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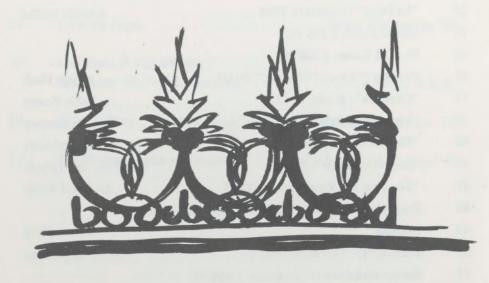
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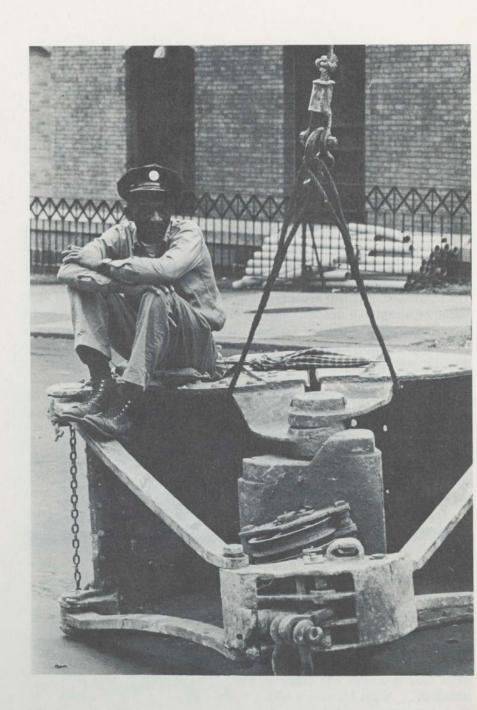
A WHO'S WHO OF BLACK AND WHITE IN THE BLACKS: A CLOWN SHOW

-JoAnne Meter

Edmund Burke, in his *Philosophy of Literary Form*, says "there is nothing more rational than the systematic recognition of irrational and nonrational factors." The problem of identity for the Negro that Genet presents in *The Blacks: A Clown Show* is precisely such a studied awareness of the irrational. The nonrational idea that ancestry is the same as essence, that race is the equivalent of identity, is the most striking imagaic-ideogaic emergence in Genet's play. Engaging to explore is the tense, funeral, life-struggle for identity of a people who have been cast in roles prior to their birth and the process of their symbolic rebirth. Genet creates a judge who says: "If a man's a man, a Negro's a Negro" (p. 109).²

Identity as herein used is according to Burke's definition: "the purely psychological concept for relations to symbols of authority, possession and dispossession, material and spiritual alienation, faith or loss of faith in the 'reasonableness' of a given structure's methods and purposes and values is that of 'identity'." Although *The Blacks* has a strong underlying current of individualistic search for identity, the emphasis in this paper is upon group identity, with the Blacks treated as one collective unit and the Whites treated likewise.

One important contrast between Genet's White and his Black is that the White manipulates the strings of power: his are the symbols of authority. White has at his command "centuries and centuries of breeding", including the "angel of the flaming-sword, virgins of the Parthenon, stained-glass of Chartres, Lord Byron, Chopin French cooking, the Unknown Soldier, Tyrolean songs, Aristotelian principles, heroic couplets..." (p. 47). He is the caretaker of the dogmatic symbol. He is Christian. His is the Host, a White Host, and his is the "lily-white Queen of the West" (p. 44). But he is also decadent. Genet caricatures a celestial, pale, colorless, pedestrian, squeamish, odorless, castrated, corpse of White. His incantation is the "Litany of the Livid" (p. 57), and his White God is anemic and comic as well: "God is white...eats on a white tablecloth... wipes his mouth with a white napkin" (p. 24). In contrast, the Black is a caricature of the terrestial: repressed, vital, primitive, cannabalistic,



exotic, and animal. Whereas all the White has is his "nostalgia" (p. 11) and "cannot fertilize, for the water is warm" (p. 75), the Black is a "terrific fucker" (p. 80). Since the White manipulates the dogmatic symbol and the symbol of authority, the established spiritual and material world is a White one in Genet's over-all picture; to identify with such a structure psychologically and economically, the Black must accept a White value structure, a White God, and, in the reality of an established illusion, a White mother and father. The alternative to acceptance which the Black chooses is a venomous rejection.

In keeping with this resolution of rejection, Newport News says: "Our aim is not only to corrode and dissolve the idea they'd like us to have of them, we must also fight them in their actual persons, in their flesh and blood" (p. 112). The "idea they'd like us to have of them" to which News refers is actually a result of long centuries of totem and taboo. The whole purpose of the rebirth ritual for the Black is to reconstruct a long suppressed totemic line, excreting long centuries of taboo weighing heavily upon his race. The emphasis on primitivism in *The Blacks* and a recognition of White totemism can be studied in the light of Freud's explanation:

The tribal *totem* is the object of veneration of a group of men and women who take their name from the totem and consider themselves consanguineous offspring of a common ancestor, and who are firmly associated with each other through common obligation toward each other as well as by the belief in their totem.⁴

The totem itself, Freud relates, always involved the sharing of a substance, usually through its eating. Genet's emphasis upon the Eucharistic Host can be seen as such a consumption, and its totemic exclusion stirs the Black. The Missionary says, "Tell me, my dear Vicar, what about the Host? Yes, the Host. Will you invent a black Host?" (p. 32). And he emphasizes further, "Grant the gray Host and you're sunk" (p. 32). Consistnt with the principle of totemism is Felicity's calling forth of a suppressed totemic line, "Are you there, Africa... Slowly you vanish... but I call you back this evening to attend a secret revel. It's a block of darkness compact and evil, that holds its breath, but not its odor" (p. 77). Odor is frequently symbolic of sensuality and sexuality. Bodily pantomine is a further suggestion of the style of primordal return of the Black, that he has regressed to the childlike primitive state and intends to belie the White through exposure of the hypocrisy of the rites of totem and taboo engaged in by the White.

With the primitve aura established, the Black ventures into the rebirth cycle of matricide and patricide. Through the law of the jungle, of darkest Africa, the Black proposes to hate the hater, to destroy the destroyer: Archibald commands "invent not love but hatred and thereby make poetry . . ." (p. 26). And leaving no question of doubt, he reiterates, "we're bent on being unreasonable, on being hostile" (p. 29). The law has reverted to a bestial one: survival of the fittest.

Freud says that the "basis of taboo is a forbidden action for which there is a

strong inclination in the unconscious." Hence, the violation of taboo is the next step of the Black in his primitive role of state. He assumes the role he has been cast in: "We are what they want us to be. We shall therefore be it to the very end, absurdly" (p. 126). He sets out upon the rebirth quest, involving symbolic matricide and patricide: the primitive taboo is incest. The Oedipal mother is "desired but forbidden and her presence is a lure to dangerous desire." The sexual union with the Oedipal mother involves a duplexity of role in this taboo violation: the Black not only violates the primitive taboo of incest, but violates the strongly totemic White taboo against the Black through the symbolic rape and murder of the White female. Snow says: "Pour forth torrents. First, showers of sperm and then streams of her blood. I'll drink it, Village . . ." (p. 75).

Together with the Missionary, the Virgin-Queen exemplifies Christian religion and Anglo-Saxon cultural tradition and hierarchy. In addition, she is the archetypal image of Mother. Speaking of the catafalque, Village says: "But her death wasn't meant to signify merely that she lost her life" (p. 17). And Snow says: "There was a touch of desire in your hatred of her, which means a touch of love" (p. 17). Again, one sees the Oedipal relation of the Black to the female image. Because of the nature of the mother-child relationship, the child often correlates the protective warmth of the mother with the corresponding material world; however, in many religious and social traditions, there is "a consciously controlled pedagogical utilization of this archetypal image for the purpose of . . . initiation of the mind into the nature of the visible world." In assigning himself a new totemic line, and in thus assuming a new identity, the Black must destroy the White, Christian mother in addition to symbolically killing the father. Archibald reinforces such a necessity for matricide when he says: "The collection would have been incomplete without the Mother: Tomorrow, and in the ceremonies to come, you'll represent the Worthy Mother of the heroes who died thinking they'd killed us . . ." (p. 124). The beheading of the Virgin Queen is a matricide consistent with primitive forms of initiation. Stanley Edgar Hyman describes such a pattern of rebirth as "a ritual of death and rebirth with identity changed, organized in relation to accepting or rejecting a key symbol of authority."10 The "key symbol of authority" in iniatory rites of passage which the young must reject to pass into the larger world with subsequent new identity is a parental one. Genet carries the symbolic matricide and patricide of initiation over into his play. The infantilism of the White in The Blacks is the pathetic infantilism of senility, whereas the Black is merely in the fetal stage, ready to be reborn, to establish new meaning and powerful life force.

From Freud, Burke derives that "the paranoid assigns his imagined persecutor the role of rejected father. This persecutor is all-powerful, as the father seems to the child. He is responsible for every imagined machination—the persecutor thus becomes the persecuted." An illustration of this point can be

seen in Archibald's vehement cry to Village: "Your father? Sir, don't use that word again" (p. 26). That the Missionary represents the Christian, White Father can be seen when he says: "Hell obeys me. It opens or closes at a sign from my ringed hand" (p. 120). In Christian tradition, the priest or missionary symbolizes the God-Father on earth, and his eventual castration evidences the killing of the Father.

Recalling Burke's earlier definition of identity, the issue of "faith or loss of faith in a given structure's methods and purposes and values" is a primary key to identity. The method, the purpose, and the value of the White necessitates the rebellion of the Black. The murderously incestual perversion of the Black for the White can be evaluated through Freud's formulation of taboo:

The persistence of taboo teaches... that the original pleasure to do the forbidden still continues among taboo races. They therefore assume an ambivalent attitude toward their taboo prohibitions; in their unconscious they would like nothing better than to transgress them but they are also afraid to do it; they are afraid just because they would like to transgress, and the fear is stronger than the pleasure. But in every individual of the race the desire for it is unconscious, just as in the neurotic. 12

Diouf supports this issue when he says: "It is not easy to overcome a guilty meekness that the heart desires" (p. 33). One begins to see Genet's Black as the essene of the forbidden but desired act, the White as the sublimation of the act. In such respect, the Queen's words are noteworthy: "And now I die—I must confess—choked by my desire for a Big Black Buck. Black nakedness, thou hast conquered me" (p. 124). It becomes clear that Genet regards Black and White as interacting illusions which in turn become a motivating reality in the triggering of action and reaction. Both Black and White attribute a portion of their psyche to the other; ancestry thus becomes confused with cause. Ancestry subsequently becomes a projected form of essence with the Black represented as a beast and the primitive animated, while the White ecomes the paradigm of civilized pragmatism. Because of the mutual projections of one important aspect of the self to respective colors, the relationship is an intimate one, which is why, when a parental rejection is in order, he tries to destroy intellectualization and return to the primitive state.

Thus we come to see what Burke refers to as the "complex-in-terms-of-the-simple-strategy", an analysis of which reveals one element as "the civilized as the primitive sublimated." Village says, "We were the shadow, or the dark interior of luminous creatures" (p. 36). And Snow recognizes this as well: "So it was true, Lord Jesus, that behind the mask of a cornered white is a poor trembling Negro" (p. 58). The Christian, who is in this case synonymous with the White and neurotic, is, according the Freud "above all inhibited in his actions; with him the thought is a complete substitute for the deed. Primitive man is not inhibited, the thought is directly converted into the deed, the deed is for

him...rather a substitute for the thought..."¹⁴ The fear behind the sublimation and intellectualization of the White is described by Archibald: "By strething language we'll distort it sufficiently to wrap ourselves in it and hide..." (p. 27).

In conclusion, we see the Black has been set apart as a taboo object by a totemic line difference from his own because of the ancestor/cause fallacy. The search for identity and for new meaning is nonrational and absurd ("... to the very end, absurdly," p. 126) because of the illusion of racial priority, which finds Virtue intimating: "All men are like you: they imitate. Can't you invent something else?" (p. 128). The forced-upon-him and somewhat hysterical hope of the Black reduces to the economic, social, and psychologic transference of power from the White to the Black: "Whatever is good and kind and tender and gentle will be black. Milk will be black, sugar, rice, the sky, doves, hope will be black. So will the opera to which we shall go, blacks that we are, in Black Rolls Royces to hail black kings..." (p. 106).

Freud says that in the unconscious psychic activity of the human being there is "an apparatus which enables him to interpret the reactions of the other, that is to say, to straighten out the distortions which the other person has affected in the expression of his feelings." Although Genet's Black recognizes the distortion and the illusion on the part of the White, he cannot destroy the color-association buildup of the White without destroying the White himself, since the White consistently refuses recognition. Archibald says: "Since they merge us with an image and drown us in it, let the image set their teeth on edge" (p. 39).

Genet debunks all of the illusions of color to "merely color". Virtue summarizes the entire difference between Black and White, when she says in the denouement: "At least, there's one sure thing: you won't be able to wind your fingers in my long golden hair . . ." (p. 128). The crisis of identity for the Black thus becomes the crisis of the future of an illusion, an illusion built around the totem and the taboo which the White has layered and nurtured over centuries of White civilization.

Notes

¹Kenneth Burke, The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action, New York, 1957, p. 249.

²Citations from Genet in the text are to *The Blacks: A Clown Show*, Bernard Frechtman trans., New York, c, 1960.

³Burke, op. cit., p. 264.

⁴Sigmund Freud, "Totem and Taboo", *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud*, A. A. Brill trans., New York 1938, p. 807.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid, p. 832.

⁷*Ibid.* p. 907.

⁸Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, Cleveland, 1966, p. 72.

⁹Ibid, p. 113

10Stanley Edgar Hyman, The Armed Vision: A Study in the Methods of Modern Literary Criticism, New York, 1955, p. 341.

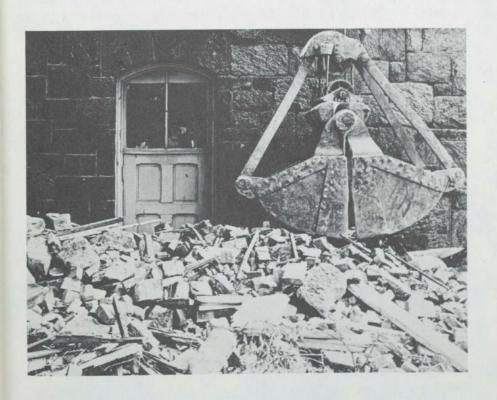
11Burke, op. cit., p. 236.

12Freud, op. cit., p. 831.

13Burke, op. cit., p. 240.

14Freud, op. cit., p. 930.

15 Freud, op. cit., p. 928.



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The rattling bird in your brain stuffed into a room without noise smashes against your head as my dead fist would

and I pity your silent face.

Ache with the hardest might you have
I'll feel each bone as it cracks against the cage

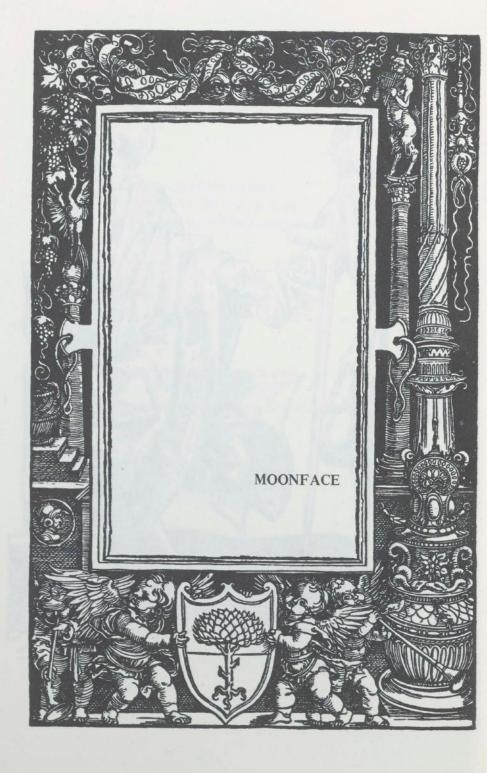
and your wings go down like meat in a lion's throat.

A motionless voice chews your heart and a dream.

Come fully clad from the scene of your death. You must move toward death's ability to move.

- Victor Bockris





I always been real proud of my kids, especially Danny. I'd like to see him grow up to be a doctor. He's got to get his marks up though. I keep telling him—he don't study, he's gonna end up working in the cemetery with me. But he won't listen to me too much any more. He's not too happy with his old man right now.

It's because of what happened at work a few weeks ago. It was a real nice day and I got to work right at seven o'clock. Usually, I hate to get up so early, but when its a nice spring day like this one was it always makes me feel real good. The cemetery looked nice and green and you could see all the new flowers people had been putting out for Memorial Day: it gave you a good feeling way down deep. Days like this you just drive around on your mower, cut grass between the stones, and nobody bothers you, yelling or asking why you're doing something; so I was looking forward to a real nice day.

When I got to the cemetery garage I was surprised to find some new faces along with the old group. I knew they must just be summer help so I didn't pay much attention to them. They come and they go all the time. Then, I suddenly heard this guy say, "Hi, Mr. DiTrio," and I looked up and it was Danny's friend Kevin. I didn't know if I should be happy to see him or not. I found out in a few seconds though, because all the old group were laughing and yelling stuff like, "Mr. DiTrio? I didn't know he had another name besides Moonface," and "I always thought his name was Mr. Face, Moon Face," and other stuff that wasn't real funny either.

Now usually, I would just laugh, myself, and try to think up something to say back to them, but this kid was one of Danny's best friends and it made me real mad to think they would say this stuff in front of him. So I jumped up and I was really going to tell them off but nobody seemed to be paying attention any more and, besides, I couldn't think of anything to say.

Finally, I remembered Kevin. He was just standing there with his hands in his pockets, blushing. It seemed to me that somehow he was responsible for whatever it was that was wrong. But before I could think up a something to say to him, the door to the garage opened and the boss walked in. If I hadn't been standing up he probably never would have bothered giving me the assignment, but as it was, I was the first person he noticed.

"Moonface," he said as he checked things off his list, "take Gambretto and Nate and that new boy next to you and get lot F37 ready for a burial this noon."

Now this didn't upset me as much as you might think. This was even easier than driving around on the mower. All we had to do was mark off the grave and get the top layer turned over so that Tony could come along in a machine that looks like a huge, green praying mantis and dig the rest of it.

So we set out for F lot with me leading the way and Nate and Gambretto right behind. Kevin was having a hard time keeping up with us because he was

pushing the wheelbarrow filled with all our tools. As we walked along, Gambretto kept talking about baseball, and the Red Sox, and didn't I think this and didn't I think that. I knew he was trying to trick me because Gambretto's like that, and so I tried to be really careful of everything I said. I'd think to myself, "Why is he asking me this question?" and I would try to give him the answer he wanted, but by that time he would have already asked me another question and be waiting for that answer. Don't ever get in an argument with somebody like Gambretto. They ask so many questions that they confuse you and then they mix your answers up until you feel as stupid as they want you to. But I don't think Gambretto's really much smarter than I am, he justs talks faster.

When we got to F lot I stopped paying attention to him and marked off the lot, setting up stakes and strings to show the boundaries. Then Kevin turned over the soil while Nate and Gambretto set up the planks for the machine to sit on so that it wouldn't be putting tire ruts in the grass. When this was done all we had to do was sit and wait for Tony.

I kept trying to think of something to say to Kevin but I didn't know what to talk to him about. I turned to Nate and Gambretto hoping that I could talk to them instead. But they were arguing over whose turn it was for overtime and I didn't want to take sides. So finally I turned back to Kevin who was looking around as though he expected the boss the pop out from behind a stone and grab him for not working hard.

"Don't worry," I said, "you can't do nothing until Tony gets here." I wanted to say something more to relax him and so a few seconds later I added, "Life's for the living." I could tell by the quick way he looked up at me that that was a strange thing to say and so I made the mistake of trying to talk my way out of it, "You guys been out raising any hell lately?" I asked.

"Not too much." He kind of laughed as he said this and it suddenly reminded me that I didn't want my boy out raising hell.

"What's that mean? You been doing it or not?" Kevin gave me another one of those quick looks and again I was sorry. I waited a minute and then tried again, asking him about school. I graduated from trade school so I spent at least as many years in school as he has. He told me it was just alright.

"What are you studying?" I think I was sweating by this time.

"Biology."

"Oh yeah? You look inside all them frogs and things?"

"Yeah"

"I kind of was in mechanical biology. While you look inside animals, I used to look inside machines and take them apart and stuff like that." His third quick look made me give up and I turned back to Nate and Gambretto. They were arguing about jelly doughnuts and how much jelly you got from each of the doughnut shops. When there was a pause I joined in, "I once had a doughnut without no jelly in it."

Gambretto started laughing before he could even get the joke out of his mouth, "You sure it wasn't a glazed doughnut?" and then Nate and even Kevin started to laugh too. I just sat down with my back against a gravestone and my legs drawn up. I wished to Christ I had just been cutting grass today. It would have been such a nice day if I had just been left alone. I began to grow more and more resentful towards Kevin. I kept glancing up at him expecting him to be looking at me but he never was, or at least I never caught him.

At last Tony arrived and began digging. He was almost done when the boss' station wagon roared up. The boss jumped out with the engine still running in the car and ran to the grave waving the plot chart in his hand.

"Goddamit, Moonface," you could hear him yell even over the roar of the praying mantis machine, "I told you to dig 37 and this is 87. You've dug the wrong grave and the funeral is going to be here in two hours."



I didn't even try to argue. My first thought was whether Kevin had heard him. Wrong graves had been dug before, it just meant a lot of extra work, but I didn't think Keven knew that. I just wanted to tell him that it's a mistake that happens every once in a while, that it could happen to anyone, that I just read the number wrong, but when I turned to him he was already laughing. He was laughing so hard that he was bent double, holding his sides. It just seemed as though I had to do something for my Danny's sake. A boy's friend just shouldn't laugh like that at the kid's old man. I just hit him once, in the side of the head, and then I wasn't mad any more.

I almost wish Danny would hit me once and then not be mad any more.

Old T.S.

I

Still not knowing if

Led from life to death

Death to life or

(Most absurd) never moving

Play

As if my life were

Staged charging through the hallowed door

For (O)

My rhythms and

My images and my symbols and

O play

I play upon the torso stage

Hot and sweating in

Debaucheries of

Clap clapping and

The theatre (the murdered

Cathedral) empties when

Our light (clapped out) is

Gone and

Old T.S. you with

"... the bottoms of my trousers rolled"

"... water lapping the bow"

"... in short, I was afraid"

Alone in the lonely ache that

Welds the weeping hearts of

Men

-Fritz Hamilton







An
Academic Exercise
– W.M.D.

I see him. We can see him. Through the branches pine and oak. We must stop laughing, but to be awake again is to laugh. You should wrap your watching in a sunbeam, then his hair and neck will feel only the warm fingers of the goldenlight instead of your drinking eyes.

Too late—stop laughing, oh please stop laughing. See how he has stopped, how he turns and squints up at us. See where the tendons of his neck stretch as his head guides his eyes from branch to branch. I have wrapped my voice in the rustle of a cardinal in the branches.

Quiet, stop laughing.

There, his eyes have found the red wings and, look, how his eyes laugh. Now his mouth laughs with them. They laugh, so we can laugh too in the goldenlight, and he thinks we are only echoes.

Ah, he caresses the myrtle trunk, embraces and kisses me. The body through the tunic against the rough bark, warm, and sun-flushed. Yes, listen to how I wrap my ecstacy in the sigh of a breeze, in the sigh of a—I am not so foolish as you would be—

Ah, his calf brushes against the trunk, against the cool moss. I would bleed my chastity away . . .

He was released me and laughs into the sunlight of your stare. See where the sunlight through our leaves casts shadows green and golden across the white tunic

Please, I will go gently to the lowermost branch. I must see the limbs and mouth

So close, and the tunic is whiter against the limbs first tanned and the new spring. The dark fine hair over the limbs glints and shines. The beard grows new as fine as the hair on the limbs. Aphrodite the laughing has left his mouth blushing . . .

Oh, there was no need to throw the pine cone at me; I would not have touched him, and now you have startled him. Stop laughing. He stares up at you through the branches again. Please stop laughing.

Look, our sister birch has already begun. If she had not chosen now to enter, he surely would have seen you. So thin and graceful, she enters our grove naked and dripping from the singing rocks of the brook.

How artfully she feigns her surprise at his presence. You should watch closely and stop laughing, you will be chosen one day. See how she carries the green tunic and places one foot directly before the other. When she would have him think she first sees him, she presses the tunic to her middle, looks to her breasts, and now to his eyes. How modestly she turns to the bushes. She slips the tunic over her head and it clings to her breasts and navel and thighs. See how she blushes and smiles as she walks towards him, how the sunlight smiles and beckons him through her hair.

How will she ...?

Listen, she asks for guidance from the grove and takes his hand. As they walk she presses her thigh to his. A few steps, she turns to speak with him and he slides the bulge in his tunic against the crevice of her thighs. Her breasts against him. His hands at the edge of her tunic . . .

See, we did not prepare the ground for no reason with pine needles and new leaves. The bodies struggle and laugh—thighs, shoulders, thick hair and mouths. There, the first emphatic thrust and the long awaited groan from our sister. A gentle rising and falling, quicker now and quickest, their muscles all contract—his cry and her eyes.

At least now you have stopped laughing. See, where sleep enters the grove in a fine mist and waits, until on the ground he kisses her brow and turns on his back to smile into the kind eyes of the golden-bowed Sun. Sleep now can wrap him in its transparent mist.

Our sister has been taken with this gentle mortal. How slowly she rises from his side. How she blushes when she kisses first his chest and now his sleeping mouth. She does not look back as she crosses to the birch, but from here I can see the sunlight trying to dry her tears. I, too, would . . .

She extends one long white arm to the sun and the gentle continuous curve of her legs, back and arm dissolves into the slender trunk. How quietly she prays that, after our lady Artemis has brought the sea ten times to its height, she will grant an easy birth.

His limbs in repose at the center of our grove, quiet now, and sacred. Lord Apollo of the supple knees smiles through the leaves and branches on the graceful limbs and his sleeping manhood newly fulfilled. She will give birth, our sister. But even before she kicked when he entered her, the others had begun. And now I can feel in my roots their hooves thumping toward the grove. Faces, horns, and red tongues. The muscles twitch and quiver under the fur. The rhythm stirs the sap in my branches and forces it to flow faster. All of them, red-tongued and blood-smeared.

Stop cowering and sobbing, my sister pine, or you will wake him. You would not hate them so if their dance had built its rhythms in this grove, if you could have watched their dull and docile expressions throb until their cracked lips pulled back and grinned their pointed teeth.

Now they stand around him and quiver, grinning; look one to the other as

great Pan raises the pointed stake over his sleeping middle.

Fool, your scream wakened him. He runs and screams his disbelief and, ah, two of them have caught him. How his arms bleed where their nails tear as he throws his screaming eyes from one bloody grinning mouth to the other.

Ah, his screams have stopped and theirs resume as they prance away into the wood.

Don't sob, my sister pine, I will weave for you a garland from the violets that already spring from his blood.



THAT'S YOUR BAG, ACE

Stephen Eingorn

A nondescript pool-hall, pinup poster about two by four, hanging by only one corner on the wall. The large green felt-covered pool table at center stage has a wooden base that seems somewhat abused. At the lower left corner of the pool table is a plump black boy, about sixteen years old. He has short, closeshaven hair, and big, plump round cheeks—sort of a teenage Louis Armstrong. His mounds of fat are proudly exaggerated by a yellow sweatshirt with the name "Friends's Select" embazoned on it. His is quite an accomplished pool player despite his years, and is enjoying himself immensely, lining up and making trick shots. We watch him for a few minutes, shooting, and singing "Ol Man River" in a throaty voice. He doesn't sing the whole song, but just fragments of it.

Ol Man River That Ol Man River He don't say nothin' He must know somethin' That ol' man River

He keeps shooting and singing as the door opens. He picks up his head ever so slightly as if to look, but doesn't. Through the door walk two mod-looking boys. Their accounterment suggests they might be English, and their accents will confirm this. They are precocious youths, of about the same age as the black boy, well groomed despite mop-like hair, and too well dressed to be in a place like this. They are wearing similar Edwardean style suits, with flared pants, long collars, and wide ties. They are very lively throughout, with the spontaneity of tourists seeing something very different for the first time, which of course they are. Their refined accents suggest good breeding.

ENGLISH BOY, to his companion as they enter the pool hall excitedly: Oh look, pocket billiards.

ENGLISH BOY 2: What a grubby sort of place, though. Wipes dirt off on his finger and inspects it, hesitates. Well, lets see what else New York has to show us. Turns to leave.

ENGLISH BOY 1: Do lets stay . . . proudly: I might like to try my hand at a few shots.

ENGLISH BOY 2: Come on wi' you. We didn't come all the way here to see some cruddy pool hall.... I want to see the Empire State Statue.

Black Boy interrupts his pool playing for the first time since they entered. Throughout their dialogue, he has remained exactly the same, except that he has been singing a little more softly than he was before they came in.

BLACK BOY, correcting: Building.

ENGLISH BOY 2: Yes, of course, thank you. Nods to Black Boy, then continues: Building-before we leave tonight.

BLACK BOY to English Boy 1: You guys tourists, or somethin?

ENGLISH BOY 1, quite naturally: Yes, we're from the United Kingdom. Black Boy looks puzzled—England, that is.

BLACK BOY: What are you doin' here?

ENGLISH BOY 2: We thought we'd leave the group.

ENGLISH BOY 1, looks hard at English Boy 2: Yes, none of that silly Statue of Liberty rot.

ENGLISH BOY 2, acquieses: Do you think we could have a few rounds with you.

Black boy nods, and finishes off the last shot he had lined up and left when he began talking to the English boys. He sinks it, of course, then lines up another shot, which he also sinks.

ENGLISH BOY 2, to English Boy 1: Mate, he's sure got a way with the stick.



ENGLISH BOY 1: I could handle it like that, I'd forget my books and become a professional, I would.

ENGLISH BOY 2: Hey Charely, do you think I could learn to shoot like that? Do you?

ENGLISH BOY 1: Gawn Man, you gotta be born a pool player. It isn't something you can just pick up, now. If it was, you could just open up a regular school for it, and give degrees and everything, and every idiot and then some would be hustling. This is a GENTLEMAN'S game.

At the word 'gentleman,' Black Boy stops, looks up from his shooting, and beams at the audience. Then he resumes. We watch for a few seconds.

ENGLISH BOY 2: Hey Ace, to Black Boy How come you're so handy with the phallic symbol?

ENGLISH BOY 1: He means the cue stick, mate.

BLACK BOY, to English Boy 1: Yeh . . . to English Boy 2: Its my bag man, can't you see.

ENGLISH BOY 2: But what makes you so good at it?

BLACK BOY, a little angered: I tol you man. Its my BAG. Nobody does my bag better than me. Maybe you don't understand, a little more gently since you are foreigners and all that . . . What I mean is He stops and thinks. It's my THING. Very deliberately now, each word accented: CAN YOU DIG IT?

ENGLISH BOY 2, in imitation of Black Boy: CAN I DIG IT. His own accent now: Of course I can dig it. To English Boy 1, affectly. And what's your bag, my long-haird compatriate?

ENGLISH BOY 1: Why, my bag is to be a thing, of course. And what's your thing?

ENGLISH BOY 2: To be a bag, what else? ENGLISH BOY 1: A douche bag, no doubt.

ENGLISH BOY 2: Bloody bastard! You set me up for that.

He taps English Boy 1 on the head with his cue stick. Black Boy shakes his head, as if to say something trite like, "boys will be boys," and resumes his shooting. English Boy 1 feigns anger and chases English Boy 2 around the table and Black Boy. On the next round English Boy 2 stops right next to Black Boy and begins to ask him a question. English Boy 1 passes them and stops on the other side of Black Boy and listens intently.

ENGLISH BOY 2: Hey Ace, don't you ever get tired of pool.

BLACK BOY: Of course not, man. Waits You ever get tired of your thing?

ENGLISH BOY 2, looks down at his own crotch, blushes: I play with my thing and you play with yours.

Black Boy goes back to his shooting. It takes a few seconds for English Boy 2 to regain his composure. English Boy 1 is laughing.

ENGLISH BOY 1, affectedly: I daresay Dr. Freud would have something to say about that. Pointing to Black Boy's cue stick.

ENGLISH BOY 2, *just as affectedly*: He would no doubt hypothesize a latent love for cuesticks, manifested in the socially acceptable game of pocket billiards. ENGLISH BOY 1, *still affected*: Old Sigmund was so wise to recognize the university of man's love for cuesticks. *In his own voice*: Freud was a fraud!

ENGLISH BOY 2: Blackguard!

ENGLISH BOY 1: Villain!

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ENGLISH BOY 2: Anti-intellectual!

ENGLISH BOY 1: Romanticizer.

BLACK BOY, breaking in suddenly: Shitheads!—Will you shut your mouths and let a man concentrate! He goes back to shooting, assuming all sorts of crazy positions.

ENGLISH BOY 2, in his own voice: America's a bloody bore!

ENGLISH BOY 1, sounding like a travel brochure: But what of the beautiful, spacious skies, amber waves of grain? English Boy 2 looks around, quickly covers his mouth. How about them purple mountain majesties, above the fruited plane. ENGLISH BOYS, BLACK BOY, all join in very cacaphonously: America, America, God shed his grace on Thee. All spread out their arms in imitation of a nightclub singer.

(Enter stranger, he is a tall, skinny black youth, wearing a tilted cap (beret) and black leather jacket. He is also wearing a mockturtle green sweater under it, and a pair of tightfitting black levi's. He has started a goatee, but it is very sparce. He is about the same age as the other boys.

As he walks in, and is greeted by the ridiculous sight of the boys singing "America" his mouth falls open, and he drops his cigerette. He regains his "cool-cat" saunter, however, as Black Boy looks down at himself, and quickly resumes his old position behind the cue ball. This cat, Henceforth called 'Cat', shuffles up to Black Boy with all his natural rhythm, obviously ignoring the two English Boys. They stare at him, perplexed, as if they were seeing a phenomenon for the first time. Cat launches into a "Hello Soul-Brother" routine to Black Boy, complete with sliding handshake, and assorted rigamorole. This lasts for at least a few minutes, as the English boys stand, transfixed, amazed at this show. Black Boy answers back in the same fashion, though less elaborately. The playwright being but a 'White Liberal,' cannot faithfully reproduce on paper the total effect and spirit of this culturally unique type of greeting, so he leaves it to the resources of director and actors.

ENGLISH BOY 1, to English Boy 2 only: Sure ain't the changing of the guards. Cat meanwhile acts super cool. (He is a caricature.) He takes a cuestick from one of the English boys, regarding him as if he were no more than a cue holder. The English boys, meanwhile, are so puzzled by this new arrival, that they stand stupidly paralyzed. Cat lines up an easy shot.

CAT, to Black Boy: Hey, bot, watch me can this mother. Exaggerated: Eight ball in de sid' pocket.

BLACK BOY, impatiently: Let's go man. Take your shot!

Cat shoots. It becomes apparent that he is not a good pool player, in fact, he is quite the fool.

CAT, as if he expected Black Boy to believe him: Slipped. Lemme have another crack at it, alright. He lines up the shot elaborately.

BLACK BOY: You're goin' about it all wrong. You gonna blow it again.

CAT: Get off me, man! I'll do it my way. This here's my bag!

At this, Black Boy shakes his head, but Cat is already leaning over his table, cue in hand, and he doesn't see. English boys snap out of trance at the word "bag." Cat "slips" again.

CAT, angered: This motherfuckin . . .

Black Boy ignores him and is shooting again.

ENGLISH BOY 1: At ain't the stick, mate.

ENGLISH BOY 2: You just ain't a pool player.

ENGLISH BOY 1: Give it up!

ENGLISH BOY 2: You're no good!

ENGLISH BOY 1 and ENGLISH BOY 2 together: It just ain't your bag!

Cat transfers his attention to the boys, and stares hard at them. All freeze except for Black Boy who is complacently shooting in the background. This lasts for a minute, before Cat breaks silence.

CAT, angrily: Who are YOU to say it ain't my bag! You blue-balled, mother-fuckin', cock-suckin', ass-lickin'... He goes on similarly for several minutes. English Boy 1 and English Boy 2 begin clapping and stamping their feet in rhythm after a minute. Black Boy keeps shooting. Cat comes up with an enormous amount of invective.

ENGLISH BOY 1, at the end: Bully!

ENGLISH BOY 2: Bloody good! (They both clap)

Cat is exhausted. He pants for a few seconds. Only action is Black Boy shooting pool, and boys clapping.

CAT, clapping dies out as he speaks: You honkys better watch who you're mockin' out. I mean, like this here's my turf and you ain't got no business on it! ENGLISH BOY 1, to English Boy 2: What's turf?

ENGLISH BOY 2: I think its like dirt.

English Boy 1 grabs broom, begins to sweep pile together.

ENGLISH BOY 1: Here. Take you bloody turf!

ENGLISH BOY 2: Who wants your dirt? He takes broom from English Boy 1 and sweeps pile to Cat very quickly, raising storms of dirt. Cat starts to sneeze compulsively.

ENGLISH BOY 1, restraining to English Boy 2: You know, mate, I don't think it means dirt at all?

ENGLISH BOY 2: What do you mean? ENGLISH BOY 1: I think it means grass.

BLACK BOY, looking up from table: It don't mean GRASS, brother. Cat stops sneezing momentarily

CAT: Somebody say grass? How much you got?

ENGLISH BOY 2, to English Boy 1, puzzled: I don't think it means grass, either.

CAT: Well, you got the shit, or don't you?

ENGLISH BOY 1, to Black Boy: What's he talking about?

BLACK BOY: The weed, man, you know.

ENGLISH BOY 1: Of course, Looks even more puzzled.

BLACK BOY, to Cat: They don't got no stuff.

CAT: Then what was they talkin' about? . . . What was I talkin' about?

ENGLISH BOY 2: You were talking about us being on your dirt.

ENGLISH BOY 1: You mean turf.

CAT: Yeh! I remember. What are you guys doing on my turf anyway? He looks at expressions of puzzlement on English boys' faces. Aw, fuck it! Turns to Black Boy: Hey brother, what are you doin' hanging around these honkys? Raising himself up to full height: I'd 'a' thought you'd have more pride than THAT. Their kind ain't good enough to associate with US. They can't even understand English.

BLACK BOY: Hell, man, they're still people.

CAT, blowing his cool: People! Was we people to them when we was slaves. Did they call your grandaddy "people" when they used to spit at him? Was we people then? . . . Fuckin' whitey. Slows down . . . Fuckin' slavers.

BLACK BOY: Shit man, these guys are all right. Smiles: They're British.

Pronounces "British" with exaggerated English accent.

CAT: Big shit!

BLACK BOY: That means they ain't slavers. England never had slaves.

CAT, slightly pacified: Oh yeah?

ENGLISH BOY 1, naively: Excuse me, but England DID have slaves.

ENGLISH BOY 2, butting in: Not as long as you Americans did though! He points his finger accusingly at the two Black Boys. Cat looks confused. Black Boy laughs.

ENGLISH BOY 1, continuing didactically: But with the Industrial Revolution,

they needed cheap workers and slaves were too expensive.

ENGLISH BOY 2, butting in, sounding like a history teacher: Then in 1807, King George saw the injustice in the situation, and let the slaves free, so they could have the right to work eighty-hour weeks with the free men, get black lung with the free men. He is now uplifing his voice to sound like a Freedom Foundation's announcer: work in the sweatshops with the free men, starve with the free men, get rat bites with the free men.

ENGLISH BOY 1: Good King George!

CAT: Fuck King George To Black Boy: See, they are slavers!

BLACK BOY: But that was years ago.

ENGLISH BOY 1, jokingly, as if to tease Cat: Wish I had a slave.

ENGLISH BOY 2: He'd do my homework.

ENGLISH BOY 1: Carry my books

ENGLISH BOY 2: Do my chores Meanwhile, Cat is getting furious. He does not see the humor in the situation. He is non-violently restrained by Black Boy.

ENGLISH BOY 1: Make my bed. ENGLISH BOY 2: Cook my food.

ENGLISH BOY 1 and ENGLISH BOY 2, together: Shine our boots! Both stick out boots toward Cat. At this, Cat breaks loose, and with a dramatic flourish, pulls out a switchblade.

ENGLISH BOY 1, jokingly: Hey, look what's got a knife.

ENGLISH BOY 2, in the same manner: Is he going to kill us, I wonder?

Now Cat lunges at English Boy 1, who calmly sidesteps him, almost ignoring him. Cat readies for another charge, looking very much like a throwback from West Side Story. English Boy 1 yawns, and diverts his own gaze to his cue stick. He looks momentarily at Black Boy, who has resumed shooting pool, then sights along his own stick.

ENGLISH BOY 1: I do believe the stick's warped. He moves the stick slowly in his hand, bringing it back and forth to check the degree of warping. Hey, look at this, mate. He turns to English Boy 2 and extends the stick, just in time in inadvertently push off a surprised and lunging Cat.

ENGLISH BOY 2, ignoring Cat: Let me see that, mate.

English Boy 1 hands him the cuestick. Holds it up, checking for warp.

ENGLISH BOY 2: I don't see no bloomin' warping! He assumes a shooting position. As he brings his arms back, he again thwarts Cat, hitting him in the jaw. Cat stops, holds knife loosely, and rubs his jaw. All except Black Boy look at him.

ENGLISH BOY 1, to Cat: You shouldn't be playing around with knives like that. What if it were sharp? He holds Cat's knife hand with one hand and with his other hand, feels the knife for sharpness.

ENGLISH BOY 1, surprised: Bloody, it IS sharp!

ENGLISH BOY 2 pretentiously: A most unpleasant game! He goes over to Black Boy, who is totally absorbed in his game: Can I join you, Ace?

Black Boy nods. English Boy 2 picks up a cuestick, and lines up a shot. Cat regains his possession, breaks away from English Boy 1, and goes for English Boy 2 who is shooting. The foreigner moves suddenly and accidently, however, and Cat hits the table, breaking off his blade.

ENGLISH BOY 1, seriously: I do believe he was trying to kill you.

ENGLISH BOY 2: You really think so? To Cat: Why would you want to kill me, mate? I was only joking with you.

Cat looks up from his broken knife, which he has been tenderly examining. CAT: you was making FUN of me. You was laughing there at me, making like I

was some kind of animal. I ain't no slave! These lines are said with the emotion of a youngster, who has broken down after teasing.

ENGLISH BOY 1, touched: We weren't laughing at you. We were just kidding around.

ENGLISH BOY 2: Then you started acting crazy, so we thought we'd better just ignore you.

BLACK BOY: That's worse . . .

ENGLISH BOY 1: We thought you'd go away if we didn't pay any attention to you.

Cat, gaining his facade: You honkey been makin' that mistake too long. You're lucky this time my blade came off . . . he pauses—the only action is Black Boy who is again bent over the table. Cat looks at his knife, which he has been limply holding. He studies it gently.

CAT: My blade . . . He picks up the broken blade and tries to fix it. Its no good no more! He forgets about his adversaries and moodily caresses his broken knife ENGLISH BOY 1, coming over: I'm sorry, mate, about the knife and all. English Boy 1 more tenderly: What a bloomin' pity.

The three commiserate over the broken knife; Black Boy's still shooting. After a few minutes, Cat hardens suddenly, and breaks the silence

CAT, irritatedly, to Black Boy: Hey Man, you gonna keep shooting the whole fuckin' day? He places the knife on the table.

BLACK BOY: Shit yes, man.

CAT: What the Hell for?

BLACK BOY, earnestly: I just gotta get good at it. You gotta be good at somethin'. My Momma always said it ain't important how good you are in everything, jus' so long as you're good at something.

ENGLISH BOY 2, without feeling: Very smart.

CAT, ignoring English Boy 2: She weren't talkin' bout no pool, though.

BLACK BOY: If I gets good enough at it, I can hustle enough money to move out of here.

CAT, surprised: I didn't know YOU were like that. You mean this place ain't good enough for you?

BLACK BOY: You know it!

Cat, incredulous: You really gonna leave?

BLACK BOY: When I get old enough, if I can get up the scratch.

CAT: You can't do that! If us Black Boys don't hang together, we ain't never gonna have the revolution they keep talking about. What about the brothers and sisters?

BLACK BOY, cynically: Can they handle the stick?

CAT: You Fuck! You just care about makin' your own goddam buck and don't give a shit for your own people!

BLACK BOY: Damn straight! What are you goin' to do? Go around burning up

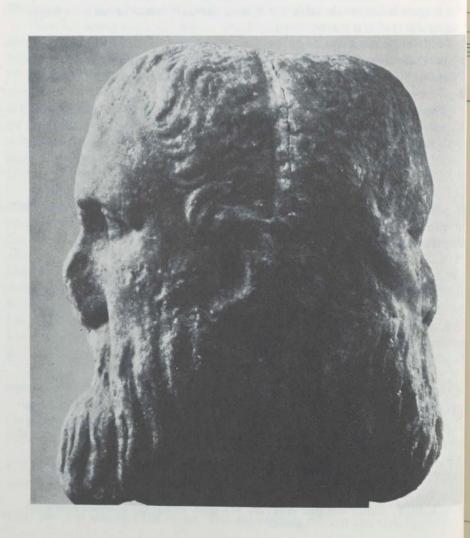
your own neighborhood. You take your revolution and SHOVE IT!

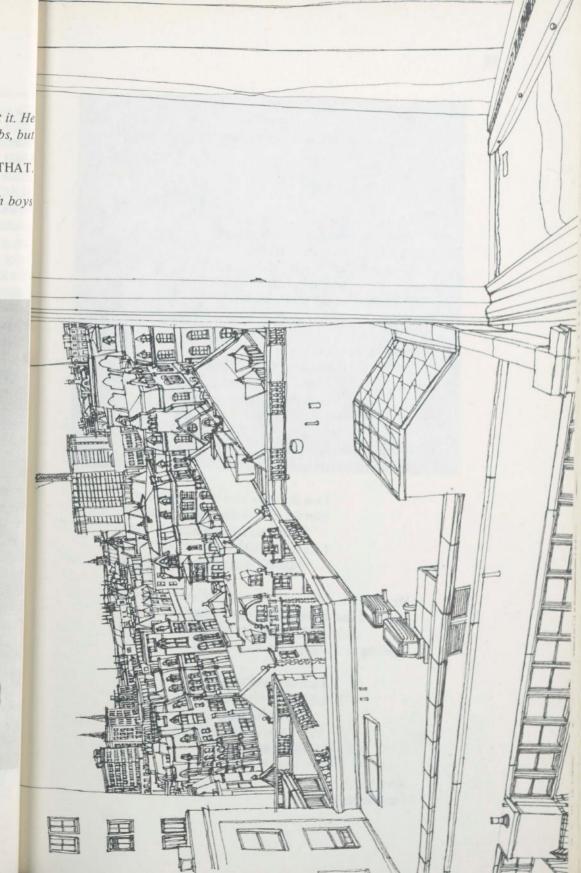
Furious, Cat grabs knife from the edge of the table where he had left it. He lunges at Black Boy's fat belly, forgetting the knife was bladeless. He stabs, but his hands rebound out of the fat.

BLACK BOY, hardly shaken: Baby, you ain't gonna get nobody with THAT. Points to broken knife; English boys laugh.

Cat looks at knife, then at Black Boy. He starts crying. The English boys stop laughing and look at him quizically.

Lights Dim.





I Am the Leper

The hollow voices of the thick night
("Singing out of empty cisterns . . . ")
Moan and mumble vain affirmations
of impending light
(And Eos sits laughing on her throne)

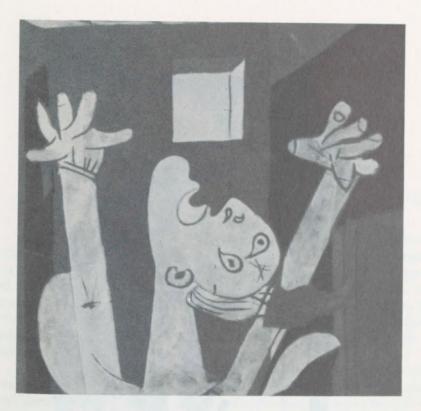
I wait alone,
Beneath the naked yew,
Listening in the distant, rustling bones
for a whisper of my name. . . .
Stumbling footsteps pass near-by
yet never approach
cho po cho po cho
Please do not approach
for I sit alone

I am the leper who
Silently surveys the human ruins
from a passing window—
I am too proud to be
another cracked and splitting pillar.

My flesh is burnt—
Scorched and shrivelled like the last leaf
on Winter's palsied branch—
Smelling of dirt and death

I am the leper who
Looks with kindness on the decaying
and the decayed,
Yet cringes at the skinless form
Shivering in the lake.

Keep back!
I am untouchable



(Forgive me, Lord!)
Though your hands . . .
Sweet Adonis, what of your hands?
Dare they caress a goddess? . . .
Your hands are no purer than mine.
I hold out my hand
Only knowing that your eyes are blind
to the smooth, numb knobs,
Only knowing that your twisted limb
will grope in vain. . . .

I am the leper who
Revels in the delicate detail
of deformity;
Rejoicing in the shock
of stump-devoured limb,
of grotesque irregularity.



CONTINUED IN MENDELSSOHN'S SYMPHONY # 4, FOURTH MOVEMENT

- W.M.D.

To be quite honest with you, I was as bored at least as thoroughly with the Homer which I had begun to translate for Monday's sessions as I was intrigued by David's comments about his art. More than half an hour had passed since he had returned to his rooms, but his arresting metaphor recurred to me and recurred, while I paged from text to glossary, text to glossary. I looked to the settee, could see him there with his legs crossed, a brandy in his right hand, admiring his own boots as he defended his work against that lack of line of which I accused him.

"You might think of my IX as a lyric poem. I painted it spontaneously, considering only my immediate sense of one color's relationship with the others—but always in the rigid terms of a poet who has been trained in the craft of verse. Then I remembered my studies and,—I can't think how to phrase it—and, I reflected IX in a mirror of Tiepolo, then painted the image that I saw on this 'glass,' the composition on the arched canvas at the end of the gallery."

Perhaps it was the blessed boredom that took me from my rooms, even though the clocks had sounded eleven some time earlier, and the intrigue that directed my steps across the commons to the gallery. I had to see the new work to understand the obscure reference to Tiepolo. In any case, David rarely hits upon so splendid a literary image—I might consider the effort of breaking into the gallery at this hour as no more than a well-deserved standing ovation.

In the commons, as is to be expected always, fog, fog—as dense, nearly, as last night's. We lost each other twice last night, David and I, on the road; and the horses were so nervous. Or perhaps the wise beasts merely were trying to discourage us from an evening whose prospect appealled even less to them than to us. They would have to tolerate that officious fop of a French groom, whom Lady Littlefield had brought back with her from her "Grand Tour," cooing at them in his awful Provençal accent while he ineptly brushed their coats. The groom would behave toward our animals in a manner alarmingly analogous to Lady Littlefield's treatment of her guests—how I dread talking with anyone come from a first visit to the Continent!

When we danced, Lady Littlefield and I, she did talk interminably, in the most chopping French, about how, since half a woman's charm was her modesty, she would never, never be seen in the new "classical" fashions from the restored Bourbon court. All the while she knew that David's sister, Roxane, was attracting stares from every man in the room with a decolletage which met her belt in front, barely covering the lower half of her bosom.

"Pour moi, je crois qu' une femme soit la plus attractive quand elle-"

"Oh, I'm terribly sorry, my lady . . ."

Lady Littlefield had stepped on my foot at this point and so our mutually awkward apologies interrupted what would have been another tactlessly jealous remark.

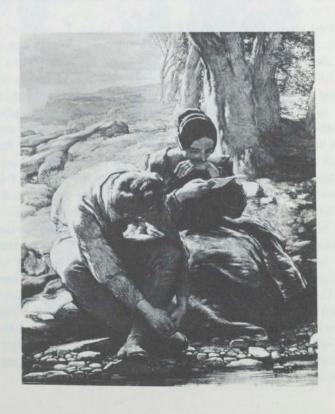
I watched the soft diaphanous folds that flowed to the floor from Roxane's breasts billow after her as she crossed to a tall window.

How very affected we were last night, Roxane, you and I! You pushed the burgundy and gold velvet back from the glass and looked to the fog settling in the garden. You suggested the fog for a theme, and I improvised:

"A vagabond, enshrounded, I,

By this vagabond from the sky,

By her translucent intertwining"



We acted as if all were very well rehearsed. Foiling your flushed profile with the dark velvet, you assumed a fashionably melancholy stare into the garden. I thought, I must make my gaze at your throat as rhapsodic as possible—perhaps you might favor me with an understanding glance:

"Of mists and night and pale stars pining Away their lives, and fleeting, shining..."

I suppose that this constant consciousness of self and preoccupation with appearance—we both knew, Roxane, what a lovely picture we arranged for whoever might be watching—must be bred from extended education. Imagine for a moment that we have not been studying the classical literatures since we were children. Then you young women might not interpolate that young men of poetic sensibilities can only find inspiration in melancholy goddesses who long for Arcadian antiquity. Then I might not be so forever conscious of playing the fiery young poet and we both might laugh out loud at those other couples striking attitudes properly picturesque around the room. Lady Littlefield makes an especially untempting Venus Pudica, flirting with your brother there by the drawing room, don't you agree?

And that awful, jangling verse which I have a questionably enviable talent of spouting impromptu. I am quite certain now that you were merely being kind when you smiled and sighed, "... a shepherd might have whispered those words to his Dryad lover ..."

You must forgive me for drifting off so, but Roxane did look particularly ethereal last night, in her soft gown, by the misty garden . . . But by this time I have reached the new building for the studios and students' gallery. This current mania for things medieval has forced sham buttresses even on this one building which one might like to imagine, above all else, a haven for originality. To resist frowning at one particular gargoyle was far beyond my self control; at first, I thought, because its lines were so unsubtly academic, but then I realized that my scowl was a spontaneous answer to Lady Littlefield's characteristic simper, the unique expression that made this fellow outstandingly hideous among his peers.

I hoped David would appreciate the inelegant postures to which I subjected my limbs in trying to enter the locked building through that damned window—all for some Baroque Italian and my friend's smug metaphor. He will only laugh, though, and accuse me of boredom with my great Homer, and embarrass me into recounting the tale on Tuesday at tea with Roxane . . .

The room was ghastly dark. The faintest glow from a tall, tall window suggested the ceiling's height. After a few moments in the darkness, I discerned the window's glow dimly reflected from a pewter candelabrum. If the tinderbox had not been resting there next to it, then darkness most assuredly would have conquered my curiosity and sent me back through the window.

I lighted three of the five tapers. The shapes nearest me became familiar. But as the light grew gradually dimmer in the room's corners and ceiling's vaults, so did my certainty that these shapes—books, maps, carvings—belonged to the realm of my experience. I was here, in the art library, but the room only seemed the one that I visited every day where the light was brightest. The library faded with the reach of the candles into some other, strange room, perhaps one which as yet has not been built, or which burned to the ground long ago.

Into the grey stone corridor—the candles' light pulsed a life through the veins of the walls and ribs of the vaults, one by one, as I passed under them. Those behind me, those before faded, like thoughts; only the action of my figure through space gave life to those past, might give life to those before me. But even as I so thought, a new vault would laugh for the light's presence, and the living arches where my thought had been born, only now, would pass into shadow.

The staircase waiting for so long at the end of the hall ran to meet the light even before I entered the final vault, offered me a rail. Did the steps giggle and whisper one to another, like little girls, as the light passed over and smiled upon them?

Before I entered the gallery, I turned and looked down the stairs, straining to see into the shadows and crowns of the vaults. In the half light, this academic architecture can have its effect, I must admit, but one must remind oneself always of its essential and theatrical affectation.

I crossed to the gallery and stepped through the pointed arch.—Did the hall sigh?—The paintings, symmetrically hung in rows on the long walls, one across from the other, loved the light much as the vaults had. The hall had been an empty gallery in which I could hang my own thoughts as they came and went, or hang a new stage of the same thought on each vault's walls. But here were others' thoughts, not mine, suspended at one stage of their life's cycle on the canvases. Two new thoughts, facing each other across the gallery, were born and died as the light came and passed with each third step. Patrons of the school they were, painted as Graces or Muses or Heroes, living persons locked into the artists thoughts, imprisoned on the canvas, living only as long as I could see them, in the brief light of three of my steps through the gallery. And finally David's huge landscape at the end of the gallery, facing me, between the win . . .

"Excuse me, but-"

At the sound of this very rich male voice, I promptly dropped the candle holder and prepared to meet my doom. Thanks to those abyssmal modern novels which one reads in spite of oneself, I was certain that my simpering gargoyle had taken offence at the analogy with Lady Littlefield and was come for a bloody revenge. After all, this was his realm, the hour, the fog, the would-be Gothic vaults . . .

But the hand appeared almost disappointingly human as it twisted the candles

back into their sockets and was lighting the others from the one which managed to remain burning. A young man, of my own size and age, I judged, as we stood and faced each other. After my display of total lack of composure, I could feel my face flushed to bright scarlet; no, there must have been a tint of orange, since I remember wearing my green tailcoat and I have such a capacity for clashing with whatever I happen to be wearing when I become embarrassed.

"I'm frightfully sorry if I've alarmed you," he offered, "but I tried to be as gentle as possible. If I had waited until I was directly behind you, well, there's no telling where the candelabrum might be now."

An apologetic smile turned the one corner of his mouth up, the other, down, as he tried to put me at ease. I found myself worth nothing at the moment but a profound stare. My unexpected guest wore no tailcoat nor boots, but was dressed in loose trousers that went to the tops of his low shoes. A coat of one length, front and back, reached to the base of his thumb where his right arm rested at his side. The shirt was white, with a small, stiff, rounded collar, and the cravat was tied in a stiff bow. The suit was cut from a dark blue velvet. His hair, not brushed off his brow, was parted in the middle and cut rather short. Thick ringlets—had they been arranged?—stressed how classical were his features, thin straight nose and arched brows. The absence of sideburns and the delicate curls rendered his appearance rather puerile, almost feminine. And it seemed that his eyelids were shaded with some cosmetic; yes—he lowered his eyes—they were, in the same color as his clothes.

The lowered glance reminded me of how rudely I was behaving. "I'm sorry for acting such a boor, but I hardly expected anyone. My name is Wiliam Shefford. I'm a student and have come to see my friend's painting. But who are you, please, and what are you doing here?"

I offered him my hand; he accepted it. His hand felt as his voice sounded, warm and steady; his grip, surprisingly, was as solid as his voice was deep.

"I'm afraid my name will mean as little to you as yours means to me. I'm Dorian Gray, do you like it? As for my purpose, well, I've come to bring you to our celebration, my dear friend."

He had not released my hand, but capriciously, playfully and boyishly, his smiled, and finally laughed softly. The laughter made no attempt to mock my awkwardness, but still gripping his hand and watching his face, I felt that the two of us were sharing a joke. I half resented this presupposition.

"I'm afraid I do not understand, Mr. Gray, or perhaps I might uggest that you don't. By now, the hour is far past midnight. This building is locked and completely dark, except for those candles. If I hadn't found one window unlocked on the first floor, I could have never entered. Did you follow me, or should I believe that you, too, chanced upon the same window, and happened to stumble on me?"

He made no indication to answer at this point, so I continued with what I

thought dazzling logic,"—You come upon me at a most arbitrary moment, from the total darkness of the hall. I have never met you, or recall even having seen you before, yet you call me your 'dear friend,' and invite me to some 'celebration.' Indeed, sir, how could you have known to look for me here? And from your attire, I might hazard this 'celebration' to be some kind of a masked ball."

Grey continued to smile serenely.

"Oh, Will Shefford-"

I hardly knew which way to look. From exactly opposite ends of the gallery, two female voices were calling simultaneously, in the same patronizing tone. A swish of quickly moving skirts and petticoats, and then, "—don't play such an affected ass," the voices continued together, giggling. Two feminine forms entered the circle of light at the same time, running. They reached Gray together, one on each side, stood tiptoe, each to kiss one cheek, and together, Lady Littlefield and Roxane turned to face me, smiling warmly, dressed as they were for the ball last night.

I stood with my mouth open, appearing very much, I suppose, like

"A chamber maid who's just had her bottom pinched," Roxane squealed.

And they all three laughed.

"One moment, please, I fail to see the . . ."

And, trying not to, they laughed the louder. But now the figures in the paintings laughed too, and weren't those little-girl steps in the hall giggling uncontrollably? Oh, the laughter should have cracked the windows. Now this was becoming unforgivably rude.

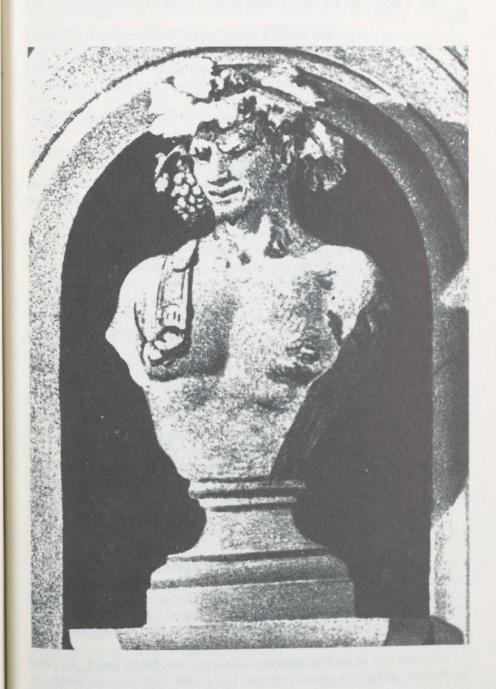
"STOP," I shouted, and they did. I was too dumfounded even to ask for an explanation.

Gray smiled to the ladies and to the dim figures in the paintings, and then, to me, "Come, my dear Will." He was still gripping my hand as he led me down the gallery. "Let's have a look at David's painting." Roxane took my free arm and Lady Littlefield walked beside Gray.

"I haven't seen this one before. So this is IX reflected in Tiepolo," I was so confused that I found myself thinking aloud as Gray lifted the candelabrum. Then I realized the complete incredulity of the situation. "But what are you all doing here, how did you get into the gallery? Your entrances were staged." To the ladies, "Last night, you two couldn't bring yourselves to speak to each other, and now you behave like . . ."

"Please go on," said Gray, "about the painting. What you were saying about the painting was really very interesting and the ladies haven't had a chance to read David's remarks yet."

Shaking my head back and forth, to the obvious amusement of everyone, I continued, "IX is a small, undistinguished landscape, you know, but competently executed."



"No, I didn't, the author neglected to supply that bit of information," said

Gray.

"The greys and browns ruled IX rather calmly. This composition certainly does "reflect" Tiepolo's proportions, and the colors—those blues do grin wickedly, and the way they grab for the supple pinks and sand tone of the hills—well, it's rather embarrassing in mixed company. And David has made all his greens drunk with yellow . . ."

"In case you've missed them, that group of people in the lower corner, in

the distance, is our celebration."

"Your masked ball, in David's paintings? Don't make a fool of me, Mr. Gray."

"You may think of our celebration as a masked ball if you like, but I assure you, I no more consider my velvet evening clothes a costume than Roxane does her empire gown—or you, your tailcoat and boots."

"But I've never seen clothes like yours-"

"-And I have seen yours only in volumes of antide<u>luvian</u> history." Lady Littlefield and Roxane giggled. "But really," he contined, "we argue superfluities. I know that preoccupation with appearance is part of your character, but if I had worried about how different people might react to the cosmetic that I found over my eyelids, then I never would have decided to gather guests for our celebration and so would have conceded to Oscar before even trying to leave the novel."

"I do not understand. What are you celebrating and where do you come from?"

"I recall reading that you were thinking of thoughts in the hall downstairs, and that you 'saw' thoughts—how did you phrase it?—'suspended' on the canvases in here. And you observed how these thoughts were born and died in the presence or absence of your candles. This insight of yours intrigued me much the same as David's comments did you. I decided then to enter and invite you.

But where do you observations leave us, my dear Will, when the light is lifted from the pages where we live, 'suspended,' you might say? Like the figures

in the paintings, reaching to the light of some library's lamp?"

"I'm afraid that I'm beginning to understand-"

"I though you would"

"-but are we as helpless as the figures in the paintings . . .?"

"I thought so once, but learned differently. Are you willing to join us in the celebration? I have planned it as a grand folk dance, with lots of wine, and the liveliest, most thoroughly uncivilized music. I promise you freedom from your 'suspension,' but I warn you that we celebrate the passing of something rather dear to you."

The last half of his final sentence drifted past me, barely heard. A chance to-Roxane smiled and pressed my arm. Her candid remark earlier about my

expression demonstrated her willingness to abandon the false sense of decorum that these pages have imposed on all of us. Lady Littlefield's simper was now a broad and friendly smile, and her new friendship with Roxane . . .

They were watching me, waiting for my answer. I smiled and nodded, "But how do you propose that we travel to your celebration, Dorian?"

"Our celebration, Will," He began to extinguish the candles. The girls were laughing now to each other, and they nearly knocked me over kissing me, most indecorously. "We're going to run," Dorian offered.



After a moment of total darkness, the sunlight of David's landscape began to dawn in the gallery, revealing in the center of the room an elaborate and jeweled coffin, resting on a white marble bier, on which sat golden statues of allegorical figures, Muses, they were, except that there were only eight. Large as life they were, in exaggerated, but graceful attitudes of mourning. Their sculptor was obviously an Italian of operatic sentiment.

Dorian and the girls seemed not to notice this latest acquisition of the gallery, but stepped across the frame into the sunlit hills. We all laughed and ran

about until I quite forgot about the jeweled casket. But as we ran toward the crowds in the distance, I stopped to wait for Dorian, who had turned to walk back to the gallery. He crossed to the casket, and took from inside his coat a white rose and what appeared to be a peacock feather, and left them on the lid. "You are all invited," he shouted, and the figures from the paintings stepped down into the sunlight, ran across the gallery through the frame and passed me on the hillside, laughing.

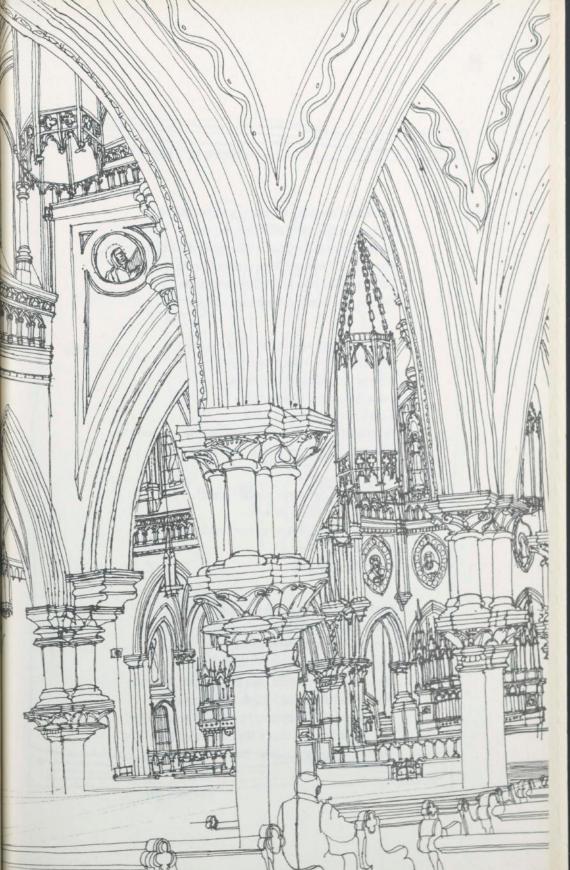
Dorian now walked to the edge of the frame, lept over it and joined me on the hill.

"It was very kind of you to wait, but, come, let's catch the others."

With a wild grin, he turned to run down the hill. I ran a few steps behind him, then tugged his arm to stop him, "But what are we celebrating?—You never told me, Dorian."

The grin stretched and he whispered, very theatrically, "The death of Poetry." Grinning even more wickedly, he turned and blew a kiss toward the coffin, so dazzling and ludicrous there in the sunlight and we ran down the hillside to where Roxane and Lady Littlefield stood laughing, waving.





Helen of Troy

Good men are born on many a mountainside.

I do not care if they are from the soil
Whence, as you say, grace springs, and wisdom comes,
For men of any land have arms and eyes,
Sufficient fire and foolishness and pride
For me, the humblest princess of them all.

You see, I was used lightly as a rag doll
And the yellow tatters of my honor
Were scattered like woollen hair.
I was flounced and paraded,
Kissed, reprimanded, traded,
Embraced by a child with a breastplate of silver
And returned to my cradle, carelessly.

All, all from my silver sandal loosed!

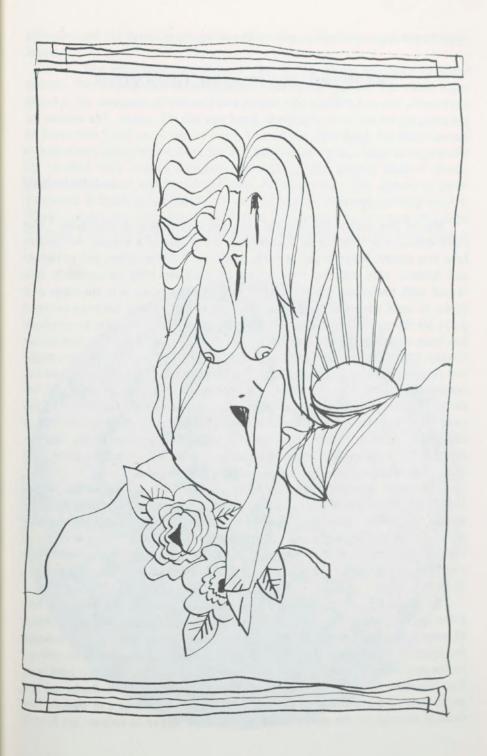
The vast machinery of war—

Your monday-morning curses touch me not.

It's over, I will be

A dutiful wife.

I hear the storm sometimes in sleep,
Rolling about in the gilt of my hair,
And, crying as though I cared,
I wake and call you:
What matter if a world, not a crazy city, burned!
What sea or flowered hillside could compare
Themselves to my eyes or to my unchaste thighs?
Nobody now cares that a thousand men have died
But tell them I am lovely: they will smile.



THE PHARMACEUTRIAE OF THEOCRITUS

John Leopold

Men in love pray to the Sun for help, but women pray to the Moon. 1 The Pharmaceutriae or Witches of Theocritus is the prayer of a woman wronged in love. Her prayer, which is also, a song, is addressed to the Moon, and to Hecate and Artemis, who with her form a triad of goddesses who are especially concerned with protecting the interests of women. The poem is in the form of a mime, or brief scene from daily life. The young woman who has been wronged prays for revenge and performs the dark rituals of Hecate in order to win back her lover chastened by the torment of her magic, or, if he must be lost to her forever, to curse him and his new love. The themes of the poem are love, magic and revenge, but also poetry, or song, for, through her long incantation and her confession addressed to the Moon, she appears to overcome her grief and her desire for revenge. Daphnis, the shepherd poet, whose death is the subject of the song of Thrysis in the first Idyll of Theocritus, wasted away in silence, unable to sing and exorcise his passion. Simaetha, the would-be soreceress of the Pharmaceutriae, binds her passion with the incantation intended to spell-bind her lover and extinguishes the fire of her longing as the magic fire dies.

The poem consists of an introduction (lines 1-10), an invocation to the Moon and Hecate (lines 10-16), the incantation beginning and ending with the refrain "Jinx-wheel, draw that man to my house," (lines 17-63), the story of Simaetha's seduction, with the refrain "Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon." (lines 64-144), the news that Delphis has found a new love (lines 145-158), a final threat (lines 159-162), and a farewell to the Moon. (lines 163-166).

As the scene opens, Simaetha and her slave Thestylis are preparing bay leaves, potions and a libation bowl for rites in honor of Hecate, infernal goddess of sorcery. Simaetha then tells enough of the story of her love affair to indicate the motive for her spells. Her lover has been ignoring her. Tomorrow she will go to the gym where he exercises and scold him, but tonight she will spell-bind him. Her intention to scold him on the following day casts some doubt on the seriousness of her subsequent threats to destroy him by magic or poison. Her feelings throughout the poem waver between the desire to recover her lover's

affection and the desire to avenge herself on him, as Medea avenged herself upon Jason.

The invocation is addressed first to the Moon and then to awful Hecate. The two goddesses are distinct, but closely related. The calm, virgin Moon is the recipient of women's love prayers; she also has a special relationship to witches and sorcery. On the one hand, the Moon gives light for the gathering of herbs that must be picked at night, but, on the other hand, the Moon herself is sometimes pulled down from the sky and locked up in a chest or mirror-case by witches who require complete darkness for the darkest magic. Hecate prefers the darkest nights and the most desolate places. She appears in grave-yards and at lonely crossroads to the tune of howling dogs and chanting witches. When women pray to Hecate, they pray for revenge on the men who have wronged them. It is clear that not only the Moon and Hecate, but also Artemis is



invoked. The bay leaves in the first line are probably in her honor, and when the goddess does appear in lines 33-36 she has just been addressed as Artemis. The three goddesses, each open to the prayers of wronged or suffering women, are so closely associated in the invocation and incantation that Simaetha seems to be addressing herself to different aspects of the same person.

The incantation, as a good incantation should be, but seldom is, is a tightly organized and symmetrical word-trap for catching and relieving fear and hostility. The fire magic and the images of whirling and flashing metal (the rhombus, or bull-roarer, is whirled for magic effect-lines 30-31) in the first half of the incantation are particularly effective in reflecting the girl's emotions. The magic rites of the incantation are brought together from many sources and are not all intended to achieve the same result. The iynx, which I have translated "jinx-wheel" in order to retain the sound of the original word, is first a bird sacred to Aphrodite and later a magic wheel spun to capture a man's affections. At one time the bird seems to have been bound to the wheel, but the reference here is probably to the wheel alone. The love-magic of the ivnx is in contrast with the melting of the wax doll and the threat of poison belong to the girl's desire for revenge. In surviving magic texts, the two motives are sometimes blended, but never to the degree that they are in this poem. The second half of the incantation-after the appearance of the goddess in lines 35-36-is rather different and entirely foreign to non-literary magic texts. The girl reflects on her own suffering, on the calm of the night that is so different from the storm of feelings in her heart (lines 38-41), and on the longing that is draining her just as a swamp leech would drain her of blood. There is a fine balance in the incantation between the frantic magic rites of the first half and the reflective passages of the second.

Simaetha tells the story of her seduction and betrayal in a long soliloquy to the Moon. Her slave has gone off to smear Delphis' house with magic herbs. The rituals are over. The goddess is still present, but not as Hecate. There is no need for the goddess of sorcery now that the incantation has absorbed some of the girl's passion. Now she can tell her story from the beginning in the still moonlight. Her love affair is not so different from some small-town, middle American love affairs I can remember in which some poor girl was too easily impressed—and too easily seduced—by the captain of the football team. Her story, while it recalls the terrible revenge of Medea, is like nothing in Greek literature before New Comedy; it is the story of an ordinary love affair. The characters are not the children of kings and the grandchildren of the gods, but the boy and girl next door. Our sorceress is not avenging terrible wrongs done by a man who had promised her everything, as Jason had Medea; Delphis never made any promises, and he certainly didn't owe her his kingdom. She had never saved him from fire-snorting bulls or a dragon.

She is scaled down from the great witches of epic and tragedy, and that

gives her incantation and her lament a somewhat lighter effect than the curses of Medea in Euripides or even in Apollonius Rhodius. Her longing and her pain are very real, but her curses and her sense of herself as a tragic heroine are exaggerated. One suspects that she may fall in love with another healthy young man the next time she goes to a parade.



Translation

Where are my bay leaves? Bring them, Thestylis. Where are my potions? Wreath the pot with the best sheep's wool dyed crimson, that I may bewitch my cruel man, the man I love, the wretch who hasn't come to see me these eleven days past, who doesn't know whether I'm dead or alive, who, in his spite, hasn't even knocked at my door. Have Eros and Aphrodite really gone away, shifting his fickle fancy to another? I'm going to Timagetus' gym tomorrow, that I may see him, and I shall scold him for the way he's treating me; and now I'll spell-bind him with my rituals. But, Moon, shine bright, for I shall sing to you softly, oh spirit, and to infernal Hecate, whom the pups shiver at as she comes over the graves of the dead and the dark blood. Welcome, awful Hecate, stay by me to the end, making these drugs no less potent than any of Circe's, Medeas's, or blond Perimede's. (1-16).

Jinx-wheel, draw that man to my house.

First the barley's consumed in the fire, but sprinkle it, Thestylis. Wretched old woman, whither are you flying in your fancy? Filthy hag, have I really become a mockery even to you? Now sprinkle the meal and say at the same moment: "I'm sprinkling Delphis' bones." (18-21)

Jinx-wheel, draw that man to my house.

Delphis hurt me; I'll burn bay leaves against Delphis. As these leaves crackle loudly, and, suddenly set ablaze, burn utterly, and we see not even an ash of them left over, just so let Delphis burn down his body in fire. (23-26)

Jinx-wheel, draw that man to my house.

As with the goddess' aid I melt this wax, so let Delphis from Myndus suddenly melt with love. And as this brass rhombus spins by Aphrodite's power, so let that man spin round before my door. (23-31)

Jinx-wheel, draw that man to my house.

Now I'll burn the bran. You Artemis, you could shake the steel of Hell's gates, and, if there is anything else unshakeable, that too could you shake. Thestylis, the dogs in the town howl for us. The goddess is at the crossroads. Sound the cymbal as quick as you can. (33-36)

Jinx-wheel, draw that man to my house.

Look, now the sea is still, the winds are calm; yet my sorrow is not silent in my breast. I am all on fire for that man, who made me miserable, a maiden no more, but not a wife. (38-41)

Jinx-wheel, draw that man to my house.

Thrice I pour libations, Lady, thrice I voice this prayer: "Whether a woman lies by him or a man, let him be as forgetful as they say once Theseus was, when he forgot Ariadne of the beautiful tresses in Dia." (43-46)

Jinx-wheel, draw that man to my house.

Horse-frenzy is a plant that grows is Arcadia. Because of it, all the fillies and swift mares run wild in the mountain. So too may I see Delphis, and may he come like a madman to this house from his greasy glistening gym. (48-51)

Jinx-wheel, draw that man to my house.

Delphis lost this border from his cloak, now I tear it up and toss into the savage fire. Ayeye, cruel Eros, why have you drunk all the dark blood from my flesh, clinging like a swamp leech? (53-56)

Jinx-wheel, draw that man to my house.

Tomorrow, when I've ground a lizard, I'll bring him a deadly drink. Thestylis, now take these herbs and smear them over his lintel, even while it is still night, and say in a murmuring voice: "I smear Delphis' bones." (58-62, line 61 is omitted, as in Gow's text.)

Jinx-wheel, draw that man to my house.

Now that I'm alone, when shall I weep for my love? where shall I begin? Who brought this disgrace on me? Eubulus' daughter Anaxo was passing by us, as a basket-bearer on her way to the holy grove of Artemis, and many beasts were strutting about her in the procession, among them a lioness. 1 (64-68)

Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon.

Theumaridas' Thracian nurse, God rest her soul, who lived next door, prayed and beseeched me to watch the parade. I—to my misery—went along trailing a beautiful gown of fine linen and wrapt in Clearista's long cloak. (70-74)

Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon.

When I already half-way down the road, near Lycon's, I saw Delphis coming along with Eudamippus. Their beards were blonder than the golden-creeper, and their breasts shone more than you do. Moon, since they were just coming from a good work-out at the gym. (76-80)

Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon.

As soon as I saw him, I was intoxicated, and, poor me, my heart caught fire. My beauty was melting, and I payed no mind to the parade. I don't know how I got back home, but a burning fever shook me, and I lay in bed ten days and ten nights. (82-86)

Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon.

Often my skin grew sickly, the color of yellow dye; all the hair was falling from my head; skin and bones were all that remained of me. Whose house did I fail to visit, which hag's home did I miss, of those who sing incantations? But it wasn't



a light thing, and time rapidly fleeing. (88-92)

Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon.

So I told my slave-girl the whole truth: "Come on then, Thestylis, find some remedy for my stubborn fever. To my sorrow, the man from Myndus possesses me completely, but go and watch for him at Timagetus' gym. For there he often goes, there he's accustomed to sit in sweet contentment. (94-98)

Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon.

Whenever you see that he's alone, nod to him gently and say: 'Simaetha calls you' and lead him here.' Thus I instructed her, and she went and brought Delphis with his glossy skin to my house. As soon as I was aware that he was crossing my threshold with his nimble foot. (100-104)

Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon.

I caught a chill all through my body colder than snow; sweat was dripping from my brow like wet dew; I could not speak at all, not even so much as children whimper in sleep calling on their dear mother; but my fair flesh grew stiff as a doll's all over. (106-110)

Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon.

When he had looked at me, that ruthless man turned his eyes to the ground, sat on the bed, and, as he sat there, said: "Well Simaetha, you've come in as far ahead of me, as I did a short time ago when I outran graceful Philinus, by actually calling me to your house before I came. (112-116)

Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon.

"For I would have come, by sweet Eros, I would have come, in a party of two or three, just at nightfall, guarding Dionysus' apples in my robe, wearing white poplar, the plant sacred to Heracles, bound on my head, woven all around with crimson ribbons. (118-122)

Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon.

"If you had received me, it would have been pleasant, for I am called swift and handsome among the young men, and I would have been content, if I had but kissed your beautiful lips, but if you had sent me away and the door had been barred, then surely axes and torches would have come against you. (124-128)

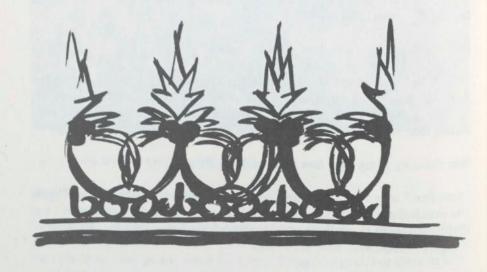
Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon.

"Now first I acknowledge my debt to Cypris, and you are second after Cypris, you snatched me from the fire, dear lady, by calling me to this house when I was already half burnt to ash. Eros often kindles a blaze hotter even than Hephaistus' of Lipara— (130-134)

Hear the story of my love, how it began, Lady Moon.

"and with his malicous kind of madness he chases the maiden from her bedroom, and the bride, driving her from a bed still warm from her husband." Thus he spoke, and I, too quick to thrust, took his hand in mine and made him lie down on the soft bed. Quickly flesh melted against flesh, faces were warmer than before, and we whispered sweetly. So, lest I babble too long, dear Moon, the great mysteries were fulfilled, and we achieved our longing. He found no cause for blame in me until yesterday, nor yet did I in him. But the mother of

Philista our flute-player, and of Melixo came to me today, just when rosy Dawn's team, bearing her up from Ocean, was cantering toward the sky. She told me many other things, and also, that Delphis was in love. Whether longing for a woman possesses him or rather longing for a man, she said she did not know. but only this much-that he was always pouring out toasts to love in unmixed wine, and finally would go off in a hurry, saying that he would cover that house thick with garlands. My gossip told me these things, and she is truthful. For at any other time he used to seek me out three or four times a day, and he often left his Doric oil-bottle with me. It is now the twelfth day since I've seen him. Hasn't he found some other joy, and hasn't he forgotten me? Now I'll spell-bind him with potions. If he still gives me pain, by the Fates, he'll knock at Hell's gates, I swear, Lady, I keep poisonous drugs for him in my box, which I learned of from a wandering Assyrian, But, fare well on your way, and turn your team toward Ocean, Lady; I shall bear my longing just as I've stood it until now, Good night, Moon of the shining throne, good night all you other stars, who follow the carriage of still Night, (135-166)



Notes

¹From a fragment of Pindar quoted by a scholiast on line 10 of this poem.

²Apollinus Rhodium Argonautica iv. 53-65.

³L. B. Lawler, "A Lion Among Ladies: Theocritus II, 66-68" Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philogical Society, LXXVIII (1947), pp. 88-98. She suggests that the animals are really women in animal masks, who are honoring Artemis as potnia theron. If that is the image, it seems to represent women in their fierce aspect, as witches and jealous lovers who take their revenge on men with poison or sharp nails.



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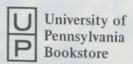
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"O swallows, swallows, poems are not the point. Finding again the world, that is the point, where loveliness adorns intelligible things because the mind's eye lit the sun."

from "The Blue Swallows" by Howard Nemerov

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