

# PULSE





# PULSE

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ELEANOR POETRY AWARD  
Murder in the Bookery . . . W. W. Pratt, Jr.  
PULSE POETRY AWARD  
Idea . . . Mark Pittel  
2nd PLACE AWARD  
Navaho Poem . . . Terry Morrison  
3rd PLACE AWARD  
About Adolescence . . . Sherry Ward  
PULSE SHORT STORY AWARD  
The Visit . . . Jacqueline Ponder  
2nd PLACE AWARD  
Portrait of a Silent Departure . . . Debby Hackaman

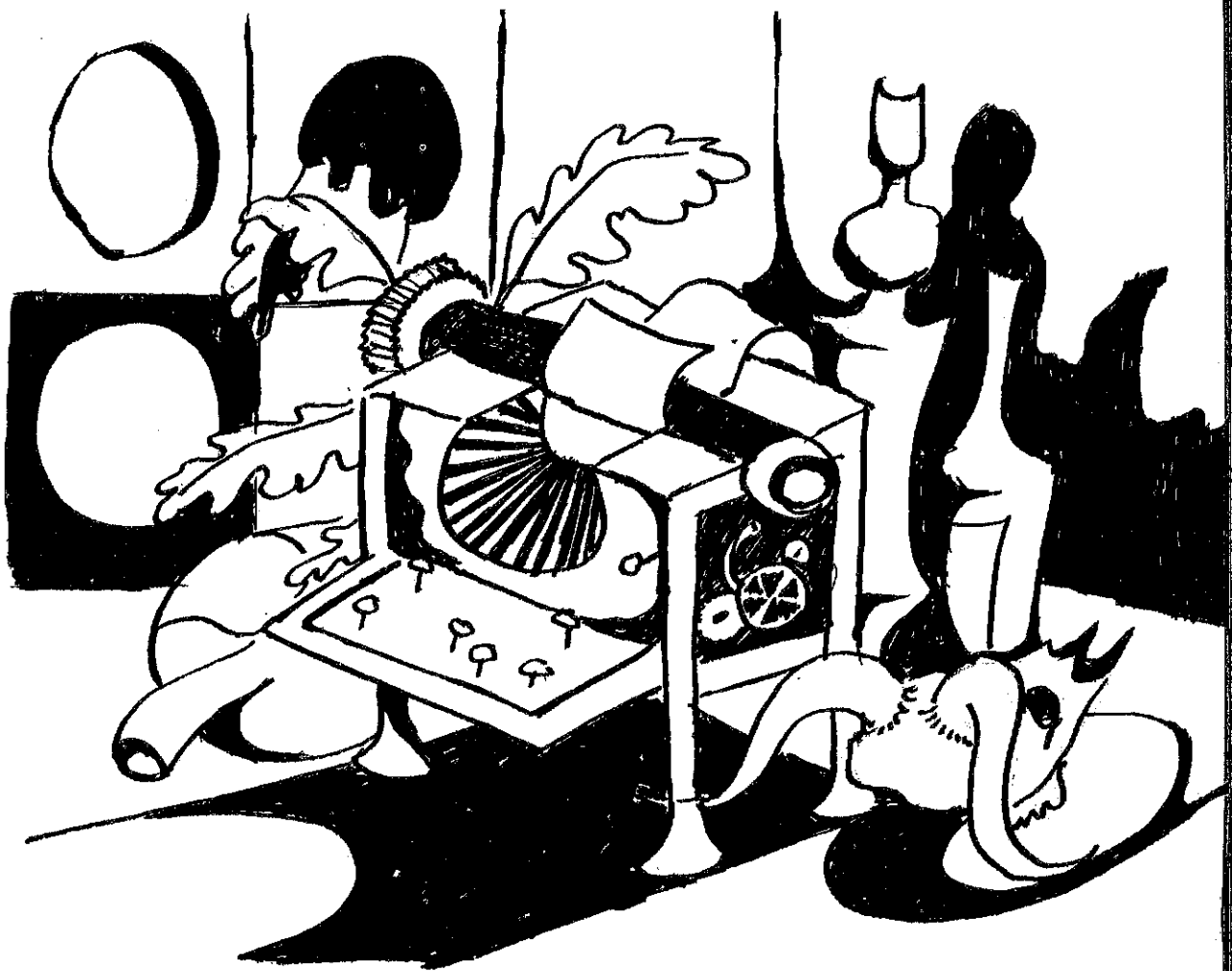
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Spurlock

# The Eleanor Poetry Award

Sponsored By Mrs. Eleanor Weinbaum

## Murder in the Bookery

I'll tell you about Ellen, Sharp Ellen.  
You all know her. She's an all-around fact.  
For everyday she wears a sweatshirt inscribed  
"Intramural Champs  
Men's Doubles."

Aurora Sensualis. "Quiet" signs in the library  
Sweat. Whisper across isles of references.  
The books all hold their breaths. Poem collections  
Make silent inferences.

Sharp Ellen. Stretch All American Pants Ellen,  
On a stroll in the non-fiction section,  
After a book on grammatic construction.  
My eyes bounced away from my Toynbee.

Glandiloquent. We all not looking stared. The magazine lady  
Straightened her hair, tightened her sternness.  
Freshmen peered from paperback shelves.  
Scholars, recently thrilled by a phrase,  
Researched themselves.

W. W. Pratt, Jr.

## SONG OF AN OLD MAN

I am a little leather  
of an old man  
tanned against life.

all time has turned to darkness  
like decaying leather,

my eyes  
are grapes grown old against the skies,

my breasts are dried prunes  
hanging from a peccant pole.

a tree is a twisted candelabrum,  
its branches burn in fall.

I am old—I cannot be young  
that's all.

a broken winter bough  
lying leafless on the ground.

all the meaning of my past  
is put in seven pictures:  
yellowed, cracked, and curled  
like fallen leaves.

an old man has fallen  
far enough;  
becomes a body of dark water.

At night pools of water sleep  
between the sidewalk and street  
like smooth black mirrors.

the moon rises above  
its forest beard;  
reflects its bosom,  
and crooked branch  
in a mirror of black.

and salvation begins.

Terry Lee Morrison

The years  
Whisk the calandar pages  
    before me  
With the rythmic finality  
Of steel wheels snapping a rail joint

Standing between the steaming rails  
I watch the red lantern  
Of my life  
    fade quickly  
Into ever expanding darkness

Gordon Hutson

### **A Canticle for Charlie**

Who winds the clocks as the snow melts  
And the crystal flow trickles to carve  
Its path of scars in the landscape?  
The pendelum swings for the glass gods  
Who lost their usefullness, unknowing,  
Uncaring of the empty sullen faces.  
The old man sets the ticking -- begin;  
The holocaust was just an accident,  
Or so they told the newspapers -- yesterday,  
And today, and so they will tomorrow  
In the year of the dying.

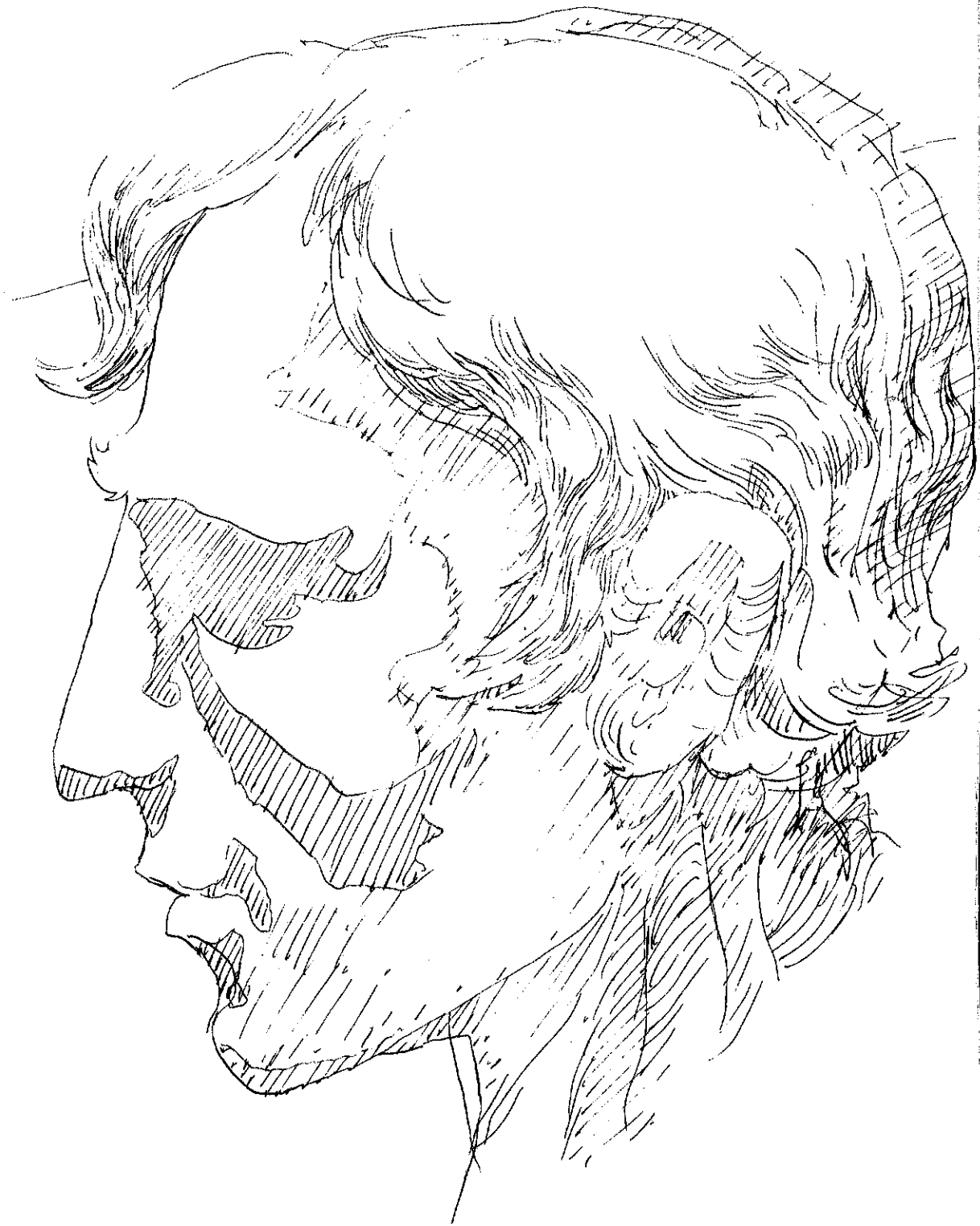
Dennis Epps

### **The Clock**

Fact of a worker clock --  
Tenuous click of inexpensive gears,  
Metering the promise of a mainspring.  
The metallic diverter,  
Pointedly chopping its children, seconds,  
Struggles with neotime,  
As if it were a job to be circumscribed.

W. W. Pratt, Jr.





William Powell

# Pulse Poetry Award

## Idea

A random Greek standing in a doorway,  
Face shaded and sun on his back,  
Smiles and waves his hands and the handmaid  
Listens, tells him twice to go away  
For the mistress is bathing and won't be disturbed,  
(Least of all for the half bald young teacher)  
And will give no time for further receiving.  
The books and flowers are shamed, perturbed;  
They stare away from the sun and into the dust  
As they hang from wrists lying sadly on thighs.  
He leaves an ornate message for the pretty lady  
And the way he smiles back liquid shame  
Makes sad little curves in the still air  
of Athens.

In the house of a friend he drinks grape wine,  
Philosophizes, makes light of the woman.  
"There are yet whiter skins, and finer eyes,  
And women of scent and satin in lands  
Faraway. Why pine for the tawdry whores  
When perfection lives somewhere untended?  
All things have meaning beyond meaning;  
Reality lies in shadowy tones.  
Gray is the flesh of my unkind lady  
To the skin of the one we cannot know  
Forget you have begged for petty pleasures,  
And seek the perfect, absurd, in all things."

He has had an idea, so he drinks till he falls  
As the scholar's reward. Though he appears again  
Before a courtesan's door, both poetic and needful,  
Yet he scorns the base images that dance before  
The fire and cast shadows on the ball.  
Understanding only tells us when we are foolish;  
It is shame that makes us not foolish too often.

Mark Pittel

**of me**

there was a  
hairy rat  
squashed on the  
railroad track and  
it nauseated me  
but I peeled it off  
anyways,  
blessed it and  
threw it in the  
weeds.

and near the side  
of the road I  
vomited.

it was a  
beautiful  
Finale.

Susan Halter

**NEUROTIC**

She set a fruit tree in her yard,  
But no fruit did it bear;  
She slipped a cutting in its place --  
Its blossoms withered there.

The sap that might have brought new buds  
The mother stock sucked dry;  
The empty bole remaining then  
Could but delude the eye.

Now all the burning, barren years  
Have left her only this:  
Remembered sight of shining leaves,  
Bleak ashes of their kiss.

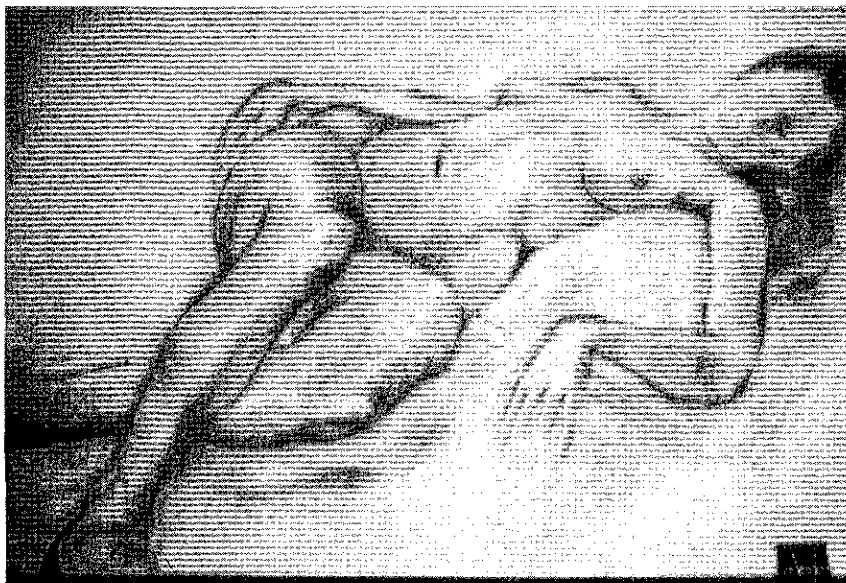
Margaret Gibson Hynes

**ORIENTAL MAGNOLIA**

Yesterday, East's bare-limbed child;  
Today, in virgin pink,  
West's garden bride.

Margaret Gibson Hynes

## 2nd Place Award - Art



Nelson Flanagan

### The Present Year

The present year, a bubble with handles  
At either end, waits to be pulled apart  
And burst into disconnected circumstance  
By the flowering daily disharmony.

Those people who have so frankly loved you,  
Will they recall the wistful wanderings  
When you rode the handlebars of passion  
Softly doled out, all itself receiving?

Come down to the river and see bubbles  
Sliding near the surface, rising to sink  
Back into the almost compensatory  
Junkyards of gloomy lives that have been led.

From the darker dreams of morning you know  
That no deeper meaning lies incumbent  
In the breaking of sad and soapy bubbles;  
Directions are spirals leading nowhere.

Mark Pittel



Roger Shoffit

# First Place Short Story Award

## THE VISIT

by Jacqueline Ponder

Rubbing the back of her neck, Ary Young walked to the edge of the wide back porch and called, "Fredda . . . Fredda Mae! Come on up to the house now, Mama's ready to fit your dress." While she waited for an answer, she stretched and arched her back in an effort to ease the dull ache that always plagued her when she sewed. She shaded her eyes and scanned the long green rows in hopes of spotting a bright pink bonnet that was supposed to be somewhere in their midst. Impatiently, she called again but in a louder voice, "Fredda! Come here!"

"She can't hear you Mama," a small voice quietly commented beneath her. Ary leaned over the side of the porch and saw her youngest child, Janie, squatting by the water pump, making mud pies.

"Why can't she hear me?"

"Because she ain't there."

"Ladies don't say ain't . . . Where is she?"

"Out yonder." Janie said, pointing a muddy finger towards an outhouse a small distance away.

"How long has she been out there?"

"I don't know, Mama, she left the garden long time before I started making pies," she explained as she dumped the red gooey contents of the lid onto a oard that was almost covered with muddy lumps.

"Run and get her for me, Janie. I'll bet she's reading another book. Tell her Mama wants her to come here right now. What am I ever to do with that red-headed child. She'll be the death of me yet!..

"I'll get her for you Mama," Janie said, carrying the tray of mudpies back to the play-like house she had outlined with rocks under the huge Black Walnut tree. Seeing the playhouse, Ary recalled fond memories from her own childhood. "Playing-like grown-ups seems so exciting," she thought to herself, "if little girls only knew the weary truth . . . I guess it's best they don't know." Seeing Janie wipe muddy hands on the back of her dress interrupted Ary's day dream. "Don't do that. Hurry up Janie. Mama's got a lot to do."

"Yes Mam" she said as she walked carefully thru the doors of her imaginary house before she started running towards the toilet.

Fredda's world had improved considerably the day when she found that the knot-hole could be unplugged to provide a beam of light just bright enough to read by. When ever she could slip away, Fredda would head for her secluded retreat, unplug the knot-hole, lock the door from the inside, place the Montgomery Ward catalogue against the sack of lime, and reclining there between the two solemn holes of the john, she would read her books and dream her dreams. She was almost to the best part of The Girl of the Limberlost -- the sad part that always made her cry, when Janie's persistent banging at the door interrupted her.

"Are you in there, Freddie Mae? Mama wants you right now. She needs to fit your dress. Do you hear me?"

"I hear you, I'll be right there." Fredda said taking her feet down from

the door. She put her fook in the empty bucket that was supposed to be filled with peas for supper and covered the book with her detestable pink bonnet. When she opened the door, Janie was waiting for her.

"You sure are going to get into trouble when Mama sees that you don't have anything but a book in that bucket. Freddie's going to get a whipping," she began to sing over and over again.

"Janie, take the bucket and pick some peas for me while I'm getting my dress fitted, will you?"

"I don't want to."

"Please Janie, I'll do something for you sometimes."

"No. I'm uot going to do at."

"Oh yes you are, or I'll tell Mama about the kitten!"

"Freddie, you promised you wouldn't tell. I didn't go to do at. Honest, I didn't mean to. Please don't tell her. I'll pick the peas."

Janie's big brown eyes welled with tears and her face looked so pitiful that Fredda wished she hadn't brought up the terrible secret. "I won't tell her this time," she said giving Janie the bucket, "but you better not take anymore kittens-to bed with you. Give me my book and the bonnet. I'll come out and help you as soon as I can. And you'd better not call me Freddie ever again or you'll be sorry."

"Yes Fredda," Janie replied, completely submissive, then she added brightly, "it sure was a beautiful funeral though, asn't it? If another kitten dies . . . can we have another funeral, huh?"

"Another kitten better not die. Now run and pick those peas!"

Ary was still waiting on the porch when Fredda walked up to the house.

"Fredda! Put on your bonnet. You'll be a pretty thing with a face full of freckles. You know better than to walk out in the hot sun without protecting your face. When you get my age your face will be nothing but wrinkles! All Southern ladies . . ."

"have beautiful white skin. I know. But Mama, that bonnet is so hot," Fredda said as she followed her mother into the house, "besides, I'm always going to have freckles whether I wear that bonnet or not. All red-headed people have them"

"You are going to wear that bonnet, and no more back-talk from you missy. Pull off you dress. When I'm finished fitting your new one, I want you to run to the store for me and get another spool of thread."

"But Mama, it's over a mile to Tinnsmen. Do I . . ."

"Yes you have to. Now stand still so I can get this hemline straight."

"Does it have to be so long. All the girls are wearing their dresses shorter now."

"I don't care how short the other girls are wearing their dresses, your hems will be a lady-like tength. You know your Papa would have a fit if you came out looking like a hussy in a short dress."

"Papa's so old-fashioned. He just doesn't understand."

"Hush that, I won't listen to that kind of talk. Papa just wants his girls to be lady-like. All men are like that Fredda. They want their women folk to be respectable and lady-like . . . there, the hem's all pinned up. While you change your dress, I'll get some money for the thread. Hurry or I'll be up half the night sewing."

Fredda had disappeared behind the curve in the road before Ary found the pink bonnet lying under the dress. She snatched it up and ran out of the house, calling, "Janie, come quick. Catch up with your sister and give her this bonnet."

About an hour later, Ary heard the sound of a motor over the whirr of her

sewing machine. She quit peddling and listened to hear if the car was just slowing down for the curve or if it was stopping. Pating her hair into place, she walked to the front window just in time to see a black Model T Ford pull to a majestic stop by the gate and after a minute, the long, lean frame of the Baptist preacher emerged from the car with the Bible clutched under his arm. "Oh! Me! The house in a mess and not a thing fit to eat--why did he have to pick today to come a'calling?" she mumbled to herself as she opened the door. "Brother Johnson, how good of you to come to see us. Won't you come in and have a cup of coffee?"

"Good afternoon, Sister Young. Is Brother Young at home?" he asked in a deep solemn voice as he entered the house.

"I don't expect Mr. Young to be i until late tonight."

He pulled his watch out of his vest pocket, clicked open the lid, and looking at it said, "I expect I've time for a cup of coffee. Hello Sister Jane, have you been a good girl since I saw you last?" He leaned over to pat her on the head but she moved completely behind her mother's skirts. He straightened back up and followed Ary into the kitchen making small talk while she heated the coffee up. When they were drinking their coffee, he began to tell her about the reason for his visit. His face was filled with righteous dignity when he explained, "Sister Young, you know that I don't approve of gossip, but when I see with my own eyes, one of my own flock start to stray from the straight and narrow path, it is my Christian duty to stop evil when I see it.

Ary's hands started to tremble so that he cup clattered on the saucer before she could put it down. "What has happened?" she asked.

"Well, this is really a matter that I prefer to take up with the man of the house, but since this matter needs immediate attention, I'll tell you . . . even though it is somewhat of a delicate nature."

By this time, Ary's face had become white with fear and her heart was beating furiously. "Go on, Brother Johnson."

"First, I think you had better send the little one out of hearing. This isn't a matter for such young ears to hear."

Ary sent Janie out to play and when the child was out of hearing, the minister continued. "Well, Sister Young, this concerns Fredda May."

"My goodness, what's that girl been up to now?"

"Well, when I was about visiting the sick and making my regular rounds yesterday, I passed by that house of sin on the outskirts of town and who did I see sitting on the steps and talking and laughing with those scarlet women but Freddie May. There she was, just as big as life and with no shame to her, talking to those jezebells in the broad light of day. I'll tell you, Sister, my heart gave a leap to see your daughter sitting in the lap of sin. Well, I went home and I guess I've prayed all night and day about what to do. My duty became clear just as your's must be clear to you . . . you and Brother Young must chastise that girl before this evil goes any further."

"I will, Brother Johnson, I will. Fredda's just fourteen and I'm sure that she just didn't think about what people would think . . . I'll talk to her as soon as she comes home. I hope you won't speak to Mr. Young about this. He is so strict with the girls and this would upset him so that he might punish her terribly."

"Sister Young, I don't understand your attitude toward your daughter's disgraceful action! I do believe you don't even intend to speak to Brother Young about it. Sister, do you realize that one of those whores is a Nigger?"

Ary sat there trying to get a grip on her composure and decide what she should do. She remembered how Stanton had once whipped their oldest daughters with a buggy-whip because they were holding hands with boys.



There was just no telling what he would do to Fredda when he heard about this. How could she stop the preacher from telling him. All at once it dawned on her . . . the only reason the preacher could have had for going down that dead-end road was to visit the whore house. It is the only house on that road! Ary stood up, and turned her back to the preacher before she said, "I must have your promise that you won't tell Mr. Young about Fredda."

"Sister, you certainly don't have my promise that I won't speak to your good husband about this matter. I feel it is my Christian duty to speak to him."

"Then, Brother Johnson, I might point out to Mr. Young that it is sure peculiar that you would be a visiting down that road because only the Madame and her girls live there. Mr. Young and the other elders might be curious about who you were visiting and feel that it's their Christian duty to ask you a few questions." The minister jumped up and grabbed his hat. "Sister, I . . . I . . . I bid you good day."

"And good day to you, Brother Johnson."

The preacher rushed indignantly out of the house, got into his car slamming the door behind him, and roared away in a red dusty cloud. Ary was still sitting at the kitchen table resting her head in her hands, when Fredda returned from the store. "Mama I hurried as fast as I could. I'm sorry I took so long. I ran most of the way back. Mr. Harold didn't have any more thread the exact color, but I think I got a pretty good match. Look, what do you think?" she said, holding the thread out for her mother's approval.

Ary lifted her head and looked into her daughter's eager face, freckled and flushed from the long hot walk.

"You didn't wear your bonnet," she said. "You will never be a lady, will you?" Then in a sudden burst of anger, she slapped the spool of thread out of Fredda's hand and screamed, "Why did you go to the whore house?"

Fredda gasped, "Who told you?"

"The preacher told me he saw you there yesterday. Why were you there?"

"It's a short cut from school to here, Mama! But, I didn't see the preacher's car--he must have been walking."

"You are going to drive Mama to an early grave. You just don't think, child. A girl's reputation is all she's got and once it is ruined--Fredda, a good man will only take to wife a woman he's proud to be seen with. He won't marry a girl the whole towns talking about. A bird don't fly so high that its tail don't follow and a girl that has a bad reputation can't go far enough to lose her bad reputation either. What do you have to day for yourself young lady?"

"Nothing, I guess."

"Why did you stop to talk to them--you knew people would talk?"

"I just didn't think about that. I'm sorry Mama."

"You knew that respectable people don't talk to them."

"Yes mam, I guess I did."

"Well, then why in the world did you?"

Fredda felt so guilty--so ashamed. Her throat began to lump up and her eyes began to fill with tears and she bowed her head to avoid her mother's accusing stare.

"Answer me, young Lady! Tell me why you did what you did! Look at me!"

Fredda slowly raised her head and with tears trickling down her cheeks, she answered her Mother in a choked whisper, "They always look so lonely Mama. Nobody else in town will talk to them. I stopped to talk to them because I felt sorry for them. That's all, Mama, that's all!"

### **Science-Fiction: to George O.**

Zero one-hundred hours.  
Noon revitalization over,  
And group age twelve,  
(The pre-pubescent boys)  
Amuse themselves  
With cybernetic toys.

"Prepared Ova in Cubical,"  
By ninety-seven Dali, decorates  
The walls. A new Amusical,  
Entitled "Quadrilinears,"  
Runs amorphous in the halls.

On the walk the worker-drones in files  
Are shuffling to assignments  
With acquiescent smiles.

For an instant a negligent Administrator  
Pauses for a breath by the environmental filter.  
The eminent glow of red from the radiation shield  
Outlines the wrinkles on his face,  
Like legends of the Mars-canals.  
In his pause  
He remembers the air around sunrise.  
Seasons. Fresh rivers. Summer storms.  
Caterpillar Days.  
The Administrator is reverent.

W. W. Pratt, Jr.

### **For Cleopatra the Whore**

Restless comes the night in Matamoros  
And scorns to know her own debauched children.  
Sweaty hands take dolares, adore us,  
Suntanned phantoms in sneakers and teeshirts.  
Carta Blanca beer hardly tastes like anything;  
It's cheap and lets you stay and talk to whores  
You can't afford. To this edge many cling,  
Despising their lives, selling, buying love.  
My friend has engaged one with stiff bleached hair;  
He retreated still staring at Cleopatra,  
Who's talking to me, a coy Latin teacher  
Of life arts. She said eight; I said-for love-  
At which she patted my arm and told me  
That love is dinero. I want more of  
Each, I said, and buying another beer,  
Watched her search for luck's gift. Her powdered neck  
Twists; she leaves to answer the dollared beck.

Mark Pittel

# 3rd Place Award

## Poetry

### About Adolescence

A straggle-haired tomboy with a chaotic soul hurls  
savage screams at her brother,  
Then turns and with peacock poise walks away  
Laden with the fury of childhood and the promise  
of other passions.

She speaks a language misunderstood by all who  
know her -  
Except for Charley the Mockingbird or Harvey the  
Armadillo or all the creatures that lie under  
the yard  
Who were loved to death and buried with tears.

Screeching laughter and watery sobbing must have  
sought a common dwelling place,  
Paid the rent for a while,  
Then engaged in endless battle -  
Vacating the premises for rare moments,  
Mournfully leaving tranquillity in their place.

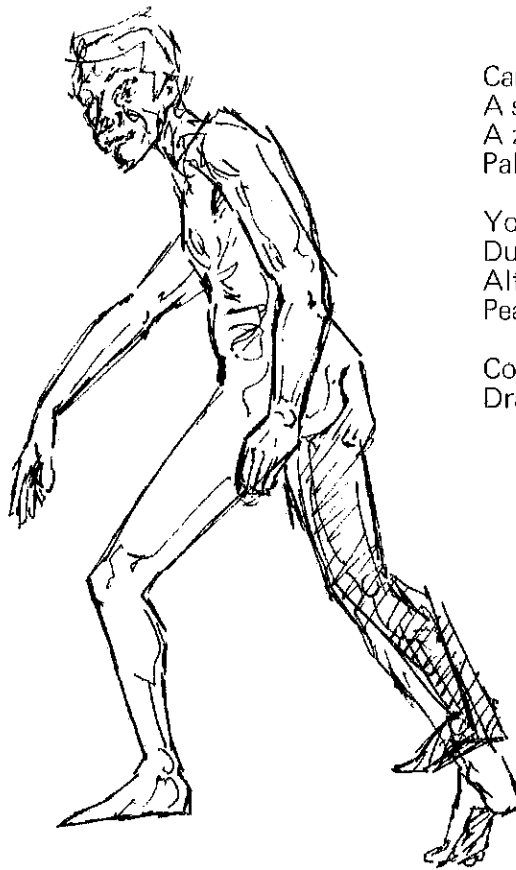
Sherry Ward

## OFFSPRING

Cardinals, bees, gold-budding trees;  
A shimmering light athwart the porch;  
A zephyrus, a transient breeze,  
Pale butterflies, be-ruffled peas;

Young fiddle-fern, snowdrop demure,  
Dutch iris' slender, ice-blue torch;  
Alfred, crowned; azaleas sure;  
Pearblossom bride's white-lace allure; --

Conundrum this, to teach, to tease:  
Drab February gave us these?



William Powell

## First Place Drawing



**Zerospect: through the green window**

1.

The giant certainty of the noon-hour,  
Seen from the downtown diner  
Through the green tinted window,  
Is diffused. Clouds, like tossed-off nylons  
Floating in the chemical water of a fountain,  
Become a collection of greens,  
Like the walls of institutions.

Through the green window in metered steps  
Minted faces of hurriers after produce,  
Maidens, relentless to become consumers,  
Children anxious to learn shopping.

I am the one in the corner,  
With his elbows sticking on a vinyl tablecloth.  
I am a King of Sorts amid the slick decor  
Awaiting sandwiches and soda --  
Assuming hues from dull rays  
That filter past on coffee stains  
In ashen greens and greys.

2.

Once I was the center of the Universe  
In Time beyond my eyes. I ruled  
with decrees that were monosyllables  
And a pair of buttery thighs.

I was deposed. With comrades  
I was seated at the round table  
To the left of the King.  
I became Gawain on a noble jag,  
Adventurer,  
But still inside the ring.

3.

Later, when my own insights betrayed me,  
I became Alfred, shrinking inside my trousers,  
Or a suspended Jesus when he forgot himself  
And almost became a man, and cried out.  
But I made no sound  
As I looked at Death under my own hat,  
and unutterably despaired.

4.

Should I leave my vantage point behind the green window,  
Or should I wait for a Sign?  
I wait, and ah, my likeness, a Sign comes.  
True light slid over a stranger's shoulder  
As he opened the door of the diner,  
And I saw you, Mon Semblable, in the glass,  
And there was pinkness in your flesh.

A short glimpse that was not green  
Looked inside the diner and said to me,  
"Identity."

W. W. Pratt, Jr.

# 2nd Place Award

## Poetry

### NAVAHO POEM

In spring, the planting season,  
we sing and dance  
as the ancients did,  
and ask the God of Corn  
to grow yellow grains in green shucks,  
while the lizard lies sleeping in the sand,  
and tumbleweeds travel the path of the wind.

At night, by our blue and yellow fires  
we ask of heaven  
and the wise ones say  
that it is life in the sky that is  
as smooth and blue as the stones in our silver belts,  
while the lizard lies sleeping in the sand,  
and tumbleweeds travel the path of the wind.

Terry Lee Morrison



Spurlock

Hope  
I must  
Have/Hope

To Be

My Wife  
Was filthy  
With hope

Greedily  
She sponged up  
Every trace of its stain

And left

Gordon Hutson

### **Iambic Transperencies**

These poems are iambic transperencies,  
Projections of my life in ten beat lines.  
A flickering bulb of memory throws  
The outline up on a wavering wall,  
Catching the folly in nakedest form.  
The words are frames in hope strung together;  
The lines are my picture postcards made from  
Some amateur snapshots of existence.

Mark Pittel



## The Mandeville Market

(First Day)

The casbah could be no less a mystique  
Than the teeming market of Mandeville,  
Guards outside by a dark enigma  
Who pipes on a Hemeric flute.  
He makes strange music with an enchantress  
Who lures with her eyes and her tambourine.  
A stranger and his shillings soon must part - verdad?  
The sin blasts me as I am pushed inside  
Amid a world made of noise and straw  
Intricately woven into hats and baskets and dolls,  
Their colors screaming to be bought.  
Mosaics of red and yellow fruit activate my taste  
While bins of blossoms make painted patterns on my mind.  
"Oh Lady, buy from me, buy from me,"  
Circe redoubled entreats.  
Irresolutely I pass on to displays of gaudy trinkets  
And objects which have no names,  
Necklaces of seeds hanging all about like pagan rosaries,  
And who knows what vices come from under the counter.  
Scores of garments hang overhead like political drapery  
Whose folds conceal sleazy dresses and suits  
From my curious eyes,  
Yet each item is precisely known and accounted for  
By its pusher.  
Gleaming black faces expand to reveal white smiles  
Which surround me on all sides;  
Luminous orbs that momentarily lock with mine  
Seem to inquire, "mullet?"  
Who are these people with live chickens under their arms?  
And these with geats on strings?  
And here a pen of orderly pigs- Ulysees' men?  
I clutch my pocketbook tightly,  
The impersonal shoving begins again,  
The strong but not unpleasant odor of life rising  
Upward from bodies pressed so close together  
That one gigantic creature has been created  
With 1000 arms and legs propelling it forward  
An inch at a time.

(Second Day)

The sights, smells and sounds are the same.  
The only difference is  
Me.  
Today, I huy.

Beverly Jackson



Roger Shoffit

### IN AN ENGLISH GARDEN

In an English garden after tea  
two strolled beneath the garden trees  
and peeked about with pasty dreams.  
One tree whose leaves were dark and green  
with pointed tongues, spoke to them,  
"I have the fruit where fruits begin."  
The woman timidly touched the flesh  
of this fruit of fruits. It came loose, fresh  
and full of nectar. Fruit in hand  
she nibbled and gave it to the man.  
New dreams arose that were not weak  
as the tinge of nectar touched their cheeks.

Terry Lee Morrison

### TWO, WITH UNSUNNED ARMS

Two, with unsunned arms, walk between  
the orchard trees with crooked charms,  
and over last winter's branches lying lean  
and black on the ground unalarmed.

As April zepthers thread the green sleeves  
of ancient boughs, a blossom, white  
and balmy, falls from among the leaves  
like a feather-white dove adrift in flight.

The offering is taken, crushed between  
their breasts as they embrace beneath  
the knotty eyes of the orchard. Green  
leaves fall; they laugh at every leaf.

Above, a white bird with black eyes  
shifts his shadow across their forms.

Terry Lee Morrison



W. E. Purcell

### SONG OF THE ELF OF JOY

Place your tears inside this leaf,  
and float them down the forest stream,  
and let them turn and turn beneath  
the moon until they turn to green.

Then lift the leaf out of the stream,  
and place the droplets on your floor,  
and count them one by one, and dream,  
and I may knock upon your door.

Terry Lee Morrison

**Sonnet- Written After Having Seen Romeo and Juliet**

I know my whole life depends on my love;  
There is no possibility, no chance,  
And no reason that does not lie above  
The sordidness that veils all, like a trance  
Seeking to besmear the transcending beauty  
With everyday ugliness. My one hope,  
To have my breathing ebb with her each sigh,  
Flow and break on her joy. The telescope  
That my love holds will locate my movement  
In a kaleidoscope of fidelity,  
Showing each future day a way to vent  
My longing to belonging and be  
A sometimes smiling man for whom all life  
Rests with a fair one, a woman, his wife.

Mark Pittel

**DECEMBER LOVE POEM**

Lacking a jacket, I  
wince at the steel shavings of  
winter wind, and  
shiver under  
harshly cut clouds that  
lie in the sky like  
jagged blocks of ice  
placed in a  
hard polished porcelain bowl.

December weather sends me to  
my love, who will hold me with arms  
as soft and smooth as feathers  
on the breast of a warm bird.

Terry Morrison

# Second Place Short Story Award

by Debbie Hackaman

## PORTRAIT OF A SILENT DEPARTURE

"SLAM!"

"Hell," he thought, as the pre-supper orchestra began to tune up, "so much lousy noise." He opened his eyes and closed them again, letting a vapor of dreams wash like a soft fog against the back of his eyes. He had slept all day, again, like yesterday and the day before. "How can you sleep so long, Grandpa?" Jeff had wanted to know. That's easy enough, boy. Easier to sleep with old memories than get up a fight a future. He had more memories than future now anyway.

The sun was burning its way into the horizon, bloodying the fields with daggers of orange-red flame. He watched the red haze roll into the room and wondered if hell looked like this, all hot and hazy with rusty sparks flying against a glassy interior. He glanced at the glass with his teeth in it and watched it turn from a golden cider to a red burgundy wine, with his pearly-whites grinning wickedly at him from the bottom of their bloody glass prison. He never knew why he bought them. They always made his mouth feel like he had been munching on ground glass. "Funny thing, though, what vanity drives a silly old fool to do." But Emy was right, he did look pretty hideous, like a dried up old yellow crab-apple with a hole punched in it. He used to scare the little ones like that, but now they were too big for that. Now they, like their parents, just shook their heads and clucked their tongues at the foolishness of an old man.

He held his hands out and looked at them. "Sure don't take long." Sixty years seems like six anymore. He traced the bulging blue vein quivering down the back of his hand. Their ruddy strength had long since given way to a yellow wrinkling and slim deterioration that gave them an almost effeminate look. "Look like they should have a flower in them 'stead of a shovel." He held them out straight in front of him and they shook a little, but just a little. Then he knotted one into a fist. He looked at it strangely, as though that yellow wrinkled thing were a foreign form attached to the end of his bony arm. "A fist, Ha!" "A woman's fist, maybe," closed so weakly he could blow through it. "I can't even . . .", he heard a monotonous buzz and cocked his head sideways, like a sparrow, listening.

He saw a fly attach itself to the ceiling and strill leisurely along upside-down in slow circles. He tried to imagine being so small and so fast and walking upside-down on a crackled old ceiling. The fly righted itself and made a three-point landing on the sheet. He watched it, so tiny and delicate, waltzing vainly over his own bed, pruning its fuzzy antennae with infinitesimal black fingers, flicking out a sticky black tongue and rubbing its hairy hind legs together. Its cocky vanity amused him and he grabbed at it. He could feel its tiny tickling feet and inquisitive antennae exploring the

sweaty crevices of his wrinkled hands. Then, easily, it found an escape route and buzzed off in a victorious whine toward the ceiling.

He opened the fly's ineffectual prison and put it behind his head, then lay back again. Emy busily drummed out a tiny symphony as she worked. She always did that. Always smiled, too, like her mother, both so like little birds, always chattering, working, moving, never still or idle. She'd push that curl of mousy brown hair back from her snapping black eyes and flash a grin, like an angel with her slightly tarnished halo askew. Lately, he'd even taken to calling her Annie, her mother's name, but she pretended she hadn't heard. He watched the wispy darkness float in the open window, then closed his eyes. A light softness diffused past his eye-lids and wrapped around his thoughts.

The sun was nearly gone now, just barely tucked behind the trees with tiny golden wisps weaving through the branches. A gentle breath of night air ran its airy fingers through the soft lifeless white hair on the pillow and silhouetted the sheet, shroudlike, against the body, then sighed past the curtains into the starless dark night.

### GATHERING

Old men, feet and legs outspread,  
Joints eased in the sun  
In league with soft-spoken stories  
Of Calmer days;  
Yet days of courageous deeds  
Layed out in great detail --  
Seldom single-tracked,  
So many attractive sidings  
Are passed each day --  
All golden in minds. . .  
Misty minds.

Charles F. Goode, Jr.

### Spring Planting

Gaping holes in the frozen whiteness  
Bleed back soil.  
The earth receives the seed,  
Holding in her dark grasp  
A seeming death.  
Warmth and moisture seep  
To touch the closed capsule  
But the wounded earth heals slowly.  
Green sleeps within brown --  
Time must pass in generation of life.  
Then pale roots will reach toward fruition,  
The germ of harvest in their twisted coils.

Carol Barbay



### "The Gulf Coast"

Baked by the sun;  
Drenched by torrential rains;  
Flat, unrelieved stretches of earth;  
Billowy clouds, knarled, ancient trees,  
Bent and twisted into eery shapes;  
Brahma bulls and calves,  
Grazing successors of the Long Horn,  
Mesquite bushes, sandy vastness,  
The Gulf;  
Tempestuous, restless, old;  
Beautiful in its savagery,  
In its season spawning hurricanes;  
Raging, tearing, in its furious path  
To its predestined meeting with the shore;  
Meeting in an orgiastic climax of death,  
Passing on, leaving the earth torn, sated,  
bruised.

Mrs. Linda S. Bennett

Hollow Men



i fell asleep in the same russian snow  
that froze aunt may

in the past cold we were allowed  
to wear our socks to bed  
under fancy patch quilts and i  
got mickey mouse ears for christmas.  
light bulb's frame. a soapy portrait,  
my white face catching a moth in a jar  
and saving the prize  
with a kink from a nigger's neck.  
i once swam the sandy creek with  
booker t. washington booker.  
the first time i saw a black butt. but  
the last until the army got mine  
and i got whipped for it.

we got a t.v. in '51,  
loud enough to shake the pines.  
that year i walked into the world,  
down to galveston from huntsville by bus,  
i spent my last for picture postcards,  
my youngman's dreams in those cards.

had hell hitchhiking home  
so hot. beer's bottle foam.  
the sun belched glare on chrome.  
the sky was an inverted dome.  
loud enough to shake the pines.  
all words are lost in sound.  
years past and

My Face is winter, summer, share cropped  
and shows the ruts of its weathering.  
my post cards pinned up a warping wall.  
three months cold. fifty year's snow.  
and i sleep,  
caught like a fish in a duck's gullet.

Charles Hopkins

### I am Strangely Tempted

I am strangely tempted to affirm the historic truth  
that, quite possibly exists abstractly,  
perfect and remote in the imagination. . .  
mellifluous optimism joins the fissures --  
a windy attic is filled with lovely objects,  
and a realm of impossible decisions;

to keep the invisible,  
split the kernels of life  
with dreamless dark,  
dank and damp on the edifice  
of philosophic notions.

plasma transfusions of unidentifiable type,  
father an entire conglomerate of wasted visions,  
devoid of the culture that spawned them.  
monsters are born, hideous and blind,  
in the twilight region of the blazing fire disk,  
a dominion in eternity of the dark other --  
vibrating on different tympanums, different frequencies,  
Nothing is so lame as lateness,  
all that is lacking is man.

Dennis Epps

### Id Music

The horizon is a line --  
a brink which is not, necessarily, an end.  
the rainbow long sought beams as an apparition  
of ghostly memories,  
burning in the fires of ten thousand eyes.  
the rosetta stone glows in carmethene,  
illuminating cornered nooks which indicate nothing.  
a rocket upward zooming, high atop a trail of wispish vapor,  
splayed with soft tendrils of smoke,  
seeking the ontogeny of our troubled times,  
to recapitulate it in the faces of future progeny.  
opaque cloudiness of colloidal inconsistencies,  
fertilized with the union of sperm and egg,  
bears the generation of light, children of the morning,  
and of the night.  
a ceremony of birth exists only in the mind,  
translated from an ancient language of term sibilancy --  
a foetus in the womb, a shell of distropic dynasty,  
helpless as the winged eye fleeing from the prehistoric bird,  
as its constant heartbeat transmits the pulse,  
that cups tomorrow from the thorn of air.

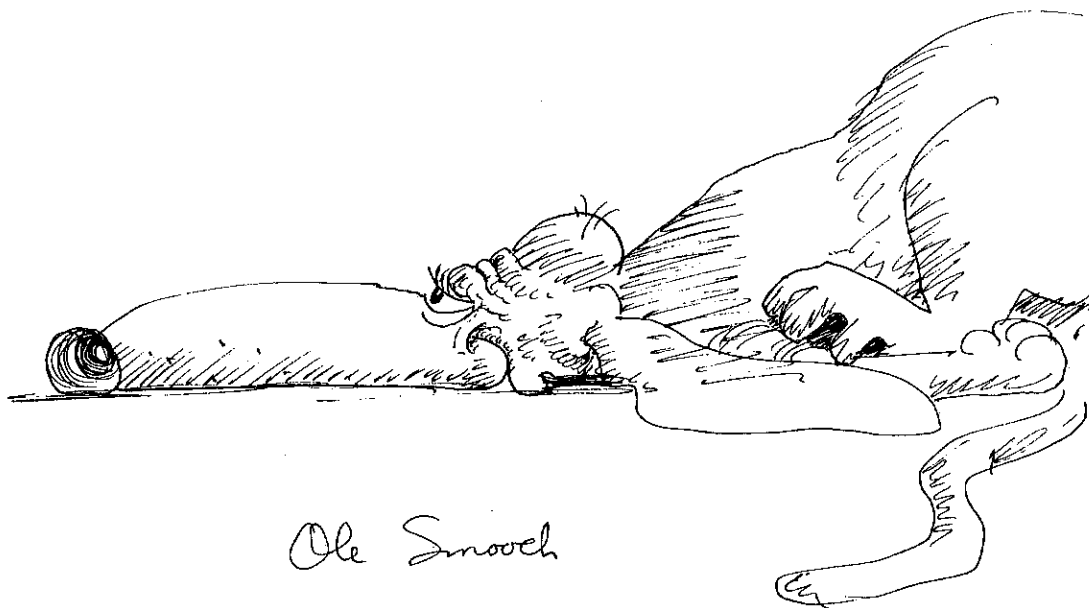
Dennis Epps



William Powell

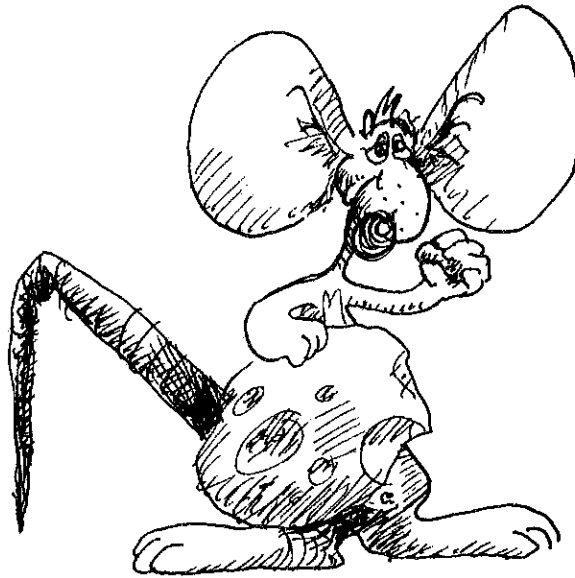
That most excellent king,  
Oedipus Rex,  
Had an aberrant thing  
Regarding sex.

Beverly Jackson



Ole Smooch

William Powell



### effection

we spent our day in the grain,  
with a color-creased sky of rice birds.  
in pandoratic flight  
like freckles. a speckled eye's view.

we spent night before the screen.  
with beveled backs, we saw sinatra  
kiss maureen o'sullivan.  
and shortly after, i kissed you.

Charles Hopkins

I would like to apologize to Mr. David Cammack  
for the similarities in three lines of my poem  
"The Snake is Long" to lines in poems  
previously published by Mr. Cammack.

Dennis E. Epps.



William Powell

## Seas

Seas that stretch away, curving concrete walls  
That hold the verdant saline waters fast  
From the sorrowing land. And suns are balls  
Of morning that shine on the many worlds.

A life is a drift onwards to rocking  
Streams of yesterday's wishes, all aflow  
For the fast green ocean, minnows knocking  
Noses of slimy silver on water roofs.

Only as lovers do the bright streams meet,  
Dance above and below the dead ocean.  
Fish and gulls are angels; a wing is fleet,  
And fins are vessels of love, truly chaste.

If ever called upon to found a cult,  
I would make the seagull my special god  
And sacrifice to him with no consult  
Youthy tears, sole shadows on the water.

Mark Pittel

## SHALLOW WATERS BEACH

The children that come to shallow waters beach  
watch the brows of the breaker waves  
whipped white like cotton candy,  
and with riant cries they clap their hands.  
But I, being much older and wiser,  
will laugh and think out loud:  
This isn't cotton candy, children,  
But the salted tips of the sea.  
But children are children and like the snails  
(their shells being ages three thru six)  
they will not listen to me.  
Invariably, they ask me once or twice  
why I don't seine the sea  
for fish as the fishermen do,  
and I always tell them that  
what I have seen on the surface  
is sufficient to see.  
And I direct them down the shore  
safely away from the sea,  
and we search for sand dollars  
and other small things.

Terry Lee Morrison



### Legacy

To you, for the night when I'm not there  
I leave a fleeting leaflike remembrance  
Of earlier joys and the notion fair  
That I am again coming, now to stay.

And certain that a darker day will come,  
We must touch each other more softly now.  
Appreciation is forever born dumb;  
Sorrow is the teacher that gives it speech.

It's the prospect of being remembered  
That delineates the way life must go.  
We leave our most private things untended  
And look to perform more memorable acts.

So we are acting scenes for each other,  
Creating moments which our memories  
Will digest as todays, going further  
Than the actors, who must grow old and die.

When gone, as one day I must surely be,  
I will have left for you some images  
Which will constitute a composite me  
For your personal use in after years.

Mark Pittel