stopped it'll reach the cottage!" Irene Masterson's voice trailed off in a tiny, flat scream. Her imperfectly-felt love for her husband bent before a panicked solicitude for her broken-down bed and shabby sideboard. She shivered, convulsively. With a faint smile, Masterson turned to her. "I'll go," he said.

He was picked up within the hour, and left his wife with heavy boots and a curiously light step. By this time the fire had crowned and was descending on Bellaire Lake, flooding the far shore with predatory flame. The truck full of volunteers disappeared into a forest whose every twig and feather maintained an awesome silence.

. . . It was late that night when Irene Masterson again heard a step on her porch. "Regret to tell you, ma'am, but your busand was pinned by a falling tree." The old bush farmer was wearing a singed hunting jacket. Irene thought dully how exhausted he looked. "He's in the county hospital, hurt pretty bad. In the front lines the whole time, trying to stop the fire, a real hero, Mrs. Masterson." He supported her sympathetically, herding her into an ancient car with several other women. One of them almost managed a smile.

* * *

Two days later, the widow returned to her cottage. Her husband had been horribly charred yet incongruously peaceful. She had stayed dumbly by his bed, not understanding, indeed hardly aware, that Masterson's voice was firmer than it had been for months. Before the coma carried him finally beyond her reach, he had been trying to remember something he had read somewhere, or perhaps heard, about men being—what was it?—frail reeds, and nothing more. She had a vague sense of failure in not being able to return his confidence; it was as if he had found the answer to a question she had never even asked.

She decked her desperation in blue cornflowers as she started to pack. Then she made herself a cup of coffee.



SOUTH AFRICA

and the press

NORMAN PHILLIPS

A student at this college between 1933 and 1936, Norman Phillips was recently promoted from Foreign News Editor to Assistant Managing Editor of The Toronto Star. On March 21 of last year, the day of the Sharpeville Massacre, he left Canada to cover political developments in South Africa. Within three weeks of his arrival, the South African government suppressed his report on police brutality at Nyanga; and on April 9 he was arrested under its new Emergency Regulations. Protests, formally from the Canadian government and informally from the press of many countries, secured his release from Durban jail not long after. In the following article he recalls some personal reactions to the hazards of news-gathering in the Union.

The "questioning" took place on the third day of my incarceration in Durban jail. At the end, my interrogator, Captain van der Westhuizen of the South African police Special Branch, attempted an ingratiating smile and said: "I guess you probably know more about us than we know about you." It was an unusual compliment. The more so after the almost daily reminder from some citizen that no one could hope to understand the problems of South Africa without having been born, raised, and confined within the borders of the Union.

The captain was trying to extricate himself gracefully from a ludicrous situation. His chief, Major General C. I. Rademeyer, then

commander of the national police force, had ordered my arrest on the basis of a dispatch that had offended the sensibilities of a Durban postal clerk. The Minister of External Affairs, Eric Louw, had then got into the act by accusing me of poisoning Canadian-South African relations—a role for which I could not hope to rival his proven ability. Clearly, he was not in accord with Rademeyer (who fell victim to a diplomatic "illness" and was replaced three weeks after my arrest). Despite my undoubted presence in cell one, block A of Durban prison, according to Mr. Louw I was not under arrest but merely "held for questioning". Here was an opportunity to demonstrate that Mr. Louw spoke with truth. If he said I was being held for questioning, there would be no alternative; and van der Westhuizen, the head of Security for Natal, was assigned to the task of grilling me. He was armed with carbon copies of everything I had written in South Africa, my notebooks and address lists. The setting was the cheerless governor's office and the captain was accompanied by the Head Constable, Wessels, who had taken me into custody.

"They had some questions," the captain began. "In that case," I replied, "I'd better have a lawyer"—a response which van der Westhuizen parried by trying to assure me that questions weren't involved and that a lawyer was unnecessary. I had one other reservation—my professional oath never to reveal sources of information. In this respect the captain was almost eager to demonstrate his regard, while the head constable was so impressed by my pledge that before the session was over he was answering the captain's questions for me: "You can't answer that because of your oath, can you?"

The interrogation took a scant fifteen minutes and although it was obviously a device to save the face of the Minister of External Affairs, someone had briefed Capt. van der Westhuizen to include a homily on how to report conditions in South Africa. "You've been talking to all the wrong people," he complained—to which I couldn't refrain from replying that his colleagues in the police force had been the worst offenders in leading me astray. Colonel J. C. Lemmer, for example, Johannesburg's elderly and dyspeptic chief of police, had not only boasted of his power to conceal information but had also been caught telling me an easily disproved lie.

* * * *

A foreign correspondent must go to the police for information and the first person I interviewed after my arrival in South Africa

was a senior officer, Colonel G. D. Pienaar, who had been nominally in command of the police at Sharpeville on the day of the massacre. When I first met him three days after the shooting, the Colonel was nervous, irritable and under great tension. It was in the police headquarters at Vereeniging and it was only after I explained that I had flown ten thousand miles to find out what was happening there that he consented to speak to me. His version was my introduction to the stock theory that (a) no one from overseas could understand South African affairs; (b) that all Africans were savages; and (c) that the demonstration preceding the massacre was the work of Communist agitators. His delusion that Communism was at the root of his troubles verged on hysteria. After we left him, my colleague Gerald Clark of the *Montreal Star* told me of interviewing the chief of police after the Poznan riots in Poland. In his opinion, the only difference between Pienaar and the Polish policeman was that the latter was convinced that all his troubles were the product of Capitalist saboteurs.

Policemen are very much the same wherever you meet them. In Orlando Township outside Johannesburg I talked to two others: Captain J. Dewet Steyn, a vigorous, efficient officer and, under him, a dispirited detective who was watching his philosophy fail him in his last years before retirement. Steyn showed no weakness. He was a professional, trained to deal with mobs, and if he had been in command at Sharpeville there would have been no slaughter. I watched him break up a stone-throwing crowd at Orlando where his technique was a classically simple use of minimum force. He had full control of his men, a small disciplined force which could easily control a much larger undisciplined demonstration. The detective, on the other hand, presented a different case. Returning to Orlando on the night of March 28, the windshield of his car had been shattered by a stone. He could not understand, he said, why it had happened to *him*, a man who had never used the sjambok unnecessarily.

* * * *

In addition to the police, a foreign correspondent automatically looks to the local press and wire services for information. For its day to day news about South Africa the world depends mainly on the U.S. Associated Press and United Press International, and on Reuters who draw on the South African Press Association. In the freemasonry of the world of journalism, it is customary for the foreign correspondent of a reputable newspaper to receive every courtesy from local newspapers and wire service offices. The South African

Press Association not only expressly refused Gerald Clark and myself an opportunity to look at the reports they were sending abroad but also thought it necessary to call the South African Government Information Service and inform it of our presence in South Africa.

In contrast, the South African English language newspapers were most cooperative. The only exception, and that was understandable, occurred at Capetown. At two a.m. one morning after we had written our stories, I called the Cape Times to check whether there had been any recent developments that we had missed. The editor to whom I spoke refused to speak on the telephone but suggested that if we called in person and identified ourselves he would assist us. We went to the newspaper office in an expectant mood, believing that the refusal to talk on the telephone indicated some major development was taking place. It turned out, however, that this was just a routine precaution for fear the conversation would be tapped by the police and the paper accused of supplying information to overseas correspondents.

Once our attention had been called to it, telephone tapping seemed to be an integral part of the South African way of life. Figures were quoted for the substantial sums in which the telephone service had invested for tapping and recording devices; private citizens displayed a reluctance to use the telephone except for the most innocuous calls; and I was able to hear for myself the sound of recording machines on the lines of people who took an interest in politics. Frequently, I was asked not to call a contact by telephone but rather meet him in person.

* * * *

From a professional viewpoint, and a rather jaded one at that, the most refreshing experience in South Africa is encountering the magazine called *Drum*. In an era when newspapers seldom crusade and when reporters depend on public relations officers for information, *Drum* and its Editor Tom Hopkinson practise an intrepid and purposeful brand of fundamental journalism. In North America it would be called muck-raking, an almost forgotten tradition established by Lincoln Steffens, a relentless exposé of corruption of all sorts. *Drum's* factual reporting, its enterprising unveiling of the seamiest aspects of Apartheid and its delightful pin-ups, form a mixture which rouses torpid instincts in any newspaperman.

Most South African journalists whom I met knew their subject

and would dearly have liked to write as they saw. Amongst them are some of the most courageous journalists in the world but too many have become inured to the daily indignities they see. Their shock mechanism no longer works. As one told me, "We are immunized against shame". Certainly one of my most embarrassing moments in the Union was when an editor summoned an African office boy to expose his ignorance and indifference to politics. This performance was intended to disabuse me of any misguided notion that the average African wanted a vote. But it only served to display the lack of communication between the white South African employer and his black African employee.

* * * *

Despite Mr. Louw's conviction that foreign correspondents, like locusts, descend on the Union too frequently and with the sole intent of calumnizing the country, my experience is that most of my colleagues lean backward to give the Nationalist government an opportunity to present its case. One rival of mine from a Conservative journal was presented with Father Huddleston's *Naught for Your Comfort* on his departure from Canada. He religiously refused to read it for fear of becoming biased. His eyes were opened when the Johannesburg Stock Exchange took him to its respectable bosom and one of its members introduced him to an underground radio broadcasting unit.

The Canadian correspondent works under the disadvantage of being out of touch with his editors: cable service between South Africa and London is vastly inferior to that between London and Toronto. Wondering about the quality of my work and hampered by the South African authorities, I was cheered one day at lunch in Cape Town when I overheard a diplomat remark that his best reports had been written during his first month in the Union. Since then his impressions had become blunted and only after two years did he feel he had regained the same standard of objectivity. In my own case, I have library shelves full of South African novels, non-fiction and pamphlets, as well as being familiar with the carefully documented studies of the South African Institute of Race Relations. I also had a grandstand seat for last spring's brutality and an inside view of the prison system. But I still find it immensely difficult to convey to Canadians and Americans the detailed enormity of Apartheid. Again and again I am asked: "Did you share a cell with negroes?"

To be a little hurt
Is to-day's gift. It will convert,
No doubt, into the satisfaction of a poem.
But I sometimes wonder,
How many hurts is too great a number?

Grendel Greene

Modernized from an original Romance by Mal-Awry, of which we have only the first sentence remaining "Whilhom there wonned in the foreste a mayden yclept Grendel Greene."



Grendel Greene lived all alone in the forest surrounded by trees. She was very impersonal. Whereas some women have faces which can be compared to sonnets, hers could only be compared to blank verse. Certainly she had something of the poetic about her; her eyes were so close together that they looked like a rhyming couplet. She was as efficient as a metronome and all day she sat combing her hair which was so long that she had no need of clothes—she just tied a piece of cord around her waist and it looked as if she was wearing a blouse and full-length skirt. She never saw anyone in the forest but, being a heremite, she didn't care. She loved the animals in the woods and it would have been wrong to say that she was totally uninhabited because during certain seasons of the year she looked rather like a bird-house. When it became very, very hot, and impractical to wear a full-length skirt or blouse, Grendel braided her hair into a swimsuit and looked bikinalian.

As the years crawled by Grendel's hair grew longer and longer until she was forced to take it up, rather as other women take up the hems of their dresses, for she never once dreamt of cutting it; she was very attached to it (by this time it was so long she had to be—she looked for all the world like an immense pony tail). And so life went on and Grendel lived happily in the woods, the envy of all the other animals.

One day a knight mounted on a buttermilk palfrey entered the forest where Grendel kept her lair. His name was Sir Spearlitttle, an illegitimate son of Sir Lancelot. He looked rather like a pumpkin and in this respect no one could hold a candle to him, though he was much less marrow-minded than the typical pumpkin. At this time he was very unhappy and was continually sighing "Woe", while Winnie



his horse, who was a very odd-looking animal indeed, her mane problem being that it had none (and surprisingly enough no tail either), had a very negative attitude which manifested itself in frequent "nays". Their relationship was not as stable as it once had been, although Winnie still stood her master in good stead. But when Spearlitttle entered the glade, at the very moment that Grendel was combing her dress into place, he was immediately struck with the Greene sickness. Grendel likewise; for her, it was love at first knight. Leaping off his palfrey into Dame Flora's lap, he rushed over to sport on the green and he and Grendel busily began to make plans for their future; Grendel would leave her animal friends and come to live with him and the Knights of the Square Route in the beautiful city of Comelittle, which King Arthur had passed on to the gallant knight, Gailyhad, and his fair bride, the Lady of the Lack.

As they were thus planning their future happiness, Spearlitttle suddenly looked troubled and rising like yeast he looked down at Grendel, anger stamped in paisley patterns over his pseudo-aquiline features. He stammered, stuttered, lisped but finally said that, much as he loved G.G., he could not take her to Comelittle unless she cut her hair to a more reasonable length in compliance with the fashion of "court" hair. Grendel curled her upper lip in anger and, with sparks issuing from her eyes in such profusion that she nearly set herself on fire, she refused to be pinned down to any such stipulation. She would have dyed rather than agree to his proposal. Spearlitttle, much taken aback by this, but seeing the situation could not be altared, gazed down at Grendel, who was combing her dress again, and said that the time had come for a parting of the ways. He said her obstinacy was cutting; with this brush-off he removed from his finger the ringlet which Grendel had given him to symbolize their love. Never had

she been so upbraided, especially by another! There was nothing to do but to say goodbye. At this very moment, Winnie, unable to resist Grendel's magnificent hide any longer, began cowlicking her. Grendel reared about quickly, her hair standing on end, a situation which was, at bottom, most indecorous, and was preparing to slap Winnie across its extremely wet snout, when a brilliant idea struck her: she would cut her hair, and have a mane and tail made for the horse. Of course this could not be done until Grendel had been given some new clothes, but, until then, Spearlittle and Winnie were content to have her ride behind her betrothed with the back of her dress loosened to hang over Winnie's rear, and tied with a ribbon at the very point where the palfrey's tail should have been. They all agreed that this was the permanent solution and so the three of them side-saddled out of the forest to live happily ever after.

If the reader is looking for some meaning or moral behind all this, he has his choice of three: (i) if he happens to be a horse, he cannot in this day and age go around licking ladies and hope to be anything but misunderstood, (ii) if he (or she) happens to have ankle-length hair, then it is advisable that he have it cut to waist length, (iii) if his name happens to be "Spearlittle", he might seriously consider re-baptisement.

RODNEY ARCHER

In the old park
with the old trees
and the old paths
the old men sit
and watch the birds
feed on crumbs and
fly.
When summer comes
they sit on stones
each winter day
they die.

NICHOLAS PAWLEY

SEA-ESTRANGED

No salt air
That blows through hair.
No high brown rock
That overlooks
The hissing foam.

No flapping sail
To give the thrill of wind,
Catching us afloat,
Slipping the hull
Over gurgling water
Into the lurching waves
Beyond the harbour.

I cannot go in the morning
Down to the water
That is one
With the seven seas
That flood the earth.

The air is insipid,
Landsman's air.
No hint of spice or heat
From far-off separate lands
That will enslave the stranger
With his greedy orphan's eye.

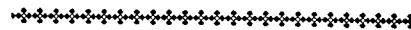
I am lost
On immediate earth.
A heavy, glaring sky
Buffets—
With alien wind.

Cry to the sky
Carry my sound
To the salt sea.

There,	In the sun
Rain has fallen	Men are meeting
Washed the air.	At the water's edge.

SHIRLEY ALLAWAY

PASSAGE

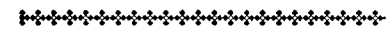


The sequence of events I am going to recount seems incredible. It is, nevertheless, true. You see, I was the principal in its slight drama and such first-hand knowledge should not be taken lightly. For I am about to tell you how I died—an eye-witness account, you might say.

The cause of my death is not important. I was struck by an automobile, a Volkswagen actually, which is rather humiliating. In retrospect I'm sure that I provided a spectacle for anyone who happened to be watching: blood, agony, and that sort of thing. To me such a scene would have seemed quite distasteful, but unfortunately I remember nothing of the short period immediately after the impact. I imagine that I was transported with speed from my position on the pavement to a hospital. At any rate, my next impression was of a brilliantly lit operating room, and several masked, mildly interested faces staring down through the light. My return to consciousness was noticed, apparently, for one masked figure asked quite decently how I was feeling. Not too bad under the circumstances, I remember thinking, but whether I managed to translate the thought into words I cannot tell. Then I became vaguely aware of some activity around me, as an anaesthetist's mask was placed over my mouth. With logic I concluded that an operation was about to be performed. I then lost consciousness for the second time.

I hesitate to describe my next sensations to you. I suppose under normal conditions they would be classified as a dream. Anyway, let us proceed under this assumption.

I remember walking down a dirt road in an unfamiliar country. It was a lonely region, and night was approaching. Therefore, you can understand the relief I felt when I saw at the side of the road



BRIAN METCALFE

a sign post, which informed me that the nearest town was two miles distant. I remember wondering at the name of the place, trying to identify it in my mind. It was an odd name, so by this time I have forgotten it. But I decided no matter what town it was, there would surely be someone there to take me in for one evening, at least until I could get my bearings and proceed on my way. It struck me then that I had no precise idea of just what my way was. Where was this road taking me? From time to time I had been passed by vehicles heading in the same direction as I was. But none would pick me up. After a while I became aware of a definite similarity amongst them all. Each was a long, black coach, with silver windows and silver trim. Evidently I was passing through a country of prosperous people, although I must say that the appearance of the land did not bear me out in this. The vegetation was sparse and limited. Certain blackened stumps showed the area had been ravaged by fire. As I journeyed I remarked the absence of any wild life—song birds or other creatures which used to heighten the pleasures of a country excursion. The sun faded and the evening air grew colder. With a slight shiver I lowered my head and walked on.

Half a mile further I encountered an obstacle which put an end to my journey, for that day at least. I approached a river which crossed my road and formed a gulf of some fifty yards. It seemed odd to me that there was no bridge, but I did notice a large ferry tied to the bank. A short distance from the river sat a squalid hut which I supposed was the ferryman's lodging. Transportation across the river being unlikely at that hour, I went up to the cottage intending to see if I could obtain a room for the night. The door opened in response to my knock and the ferryman appeared, a very old man with tattered clothes and long unkempt white hair. He stared at me intently and asked in gruff tones what I wanted. I

was taken aback by the person's manner, which seemed insolent, but told him what I needed. He looked at first surprised and then reluctant, but after considering a moment, he motioned me inside without a word, and indicated a mat for my use. His provisions for hospitality were inadequate. He offered me no food, nor did I see evidence of any in the cottage. But then I realized that I was neither tired nor hungry. When had I last eaten? I couldn't remember. Upon looking back I found that I could remember nothing before my sudden appearance in this strange land. As I relaxed in my reflections I fell asleep again. And I dreamed as I slept.

The first sensation of my dream was a smell, a pungent, familiar smell. Then my eyes opened and as I looked around me, the sterilized features of a hospital room took shape. Recollection overpowered me in a cold sweat, and I identified the smell. All that had happened came back to me. But even as I thought these things my impressions of them grew misty and my mind seemed to enter another consciousness. The scene in the hospital and all that had come before was blotted out and the country road, the cottage, and the hard mat became real to me. From then on my thoughts became more and more confused. Before me paraded a succession of figures shrouded in dusk: nurses, black limousines, a gray-haired old man and a blood-drenched automobile. Now began a period of conflict: those two themes that ran through my mind would be resolved, and the resolution was at hand. While at first the unknown composer gave alternate ascendancy to these themes, gradually the impression of the gloomy cottage dominated, and the resolution was complete. Once again I sensed the eyes of the ferryman on me, staring through the night. Occasionally masked faces peered down at me from above, but soon those masks merged into dirty white hair and the mildly interested eyes took on a piercing fascination as the ferryman appeared. As this process

continued I became aware of a blood-red light coming from I know not where. Then I felt I was being shaken and a gruff voice told me to get up and prepare to cross the river. As I arose I saw that the early morning mists diffused this unusual red colour. I asked my ferryman about this but he replied that it was natural there. As we went down to the boat I speculated on possible causes of this phenomenon, with little success.

Before we embarked on the water, the ruffian demanded his fee. Turning a sceptical eye to his ferry, which was rusty and leaked badly, I asked his price and then, uncertain of my means, gave him all the money I carried. He seemed satisfied with this and began the crossing. I wondered at the ease with which he poled the boat through the water. His age and the absence of sleep the previous night would have rendered any ordinary man incapable of such continued effort. I asked him, by way of conversation, if he had much traffic over his river. After a peculiar pause he answered that everyone crossed it, sooner or later. I was understandably surprised at this statement, but attributed the ridiculous exaggeration to the old man's isolated life and rustic naïveté. Then I asked about the town which was my destination, whether anyone there would be willing to care for a destitute stranger. At this point the man gave a sardonic smile and remarked that I need not worry over my reception. He mentioned some local dignitary in particular who would be glad to see me and spare no effort to provide for my stay with him, no matter what its duration. I couldn't help but wonder at the strange manner of his speech. Suddenly my anxiety increased as I grew aware of the smell of an acrid smoke. I raised my eyes to the further shore and saw the landscape dotted with fires. Now the sky seemed to be a mantle of fire. In the distance a dog roared, with a voice thrice the power of any I, or you have heard.

Indifference

Snow annihilates the world: a night,
And hills are gone as they had never been,
Beneath the blank oblivion of white.

Shall I then my questing soul oppose
To zeros absolute and undefined,
The dread indifference of the silent snows?

For souls have vanished there and left no trace,
Sinking lost into a nothingness
And shrouds of snow are smoothed across
the place.

JOAN HAWSON

Sin

I stepped too close
And stretched a trembling finger
To touch a dancing flame.
My hand recoiled
quickly hot,
The hair between my knuckles
Brown and singed.

But the flame danced,
Attracting, luring,
Dancing with orange,
A veil of gauze
Of red and orange.

I stepped close,
Cautiously,
And my whole hand extended itself
To burn in the dancing flame.

BOB DINSMORE

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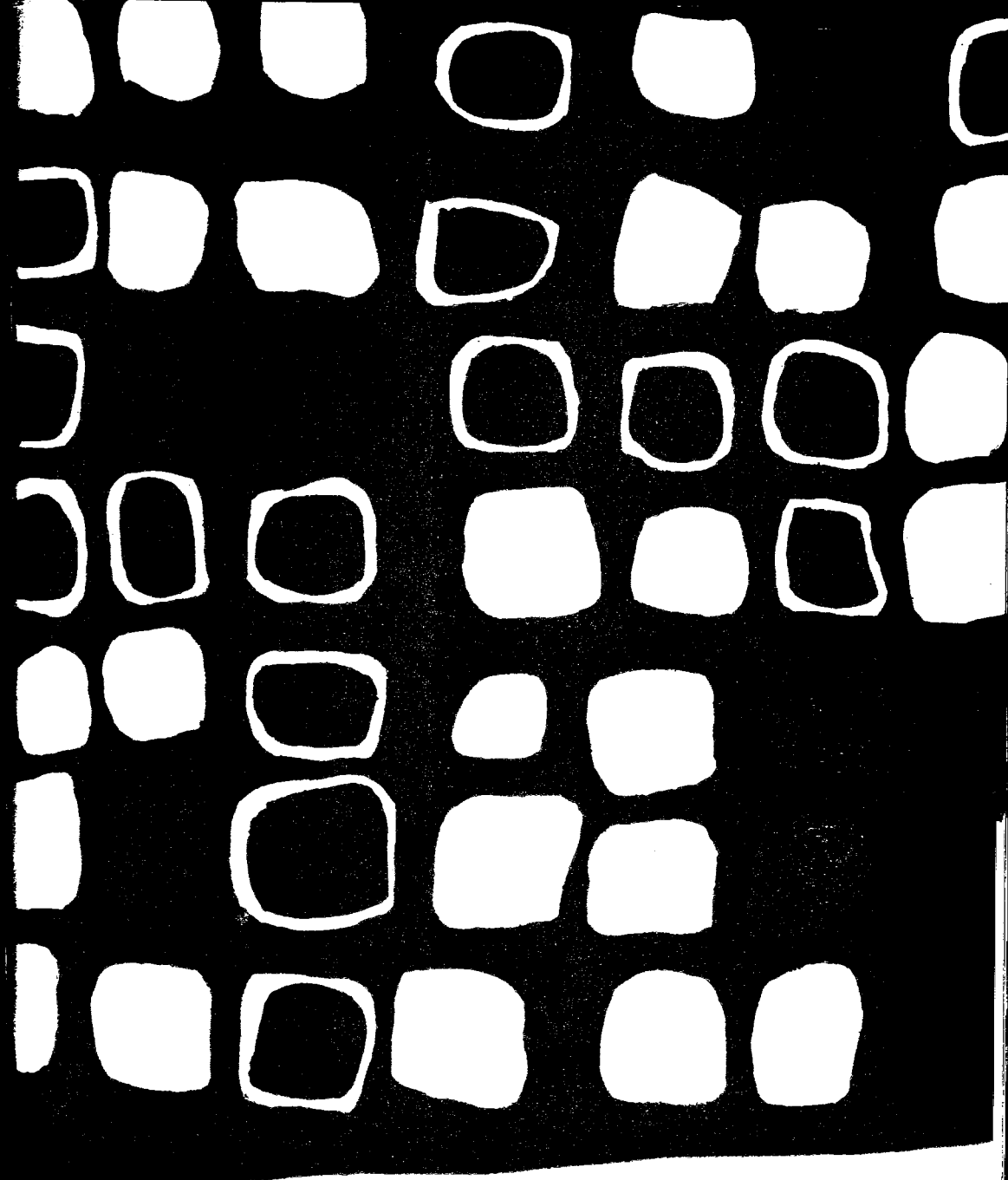
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are planted and the furthest hills.

You'll find it in the cities and around where Atlantic
traders come to trade, where the land is

rich with life. You'll find it in the east where, every
evening, the sun sets over the ocean.

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along the coast, the big cities, on the fringe of
the big cities, the big cities, the big cities.

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