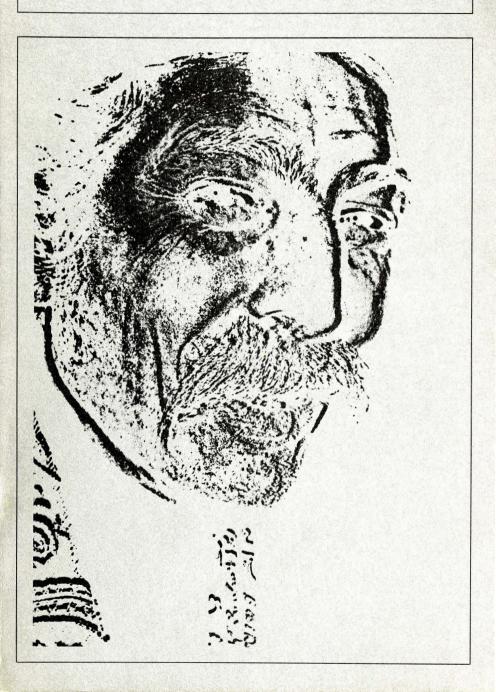
## THIR GAPTANO BRIVERY



Jean Clifford

This organism now our citadel never was cathedral, draughty tenement of soul, was what it is: ground, stone, wall, cannon, tower.

In this intricate structure are we based, now more certainly than ever (besieged, overthrown), for its power is bone muscle nerve blood brain a man, its fragile mortal force its old eternity, resistance.

— CHARLES OLSON,
"The Resistance" (for Jean Riboud),
from Human Universe

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### THE GIPTINO BANDAN

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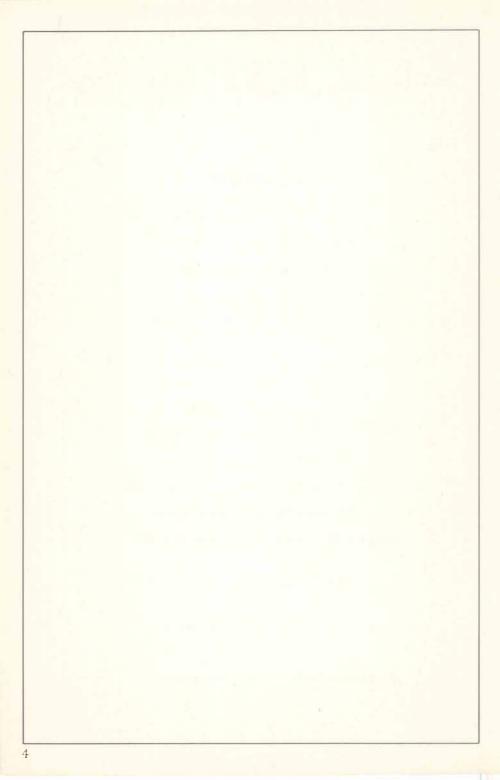
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# Gladys Hindmarch / TWO CHAPTERS SOMETHING'S GOING ON

When I call a man an asshole, I mean it, you know: says Beebo as I come into the mess carrying three bowls of chowder. I stop at the edge of the blackboard, wait a second, then take the bowls over; put one before Jock, lift one off my right arm and give it to Lefty, and then put the third down, gently, in front of Beebo. Sorry Jan, he says, didnt know you were there. That's okay, I say, it doesnt bother me at all, I, I just didnt know if I should interrupt. The three are looking up at me, my voice isnt convincing but I meant it, oh shit, I cant tell them how I think. You gotta job to do, says Lefty as he starts peppering his soup. Yeah, I say and leave feeling stupid as if somehow I could do something in some other way. As soon as I'm in the galley I can hear them talking again, words, not sentences come through the racket: if that bastard; easy, lad. What's up? says Coco as she finishes shuggling the pots and starts to lay her board out to cut the corned-beef: shut-up will ya, I'm eating; I'm not going to, you. I dont know, I say to her, Beebo's mad about something: chickenshit. So what else is new, she says as she picks up her cigarettes, he's got a temper that one.

He has? I say. Oh sure, it could be about anything, cause, cause, well at least he's not moody you know like Hal. Moody? Oh Hal's moody alright, she says, and Lefty is sometimes, not very often though, and Jock, well you dont see him like we do, he's on his best behavior cause you're here, in fact they all are, but he's a dirty old man, you'll find out sooner or later, you'll find out. More soup, yells Lefty and we smile in that way that women do which indicates the talk will continue after whatever it is is done. I walk into the mess thinking of what she said and the men look

no different than they did just a few moments ago, but there's still something going on and I'm not going to find out what unless I ask but I know not to ask and they know I know or I think they do: put more clams in it this time, he says, I want lots of clams. I take Lefty's bowl which Coco filled at least a third full of clams the first time. Okay, I say to him, do you want more too? to Jock, Jock, bowl to his mouth slurping, nods no. How bout you? I say to Beebo. Just fetch me some of that French Bread, please, and a side of corned-beef, not too much. Okay, I say into his eyes. I'll have the cod, lass, none of that other stuff, just the spuds. Yes, I say to Jock, I think I've got everything right. Everything, says Lefty as I pick up Jock's bowl, yeah you got everything alright. And they laugh, and I leave.

Side of beef for Beebo, I say to Coco as I put the two dirty bowls on the sink edge. Side of beef, she repeats as I walk over to the stove. And Jock wants cod with potatoes only; fish no veg, she says. And chowder with more clams in this. That Lefty, she says as she takes the bowl and saucer, sure likes his clams; you know, she says as she scoops the little buggers out, when he's off I use a can less. It sounds alright in there now, I say to her, I dont know what it was but Beebo laughed. Beebo doesnt hold a grudge, she says, but: you're supposed to do that, cries Puppi, that's your job. I look at her, I didnt even know it was, Coco hands me the bowl with her back to Puppi and I take it: five cod full house to follow, Puppi says as she snatches the ladle from Coco's right hand, two corned-beef, right up; two beef, cabbage only, Coco says as I leave for the mess, five cod to follow.

Shit, he's one of the best sailors on the coast, says Lefty, you cant deny that. Not on this coast, he aint, says Beebo, not on THIS coast. I lean past Beebo to give Lefty his soup and again they stop talking and again Jock looks at me as if I shouldnt, no woman should, be here. As I straighten up they watch me, I feel my arm/the upper side of my body next to Beebo, want to touch him somehow, too close, and then step back feeling the connection break as I do so. I walk quickly out of the mess and go to the walk-in to get Beebo's bread. It's under an aluminum bowl of red jello which I lift, remove the long brown loaf which was bracing it in, take out the

French, then put the brown back parallel to the bulkhead, and then the jello in the slight hollow. I place the bread on the galley counter: sheitz man, Puppi says to Coco, he thinks he's smart but in the end he'll pay for it (I unhook the open walk-in door), if it's not the company (and start to shut it) the (and I miss the word cause of the click) will see to that.

She runs out of the galley with her two plates of corned-beef and cabbage leading her and it's only when she's gone I notice Jock's plate and Beebo's next to the butter ready to go. I pick up the orange cod, juice running into the potatoes, and take it to Jock who's been waiting longer than he usually does I sense. I'll have some coffee, Jan, says Lefty as Jock takes his dish, next time you're here. Okay, I say and leave to cut Beebo's bread. Use this, says Coco as she hands me the French knife, isnt Lefty having anything? Just coffee, I answer as I slice, I guess the soup was enough. How many pieces for Beebo? I ask. Oh, six or seven, he's got an appetite, that one, nothing stops him. She pours Lefty's coffee for me as I put the bread on the plate, then wipe the knife, hand it to her: where's my fishes, Puppi says; right away, Coco answers. Well I want to get through, she says looking at me with her hands on her little hips.

I feel her buttoned eyes on my shoulders as I leave with the plate and coffee for the mess: damn it, I am slow, but I just cant: where's the mustard, says Lefty, corned-beef and you aint got no mustard out. Oh, I say as I give the plate to Beebo, then lean past him to give Lefty his mug. Stretch your arm a little will yuh, says Beebo and I move back, not you, Jan, him. I look at him, Lefty, and the other him, Beebo, looking at each other. I'll get it, says Beebo and he half-rises, leans out over the table to the little shelf above the paper napkins, to the corner of it, next to Lefty, and pulls, with his big hand, the mustard jar out. I'm sorry, I say to Beebo. You got no need to be sorry, he says, unless it's sorry to be on this ship with the likes of him.

#### ZEBALLOS, B.C.

Coco, I say quietly. She is lying under her white bedspread with a red sweater on top. Coco. Her radio plays Yellow Bird. She turns slowly and her dark hair which forms a scattered circle on the pillow pulls up on the right side, in, falls over her nose. She lifts her head to see, smiles then smiles large: it's you . . . I thought. She doesnt continue but sits up. You thought what? I thought it might be Ken calling me for night-lunch. I dont understand, she gets up to make food for him?, she, she fumbles for her clock behind the pillow, I dont give a shit about him anyway, her and him, what the fuck: I didn't think it was so soon, she says as she emerges from not quite sleep but now I'd like to pinch her lips, cut them off, not her, yes her. Is something wrong? her voice is just as it always is. I, no, I came to ask, to ask you, if, do you want to go for a walk?

She says no by not smiling and looking at her legs. I'm just too tired, she says as I say: or, is there anything you'd like me to get? My voice is garbled, throat tight, I feel sorry for her legs and for me and pissed off all in the same moment, what the fuck, this is crazy, who am I to feel hurt. Maybe, she says as her eyes come up from her feet to my face, we could go for a beer after night-lunch. Great, I say hesitantly. I didnt tell you about night-lunch? No. There should be one around ten, you'll have to ask the mate before you go off. I look at her not knowing but now I know she didnt mean Ken other than he'd wake her. Just a regulation, she says, we get overtime for it, see they get a mugup every two hours when they're loading and then two hours after mugup they get a hot meal, it's part of the agreement.

Oh, I say. A quick image of chops potatoes corn flits through my head, more things to do, to peel, I'll just never get off of here, I see thick beef sausages frying and the counter is filled with more pots, more pans. Nothing much, she says, and I come back to her — she looks young now/muscles at the edge of her eyes loose/about nineteen lying in bed on Sunday morning — just weiners and beans or bacon and eggs and soup, it's mainly a rest but sometimes one or two of them are really hungry. I should be back about when? Twenty minutes, maybe half-an-hour before, don't worry, just ask Marty or Chuckles when it'll be called. It's okay? I say. Sure, she says, there's nothing to do but set up and wash whatever mugs there are so they can use them. You're sure? Sure I'm sure, she says smilling, you better get going.

I say goodbye and step out onto the red deck. Funny how I feel about him, it was so nothing and not there except for moments, yet I hang on. The air sifts through the fibres of my skirt and top which all summer long I felt chunky in but now they seem part of me, smooth friends. I open the door to the mess and walk through the pale greenness to the white galley and pluck a piece of lemon-icinged cake off a plate on the counter, turn the corner, about to bite, but dont cause I see Ray, the skipper, see me in that second before his eyes fall into his cup. Hello, I say. He nods from his chin (a funny man from Newfoundland, alone, alone) and I pass him. It hurts you to move up to the edge even that much. My walk is tighter more funnelled till I step out onto the front deck. Sometime we'll meet, I think, but we may never and that's alright with me too.

I let out the boat air and take in the dock. Beebo stretches his arm to grab a wire, my guts lift, I feel my muscles as if they were his, holding, steadying, till Jock gets there, laughing, I connect with his belly, the three of us meet, then Hal joins us, zooming in on the towmotor, stabbing under the boards to lift. I feel my feet going up, I'm moving with him, between three men I'm enclosed in beer cases, moving over, moving away. Suddenly I'm here, just out the door, with my clothes on and a piece of cake squished through by fingers. They're there, I'm here, I don't know why. My hand comes up and I put the whole glob in: eggy-sugar-lemon glumps, I gulp, pull it down. Then I lick my fingers slowly and look around for Marty, his soft shape, I see several others, Chuckles' back particularly, but not him.

Chuckles is at the end of the gangplank facing the shed. I walk up towards him. ZEBALLOS painted black on mustard. His muscles seem taut in a way that frequently small men's do. I want to touch him under his arms, to glide down the surface of his back, to feel the bone through our skins. He turns and jumps onto the plank. It jerks up. My fingers grasp for ribs for railings. He laughs, bullets, over my shoulders, pushing me down as I squat to get balance. Our eyes meet, it is a test, he swings back onto the dock and the balance shifts. I step up to the end. He blocks me. Make me a promise. No. Buy me some beer. Garlic air shoots through gapped-teeth. I wont do that. Cigarettes? Sure, what kind? Players Plain. He sticks out his arm to help me onto the dock. I dont need it, dont even want it, but my hand goes out anyway. Numb fingers on muscle, I tighten, jump down clumsily, dont use him at all. He smiles down as I straighten, I shift away, he's not about to move. I watch his fingers wriggle in his front pant pocket, bones through soft worn cloth near his cock, I want to kiss. I feel stupid. I dont even like him. He gives me the silver and pennies and I take them lightly and without looking and move away fast.

The towmotor. Reverse. Dusty tires turning. Curving in. I stop. Can't move. Yellow metal coming to me. Jan...here, shouts Beebo. I snap. My body moves back, out of the way. You were alright where you were, Hal says, I'd a miss you. Not by much, I think as I flutter and stare at the plank where I was. My eyes drift slowly up him, he's smiling, no laugh or tease, at least I dont feel it, just a full wet look which waves way in. My eyes float back, guts too, hit a center, then I loosen, out, me to him, not as far in as he to me. We stay there a second then I fall back to almost the same place. I walk towards the side of the load, to get away, to get out, to go around it to where Beebo is. The empty swings swing up. Hal knows I'd like to fuck and I know he knows I know. I dodge between Jock and Chuckles then edge between the bumper of the dock and the load.

He slams the forklift under as I turn the corner. I look down so as to not look at him. My eyes come up Beebo to his belt, the edge of flesh there, to his chin. He grins. Will you fetch me a bar, Jan? Sure, I say smiling. I feel cuddly. I look at Hall lifting the load which he does without looking at what he does cause he knows what he's doing so well. Do you want me to get anything? I shout. All three of us exchange a teasy look. No Jan, Hal says and take it away. I follow his motion with my whole body then turn to Beebo who laughs with me. What kind? Doesnt matter, whatever they have. We stay in the ease. Something chewy or with nuts. Eatmore, I think, O'Henry, I want to hug you, Burnt Almond, Crispy Crunch. He gives me two dimes: get one for yourself too. Thanks, I say, and our eyes part. Candylovers.

I leave him, but am still connected somehow. As I move the connection spreads out and back to include: Hal, then Jock, a dog, Chuckles; Lefty, and under down in the hold, Ken and Buck; and all the machines, the winch the towmotor the trucks; and the men from hereabouts, and now, the boat, the front half of the shed and most of the dock. I step off its surface. Out of a circle. I'm alone. At last. No machines. No men. Only sounds: engine throbs, winch noises, towmotor chatters, take it away, here, over here. They touch my back, my ears, the edges of my arms as I walk up the long wooden ramp.

Bet Beebo's not a bad lover, I think as I feel the air through my skirt. He'd enclose yet I'd still be me since he wouldn't take over the way Chuckles and Hal might. And they're so opposite. Fir mountains surround Zeballos, the trees are tall, soft, green-black. I dont know if I'd like to live there, so tight. I feel Beebo's comfiness, I want to enter that, the large softness of his belly, suddenly it's Chuckles, hard, pushing down, long narrow cock, like his body, his whole motion is to hold down to fuck fast, not that coming in is fast, but as soon as he wants, and he stays as long as he feels, and I'm not there, I just lie here, being taken. I notice the rails of the ramp moving back at the edges of my eye. Not away though cause he probably doesnt know enough or care in a sense to meet that. Not that it might not happen. I've certainly guessed wrong before. It continues quite a while, he has that ego, if that's what it is, there are times I do too, perhaps they'd coincide.

The town looks like someone took a jack-knife and scraped it out of the jagged valley. The buildings are plunked down. Firs and alders could take over at any moment if they wanted to. Hal isn't like Chuckles at all. He seems more located throughout. The mudflats ahead on my right are full of driftlogs, yellow green weeds press up between. We'd be slower. More of a balance. I cant see a bed. I cant imagine a where. Our limbs kiss. Muscles full, skin cant contain. He'd control, would he. I'd probably come too soon, he might not be in, maybe not even fingering or licking, his whole body like his eyes, pulsing in and out, waves. I stop. My body seems to float ahead a step, then comes back to me. I'm at the ramp's end. I closed my eyes and can feel the mountains, darkness sinking in from above, giving out from within. Cool dark green needle branches. I could hold if I really wanted to and he could keep me there on edge. How do you know, I think as I step off onto dirt. I just do, that's all.

I walk up to the first building: a white sunporch with white curtains. No lights on. Whoever lives here sees the whole inlet. So small, I'd like more space, more colour. If I were alone, perhaps it wouldn't be, just patterns, colour, coffee. I'd read and look out and swim and bake cookies. The porch or house is part of a larger one-room building. Face on, from the road, it looks like a child's stick drawing. It's a mine-registry-standard-oil-justice-of-the-peace-coroner-marriage-death-birth-harbour-agent-for-Zeballos-Trading CO Ltd -office. Dark. George Nicholson, deputy mining recorder, agent, marriage commissioner and etc, is out. Probably down on the dock. But where are the others? I see no one on the street. No cars either, no signs, no poles, only the front steps of stores and wooden fences of houses. Steps must be for mud, winter, in any season, rain.

I skip across the other side. Corn and potatoes and green beans grow in front of a little unpainted house. I could live here, I think, as I stand near the fence. I see me pulling weeds, baking muffins, reading on the porch, washing the floor. Waiting. For what?

Waiting. I dont think it's a man. Must be, if you dont think that. It's so vague. I wish I knew what I wanted to do, to be. I want it to come to me, not I to it. I know what I dont yet I dont what I do. If things were only settled, decided for me, now what kind of out is that? Out. I want out. Out of what? Here? No. Where I am generally. I like it here, I like the boat, it's something I could do for a while without getting tired but in the all-over sense, sometime, well I'll have to decide then or perhaps it will just happen. I like things to just happen, yet in some ways that's encirclement. I lean down to touch an orange nasturtium. The petal is fluid inside yet soft out. I look up through the fence slats through the dark window and see a woman there, watching me. She has a cigar in her mouth, her hands rest on thick hips. I stand up slowly. Wave. It's her garden. Her house. I wasnt going to pick. She's so solid. Perhaps she doesnt see me.

I leave, Gravel knocks gravel. I pass a tall wooden building. Probably a bunk-house, many windows, narrow. A naked lightbulb is the only sign I can see of anyone having ever been inside. Hi, I feel like shouting but dont. A flappy noise, slow crackles in my ear. Engine sounds and gulls and a dog barking beyond it. It's loud. Now I see opaque plastic, a light inside, wooden frame veins. No shadows or bodies moving, but the skin is, as the air does, in large slow bumps. I glide past, turn about, walk through the grass to see what it is. A cookhouse. I linger — it would be so hot — then run.

I take a few steps up the road. TED'S CLIP JOINT. A guy with dark curly hair slouches in the barber's chair and reads a paperback. Stacks of comics fill the wall behind him to within a foot of the ceiling. He doesnt seem to be in the book. He doesnt seem to belong where he is. There's no inside light yet it's almost dark. His head lifts and I feel his eyes press out to the edge of me. What do you want? It's an accusation like he's not used to women. Is there a cafe here? I ask. Ted stands and makes two jerky steps. I stay where I am. The room is less than six feet wide, I can almost touch him. We look at each other and I understand, he probably hasnt been with a woman for quite a while and doesnt, yet does, know what to do. His eyes, squinched at the edges, loosen, assume a pose.

I step back from him. A dogfight starts. Down the road between the woman's house and agent's building. We laugh. It's nervous. They are both big. In the shadows I can see the shapes through the dust swell. The yowl of the down one cuts all ears. Suddenly miners run out of the hotel just up the street from us, and a kid in an Indian sweater appears out of nowhere. Then a car swirls in. I cant move. It's like watching a western, one is going to die, it is only a set, it is only a set, it isn't real, it cant be. Do you want to go for a dry one? Ted says. He's part of the picture. How can he say that now? I want to see. No thanks, my mouth opens through the film.

I turn round to there. A guy jumps out of the chevvy. Four men are congloming on the two animals. Shouting. You from the boat? Ted says. I hear him next to me but so distant. The men grab the dogs from behind. And the yowl flattens to a whine with the bark from the other pushing out, rushing out. No. Where were we, I try to remember as if nothing has happened: I, I'm not a passenger, I say, I'm working, I'm the messgirl. I dont look at him but I feel the words move out over the top. They are apart, it's over. I turn. He hasnt been watching at all. It's as if this happens everyday. I know where there's a party later. His voice assumes. He does. He's such a confident cocky bastard.

I have to be back, I say glad that I'm not just a passenger do have some reason to be here, I, I, I'd like to get an ice-cream. There's a cafe a few doors up, he says and I look closely, he's not hurt, a relief almost, they're probably out, they usually are. Then, cause he knows I wont, how bout a quickie? So sure. No, I say and step out into the road. Do you, do you get enough to live here just cutting hair? I fix trucks and cars, he says, you might say I own the garage. I look up and down the road. A field back there, he says, I get along alright. It's not a question of money but he's taking it that way, is proud. Bye, I say, and his cocky smile reappears, not certain the way Chuckles is, but the basic quality's the same. Maybe next time? Maybe, I say, and leave.

I start along the road past unpainted and unused buildings. Strange to see such an abandoned town. From the curve in the road a truck comes towards me. Hi booby, a plaid-shirted fellow in the crummy yells. I blush. Happy in a sense and annoyed.

Shoulders curled, I pass the cafe-hotel-pub. The cafe is empty, closed, licensed premises, chequered cloth covered tables sit with salt and pepper shakers waiting, waiting for that time they'd be surrounded by people. The men are coming back, they laugh and banter behind me. Up ahead are two old cars, early fifties or late forties. Three women unload driftwood, take it in through an open gate, place it on a porch of an unpainted house. I feel pulled to them, friendly, one looks at me, we exchange a happy look, she probably has a tough life, uses her body (she has on ankle socks and a house dress, the muscles of her calfs are hard) to do, her head to manage, they most likely all have to, on very little. I cross the road and head towards the little cafe Ted spoke of.

It's a sin to tell a lie: comes out onto the street. The words pull me in: of hearts have been broken, just because these words were spoken. I'm surrounded by men except for the pincurled teenage waitress who leans on the counter. Unhidden arms and necks sit about enamel tables to my right. Open plaid shirts, clean jeans, shaved faces in the booths to my left. So be sure that it's true, when you say, I love you: their energy surrounds me, presses the ceiling, the windows. I step up to the counter, watch the waitress wipe a low shelf. The record stops. They shut up, I feel the eyes on my back. Through my skirt. No one gets up to put another record on. Her birdy head turns. Her body. Yeah? Her father they have the same darkish hair and peaky bone structure - comes out from the pool room to see what the silence is about. I'd, I'd like a cone if you have one, I say to her. We dont, she says. He is behind her, small hipped and worn out, white rag about his waist. Hank Snow goes on the box. I tell him what I want. She turns to continue wiping. And suddenly everyone is talking again.

#### Graeme Foster / CATCHING HELL

"When's he coming," popped the question every five or ten minutes.

"He'll come, don't worry," said Billy, "He never gets back later than four unless pickings are really slim. On choice afternoons he sometimes gets back before two."

I was new to this game and getting impatient. We waited on those cliffs like novice vultures watching the slow harbour traffic butting the rip tide through the narrows and woo-wooing the ragged girls when they walked out of the shanties far below. They'd turn and shade their eyes, looking for the source of the kid noise on the cliff edge where we four lay hidden in the bushes, snickering and woo-wooing for more.

That's about all there was to do except for taking the odd pot shot at oileys and teal as they soared past. No one ever hit anything with the sling shots which were only good for one purpose.

Somewhere in the middle of a Hold-Your-Breath-the-Longest marathon, Walter motioned and directed our purple faces to the two distant figures stumbling along the tracks down by the grain elevators.

"Here they come!"

"Yeah, that's him, you can tell by the crappy check sports coat."
"Check the size of the prize he's hauling in today!"

The Rube and a fat woman with black hair were moving up the tracks at about a mile per hour. With one arm around the woman's pink dress, he waved a bottle in the other, conducting the rumble of his song:

> Mana Leeza Mana Leeza They have named yooo-Yer s'much like th'lady With a mystic smiille!

"Jesus, look at her. She's gonna sink his house boat sure as shit." This started us ha-haing our silly heads off.

"Shut up you guys! They're getting pretty close now."

At the gang plank they paused for an embrace. The woman wrapped her big arms around The Rube like a second coat and shook him like a bear. We heard him wheeze:

"Take it easy honey, we've got all night!"

"Okay honey," said the woman, dropping him, "Lets get inside and tuck in." The Rube stopped to get his breath and slick his hair back before leading her across the logs to his tin-roofed shack.

Are ya warm
Are ya reeel
Mana Leeza
Or jusa cold n' lonely
Lovely work ofart.

The door slammed behind them. We waited for a minute without saying anything. Then Billy spoke:

"Okay then, I guess everybody knows what to do. Johnny'll take the eggs over there a few yards. I'll keep over on the other side. Red, you stay here with Walter and keep your head down."

"But I don't get to do anything!"

"Not today, Red, you can do something next time. Just keep your head down and tell us if you see the cops or someone coming. Now remember, nobody does anything until you see the ripples coming off the side of the house boat. That means they're really banging away."

"Jeez, Billy, you guys never let me do anything."

Being little brother was a pain in the ass, but if anyone did come I'd be the one to give the warning and get the credit.

Everyone spread out and waited quietly for the ripples to start spreading away from the floats. I moved out on to a branch overhanging the cliff to get a better view of the cops when they came.

Walter was the first one to see the ripples. He pulled back hard on the slingshot and landed one dead centre on the tin roof.

"Whang!"

Billy was next, striking the walls of the house, then hitting the roof simultaneously with Walter's second shot.

"Whang-whang!"

For a full minute it was like stone rain on The Rube's roof. You could hear lots of yelling and bumping inside the house. We all laughed like crazy imagining The Rube stumbling around in the dark looking for his pants and the woman screaming her head off expecting an avalanche to come down on them.

The Rube stumbled outside, squinting in the daylight and shaking his skinny arms at the cliffs.

"Clear off, ya lil bastards! Clear off right this minute or yer really gonna catch hell!"

Johnny chucked the first egg which struck The Rube in the foot. "Jesus!" he yelled in outrage as the second one hit him lethally in the chest.

"That's done it, ya lil buggers! Yer really gonna get it now!"

The Rube disappeared into the house coming back out a moment later with a twelve guage which he leveled at the cliff edge, firing a quick double blast. Shot rifled through the trees.

"He's got a shot gun!" yelled Billy, "Let's get the fuck outa here!" I shinnied down the tree like I'd never shinnied before as The Rube fired a second blast.

"Ow-Wow!"

I turned to see Johnny running up the slope with both hands on his ass making for the road. I was sweating, really scared at being the only one left. At the foot of the tree my pants caught on a short branch. Bending down to remove the cuff, I caught sight of The Rube and the woman standing at the bottom of the cliff.

The tree broke. I hung upside-down yelling my lungs out as the last fiber of bark gave way. Hanging on to the small trunk I tumbled and tumbled, closing my eyes and waiting to smash on the ground below. I never did.

The branches of the tree had buffered and protected me from the impact. Instead, a long skinny arm reached into my nest, pulling me out by the collar. I was so close to The Rube's face that both his eyes merged into a cyclops. Wine breath poured over me.

"You lil bastard, I'm gonna smash yer head open!"

He threw me on the ground and I closed my eyes again, waiting for the rifle butt to come down on my head.

"No George! Let him be, he's just a little kid."

Lying in the dirt, I opened my eyes to see the woman towering above me. A big fat goddess of mercy with her arm barring the trajectory of the man's upraised gun.

"Lil kid, my ass. I saw the lil red-headed bastard up there with his eggs!"

"That wasn't him — must've been his brother or somebody else with red hair. This little guy was just hanging out on the tree watching what was going on."

"Oh yeah?" The man bent down and picked me up by my coat, a bit more gently this time.

"Now listen to me kid. The lady here just saved you from me knocking yer little head off. Now I'm giving you thirty seconds to get yer ass out of here and around that bend before I start shooting again. And tell that brother or whatever he is of yours that if I ever see him around here or anywhere else, for that matter, I'll knock him silly. Now git!"

With the man's foot for encouragement I made it around the bend in fifteen seconds, not daring to look back at them as they laughed. I'd go home and tell Johnny how he'd catch hell if he wasn't careful.

#### John Harris / MR. IMAGE

Mr. Image was a very ordinary man. He drove an ordinary car and wore an ordinary suit. His car and suit were not old enough to be archaic, nor new enough to be stylish. He was the bursar at a small private school. He looked after the school budgets. If the librarian wanted to know if money was available in the Library Budget, for books, he asked Mr. Image. If the faculty needed money for travel they came to Mr. Image to find out if any was available in the Travel Budget. Mr. Image knew from day to day, almost from hour to hour, how much money the school had to spend in any of its budgets.

He led a very ordinary home-life. He had children, but they were grown-up and gone. He lived with his wife in a neat bungalow in a neat suburb. Every Saturday afternoon he worked in his yard. Every Sunday he went to church and then either drove out into the country with his wife or played golf with his friends.

He was a paunchy man, with grey hair and pale skin. He might have been florid if he had worked outdoors. His eyes could sparkle, when he joked with the secretaries or got deeply involved in straightening out the financial tangle in some faculty or board member's mind. But ordinarily he was quiet and dull, almost withdrawn. His real concern was the pile of requisitions that gathered in the "in" box on his desk. He read them, marked them with the appropriate comments, and then either signed them or sent them on to the Principal. He never got behind in his work, no matter how great the volume of requisitions. His desk was always clear of everything except the one requisition he was working on at the moment.

The only deviation in Mr. Image's very ordinary life was his timetable. He had to eat out, two night's a week, when his services were required by the night-school and extension people. He could not get home and back in an hour, to have his dinner. This deviation from the ordinary did not trouble Mr. Image. He actually enjoyed his evenings out. Indeed, he looked forward to them very much.

It wasn't that he did anything unusual. He always went to Grandma's Cafe, which was only one block from the School, bought a paper, ordered the night's "special," and ate while reading the paper. Grandma's Cafe was a quiet place. Sometimes he was the only customer through the whole dinner hour. The place was fitted out like a farm-house kitchen, with stained walnut walls with pictures on them of, he assumed, Grandma as she was fifty years ago. There was a fireplace, hung round with pots and pans, and there were numerous antiques scattered around. Only the chairs were somewhat out-of-place. They were heavily padded and covered with blood-red leather; probably they were refugees from some discotheque. The waitress was a tired, plain woman in her early forties, who had surprisingly shapely legs that she always showed off by means of a short skirt and black mesh stockings. The cook was a paunchy old woman with hard lines in her face. He always supposed she was Grandma, though he could never be sure. She looked tough, and a little greasy. She had long jet-black hair tied tightly back in a pony-tail, and she smoked incessantly. Whenever she wasn't busy out back, she sat at the end of the counter and talked with the waitress. He often saw them in this position when he entered — the cook seated on a stool, hunched over the counter, with her broad back toward him, a blanket of smoke hovering in the air above her, and the waitress standing behind the counter, in front of the cook, watching the entrance. The food at Grandma's was ordinary — heavy meat dishes with mashed potatoes and gravy. The dessert that inevitably went with the "special" — a fruit compote with spray-on whipped cream — was seldom finished by Mr. Image, though it tasted very good for the first few bites.

Perhaps he enjoyed the difference in the food, or the setting. At any rate, when he went to Grandma's Cafe, Mr. Image always felt a small thrill of pleasure, like a boy going on a carnival ride. It was a strange feeling, that he never thought about much, but he always felt he was doing something exotic.

One day Mr. Image was faced with the fact that his pleasure might shortly end. He overheard the old cook and the waitress talking about the possibility that the cafe would soon have to close its doors. He presumed upon his status as steady customer to ask the waitress if what he had overheard was true. She said that the owners were indeed talking about closing the cafe. There had been a steady drop in customers over the past few years. Everyone was going to the flashy places, the pizza parlours and the pancake houses.

Now Mr. Image started to think. The problem with Grandma's, he thought, was advertising. He felt sure that there were many, of his own unassuming taste, who would come to Grandma's if only they knew about it. After all, it was the only place in town he would ever consider eating at. The other cafes were so noisy, so glittering, so fast-paced, so garish in decor. Grandma's was peaceful. A man could read the paper and eat a good meal in silence.

Mr. Image thought deeply about Grandma's for a week, and then took it upon himself to find out the owners. He thought only to make some suggestions that might help keep the place going. A surprising thing happened. Mr. Image bought the business. He had convinced himself that it could be a profitable enterprise. When he found the owners determined to close, he seized the opportunity that seemed so sure. He was not a rich man, but the investment was a small one — the furnishings and kitchen equipment, two small salaries and rented space. He could manage the experiment for a year or so, without having to give up his job. He was convinced he would succeed.

So, in a few weeks time, after some minor renovations to bring out the farm-house atmosphere, Grandma's Cafe opened under new management. Mr. Image conducted a quiet advertising campaign on the radio and in the newspaper. His ads stressed the "leisurely atmosphere" of the place, and "Grandma's old-fashioned cooking." Mr. Image thought he was being quite subtle. He reasoned that most people of his age and station believed in the old, agrarian values that they had known as children. These people would come to his cafe to eat. Among the renovations were the replacement of the red plush chairs by early American furniture, and the elimination of the spray-on whipped cream.

A few curious people came to Grandma's in the two weeks of the advertising campaign, but they were plainly not the kind of people that Mr. Image had hoped to attract. Soon everything was back to normal, with Mr. Image himself often being the only customer in the dinner hour. The books showed a steady loss, that would eventually, he knew, prove unbearable.

Evening after evening, not just on his working evenings but more and more regularly as the days slipped past, Mr. Image sat in his cafe and brooded. The cook and waitress went about their familiar tasks, and talked together quietly at the end of the counter. The old pendulum clock on the wall ticked away the hours.

Where had he gone wrong? Mr. Image thought and thought about it. For one thing, he had assumed, as people probably did who knew nothing about business, that his taste was universal. Actually, people of his nature seldom dined out at all. He himself had been forced into it by his job. Why had he been so sure of the success that seemed in retrospect so unlikely? What had tempted him to invest a good deal of his hard earned and carefully managed money in a failing enterprise?

His meditations eventually took him far back into his childhood, a time of his life that he had not thought of for years. He remembered faces, situations, events. Certain scenes from his past seemed to glow, to pulse, as if irradiated by some inner light. The first day of school, when he had awakened suddenly very early in the morning and silently left his warm bed to stand for a long time on the front porch of the house in the pre-dawn. The pale, handsome face of the woman across the street, whose husband was a brutal drunk and whom he had tried to impress one day by showing her all the month's earnings from his paper route. His school studies which, he now realized, were not practical, scholarly, diligent (though he was a highly-praised student) but rather furtive, sporadic - forays into that other world of mystery and romance. This was what he remembered. A caravan of gypsy figures. Not the public ceremonies of childhood and adolescence. Not the things he always assumed he remembered because he was always reminded of them. The things illuminated by the white light of day — these things had disappeared from his memory. The other things remained, like dark jewels embedded in the past,

Then he gradually began to understand what had caused him to make his venture. And he understood too why he had failed. He had actually eliminated the very things that had drawn him to Grandma's. It was the whipped cream and the waitress's blackstockinged legs and the red leather that had drawn him to the place. Or rather it was the whipped cream, legs and red leather in the context of Grandma's hearth rugs, antiques, fireplace, varnished walnut walls and heavy meat dinners.

Mr. Image rushed to correct his mistake. He reinstated the red leather chairs and the whipped cream. Then he began to improvise. He dimmed the lights. He found an old picture of a very fleshy, cherubic nude and hung it on the wall in a prominent place above the pies and pastries. He changed his ads, introducing the caption "discreet dining" and, in the newspaper, a sketch of a girl in black-laced stockings and partly-opened blouse surrounded by the usual emblems of Grandma's. It was as if the hidden poetry of his life was at last finding expression.

His efforts were rewarded. Customers gradually came in. They came once, and then again and again. Eventually Mr. Image did quite well. He was able to quit his job at the school, and devote himself entirely to the peculiar experience of Grandma's.

# Penny Chalmers / FOR ME IT WAS FOXES

The bounce of the old car, the sweet noxious smell of gas, nose filling, rumbling vibrations, sunk between my parents in the front seat. Who were large in those days, the steering wheel too, that vector: and thru the windshield, the looming blackness of trees. Remember when there were no shoulders to roads, and the woods reared immediately off the headlights, their colour, oranges, yellows, caught momentarily? It was that time, October, of shadows.

Sleepy, sleeping in my mother's lap. Nestled. When. A fox ran in front of the car. And. Was transfixed by the headlights. Ran and ran in front of the car but could not escape the trajectory of light. Caught. Turning head back, tongue lolling, as in the pictures of foxes hunted. The eyes like cats' catching the light and transmuting it phosphorescent, bouncing it back. Look! He shook his head and ran into the woods. Finally. I did not wake up.

That night, for nights afterward, there was a fox in my bed. Under my bed. In the closet, Mommy there is a fox in my bed. Make him go away. He was very large and his coat shot off sparks in the dark. His eyes were lit coals. He had sharp white teeth. He was hungry. He smelled musty. He was prowling. The sudden switch of the light evaporated him. I could just catch his tail glimmer away, up into the fixture. He would curl behind the light, cunning, until the light was turned off. Then he would continue to search.

My father for comfort explained that foxes were quite small, really, like little dogs, and they were more scared of me than I was of them. Well I couldn't imagine the extent of their fear, then. The fox I knew wasn't scared one bit. He was going to eat me up. Unless I played dead. I froze into the mattress. The folds of the sheet turned marble, a frieze. The fox could not smell out the stiff and still. I could sleep. Warily.

By day my father used his imagination. Foxes are really tiny, he said. So small you can hardly see them. That is because you watch from daylight eyes, I thought, and foxes come out in the dark. So small you can never see them. Look! There's one now! He followed a something flying and caught, cupped it in his huge hands. Slowly he opened them to let me see. Shh. It's a fox, he said, and they scare easy. Be very quiet. I peered into the dark cavern of his hand. The something, nothing, was gone, not in the palm's hollow, nor the crevices between fingers. Look, there he is! Flying there. There.

I followed his eyes, their darting, dubiously, till catching on. Hey, another one! He pointed, exulting. I'll catch it, I squealed and caught it. I've got one. The nothing in my hand brushed my skin like a moth's wing, tickling, powder. See? Dad looked in. The fox flowed out and perched atop the china cabinet where none could reach. Nevermind, there's another! We were all around the room after foxes. They never stayed in my palm for inspection the way they did in dad's. I tried to see their wings. I didn't know foxes had wings. They were all around the room, hovering, at the edge of sight, and prancing. Tiny pairs of eyes glowed from the chandelier, from the top bookshelves. They were like fireflies. Whose lights went on, went out.

#### Kathy Duncan / THE LAKE

That summer I spent most of my time on the verandah looking at the lake. The lights off the water were bright and clean, and it was so beautiful just to sit there watching it change. I could spend hours looking at it, all the lovely patterns of lights and shadows. There was always something different to see, it was never the same.

I guess we were lucky we found that cottage to rent. We'd just come to Quebec and it was hard to get a place, there weren't many. It was such a quiet, isolated spot. Driving along the main road you'd never guess there was a lake and cottages there, they were all hidden away in the trees. Dave only came for weekends, but I stayed all the time with the children. They loved it, they really did. Debbie was in the water all day, just like a fish. Greg was more interested in catching frogs and minnows. He paddled around the beach with his pail, happy as could be. I didn't worry about them in the lake, and they left me alone.

It was lonely, but I had my books and some knitting to do. And there was the lake to look at. We had it all to ourselves during the week. You could see a few cottages from the water but there weren't many. People just seemed to come for weekends. Our only neighbors were some nuns from Paris. I'd seen them walking in the woods sometimes. Once in awhile they'd say a few words to me but my French isn't very good. They worked at a school in Montreal or something, and had this place as a retreat for the summer. They were very quiet, I hardly knew they were there.

The lake was three miles long, and there was a little island in the middle. We'd take a picnic most days and row over there for lunch. It had good sandy beaches and I went swimming sometimes. The water was like ice-cubes but it made you feel good, tingly all over. It was so pure it was pumped right out of the lake up to the cabin, and we could drink it. It tasted good, it really did.

That's why I was so upset about the fish. It was the end of the summer, and this dead fish was in the water not far from where our beach was. Just past where we kept the boat. The smell came right up to the cabin, a horrible, disgusting stink. It was just floating in the water, belly-up with its insides starting to melt away. A stringy mess of jelly with eyes sticking out. I had to get in the boat and scoop it up out of the water, I couldn't leave it there. I put it in a plastic bag, brought it back and buried it in the woods. It was just awful, like cleaning up vomit. And I was worried about the lake. Why did it have that dead thing in it?

I didn't want to go in the boat again after that. The children whined at me about a picnic so I packed some sandwiches and took them for a walk. There was a kind of spongy dirt path along the side of the lake. We had to climb the wire fence that was around the nuns' place, and Debbie cut herself. I don't know why they had that fence but it didn't look right. We passed their house, their retreat, it was grey and dirty looking. One sister was walking up and down their beach, saying prayers I guess. She didn't even notice us.

We walked quite far. There were a lot of soggy dead trees in the woods, and slimy logs sunk in the water. There are always a lot of dead things in a forest, you can smell it. Dead birds with broken wings, dead animals rotting into the earth. I saw a snake all squished up in the ground. Its middle part was coming out, white and sticky. I don't know how it got that way, somebody must have whacked it with a stick or something. We had to go back. How could I eat my lunch after that? I felt sick.

I watched the lake all afternoon. The water seemed to turn dark and murky looking. The telephone kept ringing and ringing, three long and one short. It was a party line and our number was one long and one short. But it kept ringing and I didn't know if I should answer it or not. Why did it keep ringing that way? I couldn't think with all that noise. That evening I made the children go to bed early, I was tired. They didn't seem to mind, they're good sleepers.

I washed up the supper dishes and was standing at the sink, looking out the window. The light was gray against the black trees. The sky was heavy and it was muggy and hot, you could feel a storm coming. I was in my shorts trying to keep cool. I was just standing there looking out the window and I don't know how to explain it. It was this thing coming out of the trees, looking at me. It was a death head, I'm sure that's what it was, a death head. This mask coming out of the dark, looking in at me. It caught me in its eyes and I couldn't move, I was too scared. It disappeared and then there was a knocking at the door, and it opened. I saw it open, and this grinning dead thing stood there, looking at me. Its black gown dragging it into the ground. The face so old and grotesque with that cloth wrapped around it. It just talked gibberish, standing there, waving its arms and claw hands. I told it to go away, very quietly. I looked at it, waiting and waiting. It was trying to tell me something, that horrible thing was trying to talk. Screams knived at my throat trying to get out but I couldn't scream. I couldn't move, I just told it to go away, go away. Finally it did, but how could I know where it went? Maybe it was going to come back, how did I know?

Sweat oozed out of my skin, crawling over me like a wet sickness. The dogs were howling and the storm started, with those black sheets of rain. I just stood there in the beating thunder and lightning. The electricity went off, and it was the darkest dark it could be, I was blind in that black. My heart was pounding at me to move, to get out of there, but I couldn't. The lake came to me through the flashes of lightning, coming and going. I couldn't do anything, I was afraid to shatter that darkness. I couldn't break through, my mind was holding me tense, I couldn't move. What could I do, how could I sleep? Finally my legs took me into the bedroom and I lay down, burning. There was a window in there too, and I knew that dead thing would peer in at me. I wouldn't even see it, it might just stand there, watching me. I knew I'd never sleep, and I just tossed and turned on that lumpy, hot bed.

I don't know what happened, maybe it was the storm or my own heat that did it. This electricity just seemed to come in all around me. It surrounded me, but it was coming out of me too. This electrical field giving me power, energy. I couldn't understand it at

first, not for a long time. But then I knew why it came, what I had to do. It just came to me.

I raised up and left the squirming body. Kept the eyes closed. I left it behind and went outside. My bare feet crushed the rocks and made a path. I knew where to go. My legs and arms pushed through the bushes and thorns and the wire fence. No scratches, no pain could hold me back. I had power to use, such power, I walked with it. The electricity cut the cobwebs, nothing could stop me. I found the window and climbed into the darkness. I smelled the fear, I heard the silent screams in that cell. My fingertips sizzled as they clenched the throat with that power. I brought it back, clean, electricity is clean. I could carry it easily with the power. I did what was necessary, I knew what to do, I found what I needed. Then I went back to the tossing body, and calmed it. I slept. The next morning I got up early. I took the sheets down to the lake and washed off the blood stains. I had a swim, all by myself. The water was numbing, freezing clean. I floated free and looked down into the lake. I could see very far. It was beautiful again, pure and sparkling clean. I could dance in that water. The children called and called to me from the verandah, I knew I had to come out, I waited as long as I could.

I covered up in my old jeans and a soft polo-neck sweater, warm and cozy. We had some breakfast and the children went down to the beach. They noticed the downstairs window and told me. I told them to go play, never mind about the window. Walk down the other side of the house and don't look at it, I said.

I knew I had to go downstairs, into the basement. The pump for the water was there, and I knew I had to check the water, make sure it was clean. I lifted up the door in the floor and climbed down the stairs with a flashlight. I needed a flashlight because I knew the window was dark. The black cloth was hanging in front of the window. I stabbed the light into it and watched the face, that dead face under the rope. It was better dead. Anything that old had no right to live. It would only show what it's like to be so old, and who wants to see that? The rope held the head down. I turned it so the fish eyes could look out and down at the lake. The water was clean, pure again.

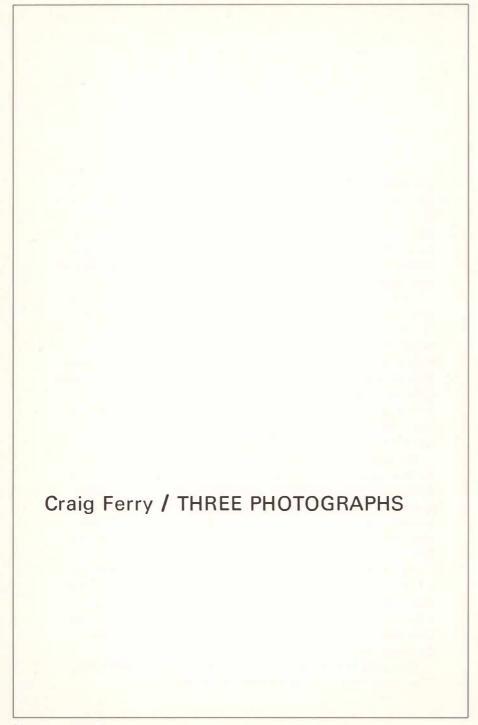
The children came back with two of the nuns. They must have told them about the window. They were very scared. They went down on their knees and started praying right away. They tried to touch me but I kept away from them. They left and came back later with the police. One of them spoke some English and kept saying, I'm so sorry, madam, how terrible for you. He wanted to comfort me. They took me upstairs and made me drink hot milk with honey in it, can you imagine?

Then Dave came, and there was another big commotion. He spoke French to the sisters and held me. He said it was alright, this nun had been very depressed. She was senile, she even wet her bed she was so old. And they couldn't understand why she did such a thing, killing herself that way. Her mind must have gone. They all felt very bad about it. One nun asked if I'd seen the dead sister the night before, early in the evening. She said she was coming over to use the telephone. Theirs was out of order and they were expecting a call. I told her it had been ringing all afternoon, why didn't she answer it?

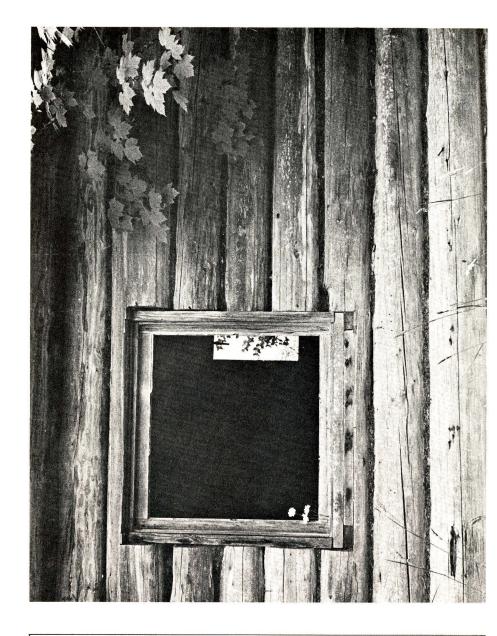
The policeman said maybe she came over and hung herself in our basement because she knew what a shame it would be if she did it in her cell. Suicide was a terrible thing, a sin. The other sisters said they hadn't seen her, they thought she was in her cell praying. They didn't like to interrupt her, maybe she left then, who knows? I said perhaps she wanted to see the lake when she died, maybe that's why she came to our place.

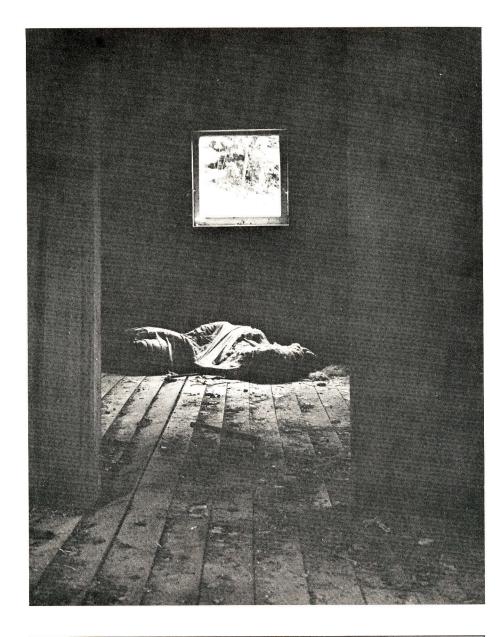
After all the fuss was over, Dave took me and the children to a hotel. He didn't want us to stay there another night, not after that. I didn't care. I missed the lake but I knew it was alright. I had to leave sometime, but it was sad. It was too bad we had to go then, just when it was beautiful again. After the storm the water was quiet and peaceful, at its best.

That night in bed I told him it was okay, the cuts didn't hurt. They were clean. I'd washed them in the lake.









# Bill Bissett / SIX POEMS STARTIN TH FIRE

th attainment th glowing card, blowin in yr fingrs blowin onto th coals sparks, kneeling by th dark cold fire god

yr hands in th orange red colord flame dont feel a thing cept th cold in yr toes yr breath ovr n

ovr agen keep sendin it out bfor yu catch it th snow light all around yr eyes

movin th logs th fire speek when yu do

goin out to chop sum mor wood now th prayrs in my arms th erth turning all ovr thru us our selves th one body moving

## TH FIRST DESIGN

it takes just about one tree fr a weeks fire wood our arms thru th branches

ther was a moose out ther last three nights calling

nd one night last
week pack a wolves howling
ther cries cummin from back
a ways ovr th pond sum funny
clouds passin ovr th moon
a strange charge nd th blood
was up high thru th dreams

yu can see th frost in th air

yu put on yr shirt in th early morning nd its a sheet uv ice ovr yr skin

yr blanket uv hair kiss th blew tits rise in yr mouth

th white snow flyin all aroun th warmth th trees green

fingr th sky

# EATING TH SOUP

th watr is boiling now
nd what yu feel at th back
uv yr neck is a wind nd
rain storm th trees are
raging thru th early night
evrything wet and a small red
light in th east at th end uv
th flat lands btween th
mountains look like wings

## SALMON HERRING AND TH SUN

th flowr is beautiful say the joints ok too the night is long nd lingres the trees rising the fever eases and ourselves inside the chamber drive into the

blu sky th trees leaning tord th red pink nd orange yellow light goin ovr th side uv th snow watr earth

we cud eithr what day is today wednesday on friday or leev it til monday yeh leev it to monday or sum day aftr that evn

is the writing all the gods eye rising in the clearing and listning to the stones jam drinking tea tuning up the sounds

red coals on th smoke th smoke rising yr lips take in th shining earth

th lettrs cummin aftr all th storm when aftr it cums yr hand n th pen mooving th drum cum ovr to th mountain

yuv got a word for it ethr yes n th energy cum thru th sand nd rock th serene statues uv zeno from th ocean

now oranges is in yr mind th floor rising in th chambr th tabul cloth n th harmonica guitar piano goin ovr n ovr th streem uv th

flow climbing th lengthy discourse btween planets n what floating stars opn up yr head or galaxees

yu see a buffalo on th wall nd theyre goin ovr n ovr th chorus th notes spinning tying up th bag nd lifting yu off yr chair

similar as yu go pull mor hot watr off th stove for tea nd put anothr log in

#### CHILE

today they think they got allende sure his body his blood his eyes they got like meat running ovr th probably ancient marbul floor uv th palace built long bfor ther was a man to be in it built long bfor thr was allende since they had long really beleevd as our govrnmentz sumtimes do as what is con fusd in all uv us sumtimez duz that evrything is an ego powr trip they think they killd th spirit too but they did sumthing in th darkness uv th soul uv hate nd slaughtr that they shud need th poor peopul to bleed that they shud need th poor peopul to bleed th change will cum th change will cum nd thrs mor uv us poor peopul than them nd we ar lerning how

# IN NOVA SCOTIA TH PEOPUL CALL SHIT HOUSES HOUSUS UV PARLIAMENT

th peopul ther yu heer em say aftr nite fall nd theyve eatn if thr lucky gess iul go out to th house uv parliament or to th hp fr a whil evn respektabul peopul yul heer say that if thr outside th town in the country or sumthing whr thr isint any indoor plumbing kind uv says it rite thr th peopul squeezd by th british nd rite up to th throat by th amrikans japanese too nd exactly by thr own pigs ther own rich sellin it makin us thr plan into 1984 robot creeps muttrin bout nashunal unity all a time whil we work our guts out in amrikan plants amrikan evry thing mines blah blah in our own country nd if th factory is canadian its no bettr lookit th widows uv new foundland 1300 dollrs fr deth compensashun fr silicosis nd th welfare rips evn that off alcan nd th peopul cant b unified if we dont own what we do our own resources food cultur ideas media th pigs in th big shit house in ottawa say we they say we who we

they got a sause calld houses uv parliament for meat at the tabul hp sause it sure tastes shitty too

# Gerry Gilbert / SUMMER OF 73

us thee this me

up until it's all said we get to say it

tomorrow's bread is being baked rite now

everything

this good pen
& proper height to write on
sitting up on wooden legs
elbows on the table
lamp on the wrong side
lady on the gitanes pack breaking into song
fresh okanagan apricot jam
finish dubonnet
write on

august full moon
I thought you said doom
you said wisdom

spider stopped there quite a while looking up Miss Gita's skirts while Mistah Zig Zag looks the other way we'll see

the banana wars go on there's the banana it's worth it

sleepy beautiful bee see moon's got you too

if I was up there
I'd want to come down here & write about it

it i cross

Slim splashed in the bath tonite & kept saying fart far out & James Dean died to save Lee Harvey Oswald

be happy tomorrow

I dreamed an old fort all these years the cannons were loaded

I woke in the sun finding out no one has the nerve to trample the thistles this year breeze roaming through the garden

art
less
& less
leaves
of
off
often
alder
maple
rain

there's a slug on a stone down there if you hurry

skid marks

fish & visitors going off in the heat

# Jim Green / POEM

They had been five days in the small snow house tinkering off and on with the ancient skidoo. The man, with his grandson about fourteen, used the last of the gas when he heard the plane, tore off his windshell, doused it, adding oil to the tiny blaze. They had a hind quarter of caribou, were going to start walking next day for home, a hundred eighty miles dark twenty four hours wind north. and a little west.

Fort Ross Jan. 1972 Translated from the Italian by Marcia Nori.

The poems are from a sequence, "Wirrwarr," contained in a larger collection of Sanguineti poems called Reisebilder.

# Edoardo Sanguineti / THREE POEMS FROM WIRRWARR

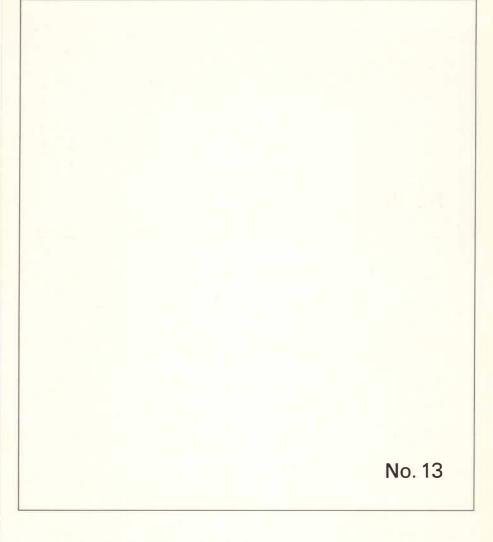
No. 12

How nicely they're holding hands, you were saying, that man and that woman

who are walking together:

it's about Tenti and his wife, I explained to you,

inventory number 12547: (and he's a priest of low rank): and I'm warning you: I'm made of coloured stone, and they're walking inside a tomb:



κτω, I say to the right: and to the left  $\chi \rho \omega$ : everywhere the symbols of the joy of life are being destroyed): (the value of custom): (I point out the two flutes to you,

for example):

but now I scream the categorical imperative for you: think about making money, about hanging on tightly to my skeleton, and drink:

learn to consume me, to consume:

#### No. 15

the dialogue about the best methods took place at Kreuzberg, in Gorlitzer Str.,

in an apartment where Hindenburg once lived (today an artist's house),

on the night between the 25th and the 26th of June 1971, almost underground

(the only

witnesses, Pippo the dog and Sabato the cat, and another who for me remains nameless): and to the blows of calvados:

the culminating point was reached

when Manfred, talking about the young leftists, defined them as "student-types":

(and then: I said, that's enough Brecht:

I'm thinking about enlisting in PCI when I return):

(...): (and now, changing the scene (un coup de théâtre):

(in Schoneberg) exeunt animals and children, enter (the professor's house)

intellectuals and teachers):

I recognize the nordic artist, the realist, the supernaturalist,

the curious traveller, the young witch): (I hear applause for vital anarchism (which is literally in a black shirt): (and on the first floor, a child of the world

snoring, stretched out on a divan):

doch gibt es ein Gedichtchen):

# Jancis Andrews / THE BLOOD-TIE

Something is wrong here.

Did we not dress correctly for the ceremony?

The people are staring.

Our faces are starched and folded into neat white triangles

And we wear them conspicuously.

Oh my little sister,

I think it must be that red pulp you hide in your hand.

It quivers like an aborted embryo.

Shall we rub salt into its little face?

Is it a conscience?

Let us swallow it quickly like a biscuit!

Let us go all the way and rip the legs off a kitten!

Let us gulp from its stumps and get bloody, bloody drunk —

Let us slit open the chest and memorize the systole and diastole of the heart,

Then you and I can each force a curious arm down the other's throat And attempt to discover the same movement within ourselves!

Our mother's coffin glides into the oven.

It is eager to go, see how swiftly it moves forward.

I think she is anxious to get away from us.

Her face was locked against me when I looked down on her:

The eyelids nailed down tight;

Her mouth closed and bolted in my face.

I think they told her about us.

That is why they put her best shoes upon her feet,

So that she could run away as soon as we weren't looking.

And yet I was sincere when I held before her this urgent telegram:

"Mother, even though you bequeathed me tumours, It grieves me to see you packed into this fancy box — The interior moulded to keep you tidy, the paper sheet — There is more -During my ninth year,

When you were busy re-reading your women's magazines,

Father amused himself

By hammering a spike of steel down through the top of my head. It scraped my brain and cut my tongue off at the root, So that I could not speak,

I could only signal with my eyes.

I waved my hands frantically in your face, pointing to my eyes, But you fixed your stare upon my mouth, my mouth, mother."

But I do not know if she believed me.

Under the sheet I saw her fists were clenched.

Now the fire will suck her.

It will roll her around its tongue,

Smear her flesh over the roof of its mouth,

Spit the bones out sidewards.

Afterward we will poke among the ashes

Fearful that something may have escaped.

An eye, maybe, the whites rearing, the iris a cold burning green

Tidal wave, raging over our halting explanations;

The pupil dilating, dragging us underneath.

I tell you I am uneasy. Let us leave here immediately.

The church is breathing heavily.

I fear it is preparing to say something about us, Something that will shock the congregation.

They will rise, screeching, and flap after us.

See, even now the priest

Cocks his head at us sidewards,

His eye gleaming and alert, his beak honed, ready to strike.

His claw has paused at a passage in the bible.

He is far too intelligent. Let us slip away!

The trees along the avenue are whispering behind raised hands. The pavement glitters. It lights us up from underneath.

There is nowhere safe for us.

Here in the house Our mother's belongings still lounge about the furniture: A dress flopped out on a bed; Her slippers relaxed and comfortable on a shelf. I may have to put up notices. Yet when I try to tidy up the bedding, The sheets tremble and will not lie corner to corner. I think my hands frighten them. I think they recognize me. My fingers are the metal keys of cash registers, Crude and rattling through a brutal downward slam, Bursting open the cash drawer The cards exploding SOLD! Here, In my bag I keep several suitable facial expressions. Take one, and put it on. Now we are twins. Now we cannot tell which is which. Now we can explain innocence to one another. And now, since we have mislaid the lamp, And since the time is come, my little sister, Let us turn up our jugular veins till they burn blue — Let us put razor blades between our fingers And stroke each other To sleep

# George Bowering / from THE BIG LEAGUES

#### 1. THE DETROIT TIGERS

That was the year of the riots, principally Detroit but also Buffalo, Newark, somewhere in the West, Los Angeles that year too? Was it 1967, they were taking the news away from our Centennial, the newspapers, idle or boring again or amusing, the Canadian centennial practices, some town in Manitoba making a civic bonfire of outhouses because at last they had sewers, paid for by the government, we have no wars & we spend all our money on grants ever since 1967, there goes that number again, the Canadian sits in his coffee shop & sees that Boston wins the pennant. Outhouses, while in Detroit they were burning the skyline. Two years later they found a skeleton with a rifle on a roof.

He went down there from London, Ontario. One of his friends there was a tall Trotskyite with a sense about him of peril. He walkt all the way because he was afraid to ride the bus or he didnt have the right change, from Monroe Avenue. When he got there they were all over the floor, who were to be later in jail, the Americans, & a scent of incense that told him he was here, across an immense border. Among them was only one black man, a boy, who carried a guitar of all things, & this is a black section of the inner city, where these whites, once students, whose parents owned gas stations, stayed, & they were free to have the most bizarre ideas, America in the sixties, even the walls gave off a tremendous pressure, where back home in Canada he felt only that the newspapers were spectators of something you could never know.

So he was there when the white police came, out of the ashes, out of the flames, to the door, looking for Negroes. His friend was across the hall, in his own rooms, & another said dont go in there, we heard scratching & we think it's the Black Panthers. The place was broken & smelly & the white police had their guns out, they were ready for a short happy life, I mean, he thought, what could be more American than that, the civil war was over a scant one hundred & two years ago. So he watcht them kick down his friend's door, & out of the burning bright they came, not the Black Panthers, but three brilliant tigers, leaping with gigantic paws into the stream of bullets. What immortal hands, he thought, & then he saw the two policemen die in the teeth of the revolution.

His friend opened the front door & releast the cats into the darkening street one block from the expressway. His friend turned to him & said, the horsemen of instruction simply want to bury an icepick in your head.

### 2. THE DALLAS COWBOYS

Their names were Tex Tyler & Slim Chance, & they were riding point duty in a rocket-fitted Huey mixmaster over the carpet of rounded trees near Bai Donc, the provincial capital. They were the top guns in G Company, & had been there since the early days of the range war. The inside of the helicopter was fitted out with decorations, doodads, a picture of David Janssen in battle togs, a number of VC ears, dried & tiny, an ancient & tattered regimental flag carried back from the carnage of Chihuahua. He could see their dark aviator glasses thru the sights of his AK sput gun, & when he squeezed the trigger the whole fucking thing came down the other side of the river.

Tex had a bad ankle but Slim was unscracht, & it didnt take them long to get from the wreck to the biggest house in the deserted village. The army signs on the walls told them it was empty, they had the whole place to themselves, so they washt up, tidied their bandannas, & sloped off down to the saloon. It was as if the former inhabitants had simply dissolved into the air — half-finisht drinks on the bar, cards & glasses on the tables, a burnt-out cigarette on the edge of the piano-top. The boys set themselves up at the bar. Whisky for me, said Slim, Tex sat down with a bottle at one of the tables & riffled a deck of cards. What's your pleasure? Let's play stud said the other man.

Getting across the river wasnt hard in the dry season, he watcht the shorter men & women in front of him holding their rifles over their heads as they waded in water up to their chests. He thought of the Avon River above Stratford, Ontario, how he had walkt into it the first time as a child, wondering what the Indians had called it. He would not stop here to drink this river, there wasnt time for that in his new country. They stept out one by one & faded into the trees, a silent troupe of children in black pajamas, too wide awake for bedtime verses.

Slim said I'll see your five thousand piastres & raise you five thousand more, Tex said I'm calling, & when Slim laid down his three queens Tex said not good enough, read 'em & weep, placing five hearts on the torn green felt in front of them. Wahl, ah notice two of them hearts is crimpt on the corners, said Slim, I dont cotton to cheaters, especially in my bird. You aint got a bird no more, said his partner, getting his hand on his gun just as fast as his Dallas sidekick.

That's the way they were when he appeared in the doorway with his AK leveled at them. Who the hell are you, said Tex. The little dark people emerged from every door & window, rifles pointing at the two full bellies. We're the Indians, he replied.

## 3. THE SAN DIEGO PADRES

The long gray-silver ships came out of the sunset into San Diego, over the Bulge from Asia, laden with men & machines on wheels, laden with soft-drink dispensers; the president has said save, save our boys & the expenditure of taxes, reduce taxes he said, & four hard-of-hearing cowboys took off for Camp David with murderous intent. He was on the ship under false colors, white & tall, wearing the purloined green uniform with the name Chance sewn over a pocket. He was curiously interested in the two sallow youths, similarly labeled Cruz & Hernandez. Each of these was carrying a regulation dufflebag stuft with marijuana from the Plain of Jars. Remembering the sweating hands as he'd smuggled new phonograph records on the Greyhound thru the Detroit Tunnel, he was filled with wonder at the intrepidation of these two latin youths.

Latin youths, well, but where had they gotten to? He was surprised but not finding it his business to intrude, he did not accede to the wishes of the two thin men in underwear whom he found trusst & anxious in the laundry room. Certainly their explanation sounded plausible. The ship sat at anchor a few hundred yards from the pier while the details were visited, that is the war-tempered dogfaces were not to be loost pell-mell upon the whores & parents of Southern California without Stateside debriefing — those were the reasonable words of the defense department & they were certainly knowledgeable about these few hours, what with that name & all. But of course the question of religion was here a sensitive one, & he had no reason to disbelieve the reasoning of these two near-naked chappies from a minority group, he would assume that indeed they were priests who had been allowed aboard to dispense their jealous duties regarding the shall we say Chicano doughboys. But he himself was only a Canadian, it wasnt his peace, & he closed the bulkhead he thought they termed it, again.

That is not to say he was surprised to look over the rail & see the brace of rotund Fathers sitting in the motor launch preparing to cleave the salt waves toward land. They sat there in rough brown fabric tied at the supposed waist with humble twine, two Friars Tuck, & smiled up at him as befits the tendering cleric, all three of them in assumed costume as it were, the two quite rotund shepherds & the non-Texan lately called Chance.

They bounced not too briskly he hoped on their way cityward, & he turned to look up toward the sun where the commander stood at the bridge impatient to liberate himself from a large case of fully-equipt Japanese cameras.

## 4. THE BUFFALO SABRES

It was only by Chance he happened to be there when the great poetry reading was on, he decided to take a drive out of London, Ontario, his back half broken, & there he was on the road to Buffalo, past the cheese, past the tobacco, past Lobsang Rampa, shuffling off memory, right down Main Street to the sunny yabber of the campus, miraculously shining under a rent in the steel overhead. Poetry Reading today at noon it said, a confrontation he felt he had to get high for & so he lit up a stick of defoliated residue from the central highlands & there he was in the audience, only to be shockt at his ill luck when they marcht out onto the stage, the three squarest poets in America, the academicians, Pathos, Bathos, & Artifice, their ceremonial swords hanging like doctorates from their hips.

Holy shit he murmured, blowing his high, I cant believe I'm in Buffalo, where are all the olsonites we're used to sitting on when we feel the force of the Movement? Too late, Pathos was reading

The motherbirds thieve the air To appease them. A tug on the East River Blasts the bass-note of its passage, lifted From the infra-bass of the sea

dum dum de dum, it was his stomach saying you can find something better to be doing at high noon, but Bathos was on:

Out walking ties left over from a track Where nothing travels now but rust and grass, I half-believe in something that would pass Growing to hurtle from behind my back.

You betcha, he thought, & lookt to see if he could make it, but no such luck, there were seven Gary Coopers between him & the aisle, & Artifice was at the podium:

The vicious winter finally yields the green winter wheat; the farmer, tired in the tired fields he dare not leave will eat...

That's fucking well enough! Wait, that wasnt me thinking—
it was a voice from the back of the room. A figure in green & white,
a shining sword in his upraised hand, leapt chairs & bodyguards
on his course of vengeance. The three fustian figures upstage bared
their blades in the unison of an Iowa Workshop triplet stanza.
People in the audience, who a moment before were nodding, began
to wink & blink, to the clash & ding of naked steel.

"God help them, it's the roguish swordsman yclept D'Arte Angoisse!"

Oh, the glittering alloy made sweer music in that sphere of prose, & three heads lay on the rostrum, facing the audience with no change of expression. Then the avenging spirit faced these

heads, his sword once again in its resplendant sheathe, & he spoke the end of his composition:

> All you say you want to do to yourself you do to someone else as yourself

and we sit between you waiting for whatever will be at last the real end of you.

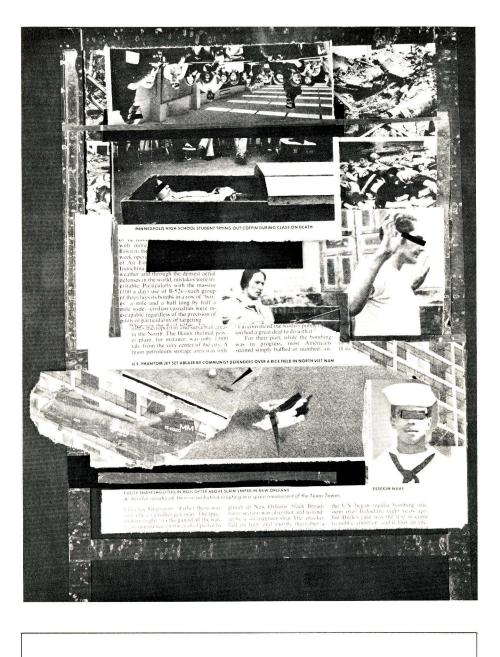
Yep, that was one of those just wars of words, he thought as he drove toward the Falls. Buff, goodbye.

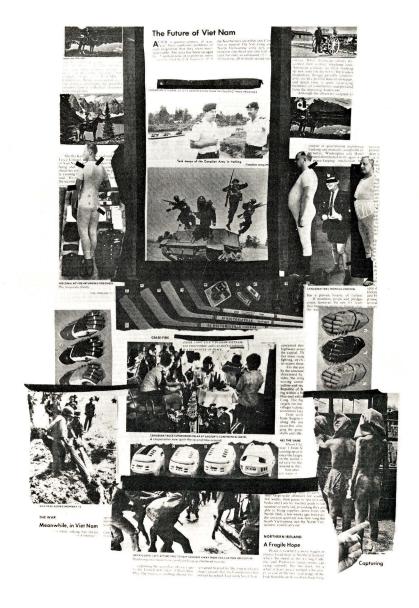
# Christos Dikeakos / PHOTO-COLLAGES

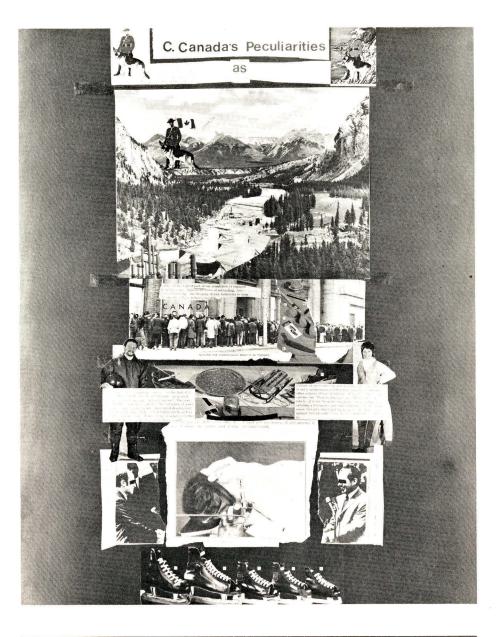
This photo-collage series consists of a critical documentary reportage. The works utilize a process through material in which a dialectical sense of the reality of specific time and place is created. This is accomplished through a methodology of "collage" where discontinuity is used as an organizational principle, and the arbitrary structure of reality is fed back upon itself to reveal otherwise hidden meanings. The existence of personal "style" etc, is the basis for the kinds of content I am attracted to: "the hidden" structure of reality. The multi-images within these collages are mirrored by and directly relate to the "text" of each specific work. My primary interest is in the production of an external object or situation which reveals these covert systems of meaning.

- 3. Demonstrators run as British troops dismount from cars
- 6. High school students trying out coffin in class on death
- 7. After a quarter of a century of war
- 8. Didacticism: Canada's peculiarities









# NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

GLADYS HINDMARCH has a 2½-year-old child and caretakes and teaches, and has not enough time for herself. The chapters published here arise from her year and a half as cook and messgirl on a B.C. coastal freighter. Gladys has published irregularly in local journals and papers, including The Georgia Straight, The Grape, Iron, Pacific Nation and Tish. Her book Sketches was published by Beaver Kosmos (Montreal) in 1971. The Peter Stories is coming out this year as a joint production of Gronk and Coach House Press. Birth, which Gladys describes as "an account," will also be published in 1974 by Co Tinneh Books of Castlegar. Gladys recently gave a well-received reading at Capilano College.

GRAEME FOSTER is a student at Capilano College in the Audio-Visual Program. He grew up in North Vancouver, has lived in Europe and the Canary Islands, and presently lives in Vancouver with his wife and child. As well as studying film animation, Graeme is taking creative writing, and this is his first publication.

JOHN HARRIS teaches English at The College of New Caledonia, and co-edits Seven Persons Repository. He has published in little magazines, including Canadian Forum and Dr. Generosity's Almanac. His book of poems and photographs called Alberta was published by Repository Press.

PENNY CHALMERS, who lives in Ward's Island off Toronto, recently edited an issue of *IS* (Coach House Press) devoted to women's work, and is busy organizing this year's series of readings at *A Space Gallery*.

KATHY DUNCAN is a mature-entry student at Capilano College. Originally from the Chicago area, she has lived in various parts of Canada for the past six years. Kathy began writing only a few months ago, and this is her first publication.

CRAIG FERRY is a free-lance photographer from Vancouver. His work in this issue is primarily a study in texture, as opposed to resolution. Although his work has previously appeared in papers, this is his first magazine publication.

BILL BISSETT, who edits *Blew Ointment*, is one of the finest oral poets in the country, a rhythmer of powerful chants. He has a new book out from Talon press, pass th food release th spirit book.

GERRY GILBERT has two new books forthcoming: *Skies* (Talonbooks), and *Journal to the East* (Blew Ointment Press).

JIM GREEN has had poems published in *Blackfish* and *North*. The Canadian Author and Bookman and Spring Rain have also accepted poems for publication. Blackfish intends to publish a volume of his work early next year.

EDOARDO SANGUINETI is an Italian writer, born in Genoa in 1930. He has published extensively in Italy, and his novel *Italian Caprice* has appeared in English translation.

MARCIA NORI, who now lives in Toronto, has her M.A. in Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia. She has published her own poetry, as well as translations from Italian and other European writers, in many Canadian magazines.

JANCIS ANDREWS, a mature-entry student at Capilano College, was born and raised in England. Taking a few courses at a time, Jancis eventually hopes to work as a nurse when she completes her studies. We look forward to more poems from her in the future.

GEORGE BOWERING has for some time been reaching beyond the limits of lyric poetry to new forms in prose. A book of prose studies, titled *Curious*, is due from Coach House Press early in 1974. He is currently teaching at Simon Fraser University, and putting together the final issue of his excellent little magazine, *Imago*.

CHRISTOS DIKEAKOS is a Vancouver artist who has been active both in the production of new work and in teaching, primarily at the University of British Columbia. The collages reproduced here are four from a series of eight, which was recently exhibited at the Vancouver Art Gallery in the *Pacific Vibrations* show. He continues to explore the potential of collage.

COLIN JACKSON, whose fine photograph of a Big O habitué appears on this issue's cover, is an Audio-Visual student at Capilano College.

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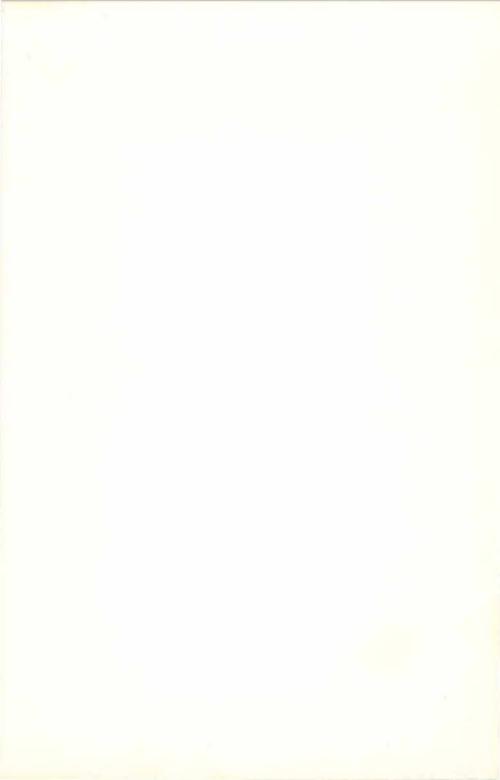
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GLADYS HINDMARCH

poetry by JANCIS ANDREWS

BILL BISSETT

GEORGE BOWERING

GERRY GILBERT

EDOARDO SANGUINETI

and

serial
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