CALLIOPE

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CONTENTS AND CONTRIBUTORS

TRAVEL IS SO . . . , page 3 . . . . Robert C. Ryan
DELIVERY, page 5 . . . . Gloria Brocato
HIDDEN THINGS, page 6 . . . . James Keats
WHITMAN AND LINCOLN: CLAIRVOYANT COMPANIONS,
   page 7 . . . . R. M. Hofmann
PO' NIGGER'S SONG, page 10 . . . . Pete Cooper
GIDEON'S CAMP, page 11 . . . . John A. Eastman
COMMENT ON HUMAN WINTERS, page 16 . Mary Lou Lemon
SHORE NIGHT, page 17 . . . . Dave Newsome
ODE TO THE ROSE PICKERS, page 18 . John Murphy
NEW CITY, page 19 . . . . Douglas Hodgman
RESCUE, page 23 . . . . Bryce Forester
NATURE MORGUE, page 24 . . . John A. Eastman
MIND ALONE, page 25 . . . . Gretchen Mall
SUNDAY MORNING, page 26 . . . Sherwood Snyder III
LE CHAT NOIR, page 27 . . . . Diane Peacock
THE JITTERBUGS, page 28 . . . . Susan Darling
THE INTERVIEW, page 29 . . . . U. Harold Males
CONFESSIONAL, page 30 . . . . John McClure
THIS PLACE OF WRATH AND TEARS . . . .
   page 31 . . . . William H. Pyne
EDITOR'S NOTE, page 35 . . . . John Murphy
Travel Is So...

by Robert C. Ryan

Mr. Albertson was interested in old cathedrals. Mrs. Albertson was interested in young men. They saved for two years to go to Europe to see the old cathedrals. Mr. Albertson made the very sensible suggestion of taking a student ship in order to be in the company of people who know more about old cathedrals. Mr. Albertson agreed that it was a good idea. Mr. Albertson told everyone how sensible his wife was.

They had a champagne farewell party on the ship with some of their New York friends—that is to say, some of Mrs. Albertson’s New York friends. Mr. Albertson was from Wisconsin. He had met Mrs. Albertson five years before when he had come to New York on business. One of his business friends had introduced them and Mr. Albertson was immediately captivated. Mrs. Albertson had seen to that. She was a successful woman if not a successful model.

Champagne didn’t agree with Mr. Albertson so he retired to his own cabin immediately after the ship left the dock. Champagne agreed excellently with Mrs. Albertson and she retired to the Lido bar where there was much merriment and many young men. After the champagne ran out she sat at the bar and drank hot wine. She was joined shortly by a football player from Duke who had never seen a contrivance like that hot wine maker. This provided a topic of conversation. They found others.

They walked around the deck and admired the phosphorescent marine life splashing off the bow. They climbed up to the smokestacks and laughed about going up the ladder. They inspected the smokestacks and the football player held onto Mrs. Albertson’s waist so that she could lean out and touch one of the suspended life-boats. She purposely let her feet slip out from under her and was so grateful for being caught that she invited the young man to her cabin to have a night-cap. The young man found it unnecessary to leave until just before dawn.

Mrs. Albertson was extremely discreet. She had proved that by talking her husband into taking separate cabins.

By day she accompanied her husband. They sat in their chairs on the sun deck near the swimming pool. Mr. Albertson read about
old cathedrals and studied his German conversation or his French conversation. Mrs. Albertson caught up on her sleep and studied the young men sunning themselves or the young men swimming or the young men playing shuffleboard.

By night Mr. Albertson usually retired to his cabin after the second sitting meal. Mr. Albertson believed in broadening himself culturally. Mrs. Albertson broadened herself otherwise.

After the football player there was a swimmer with fine flowing muscles, a VanDyked English professor with a highly developed aesthetic sense and a Canadian who spoke French also. Mr. Albertson enjoyed the crossing immensely.

They took the boat-train from LeHavre to Paris. Mrs. Albertson became ill on the second day and remained so for a week. This deeply distressed Mr. Albertson but he was prevailed upon by his wife not to miss the opportunity of seeing all the fine cathedrals in the city. So he went off to see Notre Dame, Sacre-Coeur, Madeleine and Ste Chapelle. Mrs. Albertson planned how she could get her husband to leave Paris without her.

Mrs. Albertson's frail condition, she decided, would not allow her to travel. She would stay in Paris and take some classes at the Sorbonne while Mr. Albertson went to look at all the old cathedrals. There was no sense having his vacation ruined because of her illness.

Mr. Albertson set out for the cathedral cities of Europe. Mrs Albertson set out to have a good time in the most romantic city in the world.

Mr. Albertson returned unexpectedly late one Sunday evening a month and a half later. He walked into his wife's hotel just off Boulevard St. Germain with the intent of surprising her. He did. He also surprised the young man with whom she had retired for the night. Mr. Albertson had not heard the classic definition of savoir faire but he beat a hasty and confused retreat.

Mr. Albertson walked down to the Seine and jumped in.

The splash awakened one of the gentlemen who had just settled down for the night under a nearby bridge. The gentleman hastily put his shoes back on and grabbed up a gaff-pole which he used for purposes of snagging floating refuse and snagged Mr. Albertson's coat before he could float away. Mr. Albertson was in no shape to argue so the gentleman relieved him of his watch, rings, and money and left him lying there on the concrete embankment.

The gendarmes found Mr. Albertson in the morning, still alive but suffering from exposure. They put him in a good hospital under
the direction of Mrs. Albertson. Everyone agreed that it was a ter-
rible thing how American tourists were treated in Paris. Just think
of it. One couldn't even walk out at night without being set upon
by a bunch of footpads. Shocking.

Mr. Albertson regained his health quite rapidly. Mrs. Albertson
related how she had also been attacked—by a fellow student with
whom she had mistakenly been friendly. It saddened Mr. Albertson
to know he had been so much in error. He apologized for all the
trouble he had made. Mrs. Albertson cried a little and said she
was so sorry.

Mrs. Albertson thought it best for Mr. Albertson's health to have
him stay in his cabin as much as possible on the return voyage. Mr.
Albertson agreed. Mr. Albertson told everyone how sensible his wife
was.

Delivery . . .

Stretched mercilessly
In Time's antiseptic operating room
Between the sterile halls of Eternity
I lay in screaming labor
On my pain wracked bed of desire
And brought forth
From the throbbing womb of my heart
Hope, stillborn.

. . . Gloria Brocato
Hidden Things ...

I
Here lies what we shall never tell.
The ground has sagged with a winter's time
And the forest has grown and hides all well,
Too well, I fear, too well.
It is forgotten.
The scars upon the trees are healed
By nature's growth and breath,
Breathing to heal all, but dying and death.
The dying that remember
Too well, I fear, too well.
But all is spring and not death
Glassy eyes, they are for the dead, dying
And limbless trees
That are hidden in a forest of spring.

II
Let them bloom, the flowers of this year.
Let them dance without my fear.
Let spring, as it must and shall,
Approach with thoughtless licentiousness
To dance upon the holes we dug,
The holes we filled and left unmarked.
It is forgotten.
Time has a method of poisoning
The brain into lethargic
Stillness. The sounds of marching
Nonentities have stopped, but we only
Wait to be called again.
The forest hides its graves
Too well, I fear, too well.

... James Keats
Whitman and Lincoln: Clairvoyant Companions . . .

An Investigative Paper

by R. M. Hofmann

This is the story of a very curious friendship. It is, as well, a bewildering exploration into the deep personalities of two extraordinary men: Whitman and Lincoln. It concerns a comradeship made heroic by its lofty expression, and made perplexing by the fact that the companions never met or exchanged a spoken word!

The durable bond of affection between Whitman and Lincoln was undoubtedly forged in the late 1850's with the first publication of *Leaves of Grass*. This volume was generally ill-received in America, and its creator was sternly criticized for his plain-spoken celebration of life's sensual side, as well as his sharp departure from traditional literary technique. But Mr. Lincoln, engulfed by a sea of dissention, was nevertheless proud to place himself among the first few enthusiastic defenders of Whitman's style and spirit. One evening he took the book home with him, and when he returned to his Springfield law office the next morning he remarked that he "had barely saved it from being purified by fire by the women." He then requested that the book be left on a table in his office, and we are told that he often picked it up and read aloud from it.¹

But this devotion had far deeper roots which penetrated the rich soil of sentiment from which both men had grown. Whitman was the poet of the democratic ideal to which Lincoln was so obviously dedicated. Consider, for example, these lines of Whitman:

> My comrade!
> For you to share with me two greatnesses, and a third one rising inclusive and more resplendent,
> The greatness of Love and Democracy, and the greatness of Religion.²

This is but a different method of saying, "With malice toward

---

none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right . . .” It would be unreasonable to suppose that the thoughts and actions of both men were not mutually enriching and inspiring.

One is tempted, therefore, to presume that they intentionally avoided a personal meeting, for many opportunities to be introduced presented themselves. During the Civil War, Whitman spent more than two years in Washington, serving in every way possible at the Military Hospital. “I see the President almost every day,” reads his diary of August 12, 1863, “as I happen to live where he passes to or from his lodgings out of town. We have got so we exchange bows, and very cordial ones . . .” And with an entry made on March 4, 1865, Whitman says of the President, “I never see that man without feeling that he is one to become personally attach’d to . . .” Here then, is the merest hint of a psychic affinity which may have bound the two men together, an assumption which draws considerable substantiation from incidents that occurred shortly before Lincoln’s death.

On April 10, 1865, Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln were entertaining guests at the White House. During the course of their conversation, Mr. Lincoln mentioned that he had recently had a very peculiar dream. He then attempted to dismiss the subject, but Mrs. Lincoln, quite dismayed, insisted that he relate the events of the dream. Mr. Lincoln reluctantly agreed to tell about it.

“About ten days ago, I retired very late. I had been waiting up for important dispatches. I could not have been long in bed when I fell into a slumber, for I was weary. There seemed to be a death-like stillness about me. Then I heard subdued sobs, as if a number of people were weeping. I thought I left my bed and wandered downstairs.

“There the silence was broken by the same pitiful sobbing, but the mourners were invisible. I went from room to room. No living person was in sight, but the same mournful sounds of distress met me as I passed along. It was light in all the rooms; every object was familiar to me, but where were all the people who were grieving as if their hearts would break?

“I was puzzled and alarmed. What could be the meaning of all this? Determined to find the cause of a state of things so mysterious and so shocking, I kept on until I arrived in the East Room, which I entered. There I met with a sickening surprise. Before me was a catafalque, on which rested a corpse in funeral vestments. Around it were soldiers who were acting as guards; and there was a throng
of people, some gazing mournfully upon the corpse, whose face was covered, others weeping pitifully.

"'Who is dead in the White House?' I demanded of one of the soldiers.

"'The President,' was his answer. 'He was killed by an assassin.'

"'Then came a loud burst of grief from the crowd, which awoke me from my dream. I slept no more that night, and, although it was only a dream, I have been strangely annoyed by it ever since.'"

Historians commonly agree that President Lincoln was wrong about the time of his dream. Ward Hill Lamon, one of the guests at the White House that evening, remembered this dialogue almost word for word. He believed that dream occurred on March 19. If Lamon is correct, then Lincoln's actual assassination took place approximately one month after the dream-assassination, April 15.

And as Lincoln's casket lumbered over the roads between Washington and Springfield, Whitman penned a final tribute to his beloved friend. This, his "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," is perhaps his most beautiful composition. In it, he reveals not only his admiration for Lincoln, but also discloses a recent weird premonition:

O western orb sailing the heaven,
Now I know what you must have meant as a month since I walk'd,
As I walk'd in silence the transparent shadowy night,
As I saw you had something to tell as you bent to me night after night,
As you droop'd from the sky low down as if to my side, (while the other stars all look'd on,) 
As we wandered together the solemn night, (for something I know not what kept me from sleep,)
As the night advanced, and I saw on the rim of the west how full you were of woe,
As I stood on the rising ground in the breeze in the cool transparent night,
As I watch'd where you pass'd and was lost in the netherward black of the night,
As my soul in its trouble dissatisfied sank, as where you sad orb,
Concluded, dropt in the night, and was gone.

We are now faced with something more than an astounding coincidence! Whitman speaks of a foreboding which tormented him

“a month since.” If this is accurate, the misfortune was forecasted to Whitman during the same week in which Lincoln’s ominous dream befell him . . . perhaps the same night!

And so we are left with a mystical enigma, and we must—forever—wonder why these two great men never met. Ahhh, but more tantalizing still: How much less a man would either have been without the other?

Po’ Nigger’s Song . . .

Now if Ah had a penny wid God’s pitchur on it
Ah’d buy me a secun-han soul
Fum dat fire-breathin Parson, (Ah’m poztive he sells em.)
An den, when Ah really felt whole,
Ah’d leave off mah sinnin an pray hard for Heaven:
Repent all mah cattin an booze.
But till Ah git dat God-cent, Ah’m woman-born nigger
An ain’t got a damn thing to lose!

. . . Pete Cooper
Gideon's Camp...

... John A. Eastman

Notes on 'Gideon's Camp':

Gideon's Camp is frankly a series of short poems held together by the common thread of the concept, Quest. These remarks are not an attempt to clarify the Quest, nor to defend its consistency with an elaborate paraphrase, but are meant to help the reader avoid a certain initial confusion by erecting a few rather obvious guideposts toward greater appreciation of the journey.

First of all, let us assume that the Quest is an ascent from the river bed to the valley, for young traveler begins with nothing; he does not know mountains exist. As he begins, he has an assurance of the light that he can only feel, and his journey will be a series of felt impressions. Intuitively, he will experience the fagged-out horror of the urbanized community, the song of aloneness, and the cruel truth of inhumanity. But he will also become aware of joy, song for its own desperate self, and the light that does not cease to call softly. At the camp, his host, fatal with knowledge, plays the intellectual game with the usual symptoms. After a pathetic fit of erotic desperation, the traveler realizes the Quest is over and enters resignedly into Gideon's Camp to assume the rational mind... J. M.

Gideon's Camp...

Scene: The interior of a tent. Lying on a cot in one corner is a bearded man (M). A flap opens and a servant enters with a youth (P). M rises, and the servant goes out.

P. Traveling a rutty road
   From dawn to noon to now,
   I saw at dusk this village—
   The first, it seems, in ages—
   and ask if I may spend the night
   in human company.
M. Your face is scratched and weary.  
Who are you and where are you from?

P. The name is not important  
But the place is infamous.  
A refugee from Goliath, I am,  
God pity me.

M. What?

P. Setting out for Gideon's camp I found  
Higher airs made blood a beating thing  
Alive at last and though the sun was not the while in sight—  
Ah, my comrade, I could feel it there.

Sight set for Gideon's camp I walked  
Where balanced needles twinkled quivered pointed  
Into foggy sulphur smelling glens and though I gasped and throbbed in bog—  
Ah, my comrade, I could hear birds sing.

Pushing on for Gideon's camp I slipped  
On glowing boulder coals while hotter yet my blood  
Than these and though I shrieked in moving to get up—  
Ah, my comrade, I can bear not this.

When I'm there at Gideon's camp I think  
My eyes will not be customed to the light  
I find and though the sun is not the while in sight—  
Ah, my comrade, I will make it yet!

M. But Gideon's fire to you  
Will be no warmer than Goliath's.

P. Deep under  
Sifting an eon's pile of bleached chowder  
I probed a million tombs with the one tired agony hissing  
A dry whisper through the dark  
... Maybe in the next cool one.

Close about  
Milling in a generation's throng of faggedout faces
I probed a million vanities with the one impressive agony grinding
A rasp over the wheel
    . . . Maybe in the next hot one.

High up
Breathing a light year’s cosmic winds
I probed a million airs and vacuums with the one desperate
scream ripping
A hole in my throat

    . . . and Gideon answered.

M. The youth of you astounds me—
    Devils play about your ears
For know that this is Gideon’s camp,
And you are not welcome here.

P. (Pausing . . . then, aside)

    I swallowed air
Before there was much water
And, dwelling in the arid vapor-volumes
(rushed as far as the horizon),
My tongue, a cranial appendix,
Burst now and then with desert song
Between impassive sucking.
I lived, as was my duty,
And this before the water.

M. Devils do not cease
    Their war upon your ears,
For I have spoken:
    Go away from here!

P. (aside)

    A bubble or an odd, improper fusion
Was enough to cool the soft manfence of beating blood
Into an iron, binding rope . . .
Back there in the sheltered, throbbing darkness
I each year on piling year
Until a score of iron turns had wound me to my waist,
Each weave more tempered link on link
And now no holes between.

You will not see an outward rage
That better men engage to make them better;
But hurricanes are zephyrs as compared
To Furies' scratch and tear that rips inside.

M. Since I cannot rid my tent of you
Please tell me the nature of Gideon's call—
Did he shout? Did he signal?
Or whisper?

P. Aye, he whispered.
For word summons further by whisper
And deeper, and lasts longer,
Than loud ranting.
What is there that is beautiful that shouts?
Love?
God?
Truth?
Always the tinkle has out sounded the blast.

M. (aside)
Ah, see if there is substance of two fingers to hold up
In praise and glory
Of mutual stimulation.

Thumb back through musty, crinkling calendars—
When did the final human being die?
And did they mob his hearse
Or chant his sodden body to the sky?

When will we live again,
Be resurrected from the vast demesne?

No, there is no substance of two fingers to hold up—
Metallic clanking
Sounds from the amputation.
P. Speak so I may hear.

M. After the halfdwindle wreck of the flesh
   Of ten million, ah, ten billion more
   The you and the I of us may crush lesser lives of us,
   After ten million, ah, ten billion more.

   The future divine of us is human sign of us
   And after ten million, ah, ten billion more,
   May blossom or wilt from us, Gods from the mad of us
   When ten million, ah, ten billion more
   Are all gone.

P. Be kind, O be kind
   To my kind and my kindred
   Come kinder than yet the cold clasp of your curse
   Cut a kingdom of kitchen
   Conspiring to kill us
   Bequeath to my comrades in coming a coffin—

   O the powder dry corpse in
   The kiln of my soul.

M. Your shaven face betrayed you
   To my eyes before your speech—
   You are not one of us.
   Lord, how I loathe this!
   I cannot avalanche myself to the
   Lee side of the mountain mind.
   But if I must prattle with you
   Let it not be a game.
   Think on this, dolt,
   And then be silent:

   Beyond all else that is or believes to be
   Our God is a syllogism
   And if you cannot argue It
   You carry a lost soul and need to have it cut out
   On the high altar we have here.

   Compassion we crucified,
   Medieval as your mind,
And laughter, being rather crude,
Except titters for delicate things.
There is more, but your eyes are fogged already.
Come with a heavy headed rebuttal,
If you have one.

P. (pausing)

I woud but, sir, of no avail to myself—
I am in Gideon's camp, and my mouth is closed.

Comment
on Human Winters . . .

Now come the gray dawns,
Now the time of sleeping mirth
And hollow laughter,
Where blase chatter and bright music
Fill the emptiness.

Within, cocoons of warmth distill
The talk and soundings into meanless noise;
Without, the icy armor is silk lined—
Protection from the cold.

The hibernation begins:
A yawn; a smile at a passing thought;
A settling adjustment to position;
A nod; and last, a frozen attitude

No notice taken of gray dawns.
A butterfly appears in spring,
But now—a long and dazed sleep.

. . . Mary Lou Lemon
Shore Night...

Oh Lake, I walk your wet,
Packed shore sands playing,
With your wet, wide tongue
Licking your lip where my feet were.
A red, near full moon
Sits splendid on your
Out of sight other edge and
Girl laugh lits from home turned craft.
The still stickiness of your night,
Lake—passing to breeze freshness—
Gelds will; coats art.
I succumb to you, Lake! Collecting
Calmness among heel prints and sand castles
Of another day, another world.
Soon, slumber, in a child depth seldom known
To never sun sapped, play drained body,
Comes free nor care corrupt.
Hence a time your brown burned
Bodies will be carressed by you;
Frolicking in and on and by you:
Pulling out fish from your store of them
Or bathing in you;
Or flitting knife-like through your skin
While you boil your V cuts away
Into a disorder of waves lapping, licking
Back to the fish-rippled still of another
Night.

... Dave Newsome
Ode to the Rose Pickers . . .

All the bad wine, eye-glazed
and tummy humming like a top,
we think often of art, weep
securely in our tower. But drop

out there, Yawners, move with
rich and poor through a public war
of storewindows telling all
to be a little better than before.

We see dreams, private like our
own, reflecting a reality of griefs.
In all those panes; hurts, loves
and flesh mingle into beliefs

of what we are tomorrow. Beginning
now make no apologies for being gay;
those faces are not real until
they become our own some sober day.

... John Murphy
New City...

by Douglas Hodgman

Philadelphia on Sunday is like no other place on earth; it is very big and very empty. The Sunday color seems to the memory all grey; the still, pale sky, the long deserted streets, the dark crooked alleys, the crumbling brick warehouses, the steel webs of the overpasses and bridge: they are all a drab, dull grey. Little noise disturbs the Blue Law peace; newspapers scuffle down the shadowy gutters in cold gusts of wind, water drips from the elevated’s overhanging latticework, and perhaps there is the low moan of a faraway car, the drifting wail of a siren, or the sharp echoing staccato of a boy batting a ball against a windowless building.

When he first came to the city, it was not quite yet Sunday. It was snowing a steady wet drizzle when his ride let him off in Penn Square, and he headed straight for the railroad station, hoping only that his sacking luck would be good. As he walked in the door and down the stairs, he rubbed his fingers on the money in his pocket, a dollar bill wrapped tightly around a dime and two pennies. He had been forty hours on the road without sleep, and he thought longingly of an all night movie or a hotel. But he couldn’t spend any of his funds if he was going to find a job on Monday.

He ambled once around the station floor, then picked a solitary bench back in a dimly lit corner. He waited carefully a few minutes before he stretched out and folded his arms under his head. Gradually, he felt the pain and the weight leaving his feet and ankles. His stomach turned dry, his head lightened, and his thoughts reeled dizzily until he felt he was once more out in the low wind, his thumb out, his neck cold, the cars passing; and he was walking, walking, walking...

"Come on, kid, you can't lie down here," the voice insisted. He sat up and tried to open his eyes. "You waiting for a train?" the voice rasped. He focused his eyes and saw that the cop was regarding his torn blue jacket and dirty tan pants.

"Yeah," he muttered, "Yeah, I'm waiting for a train."

"Well don't go back to sleep," said the cop. "We can't allow you to lie down in here." He watched the cop stride off under the lights to the next room. His head was throbbing heavy-light, heavy-light, and
his mouth felt full of cotton. I really ought to move, he thought, trying to keep from slumping over. I really . . . ought to . . . move.

"I thought I told you you couldn't lie down here," the voice was saying.

Quickly he sat up. "I'm just waiting for the train," he said. "Just waiting for the train."

"You been drinking, kid?" the cop asked. Oh Christ, he thought. He can smell that drink the last ride offered me.

"I only had one drink," he sighed, too tired to lie. "But look, sir, I was just waiting for a train."

"I think you'd better come with me," said the cop.

Goddamn, he thought bitterly. Goddamn it all, anyway.

"Where you from, kid?" the thick man behind the desk grunted as he wrote the boy's name in the book.

"The midwest," he answered. "Sir, can't I go back and catch my train?"

"What are you doing in Philadelphia?"

He tried to think, but the naked bulb over the desk glared in his eyes, and his head felt dizzy.

"What are you doing in Philadelphia?" the cop repeated. He stared at the cop blankly. An answer wouldn't come. "I'm booking you on a drunk charge," the cop said. "Take him away."

The one dull light stained the steel walls of the runway yellow, and the bars threw long widening shadows into his cell. "Give me your belt," said the cop in the runway. He shoved it through the bars, and then listened as the footsteps retreated down the hall and out of the room. Through the runway window he could hear the faint sound of a radio playing jazz, and now and then the blare of a car horn. The radiator hissed and knocked softly. He folded his jacket under his head and laid down on the narrow wooden slab. In his imagination, the deep shadows grew thicker and thicker until at last they smothered the light, and it was dark.

Sunday morning was grey when they opened his cell door. "Can I go now?" he asked in the hall, looking out the door and down the steps to the street.

"Hell no, kid. Got to go to court," said a cop. At the end of the hall five men from another section of the jail were waiting for the wagon.

"Don't you push me around," yelled the man with the bald, sharp skull.

"This one's a trouble maker?" asked a cop.
“Yeah, and he’s going to get his friggin’ head bust in, too,” growled the cop with the slicked hair.

“Just don’t push me around,” mumbled the sharp skull, his eyes blank and depthless as solid blue marbles.

“Just get in there and shut up,” snarled the cop, pushing the man out the door and toward the wagon.

“This is a free country, isn’t it? I can talk when I want to, can’t I? I know my rights.”

“Get in and shut up,” bellowed the cop, kicking the man awkwardly up to the wagon so he scraped his bald head against the top of the door. “All right, hurry it up,” the cop beckoned. As the boy followed the others into the truck he could hear the deep, hollow sound of a tower clock striking the hour in the still, morning air. It was seven.

The truck rolled noiselessly through the quiet streets. “Colored folks are all right,” sharp skull was saying. “Some real nice fellows I’ve known were colored.” The four negroes were growing uneasy.

“He’s going to get us all in trouble if he don’t be quiet,” one of them said.

“Anyone got a smoke?” the little man with the sweating cheeks asked as the boy took out a pack of cigarettes. There were just six left, and they were all looking at him now. He passed the pack around, then the matches, and the men smoked in silence as the smoke rose up like moist mist and clung to the roof.

The truck stopped in the back of the courthouse, and the prisoners were hustled into another cell. In the weak light that filtered through the high, meshed window, he could see men crowded in together on the benches of four inner cells and others standing or squatting in the enclosed runway. Four or five were sleeping on the grimy cement, a floor half flooded by the leaking faucet; and, in a corner, an old, bare-chested derelict was muttering softly to himself.

The boy slouched back against the wall and thought about food. It had been almost twenty hours since a ride had bought him a hamburger, and the hunger was now a shaking nausea that gnawed at his stomach and hurt in his head. The door lock clanked several times, and more prisoners were brought in. Later, there were still more.

Somebody said it was after one. A huge, shivering negro with a wedge shaped head was bawling his hunger. “Let us out so we can get some food,” he howled.

“And so I says to this cat: ‘Man, you got joint on your breath and roaches in your pants cuff. Clean up, man, clean up.’ ”
“Here I was just brewing the sternover—”
“Sterno, you idiot.”
“And who should come mincing up but these two broads, just like they could smell it, see . . . ”
“So I said to the judge, I said, ‘Judge, you just send me up to the House of Correction, and I won’t bother you no more.’ Shid, you get a bed, three meals, and television. Shid, it gets cold outside these days.”
“All I was doing was sitting there on my girl’s door step, and along comes the red wagon and picks me up. It’s getting so you can’t sit on your doorstep without being picked up,” moaned the young man with a press in his pants.

The door clanked open, and the little officer with glasses over his pinprick eyes scowled at the prisoners. “Who wants to wash my car?” he snapped. Someone volunteered, and then others volunteered to mop the floors. The door closed and opened again. “Hey, kid . . . Yea, you. Come over here. I got a job for you,” the little cop said, leading the boy out into the court room.

The boy worked down the brass rail, buffing off the wax. Just as he finished, the judge completed some paper work. “All right, bring in the drunks,” said the judge. The cop with pinprick eyes went back down the hall, and then they came; forty-five men, they came shuffling, limping, staggering, coughing.

“All right,” said the judge, as soon as the group was assembled before him. “Who’s got a dollar bill they want to donate to the Heart Fund?” The young man with a press in his pants walked up to the desk and dropped a bill in the little tin can. “Okay, go home,” said the judge. “Now who’s got fifty cents they want to donate? Nobody’s got fifty cents? We’ve got lots of room for you up at the House of Correction . . . All right, who’s got a quarter for charity? Okay, go on home. Go on home. Okay. Okay. Okay. Any of the rest of you got any money at all? Okay. Go ahead. Goodbye. So long. Save some money for carfare. Go ahead.” The judge looked out over the group still waiting. “You, you in the overcoat. You look like a nice man. Go on home. You can go too. You too. And you, and you, and you.”

The boy stood by the rail and watched while the judge finished dismissing the prisoners. Damn it, he still hasn’t pointed my way, he thought. “Why doesn’t he point to me?” When the last man drifted out the door, the little cop focused his pin-prick eyes on the
brass rail and smiled. “You didn’t do a very good job,” he said pleasantly. “Polish it over again.”

“You want some money for the Heart Fund?” the boy choked stepping up to the desk with the dime and two pennies.

“Yeah, let him go,” said the judge. “Save enough for carfare, kid.”

He walked out the door, jumped off the steps, and started up the long, deserted street. The sun behind the blanket of grey cloud looked like a dim flashlight wrapped in dirty gauze, and a cold gust of wind scuffled newspapers down the shadowy gutters. Water dripped from the overhanging elevated, the low moan of an auto horn sounded faraway, and across the street in a vacant lot a small boy was bouncing a ball against a windowless building. Now I will get something to eat, he thought confidently, and tomorrow I will get a job. But in the back of his mind was a thought he wanted to fight off, to forget: This new city, this Philadelphia on Sunday is like no other place on earth; it is so big, so very empty.

Rescue . . .

To the night belongs a fragile stillness;
It could be Death in miniature.
Life creeps forth in the delicate light
Of a trivial firefly.
Its insignificant gleam, when seen,
Becomes an exquisite lamp,
Soothing a lonely, frightened man
Charmed by its skipping, subtle grace,
Enraptured by its winking light.

. . . Bryce Forester
I took of death a dose enough
In glaze I stared at feather stuff
And eyes more man than mine stared back.
A justprung heron hung, and flung
Across a waxy leaf my tongue
A warbler mutely mocked.
I bowed my head to feathered dead . . .
A standing stolid Darwin doom—
My pulse drumdrawn by the tattered tomb—
Of grouse mate passion robbed.
A log lay under its tailskin
I strained for a bloodbeat on wing plastered in—
And pulpy in my manwise ran.

... John A. Eastman
Finally the door closed and peace reigned. Mother has the baby for the day so I will be able to get at all the things that have been piling up. I had better start with the dishes and there is the washing to do. So much to do and no time to think.

I walked slowly down stairs and started to put the first load in the washer, diapers and diapers, is there ever an end to them? And now outside to hang up the lines. Every time I look at a clothesline I shiver, and I think of Ann. Poor Ann, how could any human mind deteriorate so much that they would take their own life. She couldn’t handle problems, they say.

How I miss her. She was the one who talked me into college and she helped me design clothes. How could her talented mind think such thoughts? She had everything any person could want, a loving husband, and little Connie (so talented and shy). Why, oh why, did she do it. She just had a new house, all the money and happiness she wanted. What must she have thought before she stood on the swing and put the callous rope around her neck? She couldn’t handle problems, hell, neither can I, but who can?

I guess my mind must have really wandered off, I have so much to do and no one can do it right. The house just isn’t clean, nothing is. Mom said I needed a day off, I can do things, it’s just that I never seem to have time.

I had better clean the closet, there just isn’t enough room. I’ve tried to tell Paul, he doesn’t understand. The first washer must be done, and Oh,’ it is raining and I’ll have to hang the clothes down in the basement. Nothing goes right anymore. I wonder what it is like to die? That is silly, and I have so much to do. Why are the tears falling? I can do things! I have time to do the floors now, goodness it is almost noon. I’ve got to stop and have a cigarette, and some coffee.

There, the wash is done, and—I wonder what it is like to die? There would be no problems, it is swift and sure. Paul hid all the sleeping pills. But there is so much to do, the closet is so crowded. I will take a warm bath and forget all the problems, but the closet!
The water is so warm and feels so nice. It is almost like sleep, but then so is death, it is just the problems. Paul will be home in about two hours. I must be ready. It is all set. The baby is too much, Paul doesn’t understand. Everything is clean and neat, the way it should be, only can’t. The closet, how can I rearrange it so things will fit?

I slowly took down the clothes and then the lines. The rope was so heavy, and it would be so easy and painless, and neat; and then no more problems. I can’t handle another baby, I can’t tell Paul. I won’t. I looked at my hands and found I was making a noose, so easy and clean. I slipped the rope over the beam and thought I finally understood Ann. Life can be too hard. I balanced for a moment on Becky’s swing and thought, it’s just all the problems. I can’t handle them. I can’t!

Sunday Morning . . .

The ship was piered at Norfolk port.
   Its guts were wormed with men
   All rushing through excited tasks
   To set to sea again!
Each moved with vows of vengeance.
   Their hearts were gnawed with dread
   For war had belched its bitter bile
   And many mates lie dead
On Neptune’s unfinished carpet.
   Mosaic begun with time
   Revealing histories but to the dead—
   Tongueless players in mime.

   . . . Sherwood Snyder III
Le Chat Noir ...

Ici et là on peut le voir
Ne partant nulle part, il est
Où il sera, moi, je ne sais
Mais je l'aime, mon cher chat noir.
Pendant le jour, pendant le soir
Il dormira, mais dans la nuit
Il veut roder; et il s'enfuit
Quand on arrive, le bon chat noir.
Mon amour qui comme mon chat
N'est pas câlin, ne comprend pas
Mes caresses; il m'a blessée.
Mais mon chat noir et mon amour
Malgré tout me sont chers toujours
En les aimant, je suis aimée.

... Diane Peacock
Large, frightening red cats with sharp teeth and big eyes are hung on the curtains and tacked to the walls. There is a strange feeling of movement in these cardboard cats; a feeling intensified by the loud jumpy music of the band. The people listen to the music and begin to clap their hands with the rhythm of the big, loud drum. Toes start to tap the floor and a few of the beat-crazed people begin to dance.

“What kind of dance is that?”

“They call it the jitterbug.”

“Jitterbug? Hm-m. To me it looks like undecided lovers.”

“What do you mean?”

“Well, just look at them. The boy grabs the girl. He pulls her close. With a brief moment of thought he spins her away. The girl shuffles her feet and wiggles her hips, as if to waste a little time while the boy thinks of the mistake he has made. Now both the boy and girl are waving their hands in the air wildly and walking on their heels. They look like penguins. The boy grabs his partner and spins her around again while he gives the idea one last thought. Then, he pulls his girl madly back into his arms. They seem to repeat this routine. Oh, look! They are going faster now. How can they stand it? They cannot possibly go on much longer.”

The music reaches a rousing tempo. The dancers and musicians keep on, seeing who has the most stamina. The music finally comes to a screaming halt and the dancers limply walk toward the nearest chairs.
The Interview . . .

by U. Harold Males

For four long years, Ralph Hanson had been dredging up bright remarks with which to embarrass the interviewer and now his brief moment was finally at hand.

He strolled into the office and placed his papers in front of the captain at the desk. The officer rose, offered his hand and at the same time waved vaguely with the left one in the direction of the other chair. Perfunctorily, Hanson shook the proferred hand and dropped rather loosely into the indicated chair.

A quick smile appeared on the captain's face and he stated mechanically "I'm an R.O.T.C. instructor and I'm required to give each entering freshman a little talk on the benefits of the R.O.T.C. program." He paused, and glancing at the smirking figure seated across from him ventured, "Are you, by chance, a veteran?"

Hanson's grin became wider, "Yes, by chance, I am."

The captain suddenly seemed ill at ease. "Well, I have to give you this talk anyway." A probing finger crept stealthily inside his shirt collar.

Hanson's rejoinder served only to heighten the awkwardness of the situation. "I know you do." His jaw twitched with the effort of maintaining that grimace upon his features.

The captain spoke rapidly now, looking at his desk top rather than at Hanson. Every time he glanced upwards he met that fixed smile. Presently, he stumbled, mispronounced a word and catching himself, looked at Hanson for encouragement. There was none forthcoming.

The ghastly smile was still present, but a careful observer might have noticed that it had slipped ever so slightly. It slipped still more as the captain continued, paused, and clearing his throat, lurched onward with an anguished frown upon his almost livid countenance.

At last the speech was over! The captain looked at a point somewhere over Hanson's left shoulder as he shook his hand in dismissal. Hanson disengaged his hand and shuffled out in a rather disturbed state of mind. The experience hadn't been nearly as satisfying as he had hoped it would be. He felt horrible. The expression on the
captain's face, when he had looked upon Hanson's painted smile, had been one of sheer physical pain.

Slowly, Hanson walked out of the building. Pity was a new emotion to him, yet he was almost sure that was what he was feeling for the captain. Strange, but in all the novels he had ever read about ex-G.I.s, they had always felt somewhat exalted after humiliating an officer in just such a predicament.

Hanson's eyes brushed his watch. The cafeteria was open by now and he knew that his Air Force buddies would be there, downing coffee. His pace quickened. Maybe he would just change a few facts and make a big deal out of the whole mess. The idea appealed to him. This could make a pretty funny story if a guy knew how to tell it the right way.

Confessional . . .

Blacked robed men—their silence voices,
Like pathetic winds that probe
Thru scavenger picked angling streets
By night, images of bleeding swords—
That bleeding rust,
And dust flowers pressed in leather books,
Where virtuous must evokes a cozy smile.

Father leisure up the receding aisles!
Father, black against the marble wall,
Approach me upright coffined here.
Father hurry, hear me now!
We'll syllable my life and breathe a lamb
And burn it writhing up and be reborn,
Father! black against the marble wall.

. . . John McClure
The sun was getting hot and it was all I could stand to balance myself barefooted on the sun bathed rail as Tony and I walked down the railroad toward Capital street. Tony, hopping from tie to tie and munching on one of my mother's oatmeal cookies, was tossing up a rock about the size of a baseball and trying to catch it with his free hand. He lunged toward me, missed the rock and made me lose my balance. The sharp edged gravel of the roadbed bit into my bare feet.

"Now look what ya did! And I was tryin' to see if I could stay on all the way to Capital!" The stinging of my feet put a knife in my voice.

"Don't count it. It ain't your fault. If ya don't fall off the rest of the way it's the same thing."

"Naw, it ain't either." The hot rail on my now tender feet was more than I could take. I hopped along side of Tony.

"What are we gonna do?" he mumbled through a mouthful of cookie.

"I don't know."

"Let's go down to the schoolyard and see if we can get enough guys for Indian Ball. Whata ya say?" he suggested as we passed the mine siding and turned down Capital.

"Okay by me." The sidewalk was too hot for my bruised feet. I walked in the grass—it felt soft and prickly at the same time, but much cooler.

A block from the mine there was a group of miners milling around the corner. Tony's father was a miner and several of the men spoke to him.

"Hi, Tony. Where's your ol' man?"

"Your old man ain't scabbing on us, is he, Tony?"

"Hell, no!" Tony's face turned redder than my mother's roses in the backyard everyone had to be so careful of. "He ain't no goddamn scab!"
"You tell 'em, Kid!"

We skirted around the edge of the crowd. My heart leaped at the sound of their voices; some were pitched unnaturally high, and oaths spewed out in torrents, like the gushing of water through sewers after a downpour. I glanced at Tony. His eyes were lit up like a hundred watt bulb—only once before had I seen him look like that: the night we’d got into the gang fight after the football game. My stomach took a fast ride up an express elevator.

"Come on"—my voice came out strangely, startling even me—"let’s go, or the gang will all be gone!"

"Stick around!" he snapped at me.

The look he gave me was almost like a slap. I felt my face glow and I backed away toward the sidewalk, stubbed my heel on it, and ignored its heat; I had a feeling of awkwardness and a strong fluttering stirred in my breast.

A truck load of coal went roaring past, and someone shouted: "There goes another load of scab coal on a scab truck!"

I saw Tony heave his rock at the departing truck; it fell short of its mark, and Tony said disgustedly:

"Missed the scab-bastard!"

"Atta boy, kid!" a voice from the crowd yelled.

My hands began to tremble. I gasped, "Christ! What did ya wanna do that for? Let’s get outta here!" and tugged at his arm.

"What the Hell ya scared about!" He jerked his arm away angrily.

"Who said I was scared?" I sneered, calling up all my strength to be convincing.

"Well, you sure act like it!" His voice was raspy and his face was flushed pink. "Help me find some more rocks, then. If you ain’t afraid!"

"Okay, okay, but . . . ."

He turned on me sharply. "You ain’t chickenin’ out on me, are ya?"

I swallowed a lump in my throat and brushed past him. Scared, was I? I’d show him! I scoured the block and returned with both of my overall pockets bulging with rocks. I started to say something to Tony but he held up his hand for me to listen. I couldn’t quite get what the talk was all about, for everyone seemed to be trying to damn the scabs at the same time. Suddenly a feeling of importance swelled in me; I felt as though I belonged—I felt a brotherhood toward the whole crowd—I became a miner with a big grievance.
A warm pleasant feeling swept through me; and I tried to swagger my way through the crowd like Tony.

More people joined us, and another crowd had developed on the other side of the street. Foul epithets to scabs were bandied between the two groups. Rocks and clubs appeared magically out of nowhere. Another truck rambled past. The crowd grew almost silent, only the shuffling of feet and heavy breath disturbed an otherwise quiet people following the truck with their eyes. A lone rock went sailing through the air. The mob burst into screaming filth and a shower of rocks and clubs filled the air, but the truck was out of range.

"Kill the dirty scabs!"
"Kill John L!"
"Give 'em Hell, men!"

Before I knew what I was doing I had thrown my rocks and was screaming filth at the top of my voice. I was pushed, pulled, mashed and tugged along with the milling crowd in a mad scramble to retrieve the thrown rocks and clubs. I became separated from Tony, but I didn't care. I didn't need him anymore. My heart was thumping like the old water pump in our basement, and a warm sweat made the palms of my hands slippery.

Another truck was spotted turning out of the mine entrance, and a cry went up through the crowd. This time everyone was ready. I could hardly wait until the truck was in range. I aimed a rock at the man behind the wheel, but my aim was lousy. But amid the shower of bricks and rocks bouncing off the truck the windshield disappeared with a crash. The truck veered crazily, first one way and then another, finally straightening out and seemed headed right toward me.

Someone screamed: "Lookout! That crazy bastard's trying to run us down!"

The men in front of me scrambled hastily to get out of the path of the onrushing truck. I turned around and pushed and shoved wildly, my heart pounding furiously in my ears. Someone stepped on my heel. I fell forward, clutched desperately at fleeing legs in front of me and a miner's boot heel exploded on my chin. A terrific crash boomed in my head. My teeth bit into my mouth and I tasted blood as a flood of pinhead lights flickered before my eyes. The trampling feet came to a sudden halt and I staggered to my feet feeling lightheaded.
The telephone pole was tottering, and the truck, like some crushed monster, was squirting hot water from its radiator like water being squeezed from a sponge. The retreat was over and the crowd was surging back toward the truck.

"Kill 'im!"

My head was throbbing with pain and my body was shaking worse than the time Tony and I had broken through the ice while skating on the quarry pond. My aches fed my fired brain with just one thought: To smash that scab with my bare fists. I rammed my way through the crowd. An iron hand grasped me on the shoulder from behind, and I was spun around with a violent jerk and sent sprawling to the ground. A silver badge on a blue uniform and a billyclub clenched in an iron fist flashed before my eyes. My breathing almost stopped; a cold chill clutched at my heart. My shoulder and chin burned; my head throbbed. I jumped to my feet and ran headlong across the street. Looking back, I saw the driver jerked from the cab of the truck by two burly miners. Their faces seemed almost purple as they clubbed him with their fists; others grabbed frantically at him as he started to fall. His clothes were in shreds. He fell to the pavement like an empty potato sack. Blood had turned his face into a hideous mask of red mush! Then it hit me! A scab! My God! This was a man!

A policeman ran up beside me, pointed a big barrelled gun over the heads of the turbulent mob. Pop! Someone let out a scream of pain. A cloud of white smoke burst into sight among the crowd. Other policemen around the fringes of the seething mass of men, their faces hid behind grotesque halloween-like gas masks, hacked away at them with clubs. The mob began to disperse quickly: men began to stagger away covering their eyes and noses with handkerchiefs; some were left where they had fallen on the ground; some sat with dazed expressions on their faces. I saw one man running blindly, holding his hand to his head, blood oozing out between his fingers. Another man, being led away by a disheveled companion, stopped and spat blood on the ground through split and gnarled lips. The lonely wail of sirens filled the air as more police cars and ambulances appeared on the scene.

A sickening convulsion gripped my stomach and I supported myself on a nearby car fender as I vomited. My trembling became violent, my knees became watery and I slumped to the curb. Something welled up inside me, like a fountain of vinegar gushing and splashing around in my breast, tears flooded my eyes and trickled
into the corners of my lips and were salty in my parched mouth. The screaming of every bone and nerve in my body soon subsided into a numbing weariness, and I felt more tired than I had ever been before. I suddenly felt as though I were all alone, trapped in front of an onrushing train and was unable to move from its path—and I didn’t care... I just didn’t care a bit.

"You all right?" I recognized Tony’s voice.

I kept my face buried in my arms so that he couldn’t see my tears. Not that I cared about him anymore, either. For he wouldn’t understand. It was just easier this way.

"Yeah, I’m okay."

"What in the hell are ya cryin’ about, then?"

"I ain’t cryin’," I lied. "I got a dose of that tear gas."

"Don’t cover your eyes then, stupid! Let the air at them." He touched my aching shoulder and I winced. "Come on, let’s go down to the school and tell the gang. Jesus, that was sure some go around while it lasted!"

"You go ahead," I said. "I’ve got to go home and get something for my eyes. I’ll see ya later."

I got up, turned my back on Tony and the whole miserable scene, and headed toward home. I knew no one was home, and I needed to be alone.
These are my poetpeople, my pennysingers,
Reaching out to pound a sound, a song.
Their brave words worthy rust in tears
And worthy are these pebble sighs of
Moons and moondoms; flow out my doves,
Do ye undo those lies nor yet prevail,
But singing in our hearts, our heats
Of hearts, loud, louder, go now thou
Proud and unashamed not in silence,
But round us ring a lovehood, my loves,
My loves.

And you, good readers,
Accept this rag for the common cause
Of bricks, pedantry, roses, laughter
Or whatever your wishes; we simply
Dedicate this effort to the Academy,
And dearfully to God, our common Fountain.

... John Murphy