

1

CALIFORNIA

A JOURNAL OF LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

QUARTERLY

DALTON TRUMBO

THOMAS MCGRATH

DON GORDON

MARIO CASETTA

RUTH FORBES SHERRY

JEANNETTE GOULD MAINO

EUGENE FRUMKIN

EDITH WITT

MAURICE CARPENTER

MERIDEL LE SUEUR

EWART MILNE

GORDON WHARTON

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY



VOLUME 4 / NUMBER 1

1956

A CLEAN 6 X 9 READING EDITION

Beyond Loneliness gives this issue its argumentative center. The fiction—Babylon Descendent by Dalton Trumbo; The Root by Meridel Le Sueur; A Long Day in a Short Life by Albert Maltz—moves among private crisis, social pressure, and public consequence, with each story's title and setting supplying a distinct point of entry. The poetry runs from The Hunted Revolutionaries and Slum, shifting between grouped poems and single lyrics rather than settling into one house style. The printed contents bring together 3 works of fiction, 16 poetry entries, 1 prose or editorial entry, giving the issue a deliberately mixed pace across genres and forms. Short pieces sit beside more sustained contributions, and the sequence keeps changing scale without losing the issue's central literary concerns.

This edition resets the journal's literary texts for reading. Each piece begins on a fresh reader page and identifies its original journal page and PDF scan page; advertisements and decorative matter are omitted. Artwork and irreducibly visual material appear as labelled original plates.

CONTENTS

Beyond Loneliness	<i>Editorial</i>	2
Babylon Descendent	<i>Dalton Trumbo</i>	3
The Hunted Revolutionaries	<i>Thomas McGrath</i>	10
Guadalajara	<i>Don Gordon</i>	12
Love Lyrics	<i>Mario Casetta</i>	13
Eden Made Plain	<i>Ruth Forbes Sherry</i>	14
Night in the San Joaquin Valley	<i>Jeannette Gould Maino</i>	15
I Hear the Echoes of Attilan Hordes	<i>Eugene Frumkin</i>	15
Notes on Contributors	<i>Contributor notes</i>	16
Come Lie in the Sun	<i>Edith Witt</i>	17
Four Woodcuts	<i>Mario Casetta</i>	24
Six Poems	<i>Maurice Carpenter</i>	27
The Root	<i>Meridel Le Sueur</i>	32
The Fool's Song of Tomorrow	<i>Ewart Milne</i>	38
There Lived a Man	<i>Ewart Milne</i>	39
Predicament	<i>Gordon Wharton</i>	41
Comrade Worm	<i>Gordon Wharton</i>	41
A Group of Noble Dames	<i>Jack Beeching</i>	42
Photographs of the Atomic Nucleus	<i>Jack Beeching</i>	43
Dead Reckoning Day	<i>Jack Beeching</i>	44
Slum	<i>Cressida Lindsay</i>	45
A Long Day in a Short Life	<i>Albert Maltz</i>	47

Beyond Loneliness

We are pleased to announce the award of the magazine's Short Story Prize of \$100 to Meridel Le Sueur for her remarkable story about Lincoln's mother, *A Legend of Wilderness Road*, published in our Volume III, No. 2.

Fine as Miss Le Sueur's story is, our decision was neither easy nor offhand. Our readers, whose advice we asked in making the selection, found the choice no simpler; they spread their franchise over seven candidates out of the thirteen available in the four issues of Vol. III.

A Legend of Wilderness Road is almost a poem in its evocation of a mood, its concentration, its imagery. It is a story of the hunger that is in all of us, not only the physical need but the hunger of the human spirit to reach beyond loneliness to the wisdom of the world. It is an affirmation of life, its language and symbols fresh, its emotion genuine, its people vital. We found in it no naïve optimism but the reality of character struggling free of oppression and soaring to a mighty fulfilment. Says the legendary pioneer mother, Nancy Hanks, to her unborn child, "You goin' to be my loneliness made tall, my hunger walking, a friend to all in the wilderness, Abraham.'" We believe *A Legend of Wilderness Road* has a richness and universality of appeal not often encountered in contemporary fiction. Our hunch is that it may become an American classic.

THE EDITORS

Babylon Descendent

Dalton Trumbo

(Lieutenant David Gruber is a character in a novel in progress entitled Babylon Descendent. On the morning of April 28, 1945, ridden with recurrent malaria, he arrives at Hamilton Field in San Francisco, and sets out to find the wife who wrote him, while he was overseas, that she wished a divorce.)

ALL THAT DAY Lieutenant Gruber passed from chill to fever and fever again to chill while he searched the city for his wife. She no longer lived at the address from which she had last written. He had known she wouldn't, he had expected her to move, he had gone to the address only because it was the necessary starting point for his odyssey. Thereafter it was a matter of patient inquiry as he traced her from one part of the city to another. "No, no-Gruber, Mrs. David Gruber, her name is Midge, and the boy's four years old with blond curls and he laughs a lot, or used to. Sansome Avenue, you say, 2416? Thank you very much!'" The day wore on. The sun retired behind clouds and the wind rose and the first rain fell. Gruber, as he neared the end of his search, appeared to grow smaller and yellower and wearier. The taxis he tried to hail were either filled or they passed him by. He traveled by trolley and bus, trudging doggedly between connections, stopping for Coca-Cola when the fever was on him and for coffee when he grew cold. And all the while his thoughts roared, voices spoke to him, universes rose and fell in flames at his bidding, and he felt as mighty as the great enthroned Jehovah.

I've come home, Midge. I've come back to my wife. The city is a whoredom of whoredoms and in yet a little while I shall avenge the blood of J ezreel. She shrieked and fell at his feet, begging for mercy, promising never to do it again. No, no-that wasn't what she did at all. She took him in her arms and sobbed. Davey, Davey, it was all a mistake! I love you so muFh! I was ashamed to write any more, I was afraid you'd never have anything to do with me again, you were always so proud! Thank God you're home, Davey, look at little Wayne, [3] hasn't he grown? Isn't he tall and beautiful? This is your daddy, Wayne, give your

daddy a kiss. And Wayne, jumping up and down with pleasure, threw his arms around his father's neck and smothered his face with moist, velvet kisses. Then Midge turned into Gomer the whore and stood scornfully before him, her words as sharp and cold as daggers. Why did you come? I don't love you and never did. You've always known that, in your heart you couldn't help knowing. I'm in love with somebody else. Go away, Davey, and leave me alone. Let me be happy. I've forgotten you. Go away, Davey. Go away? Where? He had no place to go. Couldn't she understand that? Could she, whom he had loved so dearly, turn him away like this? A star exploded inside his head and he threw himself on her, beating her until his muscles turned limp with exhaustion. She sank to the floor and lay there cringing, her arms thrown up for protection. She crawled to his feet and kissed them, whimpering for mercy. He picked her up and carried her off to the bedroom and there committed indecencies with her, and she was too cowed to resist them. Then he turned and left her. But where could he go? Without her he had no home. Oh please, please love me, Midge! I've come home-I've been away ever so long and now I've come home to my wife-my pretty wife-please-Midge...?

In the hour that all San Francisco turned homeward through the early twilight of rainy streets, Lieutenant Gruber ascended the cliffs of Ithaca and arrived before the door of a second-floor flat on Stockton Street. He was so cold he had lost effective control of his muscles, so his knock rang out more loudly than he had intended. He withdrew his fist abruptly, thrust it into his pocket and stood as quietly as possible, shivering and waiting.

He heard a rush of eager feet on the other side of the door (that would be Wayne, the boy) and then a feminine voice lifted in mild reproval (Midge!) and then firmer footsteps moving to the door, and then the knob turning, and then-- The door opened and she stood before him, a lacy apron fastened around her waist, prettier and far younger than he had remembered her, the bright, expectant flush of her face changing first to surprise and then to pity. Behind her and a little to one side stood a blond boy without curls, staring up with a certain disappointed curiosity. In the dazzle and hunger of that moment all the tender, careless, confident words he had thought to utter died miserably in his throat.

"Let me in, Midge;" he begged through chattering teeth, "let me in, I'm freezing to death!"

"Of course!" She opened the door and he passed into the living room. "Wayne;" she said quietly to the child, touching his shoulder with her hand for reassurance, "this is your father. This is Wayne, Davey.'" Gruber stood awkwardly in the center of the room, looking down at the boy and feeling that he understood nothing of what was happening.

[4. The California Quarterly]

"Hello;" said the child. "Hello-son'." "Put your bag down;" said Midge, "and take a chair'." He dropped the bag abruptly and she began to help him with his coat. "No, no;" he said, "I want to keep it on. If I could have something hot-coffee or tea-or just hot water would be fine. I'm cold'." "Tea will be quicker;" she said, easing him gently into a chair. "It won't take a minute. Wayne will entertain you-won't you, Wayne?"

"Can't I go with you?" asked the boy, his voice suddenly fearful and a little suspicious.

"If you'd rather;" she said. "You can help arrange your father's tray'." She went to the kitchen, Wayne following her closely. At the doorway she turned and smiled back at Gruber as if to comfort him. "It takes Wayne a little time to get acquainted;" she said, "but he makes awfully good friends after the strangeness wears off. It'll only take a minute for the tea'." He nodded, and she was gone, and he was left alone in the room.

He lay back in his chair, listening to the pleasant distractions from the kitchen and waiting for the quiver to die out of his suddenly relaxed muscles. The sound of china, of silver, of a radio playing in another flat, of rain spattering against the window, of a trolley in the distance, of a mother speaking softly to her child. Her child--? His child too. His wife and his child were in the next room, and if that was so then this was his home, he had a right to be here, he ought not be made to go away.

She was so different from his last memory of her. He had carried with him the image of a girl of twenty looking as if she were still in high school, rather thin, with a small face and great dark questioning eyes and a child's laugh-a girl of whom everyone said it was ridiculous to think she could be the mother of a two-year-old son. The girl in the kitchen seemed another person altogether. She was taller, her hips and breasts were

rounder, her step was firmer, her voice was softer, her eyes asked no questions. And she was more beautiful -oh, a thousand times more beautiful!

He opened his eyes again to make certain he wouldn't miss seeing her if she passed by the open kitchen door. His gaze slowly swept the room. It was long and rather narrow and not too plentifully furnished. The blue twilight of evening seeped into its far corners, softening every contour. Almost exactly in the center of the carpet lay a child's drawing book, its pages open, broken crayons scattered near it. At the far end of the room, cut in half by a moat of light from the kitchen, stood a square dining table decorated with a bowl of sweet peas, already set for dinner.

He straightened a little in his chair and stared off at the table. Two crystal goblets stood opposite each other, gleaming softly in the kitchen light, and on the other side, between them, a silver mug marked Wayne's place. He thought about this for a moment, about there being three places at the table. Then, with a shock that caused his skin to writhe, he realized that he was [5. Babylon Descendent J coming, the thief, the adulterer, the daring stranger who had taken his wife. The third place at the table was set for him; the flowers on the table, the lace apron, the look of expectation as she opened the door (it was on the boy's face too), the excitement beneath her flushed cheeks, the eagerness of her opened lips, yearning and tender and joyful-all for the stranger.

Yet he had a right. He hadn't signed the divorce papers; his commanding officer had supported him in his refusal. She was still his wife. A woman belonged to her husband. He was the master in this house. He had every right to take her in his arms by force if necessary, to strip her blouse away and touch his face to the nipples of her bare breasts. He could, if he wished, and in spite of all her struggles, carry her off-- Shadows darkened the glow of the kitchen doorway. Wayne appeared, carrying a tray, eyes intent upon his burden, tongue thrust forward between his teeth, his steps careful and gliding and pigeon-toed. Behind him Midge carried the teapot, watching the child as he made slow progress across the room. Wayne placed the tray on a low table and immediately retired to safe staring distance. Midge poured the tea, remembering precisely how much sugar he always took with it.

"Here;" she said gently, "you'll feel better when you've drunk it:" As she handed him the cup he looked searchingly into her face. She smiled. Her

eyes, like those of a compassionate cousin, were full of sympathy, and nothing more than sympathy. They seemed to tell him only that she pitied him and didn't dislike him. He turned away from her quickly. Rights, rights, rights-what good were rights when there was no love? Ah God, how much could a man stand, loving and not being loved, and what good vengeance upon the house of Jehu?

She moved across the room to flip a switch, and all the lamps glowed with yellow light. She went to a small table, lifted the telephone and started to dial. He watched her, conscious that his skin was tightening again. She was calling him, preparing to tell him that something unfortunate had happened and he was not to come to dinner. He began to twitch with anger, seeing her go about it so shamelessly. The loud sound of his cup and saucer as he set them down hard on the table caused the boy to move a few steps closer to his mother.

"Wait a minute!" he said hoarsely, "Who are you calling?" She looked across at him perplexedly, but didn't answer. "You're phoning him, aren't you?"

"Because he was coming for dinner and now you don't want him to come!" "Well, hang up!" "It's too late anyhow," she said slowly, putting the instrument down. "He isn't there. He's already started!" "That's good. That's fine. I want to meet him. I'd like to see a man who [6. The California Quarterly J could-who could--" His voice trailed off into the quiet air, unable to find words for so monstrous a thing. She rose from the table and came over to him.

"I wish I'd known you were coming," she said softly. "I'd have arranged it so we could have a-a talk. There's so much I need to tell you, so much you'll have to try to understand-and it's all so unfair to you--"

"Are you trying to say you want me to get out of here?" "Of course not. I want you to stay for dinner." "With him?" "No. He won't stay. I'll tell him." "And after dinner I suppose I just go out and hunt a bed somewhere." "We can talk for a while first. Wayne and I live here, Davey. We live here alone." "I remember a night on Pelilieu," he said, himself astonished at the words that poured from his lips and puzzled by their irrelevance, "I had a machinegun detail stationed on a little hill in the trees on the far side of the airstrip, and I was walking across a clearing to see how they were making out. And just as I got to the middle of the clearing a howitzer busted loose and I hit the dirt, and when I got up I

felt I'd lost something, and I looked in my pocket, and sure enough I'd lost the little folder I kept your picture in. And I knew, I just knew-although how I knew I couldn't tell you-that if I didn't find it right then, that minute, everything was finished, I'd never get back. So I got down on my hands and knees and began hunting it, rubbing my hands through the grass and feeling carefully around the stalk of every bush. And I found it. I opened it, just to make sure, you know-I remember the night, it was very clear, with the moon coming up-and when I looked at it I could make out every line of your face, and the firing died down and suddenly everything was quiet and filled with light, and you were with me there, and I knew you'd brought me through-it sounds strange, doesn't it?-I knew then I'd come back because--"

She lifted a finger to her lips. He broke off, everything he had been talking about forgotten, and listened with her. Someone was coming up the steps.

"It's Don!" said Wayne, speaking softly and with a clear note of excitement. She nodded and moved over to the door, Wayne following a step or two behind her. The sound grew louder. Midge opened the door before the newcomer had time to knock. He stood there, framed in the doorway, carrying a small parcel in one hand. He was a tall, bony, peering young man with a wide mouth that smiled easily, and jutting cheek bones. His clothes hung loosely on his frame, papers protruded from his jacket pocket, and all his joints and knuckles appeared a size too large. He wore horn-rimmed glasses with thick lenses through which he gazed at them all with an appearance of droll, owlsh good will, eager to do anything to retrieve the situation into which he perceived he had blundered.

[7. Babylon Descendent]

Midge took his arm and gently drew him into the room. "This is my husband;" she said quietly to him. "And Davey-this is Don Morley!" Morley advanced two or three steps, and nodded. "I'm glad to know you, lieutenant;" he said in a pleasant, surprisingly deep voice.

Gruber came to his feet and acknowledged the greeting with a half bow, his inquiring eyes searching out the other man's face.

"I only stopped by for a minute;" Morley said, glancing at Midge as if asking whether he'd said the right thing. "Something I promised to

deliver to Wayne!' He smiled and held the parcel out to Wayne, who advanced eagerly to accept it. "Jee-mun-ee!" he said. "Thanks!"

"Take it in the bedroom to open it, Wayne;' said his mother. "And please, Davey-Don-sit down. I have some sherry here!' Wayne vanished into the bedroom. The two men silently took chairs. Midge went to a small cabinet and returned with a decanter and three glasses on a little tray which she placed beside the tea things.

"Is it pretty bad outside?" she asked as she poured the wine. "Yes;' Morley said; then, to Gruber, "Too bad we can't offer you better weather, lieutenant.' Gruber said something which made no sense and leaned back in his chair, holding the glass in his hand but not bringing it to his lips. For a time they sat in embarrassed silence, no one touching his wine-the loving and unloved, the loved and unloving, the loving and loved-each of them engulfed in misery. Then it seemed to Gruber that a polite conversation sprang up, a conversation he didn't understand and which he recognized only by nodding now and then to indicate that he was aware of it and agreed with everything.

"There is no solution for this kind of business;' he thought carefully. '1Either you kill them all or you go away and leave them alone. Gomer and Jezreel, Gomer and Jezreel. They don't want you here and there is nothing you can do that will make them want you. You could fall fainting and dying for want of their love and they would have to let you die because they haven't any for you, none at all, not even if they wanted desperately to give it. There is the trouble!' Watching them as they sat close to each other in the yellow light, feeling how they were bound together by love for each other and sympathy for him, his mind began to wander in great leisurely circles. He felt remote as a star, observing everything and a part of nothing. He had no business being here in this room with these people. This woman was not any longer his wife, whether papers were signed or unsigned, it made no difference. She was his wife. Her loving him gave him the right. That was all that rights ever amounted to anyhow.

Then, without any warning, the real truth struck him with terrible violence: "She never did love me-not even when she was my wife! That's why she's [8. The California Quarterly] changed so much, she's in love for the first time! She never looked at me in that way, without smiling, yet her whole face a smile. The room was never filled with feeling when I

walked in as it is filled now. I never came as close to her in all our marriage as he comes at this moment without even touching her. He knows secrets of her mind and heart and body I never dreamed of. It's bad to have lost her, but never to have had her is worse-worse, worse, much worse!"

Little flushes of fever began to creep over his skin. He imagined himself rising and beating Morley to the floor, mashing his face to a bloody dabber with his fists. But his palms were turning slick again, and he wouldn't have time. He didn't want them to see him when the sweats came and his breath grew short. He wanted to be out in the rain by himself. The first shock of pain struck savagely at the base of his skull, causing him to stiffen abruptly in his chair. In a moment it would surge through his whole head, piling up at last against his eyeballs and turning everything to fiery red. Midge, sitting across from him and watching him closely, was saying something, something casual, but the roaring in his ears shut her words out. If he was ever going to get away from her he must do it now.

He came quickly to his feet, lifting the dufile-bag as he rose. "You stay," he said thickly to Morley, rushing the words, "you're the one she wants, I'm going to go!" Dimly he saw them rise as he turned and started for the door. Polite, anxious words floated to his ears but he couldn't make them out, he wasn't interested in trying. He was performing his personal renunciation, performing it in a welter of pain and panic, and he didn't want anyone to interfere with him. The whole purpose of his life now lay in getting to the door and escaping down the steps and out onto the street. He had looked at her face for the last time, he had turned his back, he was leaving her forever, and he wanted to get it over with decently, quietly, before the burning fires reduced him to sobs.

"Just a few seconds," he told himself, "in just a few seconds it'll all be over. It'll be on the other side of the hill, and I'll never have to face it again. But God oh God oh God let me get it over with, let me make it in good order!"

Just as he approached the door and reached out for the knob, a hand touched his shoulders, a voice spoke in his ear, and the pain howled behind his eyeballs. He turned and saw Morley standing close to him.

"Don't go," Morley said, "you're sick. Stay here-you need to eat something -a little rest--"

Gruber lifted his eyes and stared at the blurred face looking down at him. "You say that to me?" he cried. "You say it?" He whirled, opened the door and stepped through it onto the landing. There he stopped for an instant and looked once more at the figure which now stood in the doorway. "To me...? "

Then, like an animal which at last has identified the hunter, he rushed down the stairs, shambling from side to side and grunting a little. He didn't stop until he felt the rain on his cheeks.

[9. Babylon Descendent J

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 10 / SCAN PAGE 12

The Hunted Revolutionaries

Thomas McGrath

I

He hears the sound of hunting, at
San Pedro, beside the last ocean

The violent darkness claims us all:

The indifferent demon of the North
Sends his abstract anguish forth,
Tall as you are and more tall.
The violent darkness claims us all.

Tall as you are and more tall,
The impotent demon of the South
Tears the tongue from the honest mouth.
The violent darkness claims us all,
Tall as you are and more tall.

Schooled like fish on a shoal or a flight of meteors
The bicycle lights of the workers shawl the hills
Of foreign cities, fall toward the factory quarters
And the new day. Manhattan holds on its chilly spires
Three stars, and darkness,

II

He imagines the great demons of
the four corners of his country

[10]

Evening, with gull-cry, and a wind out of the bay
Where mournful a ship's horn sounds and the bell of a drowned
buoy

Flinging a warning call from the cold sea.
 Quiet, the wave, oiled where a freighter curves
 Toward the dream countries.

But westward the light still lasts, and a gull cries, and the wind
 Complains. The false-lights of the sun,
 Smoky and tranquil, lie on the wave tops.
 I sit at the beach, in the light of a gone day.
 And I wait for the hunters.

The violent darkness claims us all:
 The mechanical demon of the East,
 The inflated demon of the West-
 Tall as you are and more tall,
 The violent darkness claims us all.

The violent darkness claims us all:
 Now all your angels summon forth,
 From East and West and South and North,
 Tall as you are, and more tall.



He calls upon the powers of earth

The dark is in love with forms of light.
 Angel of conscience of the North,
 Assure all mortals mortal worth!
 Stars shine clearest in darkest night:
 I summon the angel of the North.

Stars shine clearest in darkest night.
 O randy angel of the South,
 Be lust of joy in the fields of sloth!
 An indifferent joy is man's secret fate:
 I summon the angel of the South.

An indifferent joy is our secret fate.
 Anarchic angel of the West,
 In solidarity bind what's loosed!
 All bitterness in time grows sweet:

I summon the angel of the West.

All bitterness in time grows sweet.
 Shepherding angel of the East,
 Organize concord in the breast!
 The dark is in love with forms of light:
 I summon the angel of the East.

The dark is in love with forms of light,
 Tall as you are and more tall.
 Though the violent darkness claim us all
 An indifferent joy is our secret fate.
 The stars shine clearest in darkest night.
 All bitterness in time grows sweet.

[III]

He remembers the tradition of
 pursuit and struggle

And, now, evening; and gull-cry. For the just and the unjust
 Impartial evening. Zodiacal light. Star light. Light
 Of search warrants. (The last wagon train
 Is burning in ambush.) Dark, now, all the States,
 And night on the west coast.

Darkness, and exile. And now the kind man,
 Who only pitied exiles, will blindly look at the map
 Where his perhaps home, graced with a foreign name,
 Waits for the great ship. Somewhere under the Line
 He will cheer for the fighters.

For they will hunt you, O revolutionaries!
 Hunt you in darkness-the slogan chalked on the wall
 Is your magical sign, icon of terrible love,
 The dark of the calendar. They hunt you, listening
 For a sound of gunfire.

But, now, the silence, and the neutral stars on the sea.
 Sirens. Waiting. The waves' long lamentation.
 Endured by millions-this darkness and the hunting:

Capture

Death

Victory: Like the struggle, the changeless sea,
Like the constant stars: Endure
Resist Endure

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 12 / SCAN PAGE 14

Guadalajara

Don Gordon

I remember the sun falling out of Mexico
into western water,
In the onyx light the old man on a rooftop
putting his plants to sleep.

[12]

I saw three civilizations in one instant
bound by a simple act,
In a fourth my father in another land
at the same hour
Bending over his leaves and everywhere
in the dying sun
The old ones of the world attendant
upon their secret thorns.

Perhaps the last times must be passed
in relation to the earth;
Or the exiles find the only occupation open
in the ruined province,
The border of our important lives
where they are sent.

It may be a blind connection with the thought
of seed,
An instinct to enact in winter the psychodrama
of spring;
Or merely to replace in the mind the knowledge
of their murderous sons.

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 13 / SCAN PAGE 15

Love Lyrics

Mario Casetta

To a Woman of Chinese Turkestan

Once I read in a geography book
How you braid your hair in little braids
And grease it down with rancid butter.
This is so different from anything I've ever heard
It's disgusting
According to the way I've been brought up.
But I would press my face
Against your hair
And breathe deep of the perfume.

[13]

2

To a Tribeswoman

Is that you, dear?
I thought I heard your sound
And felt your touch

in the dark.
Forgive me for being late,
You seemed at first so hard to find,
I didn't know I was this close

to Africa.

3

To a Mexican-Indian

• Your mother was here today-
She left a bowl of maize and a potted leaf,
A strip of woven cloth, bright green,
A forgotten lament, an ancient song
Of skeletons jangling in stark sunlight
Wearing grins and sombreros trimmed

In virgin silver-
She left the dusty outline of her bare foot
Imprinted on the floor
And across my throbbing heart--

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 14 / SCAN PAGE 16

Eden Made Plain

Ruth Forbes Sherry

That day we followed
the old road back,
pushed spider from lock.
Our voices halloed

on hollow room,
on leprous stair. The rain
seeped through the broken pane
and blush-rose mallow bloomed

on mouldering sill,
and sprig of baneberry.
We clung together then-
knew home within.

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 15 / SCAN PAGE 17

Night in the San Joaquin Valley

Jeannette Gould Maino

On Saturdays the farmers flee to town
And walk the papered streets in summer heat,
Collect in crowds, buy popcorn or a sweet,
In captoe shoes go slowly up and down,
And pause to see displayed an evening gown ...
Regard frenetic neon signs and greet
Old neighbors, talk about the crops, retreat
To weep at movies, drink at bars and clown.

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 15 / SCAN PAGE 17

I Hear the Echoes of Attilan Hordes

Eugene Frumkin

I hear the echoes of Attilan hordes,
The clamor of banner-claquing tongues crusading
The avenues, each tomtit brain bellowing
Its tinny, tiny cause. The mobs maraud
Our towns and bull the books away, burning
Their bridges before them. Hooded black to bride-
Rung day, they judge our sea-gone skyfaring
Times in the only terms they know: Poor Richard
Drunk, they hoot at songs of the dawn.

Still, still,
At moments when our hearts must hang unstrung,
Bare to the wild-eyed winds, still there remains
The good example: my teacher-bloodhound
old
But babe of words-blasting, blessing the babes
In poet woods to Christmastimes of meter,
Moving their worlds to brighter stars than any
Yet born. O'Casey green his rage, damning

[15 J

Out on the living land the distant glow
Of town is lost in moonlight soft as cream;
The frogs in ditches sing, the orchards slip
Their leaves through liquid breeze and darkly grow.
The finger-roots explore and find the stream
Of growth, and clinging, hold the earth in grip.

JACK BEECHING, who lives in London, has published two volumes of poetry, *Personal* and *Partisan* and *Aspects of Love*. He also has one novel, *The Paper Doll*, to his credit.

MAURICE CARPENTER is also English, the author of IX Poems and The Tall Interpreter, poetry volumes, and The Indifferent Horseman, a biography of Coleridge.

MARIO CASSETTA is an artist and poet now living in Switzerland but born and raised in Los Angeles. He has contributed poetry and illustrations to a number of international publications.

EUGENE FRUMKIN is an editor of THE CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY.

He contributed a moving elegy to Edwin Rolfe in an earlier issue.

DOUG GORDON, frequently published in our pages, is the author of two volumes of verse, Statement and Civilian Poems. A third book is in preparation.

MERIDEL LESUEUR, winner of our short story prize (see p. 2), is a master of reportage, a teacher,

historian,

prolific story

writer, and biographer of her memorable parents, Arthur and Marian Le Sueur, in her volume The Crusaders.

CRESSIDA

LINDSAY is a member of the third generation of a distinguished British literary clan (grandfather

Norman; father Philip;

uncle Jack). Her first volume of verse is ready for publication.

JEANNETTE MAINO has appeared before in THE CALIFORNIA

QUARTERLY

as well as con-

tributing verse to a number of other journals.

The vicars of hell: he is the seed, the egg,
The child, that wakes the bloom of farms and cities,
Spread by the wind, bird, insect, by the plan
And power, driving the clotted pulse to bleed,
The ramrod thought to bend. Flint in his blood
Will find the flame, the fire will find the place:
Will rise in Adams and Eves, O Pompeii cold.

Notes on Contributors

Cross and the Arrow, and The Journey of Simon McKeever; a book of stories, The Way Things Are; several plays including Black Pit; and some of Hollywood's more progressive films.

THOMAS McGRATH, formerly an editor of this magazine, won the 1954 Swallow Poetry Book Award with his *Figures from a Double World*. His other books of verse are *Long-Shot O'Leary's Garland of Practical Poesy* and *To Walk a Crooked Mile*.

EWART MILNE has appeared in the *Anthology of Irish Poetry* and has been widely published in English magazines. He contributed three poems to our Autumn, 1953, issue.

RUTH FORBES SHERRY is the author of *Chart for Voyage and Hourglass in the Mojave* in addition to a pamphlet, *Lament and Prophecy*. She has appeared in about 150 journals and newspapers and in several anthologies.

DALTON TRUMBO, skilled and prolific in many forms, has achieved (so far) at least two modern classics the anti-war novel, *Johnny Got His Gun*, and the screenplay of *A Man to Remember*—besides other novels, films, plays, stories and poems too numerous to record.

GORDON WHARTON is prominent among the youngest generation of English poets. He works in the antiques trade and has a volume of poetry and a study of Andrew Marvell about to be published.

[16. The California Quarterly] EDITH WITT, a previous contributor to our pages, resides in San Francisco. She has had ALBERT MALTZ is the author of three prestories published in *Common Ground* and various novels, *The Underground Stream*, *The Script*.

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 17 / SCAN PAGE 19

Come Lie in the Sun

Edith Witt

WEN

I finally came home after the uneasy
years of postwar wandering and began looking people up, I was glad
to find
Gustav's office still listed in the telephone book.

"Ted!" he cried, as if he had been sitting there waiting for me to
call. "How
good to hear you!" They had moved out into the country. "Eunice is
driving
out with a friend from the University this Sunday. Why don't you
come out
with her?"

Eunice at the University! But she was a little girl. I realized with a
rush of
awkwardness that it was more than ten years since I had seen
Gustav and
Margaret Muller-long years for me of fighting through the war and
search-
ing for the peace. I had met them, in fact, before the war during one
of
Roosevelt's election campaigns.

The rain was pouring down on Sunday morning. When the bell
rang I
rushed downstairs. Eunice was a little girl grown up, with dark hair
swing-
ing at her shoulders and wide-open lively eyes. Her friend, Anna,
was quiet
and reserved. She was French, had come to the United States for a
year to
study American literature and was shortly going home.

At Northcut we started climbing. We arrived at the crest in a sudden deluge and made a run up to the house. Margaret and Gustav stood smiling at the door and it was just as if I'd seen them only yesterday.

It was a wonderful room, a tremendous stone fireplace with great logs blazing, a wall of window opposite and two side walls filled with books. I felt the warmth steam through my clothes and reach my skin and wrap around my bones. Gustav came beside me.

He was a tall, broad-shouldered man, looselimbbed and easy. His face was rugged, his dark eyes deep and rather sad. We walked over to the window.

[17]

The rain had stopped for the moment, the sky low-grey and heavy. Beyond the patio stood a grove of eucalyptus trees, the dark sloughed off and swinging, the long-leaved branches dancing like a ballet group.

"We were out planting strawberries this morning," Gustav said. "Over there beyond that line of bushes."

"Come lie in the sun!" I laughed. He shrugged. "It's the first chance we've had. If we didn't plant them today it would be too late. And now the rain ..!"

Margaret came beside us. "You should have seen us, Ted!" She laughed. "What optimists! Knee-deep in mud!"

"You don't show any signs of it!" She was so finely groomed, her dark hair drawn smoothly upward, her fair,

almost translucent skin smooth across her cheekbones.

"Oh, here they are again;" she said. "The whole bunch of them."

"Well, there go the strawberries;" sighed Gustav.

The quail were suddenly on the grass, soft brown roly-poly bodies,
heads
bobbing rapidly. They deployed their forces, fan-shaped, and moved
across

the lawn, headed for the bushes.

"They're so cute;" said Margaret.

"All I need is a shotgun;" Gustav said, narrowing his eyes.

"Oh, you know you couldn't;" said Margaret, turning back to the
two girls.

"Still, I think we will have strawberries;" said Gustav.

We sat on the sofas by the fireplace, sipping sherry. I looked up at
the

books. They were the same ones I had borrowed long ago and new
ones I

would want to read. Now and then we talked, in bits and phrases,
catching

up the years, as if we had been traveling the same road, though not
together.

"I was in Washington the day he died;" said Gustav. "To me the
capital has
always seemed a city of stone. But that day people were weeping in
the streets'."

"Here, too;" said Margaret. "We looked into one another's eyes to
share
our grief. There were no strangers'."

"We had lost so many of our own;" said Anna. "Yet to us Roosevelt
never
really died'."

We watched the fire. We listened to the rain and the creaking of
the trees.
I was in a hole on a mountainside in Italy the day we learned that he
had died.

"It's like you lost a friend;" my buddy said. "Even at the big meetings of the world you could count on him to speak for us.'" And after a while my buddy said, "Now we'll have to speak up for ourselves." Next day we took off for the crossing of the Po.

There was a playful knock at the back door and someone called, "All&.

"Come in, come in;" answered Gustav, going toward the kitchen. "Our neighbor;" Margaret said.

[18. The California Quarterly]

Gustav came back with a short slight man whom he introduced as Heinrich Koerner. He seemed very formally dressed, in a dark suit, white shirt and bow tie.

"You see;" he said. "You should not have planted the strawberries." He sat down on the hassock, his little dark eyes sparkling, his small supple hands gesturing gracefully as he talked. He spoke with a pronounced German accent very pleasant to the ear. They argued about the strawberries, ribbing one another. I leaned back and stretched my legs and glanced at Anna, wondering if she felt as I did, warm and at peace, here in this house in the country, with the rain outside, and neighbors talking about their gardens.

Heinrich walked across the room and bowed to Margaret.

"My dear Madame Muller. The real reason for my coming out in this beastly weather is to invite you kind people to visit us as you have so often promised."

"Thank you;" said Margaret.

"Etta would be so happy for your company. And not being able to leave
the house because of the children . . . :•

"I have been meaning to drop in, Heinrich'."

"If you came as often as I asked you .. '."

"But we have been so busy, really. Today is the first day in so long
.. :•

"Will you come then this evening?" He turned to Gustav. "It is a wonder-
ful day for drinking beer:'

Margaret looked around the room.

"We'll see, Heinrich;" she said finally.

As soon as he had gone Gustav pushed himself up from the cushions. "Let's eat;" he said.

"I'm simply starved;" said Eunice, jumping up. "Shall we bring the table in here?"

We ate hungrily, delight deepening to satisfaction. And as we slowed down
to the coffee, our fruit before us and some of us smoking, we savored the bonds
of having broken bread together.

"So one of you has come home and another is going home:" said Gustav,
turning to Anna. "What will you tell them of America at home?"

Anna ran her tongue along her lips and tried to smile and glanced at Eunice.

"Sometimes I make people very angry when I speak. I say what I feel or
I say what I think or what I have seen --"

"Anna thinks that all Americans believe what they read in the paper;" said
Eunice.

"But I was not a Communist in my country when I came here," said Anna.
"Even a child in France .. '!' She broke off, her face flushing. It was true that the rest of us were embarrassed. "Our Rights of Man," she said earnestly, "and your Bill of Rights .. '!"
"We'll drink on that," said Gustav, getting up. "In fact, we're really going

[19. Come Lie in the Sun J

to celebrate. What do you say, Margaret?" She nodded. "We're going to break out our bottle of champagne:"

When we had done the dishes and put things away, we fell into the sofas again, well-fed, warm, drowsy and relaxed, with the happy feeling of not having to apologize or pretend at our animal content. Eunice walked dream-ily to the phonograph and put on Brahms' First Symphony and then fetched her mother's knitting bag and handed it to Margaret. The whole room was filled with music, inside and out of us and the room was the whole world.

The quail came back across the lawn but we watched them without comment. A small side window blew open in a rush of wet fresh air and Gustav rose and pulled it to and put a log on the fire and sat down again. When the symphony was over we stirred and smiled to one another.

"Now the champagne:" said Gustav.

"Wait," said Margaret. "Are we going to the Koerners?"

"What did you tell him?"

"I said we'd see:"

Gustav looked around the room.
I didn't feel like moving and I wanted to get back to town before
too late.
But I thought it would be nice to go down to the Koerners; as if I
were
already established here at home and everything was solid and I
would go
down the road a piece on a rainy Sunday evening and drop in on my
neigh-
bor. And it would be nice for Anna to remember afterward, a visit to
a
neighbor's in America.

"We wouldn't have to stay long;" Gustav said. "How long is it since
we've
been there?"

"I don't know;" said Margaret. "It's been a long time. We keep
saying that
we'll come:"

Gustav sat down again.
"Well, let's go, then;" said Margaret. "Maybe it will be all right if we
all go:"
"We'll take the champagne along;" said Gustav. "We'll make a party
of it:"
He tried to make his voice sound gay.

Heinrich met us at the door. "Ah, good;" he said. "Etta will be so
pleased.
Come in, come in:"

His wife Etta was entirely different from what I had expected. She
was
tall and broadboned. There was no delicacy about her face-large
mouth, large
nose, blank blue eyes. She wore her hair pulled tight in braids
around her
head.

The house was rather fancier than the Mullers; with small
windows and

lots of lace and antimacassars and bric-a-brac. There were some
photographs
of the children on the piano, three sweet and roguish little boys.
We sat in a circle around the room.

"Oh;" cried Heinrich, jumping up with his engaging smile. "I have a
letter
I must show you. It is from a very good friend, a wonderful fellow.
He is now

[20. The California Quarterly J

about sixty years old. He writes in English. That is why I want to
read it to
you. He is the best fellow in the world, only his English is so funny.'

"I brought the champagne;" said Gustav. "To drink a farewell toast
to Anna.
Do you think you could find some ice?"

"Oh, fine, fine;" said Heinrich. He came back quickly with a regular
cham-
pagne bucket full of ice, the bottle properly wrapped, and set it
down at
Gustav's feet.

"What about the beer you promised?" asked Gustav.
"Of course. Who will have beer? Only us?" He was back in a
moment
with the beer and the mugs, pouring it expertly, holding one out
with a flour-
ish to Gustav. "And now I will read the letter:" He stood with his
back to
the wall, facing the group, as if for a recitation.

"My dear beloved friends, he starts out. Things are with us now
much
better. Cappi!. that is his granddaughter's husband-has been, thanks
God,
returned to us from hospital:' Heinrich's little round head bobbed on
his

shoulders and his sharp eyes crinkled as he paused to look with
bright amuse-
ment at our deadpan faces.

I looked up at the ceiling but the voice went on.

"His illness prevents him not to care for our little vineyards with
help I

Above me, a good seven feet from the floor, a steel rod about as
thick as a
man's wrist ran across the room, its ends embedded in the wall.

"Maria-that is his granddaughter-is changed person, even to sing,
since
he is here . . .'"

It was the sort of metal rod that might be used inside a clothes
closet, but
this was much longer and up too high and right out in the middle of
the room.

"... and will have baby now again may be, please God, to live this
time'."

Heinrich chuckled.

Gustav stood up noisily. "Excuse me, Heinrich," he said. "Do I hear
it
raining outside?"

"No, no:" said Heinrich, keeping his eyes on the letter.

Gustav stepped across the rug and took Heinrich's arm and moved
him
swiftly to the window. "Do you mean to say you don't hear the rain?"
he said
loudly.

"I hear nothing;" said Heinrich.

"Why, it must be storming:"

They both bent at the window.

"See?" said Heinrich. "It isn't raining:"

Although in the snugness of the room there was no sound of rain,
Gustav

stood there arguing until Heinrich folded the letter and put it in his pocket.

Etta ruffled through some music at the piano and began to play.
Heinrich
raised his beer mug and boomed out an old German drinking song.
He had a
surprisingly large voice and he sang for all he was worth, swinging
his arm

[21. Come Lie in the Sun J

and swaying his shoulders. Gustav joined in, off-key, but with enthusiasm.

"But what is there we can all sing together?" said Heinrich, remembering himself as host. "What do we all know?"

We looke? at one another but no one suggested anything. Etta began playing Deutschland O her Alles.

"That is not very good music;" said Gustav.

Heinrich laughed. Etta sat very straight and kept on playing.

"Eunice, what songs do we all know?" said Margaret. "Or you, Ted'."

The only song I could think of was Lili Marlene. I shook my head.

"Let the young lady sing us one of her songs;" said Heinrich.

For a moment Anna looked embarrassed. Then she leaned back and sang
as if she were far off and many others were singing with her. It was
a march-

ing rhythm, the words in Spanish, but as of a march uphill and at night with

the wind cold and sharp and the stars clear ahead.

There was a general murmur of approval. Then Etta called out, "Anna, do you know this?" and began to play.

"Oh;" cried Anna, turning toward the piano. "But that is a fascist song!"

Etta did not look up.

"Ah;" said Heinrich, spreading his arms. "What is the difference now?"

He sprang up, one arm upstretched, to grasp the steel rod high above him and swung gently over us in the middle of the room. He kicked off his shoes and got his feet up on the bar and hung lightly from his ankles. He swung back to his hands again and, as we ducked out of his way, propelled himself hand over hand across the room and back again. He dropped delicately on his toes to the floor.

"Every morning;" he said. His face was red but he was hardly out of breath.

"The boys and I. You should see those little fellows take their training'."

"And you, Etta?" said Gustav. "Do you do that too?"
Etta drew back her lips.

"Now how about you, Gustav?" said Heinrich. "Etta played and I did my exercises and Anna sang for us.'" He was playful and gay. This was a good party now and he would keep it going. "Don't you know any good parlor tricks?"

"I?" said Gustav. "I will pop the champagne cork'."

"Ah, but that comes just before you go:'"

"That's right;" said Gustav.

I stood up. "I know a parlor trick;" I said.

Heinrich turned toward me, clapping his delicate hands, nodding and smiling. "Good, good;" he said.

I laughed. "Watch;" I said.

I took three steps toward Heinrich and grasped his arm in one of the judo

grips the war had taught me. He sailed across my shoulder and
landed with
a lovely crack flat on the floor. I heard the breath smack out of him.
The
room was still.

[22. The California Quarterly]

Then he picked himself up, gulping, brushing his hand across his
eyes, but
smiling. "Very good;" he said. He had not yet caught his breath. "Very
well

Gustav was working at the champagne bottle. Yes, we sat in a
circle sipping
the champagne. Politely we ran through the usual toasts. Then it
was Anna's
turn to propose the last toast herself. She looked around the room at
each of
us as if she were already home, remembering. We raised our glasses.

Then she said softly, "From America, the old world-a toast to the
new
world'."

"Pardon me;" said Heinrich. "I didn't hear ... '!"
"Etta;" said Gustav jovially, "aren't you drinking?"
Everyone turned to her. She shook her head without expression. "It
makes
me dizzy;" she said.

We said goodbye quickly. It was pouring rain outside. The air was
fresh.
The wind blew. I walked slowly to the shelter of the car, feeling the
rain beat
down my neck, lash at my eyes. I wanted to get thoroughly,
completely wet,
soaked to the skin and chilled to the bone.

As I came up to the car Margaret and Gustav still stood outside it.
The wind
blew in their hair and the rain streamed down their faces. For a
moment we

stood together in the storm.

(continued from inside front cover)

two strikes against it. Except for light or comic verse,
 Pulitzer-prizewinning
 volumes, and the highly select list of Alan Swallow, commercial
 publishers
 hardly dare touch poetry any more. Not even the university
 presses-though
 one should except Yale with its series of Younger Poets-have given
 asylum
 to poetry; at best their explication-stuffly quarterlies use a little verse
 as filler.

As an independent publisher, THE CALIFORNIA
 QUARTERLY
 from its
 inception has given generous space and attention to
 poetry-particularly to
 the poem of major dimensions and significance. So it is fitting that
 as its first
 venture in book publishing it now offers a distinguished volume of
 verse,
 Edwin Rolfe's posthumous Permit Me Refuge.

We invite those of our readers who do not yet possess Edwin
 Rolfe's
 Permit Me Refuge to inspect our back cover and act appropriately.
 Pu~lishers
 can be only as independent as their patrons are discerning.

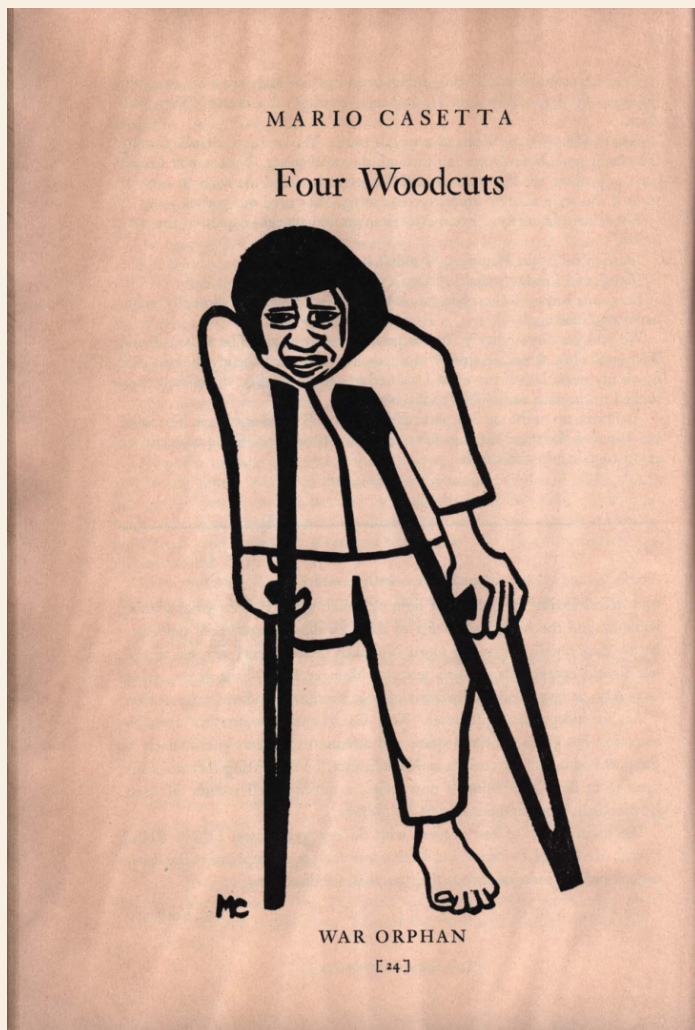
THE EDITORS

[2 3. Come Lie in the Sun J

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 24 / SCAN PAGE 26

Four Woodcuts

Mario Casetta



Original artwork plate / scan page 26



CAR BARN



DEPORTATION HEARING

[25]

Original artwork plate / scan page 27



Original artwork plate / scan page 28

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 27 / SCAN PAGE 29

Six Poems

Maurice Carpenter

A Visit to William Blake •

Last night I found that door in Golden Square
Where the prophet lives with his cloudy population;
Knocked, asked the naked lady, Does Blake live here?
I saw the girls in lovely copulation,
And Blake as he tossed those angels from his hair:
Shut the door, I said, You will shock the nation.

Outside the hands began
To assemble the engines of that iron Satan·
Erected Golgonooza and for gain;
But I lay there within that secret Eden
As mild as mild, while girls of furious gold
Laughed as they watched my embryo unfold.

Blue-lipped my Spectre rose and rapped for order.
The bards and bawds in their beds began to freeze.
Red-haired my Anima no proud marauder
Cried: Empire's no more; the lion and wolf shall cease!

The birthpangs of a world blazed in that room
Shaped like a heart, and then the rhythm started,
Systol and diastole, the pulse of birth
To split the seedbox of my dream and scatter
Those angels' teeth upon the waiting earth.

Letter to Pebmarsh Essex

In Pebmarsh you tell me the bells are silent.
What stirs with you under the shadowed snow?
From Wimborough Hill in Hardington Mandeville
The bells perform their ancient ceremonies
Unhindered by the wind, passing the hunt

Of summer to drive despair out of the tower
Down a maze of changes, dodging, making places
As the ringer dancers bow to one another

[27 J

And great bronze wheels go rolling down the hill
Cantering across the winter country
To the bare orchards and the black apples
Left by a summer plethora, a wet
Luxuriance and no buyer, ripe and rotting
On the sodden ground. Now snow falls early
Thickening branches to a double colour
That the magpie matches as he flaps away
Clacking.

A rumour comes across six counties
From where you are; it tells of a cool July
And a calm coming, a child for you.

Can we def eat by desperate procreation
The slimy death that seeps from the loudspeaker,
The glossy death that comes off on the fingers
From magazines, this threat of newspapers
And magpie politicians calling war?
Can we find in a child the refutation
Of the knife of neutrons that divides the world?

Clacking journalists in a world of gin
Grin from the celluloid sky. Yet I can hear
A blackbird in the clarity of winter
Singing, and the soft voice of the nation
Kindly, friendly, behind the fences.

Are we importunate that we should wish
Children on this world winter, while the monster
Waits to be born in a clinic of instruments
Bristling from arsenals?

Old men grow hysterical

At the new patterns in the world, while we
 More simple knew this pattern all along
 Was possible, inevitable, that it was
 The love of man, the cooperative of song.

A star shone in the east, symbolic
 Child came in 3c long and painful labour
 In an icy stable to the groaning snowbound earth,
 And above the soundless stars
 Dancing to angels' bells and shepherds

[28]

As well as the wrinkled kings
 With riches in their hands.
 The gamblers carry marked cards in their pockets.
 What stirs with you under the shadowed snow?

Let us affirm our creed .. We believe
 In the power of the withered tree to put forth sh<;>ots,
 In the power of people fortified by dreams
 To cage the monster in his nightmare tower
 And send him mad with the wild clash of the bells.

What stirs with you under the shadowed snow
 Stirs here in Hardington, we greet you, west to east
 Across six counties. East to west across seas
 The living speak; but now it is for you
 I ring tonight from a hill in Hardington
 A touch, your Pebllarsh pleasure, pray that soon
 The bells of Pebmarsh celebrate your son.

We Are a Peaceful People

Don't tell the invaders there's a valley
 Of shapely fields well-tended, hedged and ditched,
 Fed with a pleasant water. Don't tell them
 Of the hayfields and the harvests, the fat bags
 Of the cattle. We are a peaceful people.

Don't tell the invaders with their bulldozers

Of the wealth that lies under the land, oil
 Under field, uranium in veins;
 We have seen pictures of deserts and dustbowls
 In other countries; we are a peaceful people.

Don't tell the invaders with their rocket planes
 Of the flat lands screened strategically by hills,
 We have seen an airstrip carve a village,
 Stone shells derelict, thatches fallen
 In other parts. We are a peaceful people.

Don't tell the invaders with their heavy eyes
 Cinema hearts and slot machine responses
 The dreams that touch us. We are a peaceful people,

[29 J

Whose dream is buried with the tinsel glory
 They have inherited, put on like tarnished armour.

We are a peaceful people with a long tradition,
 Not only of smuggling, piracy and the like
 But of a cannibal intransigence that eats
 Piecemeal invaders. Yet do not warn them
 Of such a fate. We prefer a tougher diet.

A Rose Called Peace

This winter world is bitter,
 And women hard to please,
 I gave my love at Christmas
 A new rose called Peace;

From a black root and a bare branch
 All golden flushed with red
 We watched it grow within our minds
 Till a great fragrance spread

Across the black, divided world
 And the bitter years were gone,
 All folk admired and voted it

The best rose ever grown.

Postscript to the Ancient Mariner

Crownsnest of stars, the masts carving the sky,
Ladders of angels up to heaven,
A wake that melts in milk, the nets of adventure
Thrown out to drag the pearl from the oyster world,
Our ship sailed centuries, never to rest
Until we came, near-wrecked, into this haven,
Deceptive harbourage! the land shakes
As, stripped of glittering pennants, we limp home,
Dragging behind Leviathan.

"It was the truth I told you," said the Ancient
Mariner wringing his hands,

"But the truth is either

A naked image or a fact
Wrapped in a symbol. Ours was a ship of blood
And the Albatross was an island.

"Those garlanded and dancing innocents!
Bloody we left them on the swelling shore;
Our captain a tight-lipped nineteenth century saint
Ordered the slaughter, made a fortune out of copra.

"Now in this harbour sullen and alone
We ride at anchor, holding our eyes
Burnt by the memory of incandescence
Brighter across the bay than all the suns.
The atoll vanished with our innocence.

"I would create again that island,
That sunny green, that laughter among the hills ...

"Impossible. I hear the hollow heroes
Knock in their stainless stakes. I hear a cry
Go crashing across the aluminium sky.
Shall twilight drop an eyelid on the proud
Island, and all our history be inked away

While in the east the rosy heroes rise
To realise the huge myths of the ages?"

It Really Happened

It happened in the end. The people lifted
The lid of their shopsoiled civilisation,
Smashing the celluloid and paper windows
Scribbled with shadows. Let the sun stream in.

The tyranny of trade was broken.
Trade became craft. The crafty cowered
Before the craftsmen. Skill began to flow
Quietly in fingers long inhibited.

It really happened. Men and women moved
At last in the rhythm they were made for,
Love, food and sunlight laughed together. The dance started
In the hall of the human heart. It has never ceased.

[31]

The Root

Meridel Le Sueur

RED O'HANRAHAN sat at Biddy Palmer's, taking himself a hot grog against the cold day of the January before the rising of 1798, and he was nervous as a shepherd rounding up all the powerful information he carried (being unable to read) in his head. Besides, he seemed to hear a powerful drumming in the earth; then he would find it was his own great battered heart.

Those who drank their grog saw him there in his last spring, saw the distortion, the reek and ruin, the ferocity of all oppression; history fumed and roiled in the great strength of his old belly and loins and rose into the sorrowful and fierce caverns of his heart and head. According to his own lights he had fought in every battle for freedom since the battle of the Boyne, and he looked it, as if centuries of abuse had bent his body so that the stone of history lay on his back, bent, clawed, weighed and niggled him to anger, remembering the nights and days of torture in the King's galleys, impressed as he was into the British navy at the age of twelve. The poison of vertigo and loss had accumulated as erosion on his huge face, lighted by the frightful green eyes terrible out of the eroded cliff, salt brined clawed cheeks, and the jut of the swollen veined nose. Now he could hardly bear the heat of revolt, the green fume of the rising upon them at last, no more waiting for the French or for Tom Emmet or Lord Whosit or anybody! Now it was in their hands, pike and gun, and it blew an awful wind through the twisted, bruised, calcimined coils of the old forge of his brain and heart.

His neck rippled like a cat's with the fear of a bullet in the back from an informer, or that he should fall into a fit, or his heart stop before it happened; and now the messages and information and proclamations he carried in his head. He and Biddy watched the door for any intruder, for their leaders were in the back room, and what wouldn't Sir Abercrombie or General Lake or Cornwallis give for them now? His leathery lips moved in the litany of the messages he had. Unable to read, he carried

The Rights of Man in his pocket, would open it and pretend to read, for he knew it by heart-then tell the com-

[32 J

mittee of Lake's proclamation at Belfast-that bastard who for seven years had killed American rebels, then gone to Holland to shoot the weavers, now commander of Ulster yeomanry, threatening the Irish to give up their arms, asking for informers, offering amnesty to all who would now surrender, following with an order handing over Ireland to the whims of mercenary soldiers, militia and yeomanry living on free quarters; and Thomas Judkins of Tipperary flogging anyone for information, and every Lord High Sheriff with his own court, judge and jury. But for all their bloody violence they'd only succeed in raising the biggest crop of sedition ever seen in Eire; we'll spring up from under their boots; for every one cropped or hanged a thousand stand for him and-O creeping Jasus, he thought, I've lived to see it, and nothin' will mow me down now, nothin'!

But he scarcely slept, only with his back to the wall, as he sat now, facing enemies; for now he gathered his whole life, of burdens, blows, insults; thousands of dead men rose gaunt in him and drove him through the countryside, signing up members to the Society of United Irishmen; bringing the names of all hidden guns to Tom Russell he fell exhausted and rose running in sleep, maps in his eyes and messages marked indelible in the bloodshot rheum. He appeared strangely in Ulster, Kildare, Connaught, almost simultaneously, for worried he was that some would rise alone, or there was not enough spark for rising and they would lag behind; or he had to convey the plan of the pincers which burned in his head like an infected gall-come down from the north, up from the south, the French will land here, the day will be this one. His love for Rob Emmet, for Lord Eddy, Wolfe Tone was like the love of a man for continents of the future, or the harvest to the root, as his hand opened the books that were dark to him, the three fingers of his mutilation feeling in the dark of the word.

Back against the wall, the grog creeping like sun beneath his rags, he watched the door for that spy, Silky Jock; Burly John now had to be watched, an old dandy in a green beetle coat, brash buttons, plush breeches the moths ate off him, and a wry askew red wig. There was old

Tone, Wolfe's father, a weaver, a thin anxious face, with a drip always hanging from the long white nose, and all the others whose bodies he could read like a book, sad strong stooped men of work come from the ravished lands and the forests creaking with hanging bodies, muffled now with the cold in their bundlings of winter rags, their down-drooping eager faces warmed in each other's brotherhood. He knew what furze and thicket, what hideout bog or marsh each came from with the gun sighted between their scrooched shoulders, between the eyes, over every horizon the cunning eye of the plantation huntsmen, with their own regiments in every bush and thicket and taking the roads bold as brass; and all the corpses in the nets of winter, and men coming a spate across the land, a freshet for rising. Ah, he knew every bucko of them, and how like himself they were, full of fright, terror, apology, smallness, yet green with necessitous courage.

[33. The Root J I'll live, he thought, pouring the hot grog down his gullet, I'll carry this old ship to the golden harbor, that I will; nothing can happen to me now, no spy, pike or the new-fangled gunpowder can rob me of the glory o' the rising and in his red bracken of beard he began to sing Dr. Drennan's new song With her back towards Britain, her face to the west, Eire stands... He fell into a little sleep, his mind going over the resolution passed by the Leinster Directory which he must repeat to Simon Bond: "We will pay no attention to any measure which the Parliament of this Kingdom may adopt to divert the public mind from the grand object we have in view, as nothing short of the entire and complete regeneration of our country can satisfy us.. '!' The door flew open to the too-loud singing of Muley the gunsmith and Merriman the poet, and it got Red O'Hanrahan standing bolt upright in a trice, his paws lifted, roaring louder than they for quiet. "Air you stretchin' yer necks fer the gallows, me lads?"

"Ah;" Merriman said, embracing O'Hanrahan, "when the gallows is high yer journey is shorter to heaven, and who would be caught in a cold grave without a snit o' grog now, and who taxes the Holy Ghost unlawful, and who outdoes Caesar, the stone of the age, with the power and the glory and nothing else a-man. But did you hear of the petition to the King from Kildare, six thousand names upon it?"

"Six thousand!" O'Hanrahan cried. "A drink on it!" Rosie Flood came in the door with her baby carriage, talking in a loud voice as a guard helped

her in with it, and they all watched, as they knew under the baby was always a batch of resolutions, petitions, orders and sometimes ammunition. When she got in and the guard shut the door they all chucked the baby, embraced Rosie, gave her a glass for the coldness of her journey. "Ah;" said the little Muley, "all hell comes up the stones o' Dublin on Saturday night, men become angels and beasts and fit for anything, and up the river bottom from the great rock of Steadfast Dick in the middle of the Liffey the spirits of old rebels do rise and burn in the brain, the skull starts an inferno of flames and men become lions, I tell you-lions.. ' ' "Ah;" said the poet Merriman, "you'll be jogged off yer feet, Muley, stretched like Larry, as Swift was a-tellin'."

"He died with his face to the city;" O'Hanrahan said. "Ah, they tipped him a Kilmainham look and pitched his big wig to the devil as he threw back his head to get a sweet drop of the bottle'." Merriman continued, "O, the hemp will soon round my throttle and choke my poor windpipe to death, where to moisten the throat no whiskey is found. Tough the nights are so long and so cold 'tis the ground. Arouse thee and hie thee to the moor, ten miles away there's bread for the poor'." And they all sang, leaning their heads together, O'Hanrahan with Rosie's baby nodding its tousled head and grasping at his beard, Hillalee-Hillalee.

"It's a sad thing for the British;" Merriman said, "when the noose has lost its bitter threat. Joking is seditious. They arrest a man for it as they do a man [34. The California Quarterly] who they think might be thinking about a crime he might some day or someone else might commit. Our island is the humus of dead men who have not feared the noose, our ancestors cry from our boot-soles. The Shannon and the Liffey, the Lee, the Boyne and the Blackwater is our blood flowing, run red to the sea. W~ will trump the king, and rise from the sorrow of our bowels and heart, and take back our lands, our hills, our fields, our gentle neighborhood, and all the plots where the English upstart staked his claim'." "It's a lovely man with the words ye are;" O'Hanrahan said, embracing him with an awful love, and in him all energy that rose, glistened, sparked in men when they had a chance to rise against their oppressors. All his life he had warmed at this sparked fire a thousand times and always blew on it in men, rejoicing like a patriarch noticing his children fattening, sparking in spirit and in growing. "Let me tell you what I saw in November, me friends. I was a delegate from Kerry,

representing the prison ships, at a meeting at the Bell Tavern in Exeter. The ships were in England, for the rising of the English when the French land. No great gentlemen there, you understand, every man over his porridge and pipes telling the hardness of the times, so brilliant of mind, solid of heart they were. There was Horne Tooke, friend of Wilkes, Tom Holcroft, and a brilliant bootmaker, a cobbler you understand, talking most elegant of Representative Government and all, and Putting an End to War, and talking there about the Power o' Mind, the human mind he meant, the likes of which I never heard, makin' ye proud to hold up yore head and be a man, speaking me lads as an Emmet might do here o' the Powers of Philosophy and Reason, how to disarm yore greatest enemy and oppose the Fury with Truth. I learned about Representative Parliament and how you can do it. I made a speech too, me buckos Truth and J oostice, I said, are darlings and we want them, but you got to have arms to back it up. Arms, I said. Every man the right to bear arms. Words with arms is me motto, I said.' There was a commotion in the corner, the dust rose, the ale glasses topped. Burly John was pulling a wig off a scoundrel that turned out to be Silky Jock, and by the nape of the neck they brought him to Red O'Hanrahan and Merriman and Muley and Rosie Flood who became his judges. "Lively as a redbellied bee in a June meadow;" Merriman said, slapping him. "An ass-dealer he is now, from hell to Ballyshannon, by the holies, for hire he is, a spot of sherry now and then with the gentlemen of the castle, drawin' the cork with a crooked awl; and a drop o' holy water with the Catholics, is it? and now maybe he's thinkin' those beggars will win and I'll put in with them a bit, put a little money on that side now.'" "Ah, it's a great drop fer our side, now;" O'Hanrahan said, picking up the sniveling little dandy by the scruff of the neck. "Every man jack is joinin' the United Irish, so Silky Jock, a thin weather-vane, so thin he wouldn't feed snipes, decides to honor us. Hev ye signed up yit now so you can send a copy to the castle?"

Muley screamed in a high voice, "Blister yer limbs, a vulture to pick our [35. The Root] brains he is! What do they pay ye per word? I wish I had a neckcloth to put on ye.'" And he lunged towards his neck, stopped by Rosie who tucked the little Muley in her full bosom. "Niver ye mind, me lad, let him go out into the cold. It's better that he stools, we got an eye on him, we know him better than his poor mother. If we win ye won't have to worry warmin' yer gob, me poor lad. It's a bitter thing to spy and

gab on yer own people. I knew yer father, and the only pay for a Judas is to hang himself, nobody hardly will do it fer him. Give him a mug, Biddy, and make him drink to the Gallic Constitution!.' They thrust a mug in his hand and hotted it with a poker. Merriman gave him a sound slap on the buttocks. "Drink to President Washington and the United States!" The hot grog slashed into his sharp frightened face. "Drink to the French Assembly!" Muley screamed. Rosie held the shaking mug. "To the landing of the French and the glory of Wolfe Tone!" They were all booting him now, pushing him towards the door, and he was ducking and rising like a drowning pike. "To the Gallic Constitution and a free Ireland!" Merriman turned him, lifted his glass and cried, "To our Sovereign Lord!" The grog splattered into his face; he threw the mug and was booted out the door as they all cried, "The People!"

They all emptied their own mugs heartily and banged for more. O'Hanrahan and Merriman went back to the table by the wall and the latter slipped into the overloaded messenger mind of O'Hanrahan the further news that he was to tell Sam Neilson in prison that fifteen hundred people turned out to dig his potatoes in seven minutes flat. Mr. Orr's harvest that was cut last fall before his hanging was now taken care of again for his widow, and the oats of Pettinger, in Kilmainham jail, were cut in thirty minutes and a half. Tell old Byrnes, rocking desolate in the prison ship off Belfast, that forty ricks of hay had been stacked and thatched. Pike practice was going on, meetings, resolutions by the score. Messages were brought south and north and north and south. Merriman and O'Hanrahan went in many disguises and on many errands, into jails and out, with a hundred women who knew them and carried and brought messages to them, also food and caches of arms, and all that was planted was to come to a harvest of their own.

The two men looked at each other fondly, exhausted, gaunt, driven by this fire that was handed to them by angry men and women. "Ah, I hope you have your horse Rosinante!.' It was an old joke between them. Merriman had read O'Hanrahan parts of Don Quixote, laughing like mad. "Good journey to you, Patsy Panza, and good luck!" "Getting up earlier than the castle is better than luck;" O'Hanrahan said. "I never had luck, but I rear me own lamb, me chickens and ham, and I shears me own sheep and I wears it... I'll make it me lad, we'll see it with our own eyes

now. We will.' And in a lower voice: "Has the date been set for the rising?"

"This day it will be set.' Merriman leaned close to the big blackened hairy ear.

[36. The California Quarterly J "We'll go now to the executive meeting, and they best listen to us.' "They'll listen;' Merriman said. "Michael Dwyer the mountain man will be there.' "They'll set a date now?" "They will that.' "A date for the rising so all will know?" "It will have to be a most mighty secret, and yet all will have to know. A riddle it is;' Merriman said.

O'Hanrahan shook his rags and his tangled, matted hair. "You can't have a risin' just in the minds of the gintlemen. Hear that. They may be the brains, though I doubt it, mind ye, but I'm the belly and the arm. It's my arm that must lift to carry the pike now.' Merriman thumped his back. "It's your arm and it's mine.' "It's your arm and me own, and the arm is one lifted over all Eire today. You have to furnish the word I'm short on. Paine here in me pocket and you in me heart.' "Ah;' Merriman said, "the pair of us!" They gripped each other's hands with the high lock of the United Irishmen clasp around the wrists where the rising blood comes nearest the surface.

[37. The Root]

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 38 / SCAN PAGE 40

The Fool's Song of Tomorrow

Ewart Milne

(Since the wise men have not spoken. Padraig Pearse)

I'll wrap up Tomorrow
In my tarpaulin jacket,
While the clocks and the wheels
And the seasons go round,
Who killed Tomorrow?
Tomorrow died yesterday.
Who killed Tomorrow
When the world would be free?
There'd be bluebirds all over,
We'd live pigs in the clover,
Oh the roses Tomorrow would redden the sea.

I'll wrap up Tomorrow
In a brown paper parcel,
In my jacket of green
Where no one will see,
I'll wrap up Tomorrow
In a brown paper parcel,
Oh the flowers of Tomorrow I'll pluck from the sea.

Who killed Tomorrow
But that little cock sparrow
Who yesterday flew to the top of the tree,
With his neat little note
From his neat little throat
He killed Tomorrow as sure as can be;
Oh the flowers of Tomorrow he drowned in the sea.

No, never no more
Shall we sing of Tomorrow,
Between Lame and Stranraer

Tomorrow went down;
It was coming to this land,
It would reach us in that land,
Oh deeper than oceans Tomorrow was drowned.

[38 J

And if anyone asks me
Say, where is Tomorrow?
I'll point to the sea where Tomorrow was drowned.

I'll wrap up Tomorrow
In a length of lawn linen,
I'll wrap up Tomorrow
In Mad Meg's petticoat,
And I'll steal it away
Where no one will find it;
Oh the flowers of Tomorrow shall come thieves in the night.

Who killed Tomorrow?
Tomorrow died yesterday.
You may seek the world over-
No Tomorrow you'll find;
But when his burning arrow
Will pierce that cock sparrow
Then the flowers of Tomorrow shall redden the ground.

Today is Tomorrow till his trumpet shall sound.

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 39 / SCAN PAGE 41

There Lived a Man

Ewart Milne

There lived a man in Dagenham
A man alone, Sean Eoin* by name,
And he was far from his native home
And from O'Leary's daughter.

At 8 o'clock he punched the clock
Of Consolidated Iron & Metalworks,
He washed his face and combed his hair
And stumbled down the lodging stair

At 8 o'clock and at 5 o'clock
He punched the clock and strode out
From the Iron Mill with blackened face,
This scion of an ancient race.

He counted as the year One
From the day he'd left his mountain home,

•Pronounced Shawn Owen.

And the cabin on the Blue Reeks rim
Where he'd loved O'Leary's daughter.

The year was Five and Five again,
The factory roar grew in his ear,
His ear a shell on Hell's smooth floor
Where demons sweated iron in blood.

Shall ever I see the Hills again,
The cabin on the Reeks blue rim,
The trilling lark on the pure air
And in my arms the world?

The rams again the fences leap,
The old rams with the young rams fight,

Beside my door they tup their sheep,
And in my bed Red Head asleep.

I walk by night the stranger's street-
A woman from the shadows spoke,
If I went with her and made my stroke
The mountain rams would see the joke!

There's never a day or a night comes in
But I dream of the sun on the Reeks gold rim,
And still the lark fades from the air
And from my arms the world.

There lived a man in Dagenham,
A man alone, Sean Eoin by name,
And he was far from his native home
And from O'Leary's daughter.

The sea divided yesterday,
The land itself divides today!
Sean Eoin! Sean Eoin! The echoes die
On echoes that on echoes lie.

Sean Eoin's his father and his son,
His cousin and his second cousin.
In Dagenham there lives a race:
From famine fled the famine face.

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 41 / SCAN PAGE 43

Predicament

Gordon Wharton

When we said go we meant walking,
And quickly did not mean to run;

But sometimes never means forever.
We cannot help what we have done
When remedies are little more than talking
And none of us very clever.

But there is nothing we can bring,
Hurt smiles nor our most solemn arts,
As ransom. This means an end of kissing,
An end of bluffing.

Had we said stay and meant staying,
And here, meaning what we said,

Things would be working neatly.
Absence is more than an empty bed,
And faith is more than praying

Rather discreetly.

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 41 / SCAN PAGE 43

Comrade Worm

Gordon Wharton

Indubitably this maggot's a fly fellow,
Only a narrow cousin to the worm
Who knows nothing about a phoenix birth,
Does not spread fancy wings and go,
Or multiply his kind upon our wounds-
But is a slow-worm, blind-worm, wire-worm,
Muck-worm, the meek inheritor of earth.

Both maggot and worm depend, deploy,
Upon the Leveller's strategies,
Discover themselves in seedy things,
Furnished rooms for working men.
Apple and planet house our friend,
To both he brings democracy,
Is bland familiar of kings.

[41 J

The cousin of this wriggling here
Feeds on the politic body
Intending its overthrow; not stern
But steadfast, deplores the insular.
Comrade Worm, servant of a not unforeign
power,
You humbly reside in all things, a parody,
And when you say turn, we shall all turn.
1

I

(°, I I L. ~ ¾ II

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 42 / SCAN PAGE 44

A Group of Noble Dames

Jack Beeching

I"
, ' I

II

11

1~ ,

~;,,1

~i

A Group of Noble Dames

With provoking haunches
And vibrating bust
Descend, O gorgeous aspirin girl
And dissipate our lust.

In your ritual bathing dress,
Laconic, not obscene,
i
Leap down from the posters,
Step down from the screen.

Image of nubility,
Sanctified erotic,
Recline against the barrack wall
In posture patriotic.

You're the public concubine
Who at night inhabits
The ruminative pillows

Of these trousered rabbits.

A true madonna cures
Those who burn a candle.

My but you'd look silly

i i

With a babe to dandle.

Subtly though you bid,
Divining our neurosis,
To cure our wind and pimples,
Thirst and halitosis.

[42 J

You are far too perfect,
Cinctured in that vesture,
For a fallible posture
Or immodest gesture.

You are far too rational
To forgive our sins
But will sell us bottled beer
And sexy magazines.

A real madonna smiles
Miraculous responses.
You are but the dead-pan girl
Of commerci~l ponces.

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 43 / SCAN PAGE 45

Photographs of the Atomic Nucleus

Jack Beeching

Richly cascading, our paternal sun
Spouts incandescence big as fifty worlds;
And kindred brilliant jets of energy
Pour scalding hot from each white winking star.
Our earth has her volcanoes, and each small
Hearth-captured fire-coal spits in coloured tongues
Hot to soft hands. So a cold common thing
Blue ice, is full of vast and gaping space
Where knots of power loop and undulate.
Even your nightmare-small, most tiny dot
Has for its heart whole ceremonious worlds,
Flaming and bursting, frenzied with delight
And keeping step in the perpetual dance
Of suns that flare and man's own burning mind.

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 44 / SCAN PAGE 46

Dead Reckoning Day

Jack Beeching

A Sermon

Now shall this iron disinter
The beneficiary's dry bone
Who lived alone and lies alone;
For he had an iron heart,
Gain and save, gain and save,
Breeding coin was all his art
And he's tranquil in the grave.

By the spire the cannon stammer
Like a nervous murderer.
Their iron tracks have driven hard
Over our English burial yard
Where in white rank the carvings stand,
Stones upon a stony land.

This is our dead reckoni~g day
When battle honours rot away.
All increment becomes a debt,
Nothing to feed on, plenty to forget.

There is no tranquillity
In a true society
But leaping seas of argument
Drop their legible imprint
Graphic on the tidal sand;
And the blood of brotherhood
Flows in a stream from hand to unknown hand
So men raise triumphs as sap lifts up trees.

Fear builds a brazen victory
Upon our present loneliness
Yet on a day in history

Men rose from trenches where the dead had stood
To breed in mutiny their brotherhood.
So lovers fight to death to make a child
Or acorns thrust at earth to make a tree
And masons fight with rock to build a tower.
Draw on your day of liberty run wild-

[44 J

For when that brotherhood becomes the nation
All rivers shall run gold with new creation.

Nor shall a man go white from dreams of hell
When England our green home is ordered well
Though now we conjure hell in other lands.
An iron sergeant is the torturer;
All stock and scrip are bright from his wet hands.
How when she gives such lucrative
Power to the demented
Can England win the love
Of those she has tormented?

How when she lives by murder, loves by murder,
Loves murder, lives by orders, loves an order,
Builds order up on murder, murders order,
Loves order, orders murder, lives by murder?

The common mother we are bound to love
Lifts up her scarlet hands in accusation.
Only the dead can bear this blame no longer.
O mother-murderer, source of every river,
Put rock on rock to give your sons a tower,
Sow wheat like crosses on the holy acre
And take in yours our mercenary hands.

CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY / VOLUME 4, NUMBER 1 / 1956
JOURNAL PAGE 45 / SCAN PAGE 47

Slum

Cressida Lindsay

Wearisome is the walking home
when the day lies as limp
as a letter too well read
whose words without lips
thread all memory with beads of silence.

Now the station
turn dead right.
Dead
as the white of enamel paint
right, dead right.

[45]

They do not see
that the sky is violet tonight.
I want to shout.
I want to bring
the house tops
the hard iron rail,
the vampire of speed,
the crash helmet
the hell of slum
all
down to my feet,
as I stretch my toes
in the waste newspaper
prices in print,
war news
news of war,
as I crack my ankles
under the poster
manacled to the wall.

I see the dust
the wind carries a desert of soot
in a black tidal wave and
I am a sail
a white shirt in a cloud.

The children have lit a fire on the bombsite
they dance in the crumbling brick.
Children nursed in the lull of peace
are playing at war, on havoc of war.
The children have lit a fire
tonight they are flames in shadows of homes
tonight they are afire.

[46 J

A Long Day in a Short Life

Albert Maltz

The following excerpts are from a new novel by Albert Maltz, entitled *A Long Day in a Short Life*, dealing with a single day in, a prison in Washington, D. C. The day is a crucial one for several of the main characters temporarily quartered there pending the final disposition of their cases.

1. The Wisdom of the Street and the Field AT one-fifteen of this October afternoon, the recreation tier was a hot box. While some of the more energetic men slowly walked the floor for exercise, and a few played cards, most men merely sat and smoked.

All talked, however. The recreation period not only meant release from cell confinement, but from cell-mate as well. Here, where the white inmates of both tier one and tier three could mingle freely, a man found the opportunity to tell his private tale to a new face, or to suck nourishment from a group. Men reflected upon one another's experiences, argued matters of jurisprudence, exchanged stories that were true, exaggerated or false. In a familiar jail-house roundelay, with passion or wistfulness, ignorance or cynicism, they spoke the wisdom of the street and the field as they had come to know it.

Sometimes, when a man needed to unburden himself to a friend he could trust, the talk was hushed and private. Thus, Eddie Quinn to his old pal and drinking companion, Browney Carrera, who had been hauled in on a minor charge: "I'm on the skids, Browney; I've lost control of the wheel." CARRERA: "Forget it, pal. You're only temporary down in the dumps." QUINN: "No, I'm not. I've woke up to myself, Browney. A three-year sentence is a big jolt." CARRERA: "It's a rough one, all right." QUINN: "You and me are different, see? How many times you been locked up altogether-two?"

CARRERA: "This is the third." QUINN: "That's what I mean. Once in a long while you pull a disorderly [47] conduct. It don't count. You got control of your boozin, you don't go pickin up things in department stores when you're drunk like I do. I didn't useta be this way, Browney,

but that's how I am now-what's the use of lyin to myself? I just gotta get a cure.' CARRERA: "But listen, Eddie-what'll you do if the Classification Board don't transfer you to Danbury like you're gonna ask them?"

Qu1NN: "I'm countin they will! They got everythin to gain by it-wonderful publicity for the Federal Prison System. What the hell, they're supposed to reuhbilitate us, ain't they?"

In this manner two old friends might talk, sitting close together, speaking in whispers. More often, however, there would be nothing private about a conversation, and it would be much closer to philosophic discourse:

Talking Work:

CABEL DuFF: "I started workin in the soft coal mines of Ohio when I was twelve. I loved coal minin. Woulda been there yet, only I got the miner's asthma, had to quit when I turned forty." OTHA DOTY: "You make me laugh. I quit minin the day my buddy got kilt by a slate fall, an brother, I ain't nevah goin back to it. What the hell-there's no percentage in the average man workin at an honest job. You work your guts out for forty years an end up in the poorhouse.'" DuFF: "I'd rather end up in a poorhouse than here.'" GEORGE NEWBERRY: "You can say that again! I've never been in jail before, and I never will again.'" DoTY: "What you guys in for?" NEWBERRY [with a sheepish grin]: "I'm a house painter. I got laid off, so I started collectin my unemployment insurance. Then I got a chance for two weeks' work for a neighbor, he was remodelin his house, but I kept collectin my insurance. I don't know how the devil they caught up with me. Some stoolpigeon on my street, I guess.'" DuFF [with a loud guffaw]: "Shake hands, buddy, I'm in for the same, exact, damn thing. I'm a plasterer.'" NEWBERRY: "You don't say! Ain't that one hell of a law? It's our insurance, we paid it in, but they give me three months' jail time for collectin it.'" DoTY: "That's what I've been sayin, ain't I? It don't pay for the average man to work honest. You don't see any bankers in here, do you? You think they don't steal plenty?"

Talking Tattoos:

PAUL CostELLO: "I seen a woman in Hawaii, every damn inch of her had a tattoo on.'" JAY SPENCER: "I know a hop-head has a snake curled clear around his back an belly.'" [48. The California Quarterly]

HERBERT FIFE: "Maybe you won't believe it, but I seen a feller in Leavenworth had a bull-dog tattooed on the head of his pecker.'" Waxing enthusiastic, the men roll up their sleeves, unbutton their shirts, and display their tattoos.

Talking Freedom:

HAL LOVELACE [ten years for felonious assault with intent to commit robbery]: "Johnny, what you gonna eat your first night out?"

LAUTER: "Any damn thing my wife cooks for me. Whatever it is, it'll be wonderful." LOVELACE: "I got my first meal all planned, but it ain't what you'd think, no steak or anythin like that. It's gonna be oysters an orange juice, all I can hold, nothin else.'" ALBERT DoDSON [fifteen years for counterfeiting]: "Ain't it a funny thing how a man can have years of stir time ahead of him, but keep dreamin of his first meal out? The human mind is a funny thing.'" LOVELACE: "I'll say. What makes a man go on the illegit anyway? We know we're gonna get caught sooner or later.'" DODSON: "I didn't. I thought I had it figured out so they'd never catch up with me. Cleared six thousand in three weeks, boy I was sittin pretty.'" LAUTER [with a gay laugh]: "Money! Like I've always said-the trouble with most convicts is they were born poor'."

Talking Farm as they walk a concrete floor:

CAROLINA BELL: "I kin see you don't know mules.'" LORENZO WITT: "I know em good enough never to have one.'" BELL: "A mule's so much smarter than a horse, there's no comparison.'" WITT: "Could be.'" BELL: "A mule can work harder, takes less to feed.'" WITT: "I won't argue it.'" BELL: "A mule won't drink too much water when he's hot, 'a horse will. A mule will never eat more than is good for him, a horse will.'" WITT: "Won't argue that, neither.'" BILL: "If a mule steps into barbed wire, he'll just lift his foot up an out, do it clean. But a horse will pull an pull an cut hisself to pieces.'" WITT: "Yep, I seen it myself.'" BELL: "Then what in hell are you arguin favor of horses for?" WITT: "What else will a mule do? A damn mule will wait for a year for the one time you ain't lookin, then he'll kick out an kill you. Give me horses'."

Talking Economics:

ToM McPEAK [trying to forget his troubles]: "You ever realize there cain't be rich people without a lot more who's poor?"

[49. A Long Day in a Short Life J GEORGE TRISLER [a former employee of the U.S. Treasury]: "How do you figure that? Everybody's got the same chance to get rich:' McPEAK: "No they ain't. Suppose a man own a hat factory. How does he make his profit?"

TRISLER: "From what he sells.'" McPEAK: "Right. But if'n it costs him two dollars t'make a hat, he has t'sell it for two-fifty or three, don't he?"

TRISLER: "Sure. He makes his profit from the consumer.'" McPEAK: "Right. But who's the consumer? Mostly just workin people, ain't they?'"

TRISLER: "Sure.'" McPEAK: "Who pays em?" TRISLER: "The people they work for.'" McPEAK: "Like the owner of that hat factory, right?" TRISLER: "So what?" McPEAK: "So that owner paid his workers less for makin hats than he got for sellin em, didn't he? An every other factory owner does the same, don't they?"

TRISLER: "Sure. That's how they make their profit.'" McPEAK [in triumph]: "You just proved my case. For there to be rich people, everybody else has to get much less. That's how come there's so many poor. If you don't have poor, you couldn't have profits.'" TRISLER: "That's crazy. It's all screwed up.'" McPEAK: "Where's it screwed up?" TRISLER: "I don't know, but it's got to be.'"

Talking Politics:

EARL HOLCOMB: "I look for a new war in two years.'" LARRY TRENT: "What the hell you talkin about, Pop? We just finished a war, I just got out of the army.'" HOLCOMB: "You heard Churchill a couple months ago, didn't you? We gotta lick Russia.'" TRENT: "Maybe he's gotta lick em, but not me. Boy, if that one comes, I'm takin to the hills. I was in Germany, I seen their tanks, they're murder.'" HOLCOMB: "We got the atom bomb an they ain't. We'll lick em in two weeks.'" TRENT: "You lick em, Pop. I'll be watchin from the hills.'" So the men talked, casually, or with relish, or with essential boredom. Yet, when they were deeply serious, their conversation always ran to jails and penitentiaries, to police and judges, to trial and sentence. In this area strangers found sudden kinship, and all felt in common a keen, artificial brotherhood founded on steel bars and confinement.

[50. The California Quarterly J JOHNNY LAUTER: "Justice? There sure ain't no equal justice. For housebreaking in this city a man gets ten years. In North Carolina he gets the gas chamber. Is that justice?"

HAL LOVELACE [with genial envy]: "What are you beefin about, Johnny? You're on your way out!'" LAUTER: "So I'm one guy got a square deal. How many times does it go the other way?"

OTHA DoTY: "So help me God, fellers, there was a colored boy in Nashville workhouse with me who stole a carton of cigarettes an the Judge gave him forty years. Drop me dead if it's a lie!'" LAUTER: "A sentence like that don't surprise me. There's many a judge has a finance share in a road gang!'" LARRY McCORMICK: "Where's the justice in one man makin bail, the other man can't make it? It's a cold cash justice; if you got the money, you buy out!'" ERNIE NICHOLS: "How about that, hey? It took em three months to put me on trial for a charge that got me a three-month sentence. So now I'll serve six, the first three is only dead time. Christ, they tell you the court calendar is crowded, or your judge is on vacation-but meanwhile you're in jail, ain't you?"

LAUTER [with sudden passion]: "You're talkin. I been four months here on twenty thousand bail I couldn't meet. Now they say it was all a mistake!'" LARRY TRENT: "If anybody here really wants to know about justice, take a look at me. Five months ago I come out of the army. I rent up for a month, then I start lookin for work. I hear there's a lot of buildin on in D.C., so I head this way, I'm an iron worker. First night here I pass a gas station an hear shots. I hit the sidewalk an see three guys run out. They jump into a car, but I get the license number an a good look at em. I go down the street an call the cops. It turns out later those guys are members of a big gang, they call em the 'False Nose Gang'. The cops arrest em, but those guys got a big lawyer an plenty of bail money. They're out on bail in one day. But the cops tell me they need me as a material witness, they wanna get this gang, they don't want me skippin town or gettin shot. So I get ten thousand bail slapped on me, an I been two months in here waitin for somebody else's trial!'" HAL LOVELACE [with venom]: "Serves you right, you sucker, why didn't you keep your damn nose out of it? Anybody helps a cop deserves what he So they talked, whiling away the Recreation Hour, killing a little part of the long day.

Tom McPeak, wandering from group to group, listened, talked when the opportunity offered, and worried. Without his being aware of it, he was coming to a decision. The hours he had spent behind bars, and now these conversations on the Recreation tier, were slowly but inexorably

turning him [51. A Long Day in a Short Life] away from Huey Wilson. He just didn't want to risk imprisonment, that was the whole of it. The sheer possibility of its coming to pass was making him shrivel inside. He had his conscience, and his sense of solidarity, and his sense of shame, but they were withering away in this cage of steel and wire and stone. His thoughts now were running in one direction only—that he had done enough. It had not been his fight in the first place. It was not as though it were a union struggle, where he'd stick to the end no matter what happened. This was a matter of race prejudice, it was as old as the United States itself, it wouldn't be solved in a day. There was no call for Tom McPeak to go to jail over it.

Yet, even while thinking this way, McPeak still was worried and unhappy over Huey Wilson. Somehow everything had been made worse for him by the dinner fight, and by the fact that Huey was due for punishment. He had tried to put it out of his mind by talking to other men, but he wasn't being very successful. Wandering the tier, he listened for a few moments to the hot talk about justice, and then took an opportunity to ask Johnny Lauter a question.

"Say, feller, what're they gonna do with those two guys who had the fight at dinner?"

"Shove em in the Hole.'" "What's that?" Lauter explained what the Hole was and McPeak, frowning, exclaimed, "That sounds rough.'" "Ain't no picnic;" Lauter agreed. "Rough, hell;" snorted Otha Doty. "Maybe none of you knows what rough is. I'd ruther pull one week in a Federal Hole than one day on that damn Nashville chain gang. No man who ain't put in chain gang time knows what rough is.'" "Amen!" said Lauter quietly. "I've done both.'" "Chain gang?" McPeak asked naively. "They useta have em in Georgia when I was a boy, but I thought they was all done away with.'" "What?" Doty asked. "What?" There occurred then one of those explosive changes only possible among men like these. Whereas jail-house conversation usually was conducted with an even temper, Doty suddenly began to speak with incredible intensity, and with his drawn, iron-hard body quivering with fury.

"Where you been livin recently, on Mars, buddy?" Violently he pulled up one trouser leg and pressed his sock down against his left shoe. There was a wide stripe of discolored skin around his ankle bone. "You think I was horned like this? That's from leg-irons, I wored em nineteen months.

They put em on with rivets the first day, and they never came off till the last day of my State sentence, three weeks ago. I worked with em, ate with em, slept with em-with a three-foot step chain between both legs.' 'Holy Jesus;' McPeak exclaimed, "that's in Nashville?"

[52. The California Quarterly J "The city workhouse!" Doty replied with fury. "You live in a barracks next to the jail. They feed you beans mornin an night, seven days a week. They sleep you in rows an tie every last man to a bull chain all night long. They put a stinkin slop bucket by your bed-if you wanta use it you gotta get permission. All day Sunday you sit on a box by the side of that slop bucket -you ain't allowed to lie on your cot or play cards or do nothin. The other six days of the week you work!"

"An man, he means work!" Johnny Lauter put in fiercely, spitting the words. Lauter's mouth was tight, there was a blaze in his eyes, and he no longer was the man who had gone straight, or whose family was waiting for him to come home in the next few hours. Right now he was Lauter, the timeserver, with his memories and his wounds.

"I'll say work!" Doty cried. "They trucked us to a rock quarry outside the city every daylight, didn't take us back till dark. Twelve hours we worked in summer, ten hours in winter!"

"Swingin a sixteen-pound hammer;" Lauter said in a voice thin with pain. "Go git it! the guard says to you. 'I wanna see that number on your back an that number on your ass, an I don't wanna see your friggin face all day "It's non-human the way they make you work, it's just non-human!" Doty cried, his body quivering from the magnitude of his indignation. He was a man of thirty, dark-haired and dark-eyed, his features good but ferociously gaunt, the weathered skin taut over the bones of his face. "I went into that workhouse weighin a hunnerd an eighty-nine-when the doctor weighed me here I was a hunnerd an twenty-four. I seen two men drop dead in that quarry.

I seen men faint in the sun, they throw water on em, tell em t' go git it or they'll string em up. There ain't one of you who'd treat a dog the way we was treated!"

When Doty first had commenced this recital, there were only five others around him. By now, however, there was a gathering of half the men on the tier. Most merely listened; some, however, who had suffered similar imprisonment, began to speak out in a bitter chorale. Of a sudden

these men were like the actors, chorus and audience of a classic Greek play, all of them united by a common passion, all pondering the grim tragedy of fate and retribution.

"You know what I think of when I wake up every morning?" Doty asked the assemblage. "I think to myself, 'There's some poor guy doin his first day on the Nashville gang-God help him, God pity him, if there's a God in Heaven let Him look down!'" In the mouth of another man this sentiment would have sounded maudlin, but Doty's sincerity was unmistakable. "My first day in the quarry a guard says to me, 'Hey, boy, you ain't usin that shovel right'. Man, after three hours I was tired, I'd been livin soft for two years, I just had to slow that shovel now and then. 'You do it like this;' the guard tells me. He starts shovelin gravel on that truck so fast only a damn machine could keep it up twelve hours. So I go back to work. I do as fast as I can till I'm [53. A Long Day in a Short Life] ready to drop. I got blood blisters on both hands the size of blueberries. An hour later he comes up to me again. 'Reckon I gotta show you oncet more;' he says to me, real soft like. He takes the shovel out of my hands and then whams me across the face with it-knocks me cold. That's how they break a man in on that chain gang. Look here, you can see the scar!' A deep bass voice in the assemblage cried out: "Brother, he's talkin true! I did ninety days on a Georgia gang. I seen things go on in that swamp that God Himself would turn His face from!'" Another voice said: "But there's some that's better. I did road time in Virginia. You lived rotten an ate rotten, but they didn't chain you or beat you up!'" "Sure;" cried Johnny Lauter, "there's all different kinds of camps even in the same State. But we're talkin the rough ones, an we know what we're talkin about!'" "Brother, we sure do;" the bass voice said again. "Hittin men with their pistol butts, with their shotgun butts, with them lead-loaded hickory sticks they carry. All t'make you work faster 'n any human bein can work, with the Superintendent gettin a money cut of the business. God help all them poor J oes down there right now!'" "An suppose you're sick, you can't work?" cried Doty. "In Nashville they take you back to the barracks, chain you to a post, an make you stand in one spot for twelve hours. You ever try standin in one spot that long?"

"Is that all they did to you in Nashville?" Lauter asked fiercely. "I pulled nineteen months on a chain gang in North Carolina. You talk back to a guard in that camp, or break a tool, or do any damn thing you're not

supposed to includin bein sick-and they let you have it. I've seen them shave a man's head, strip him naked, an cover him with molasses. Then they strung him up by his arms from a tree limb for the flies to go at him, kept him there seventy-two hours. I seen em spread-eagle men on the ground an whip em with a bull whip till they was almost dead. I seen a colored fell ow whipped so hard on the first crack that his skin broke an the blood spurted up high as my shoulder. I heard men scream till I.. '!' Suddenly Lauter was silent, and then the other men became silent. Mr. Jonas, a youngish, good-looking officer, was standing on the outside of the group, holding a bundle of letters. He had been listening for several moments without being noticed. Now, as all faces turned toward him, he said quietly, with a humorous note in his voice, "You heard the man! Guess it's lucky you're all in Federal-me too. Now we'll have mail call." "What's so good about Federal?" a voice asked somewhere in the crowd, and there was laughter.

"Roy Keedy;" Mr. Jonas said, paying no attention to the remark, "Paul Moses... Earl Holcomb.. '!' Quietly the men waited for their names. The passion play had ended. Yet it was not forgotten, and it would be played out again. Tomorrow it might be the crude horrors of county jails, and the next week it might be the Pitts- [54. The California Quarterly] burgh workhouse. Always there would be men here with ulcerated hearts who would cry out, "I seen things in that place that God Himself would turn His face from!" Tom McPeak, standing alone, was churning inside with only one emotionhe wanted to be out. He no longer was afraid of the visit of Detective Stoner; now he wanted it to come.

In the middle of the recreation period conversation ceased as the loudspeaker in the West Wing suddenly shouted an order:

"Now hear this, now hear this The following two men report to their tier Officers Huey Wilson-64464.... Huey Wtlson-64464.... Arthur Ballou-Arthur Ballou-64462.... These two men are wanted in the Rotunda immediately!"

In the moment of after-hush on the Recreation tier Eddie Quinn sang out, "There they go-elevator stops at the Hole!" Another voice, from the card-playing group that was seated on the floor, called out with feeling, "I hope that sassy nigger gets a month!"

"How come? Wilson didn't start the fight, he don't deserve no punishment at all!" This was McPeak, speaking with equal feeling. He had been watching the poker game for some minutes past.

"What the hell you talkin about?" the other asked with surprise and rancor. He was from the third tier, a man in his late twenties by the name of Foley. "Ain't you got eyes in your head? Didn't you see what happened?" He stared at McPeak with the air of one examining an idiot.

"Sure I saw it. I heard what Ballou said that started it, too:" "Like what?" "He called that colored feller all sorts of names, didn't he?" "Didn't call him nothin but what he is. A coon's a coon, ain't he?" McPeak hesitated. He knew already that this discussion would be fruitless. Nevertheless, he was involved and he was irritated, and his need to defend Huey Wilson at this point was somehow made more urgent by his private decision to quit the case. He said slowly, with acid in his voice, "I never could tell the kind of man somebody is by the color of his skin. There's lots of white folks I wouldn't have in my house!" "An lots of niggers you would, eh?" one of the other players put in slyly. "Could be! I take a man like I find him;" McPeak retorted. "I'll be God-damned!" Foley exploded. "So what would you do if a nigger threw a mess of beets in your face-say thank you an kiss his ass?"

"Maybe he would;" the sly voice put in. "Maybe he's that kind of a guy:" There was a ripple of laughter from the card-players and from several of the other spectators.

McPeak spat the match he was chewing to the floor. "Very funny;" he snapped with contempt.

[55. A Long Day in a Short Life J Foley raised his voice, and there was an aggressive, belligerent note in it. "You ain't answered my question. What would you do?"

Foley's voice was loud, and a quality in it sent a message along the tier. Conversations were interrupted and men began to gravitate toward the poker players.

Again McPeak hesitated, reason and anger in conflict. If there had been any way to break off the conversation without appearing to back down, he would have done so. He knew that it was stupid to talk to men like this. Theirs was a type of ingrown, anti-Negro prejudice that life itself could sometimes change, as it had with him, but a single

conversation never could. Nevertheless, others were around now, a question had been put to him, and he couldn't leave it unanswered.

"Looky here;" he said, "this fightin between Wilson and Ballou didn't start in here. Saddy night Ballou and three other white fellers jumped Wilson on a street corner and like to kill him. You wanna know what kind of a low-down snake this Ballou is, I'll tell you. He had a knife out ready to blind that Wilson boy when..!" "That ain't how I heard it!" Foley interrupted. "I'm in the cell next door to Ballou an I heard it straight.'" "Whatever you heard from Ballou was straight God-damn lies;" McPeak told him loudly. "I was on that street corner an I saw it:" "Well! So now we're gettin the lay of the land;" Foley answered sarcastically. "You an that nigger boy are pals, no wonder you're stickin up for him:" "Pals ain't the word for it;" the sly voice put in. "I told you before-the old boy likes black meat:" "You shut your dirty mouth!" McPeak exploded in a rage. "I don't take that from no one!" "You'll take 1t from me;" Foley said with a sudden bull roar. He jumped to his feet. He was over six feet, a man of enormous girth, barrel-bodied, weighing close to two hundred and fifty pounds. "You'll take anythin I give you and like it.'" He was only two yards away from McPeak and he stepped closer, his bull head thrust forward, his face swollen and red.

"Ain't no screw around;" the sly voice called encouragingly. "Let him have it, Joe.'" "Break it up, for Chrissakes:" Johnny Lauter cried suddenly. "You guys wanna fight so bad you willin to get extra sentence time?"

"Mind your own business, buddy;" someone else called. "Ain't no screw up here, let em fight. Go ahead, Foley, smear the bastard.'" Foley made no move. For a good many reasons, most of them having nothing to do with McPeak, he was aching to hammer somebody with his fists. Since it couldn't be the Parole Officer, who had just sent him back to prison for violation of his Conditional Release, McPeak was a fine substitute. Nevertheless, Foley had been in prison before, and he knew how to operate in a situation like this. Either there had to be no witnesses at all to a fight-or else, [56. The California Quarterly] in a crowd like this, you needed to be smart and make the other man strike the first blow. Choosing his words with care in order to achieve this end, Foley said loudly, "There's only one thing lower than a nigger, an that's a niggerlover like you who calls himself a white man.'" In the next instant Otha Doty was standing between Foley and McPeak. He was as tall as

Foley, considerably less heavy, but a formidable adversary. He cried out with intense passion, "I come from West Virginia an I had a damn good friend who was colored. I worked five years in the mines right next to that feller. I cried like a baby when he died. You wanna fight about it, don't pick somebody twenny years older'n you are. Try me on for size, you son-of-a-bitch!." "Screw comin up the stairs!" Eddie Quinn sang out. "Break it up fast!" 2. Up for Discipline Lieutenant Snider, a man with many years in the prison service, was thoroughly cynical about the inmates who came before him for punishment. Merely by a first glance at Art Ballou, for instance, he was sure that he knew the anatomy of the hardboiled punk with whom he was dealing. Ballou was due for punishment, and the Lieutenant intended to administer it, yet he was ready to assert in advance that it wouldn't teach him anything at all.

The Lieutenant was not particularly thoughtful about matters of penology, yet one problem always baffled him the fact that punishment had so little effect upon most criminals. When he first had entered the prison system, the treatment of inmates had been much harsher than it was now. Guards had carried clubs; discipline had been tighter and the food worse; there had been less recreation. The reforms of 1930 had come along and, while they had made life easier for both inmates and guards, so far as the Lieutenant could see they had achieved nothing else. The incidence of crime, and the percentage of men who returned to prison, continued as high. It was a slicker method of administration, but that was all. Punishment was still at the heart of it, even though Authority wore a glove on its hand-and punishment still did no good. Year after year men were released from abominable State prisons to turn up later in Federal-or from the less harsh Federal prisons to end up on a chain gang. Clearly the nation's penal system did not meet the problem of crime, but what the solution might be the Lieutenant did not know. Nor did he care very much. He was fifty-three years old and what he cared about was the pension that would be coming to him a few years hence. Therefore his rule on the job was to make no mistakes, to follow regulations, and to be unconcerned about their effect. In truth, fruitless as these regulations were, the Lieutenant knew no way in which they could be improved.

"Ballou:" he said, "Mr. Fuhr has given me a report of what happened at dinner. Fighting's against regulations. You got anything to say for yourself?"

Ballou, who was standing in front of the Lieutenant's desk with Officer [57. A Long Day in a Short Life J Fuhr by his side, kept silent for a moment while his gaze shifted from Lieutenant to guard and back again. He was afraid of going to the Hole, although he would not have acknowledged it to anyone, and he was eager to minimize his punishment if he could.

"Lieutenant, sir;" he began very politely, following the advice given him by his cell-mate, "I certainly do got somethin to say for myself, yes sir. This nigger I had the fight with-he was arrested for fightin with me Saturday night. You happen to know that, sir?"

"No, but what's it got to do with your breaking regulations?" "Well, I'm only here on suspicion of disorderly conduct, that's all. But that nigger has three charges on him! One of em is felonious assault with deadly weapons.'" "Look here:" said the Lieutenant, "I'm not a judge and I'm not trying your case. My business has to do with what happened today at dinner, that's all:" "But they're connected;" Ballou explained in an aggrieved tone. "That's what I'm tryin to tell you, sir:" "How are they connected?" Eagerly Ballou launched into a recital of the manner in which Wilson, and the other messmen, had overloaded his breakfast platter, and had deliberately passed him up on seconds at dinner-all of this in order to make him break discipline. He admitted that finally they had succeeded. He was sorry about that, but he was only human. What was a man to do, he asked, when a nigger threw a mess of beets in his face?

"Hm, yes:" the Lieutenant said. "But you would've been a lot smarter if you'd just sat in your seat. I'm not excusing Wilson-he's up for discipline too-but you can't claim self-defense or physical danger. The rule says no fighting and you broke it. I've got no basis to let you off without punishment.'" "Jesus Christ:" Ballou burst out, losing his control in the instant, "all I can see is that you're takin the side of that nigger:" Lieutenant Snider flushed. He was a plump, florid man, with close-cropped white hair, and his forehead turned beet red against the white hair line. He had been feeling already that there was something fishy about the obsequious politeness of this youth. These tough punks

had all sorts of ways of behaving when they were up for discipline. 'I'm giving you two days in the Hole for fighting;' he announced in an even tone, 'and one day more for disrespect to an Officer.' Shaking with indignation, Ballou cried out, 'If you think that'll teach me to kiss nigger ass, you're mistaken.' 'We'll make it four days;' the Lieutenant snapped. 'I advise you to button up your lips before you get more time.' Ballou's eyes blazed, but he kept still. 'All right, Mr. Fuhr;' the Lieutenant said, 'take him down.' He watched them leave. The moment the door to his office shut and he was alone, his anger vanished. It was impossible for him to deal with a snotty cur like Ballou [58. The California Quarterly J without becoming angry-yet Ballou already had merged with all of the other Ballous, and anger was pointless. He began to write up the necessary report.

Down two flights of iron staircase from the Rotunda there was a basement corridor where a guard was sitting by a steel-barred door, his hands clasped over his heavy paunch, his eyes closed. At the sound of footsteps he stood up immediately, thoroughly awake, his jaws beginning to grind on a cud of tobacco. He was a man close to sixty-five who looked like a caricature of a brutal prison guard-very tall, very heavy, with sagging jowls and a seamed, hound-dog face, with small eyes and a loose mouth. In point of fact he was an agreeable man with an inward fund of compassion for all inmates. He was so old in prison service, having begun as a youth in various State prisons, that sometimes he felt like an inmate himself. His name was Croy, and off-duty the other Officers called him 'Pop.' Mr. Fuhr extended a slip of paper that bore Ballou's name and number. He commented dispassionately, 'A customer, Mr. Croy. Four days.' With a rattle of keys Mr. Croy opened the door. He said, 'In here, Mister.' Ballou entered the corridor with a swagger and Mr. Croy followed, locking the door behind them. Mr. Fuhr remained waiting outside.

Mr. Croy's job was a dull one and, as a man, he loved conversation. For this reason he instantly began a monologue designed to edify Ballou and to relieve the monotony of his eight-hour job. 'Now let's see, Mister, here we have seven cells, all of em the same, only one in use, so I guess we'll give you number seven, that's a lucky number.' Mr. Croy's voice was very deep, with a slight wheeze to it, and he sighed and rumbled his words in a low monotone. 'Now you get fed three times a day down here,

just the same as always. Course you only get two pieces of bread for each meal, but a strong young feller like you can get along fine on that.' Mr. Croy unlocked the door to number seven, which was of solid steel with a sliding panel slot at eye level. The light from the corridor illumined a cell of less than normal size that was bare of equipment except for a wash basin and toilet in one corner. Mr. Croy nodded his head and Ballou strode inside.

"Got any cigarettes on you, Mister? I want em if you have.'" Ballou gave him a crumpled pack containing only a few cigarettes. "How about matches?" Ballou grinned in surly fashion and produced a box of matches. "Turn your pockets inside out-just to make sure.'" As Ballou obeyed, Mr. Croy said amiably, his bass voice rumbling, "We bring a mattress in here every night for you to sleep on. Once a day a doctor comes to look you over. Most men come out fine-nothing for you to worry about. Now you ain't got any more smokes on you, have you?"

"You can see my pockets, can'tcha?" "Sure. Now strip!" "What for?"

[59. A Long Day in a Short Life]

"Strip, Mister.'" Angrily Ballou unbuttoned his shirt. He removed it with a quick, yet uneasy and awkward motion, and stood holding it.

"I'll take it, Mister.'" "Do I gotta stay in here naked?" "Hell no, you're in Federal, not some crummy State pen. But it's my job to collect all cigarettes. Hand em over.'" With intense disappointment Ballou handed over his shirt and the two packages of cigarettes he was concealing, one in each hand. Since dinner hour, when he knew he was headed for a stretch in the Hole, he had been carrying the two packages beneath his shirt, in the loose fold of material above his belt line.

Mr. Croy dropped the cigarettes into a pocket, shook out the shirt, then draped it neatly over his arm. "Now let's see if there's any rabbits in your pants, Mister.'" Sheepishly Ballou removed his trousers. Just below each knee there was a handkerchief bound in kerchief style, the knot in front, the swathe in back.

"Housemaid's knee, no doubt;" Mr. Croy said amiably. "Let's have em.'" Held snugly behind each knee were a third and a fourth package of cigarettes donated by generous men on his tier. Mr. Croy took them, shook out the handkerchief and said, "There wouldn't be no matches in your shoes, would there?"

Ballou took off his shoes. Beneath the arch of each foot there was a somewhat crumpled box of matches. He handed them over. Mr. Croy pounded the shoes on the floor, then tossed Ballou's clothes back to him. He said with a laugh, "Whatever you've got hidden up your rear end you can smoke!" "Ha-ha!" Ballou muttered in a fury of disappointment. He began to dress. "Yes, indeedy;" Mr. Croy said amiably, as he removed the laces from Ballou's shoes, "this is a Federal Hole, not State, and a man can be thankful for that. You got a clean cell with an air vent. Why I've seen some had six inches of water in em, or with mice runnin around, or so small a man couldn't stand up or lie down. In here you even get to keep your clothes. You got a toilet instead of a piece of newspaper. You got all the water you can drink, instead of just a measly little cupful three times a day. You're just plain lucky you're in Federal!" He dropped Ballou's shoes on the floor. "No yellin, singin, whistlin, or you'll get more time down here, Mister. No knockin on the walls, no nothin. Bye now!" Mr. Croy stepped out, slammed the heavy door and locked it. He marched at an even pace to the entrance, opened the door there, locked it, and said to Mr. Fuhr, "Now there's a boy who'll spend prison time in his life!" He began taking package after package of cigarettes from his pockets. "I never use these myself." "I don't smoke either, Pop;" said Mr. Fuhr, "but I'll pass em around. I'll be back in a few minutes with someone else!" [60. The California Quarterly]

They nodded to each other, Mr. Fuhr walked away briskly, and Mr. Croy sat down. He spat a brown slosh of tobacco juice into a tin can on the floor, closed his eyes, and slipped at once into the twilight state in which he passed time.

In his quick glance at Huey Wilson's folder, Lieutenant Snider had observed a number of unusual items. Wilson was a high school senior with no record of previous arrests. Moreover, as evidence of good character, he was working in government service while attending school at night. Obviously, he was no hoodlum. Nevertheless, the charge against him was felonious assault with deadly weapons, quite serious, and in his very first day in jail he had become involved in a fight. The facts were contradictory enough to tease Lieutenant Snider's interest.

As soon as Wilson entered his office, the Lieutenant" felt that he understood. He had dealt with a good many Negro inmates in his time, and it was his belief that most of them suffered from an inability to adjust

to what was, after all, a white man's country. In the Lieutenant's opinion it was not altogether their fault, yet it was a social problem that could not be solved by letting them labor under illusions. Merely from a first glance at Wilson's face-seeing the tight, proud, unyielding expression-the Lieutenant was prepared to guess why a youth like this had been in two fights with white men within a few days. So many of them were too damn touchy for their own good. A disparaging remark that could have been let pass, or even a fancied insult, and this was the result-an otherwise law-abiding colored boy in jail.

"Wilson," he said in a not unfriendly tone, "the Officer here reports that you threw some beets in a man's face at dinner. You know you can't act that way in jail. It calls for punishment. Have you got anything to say for yourself?"

"Yes, sir, I have." Huey paused for a moment, cleared his throat, and tried to control his nervousness. "I made a mistake when I did that, and I'm sorry for it. But that fellow Ballou was part of a gang that almost killed me in a fight on Saturday night.. ." "I know you were in a fight," the Lieutenant interrupted, "but what happened outside is none of my business. Stick to what's gone on since you came in here." "That fellow's been picking on me in here, too. I'm on the mess crew and he's been calling me names I won't take from anyone." "Like what?" "He wanted some seconds at dinner and he called me 'hoy.' " "Is that why you threw the beets in his face?" the Lieutenant asked with a frown.

"Not for that, but I wouldn't serve him. I'm not a boy, I'm a man. I'm a colored man and I'm proud of what I am, and I won't allow anyone to treat me as an inferior." [61. *A Long Day in a Short Life*]

The Lieutenant rubbed his face, then asked, "So why'd you throw the beets?"

"One thing led to another. First he called me 'boy'. Then, when I wouldn't serve him, he called me a 'coon'. When I came around a second time, he called me 'boy' again and put his feet in the aisle so I couldn't get past. Then this Officer"-referring to Mr. Fuhr-"ordered me to serve him. Nothing would've happened if he hadn't given me that order." Huey saw the quick look of resentment that came to Mr. Fuhr's face, but he was too indignant to care. "When I started to obey the order, Ballou called me a 'friggin nigger'. I wouldn't take that on the outside from anyone. Am I supposed to take it in jail? Is that what the rules say about colored men?"

The Lieutenant sighed, knowing already that his guess about the youth had been accurate. He said patiently, "Wilson, you're an intelligent young fellow. You can realize that inside a jail there'll be all sorts of men, all sorts of words passed. But it's one thing to take it out in talk, and another to start a fight. You started a fight. That's one of the most serious things a man can do in jail.' Feeling it might be wiser to keep his mouth shut, but unwilling to do so, Huey said, "This Officer ordered me to serve Ballou. Why didn't he order Ballou to stop his name-calling? Isn't that just as much his responsibility?"

"Oh, for Christ's sake;" the Lieutenant exclaimed impatiently, "you're in jail, Wilson. I didn't put you in here, Mr. Fuhr didn't put you in here, you brought your own self here by getting into a fight. Then.. '!' "Don't interrupt me. Then you start a fight in here because you were insulted. Do you intend to go through life fighting over every word? If you do, this won't be the last time you land in jail. Four days in the Hole, Mr.

The guard jerked his head and Huey, holding his features under tight control, started out of the office.

"Listen, Wilson;" the Lieutenant said more quietly, "I see by your record that you're trying to get somewhere in the world. But more than one man has botched up his life by being too touchy and too quick to fly into a temper. Think it over. Maybe you'll learn something useful out of this.' Huey did not turn around and did not reply. After a moment Mr. Fuhr waved him out.

Writing his report, the Lieutenant wondered whether four days was too much punishment, but then decided it was not. This was a boy who needed to learn the facts of life.... Not that the Hole would do him any good.

Guard and inmate walked down the two flights of stairs in silence. Mr. Fuhr's face was flushed and he obviously was very angry, but Huey didn't give a damn. He felt so indignant over the patronizing, white-man's crap [62. The California Quarterly] that the Lieutenant had been trying to hand him that he could think of nothing else.

When they reached the basement corridor, Mr. Croy spat into the tin can, stood up, and slipped the large key-ring from his belt. Mr. Fuhr said with quiet venom, "Four days, Pop, but I would've given him a month. This is a real trouble-maker, he's got a mouth as big as his black ass.'"

Huey stood very still. He knew instantly that there was danger in the guard's manner.

"You don't say;" Mr. Croy responded with curiosity. "What did he do?" He unlocked the steel door and waved Huey inside.

"He don't like how I run my job;" Mr. Fuhr explained acidly. He followed them into the corridor.

"You comin in?" Mr. Croy asked in surprise. "I'd like to see the door close on this boy;" Mr. Fuhr explained. "He's just such a big, smart, know-it-all nigger, I want to see his face when the door closes.'" Mr. Croy stopped at cell number four, unlocked the heavy door and waved Huey inside. Stepping warily, his eyes on Mr. Fuhr, Huey obeyed. All sorts of thoughts and frightening notions were racing through his mind, but one idea dominated that this guard wanted an excuse to beat him up, and that he was trying to provoke him into making a wrong move.

"You got any cigarettes on you?" Mr. Croy asked. Huey shook his head. "We'll see. Strip. Throw your clothes out here. Shoes, too.'" "I've got this;" Huey said in a tight voice. He held out the bottle of calamine lotion. "They gave it to me in the hospital this morning.'" "What's it for?" "I got some bedbug bites at the precinct house. It's calamine lotion.'" Mr. Croy uncorked the bottle, smelled it, rubbed some on his hand. Then he nodded and returned it. "You can keep it.'" He took Huey's shirt.

"Yes, sir;" Mr. Fuhr said venomously, "this black son-of-a-bitch is full of complaints about how this jail is run. Complained to the Lieutenant about the way I do my job.'" "You don't say;" responded Mr. Croy, as he examined the shirt. "This is one coon who could use a little working over;" Mr. Fuhr said insinuatingly, in a lowered voice. "He needs to learn some manners.'" Mr. Croy paused in his work. He gazed intently at the slender, angry-eyed Officer by his side. Then he said in his rumbling monotone, "Take it easy, feller.'" "I'm taking it easy, how about you?" the other inquired in the same insinuating manner.

"Down here's my responsibility;" Mr. Croy replied firmly. "I ain't breakin no rules.'" [63. *A Long Day in a Short Life*]

"Didn't ask you to.'" Mr. Croy said nothing. He began examining Huey's trousers. A moment later, with a slight grimace of anger, Mr. Fuhr picked up Huey's shoes and began removing the laces. Then he launched into talk again. "Isn't he an ugly son-of-a-bitch, though. They ain't come very

far from the apes, have they? Give him a tail and you sure couldn't tell him from a monkey.' "Take it easy, will ya?" Mr. Croy said with impatience. He tossed shirt and trousers back to Huey. "Get dressed. Now pay attention the rule in here is silence. No talkin, whistlin, or singin. No knockin on the walls. You'll get two pieces of bread three times a day and a mattress at night to sleep on. Let him have his shoes, Mr. Fuhr.' "Sure.' Mr. Fuhr was holding both shoes with the fingers of his right hand, his arm held across his own body. Without warning, using all his streng~h, he flung them at Huey. One shoe struck him on the hip and the other hit him in the groin. The latter was a punishing blow. Huey gasped violently and then stood rigid, unable for the moment to breathe, while the pain spread its fire to his belly and chest.

"God damn you!" Mr. Croy cried explosively. "What the hell you do that for?"

"Keep your voice down;' Mr. Fuhr retorted in a whisper. "It was an accident. They slipped out of my hand'. 'You going to report me, Mr. Croy?" "If it comes to anything, I'm protectin my record;' Croy replied in a threatening voice.

"It won't come to anything'. 'You think he won't beef?" "One nigger has no beef when two guards say otherwise'. Mr. Croy stared at him in anger, then turned to Huey, who was beginning to breathe more normally. With a decisive gesture Mr. Croy slammed the door shut and locked it.

"Get out of here;' he said to Mr. Fuhr. "Sure;' the other replied, smiling. "Take it easy, Pop, huh?" Within the pitch-dark cell Huey stood where he was. The pain was passing slowly.

[64. The California Quarterly]