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FLAMINGO

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SPRING 1959

Editor — SALLIE REED

Editorial Board — JODY BILBO, JOHN HICKEY, R. L. SMITH

Business Manager — DALE INGMANSON

Typists — KATHERINE ANDREWS, VALLORIE BURNETTE, SALLY
HILLS, KAREN NORDBERG, GLORIA PASTERNAK.

Proofreader — BARBARA GRAHAM

Layout — NANCY HASKELL, R. L. SMITH, JIM SWANN

Illustrators — GARY GOLDFARB, DALE MONTGOMERY, JIM SWANN,
STUDENTS OF PRINCIPLES OF ART 131

Literary Advisor — DR. IRVING STOCK

Cover — LEO HANSBERRY

The Burning of the Leaves

In the gutters of Exodus, burned the piles of dead leaves. Raked from lawns, tossed together and destroyed. Blue smoke curled and spread into the crisp air. Small sacrificial fires, offerings to the slow, creeping, beautiful death of fall.

The frosty mist of the cold mornings hung blanketing the town. The great bell in the tall brick tower of the town hall was louder. Cutting, spreading through the clear air. Warning, pacifying. Time is still here. Time still moves. Warning, pacifying. Time is still here. You too must move with it. Cars started, belched clouds of white smoke and coughed at the new-born cold. You too must move with it.

The dream was slipping away. A dim, golden form dissolving, dissolving into the sunlight that slanted across the green bedspread. Daniel stretched his arms and felt his loins relax.

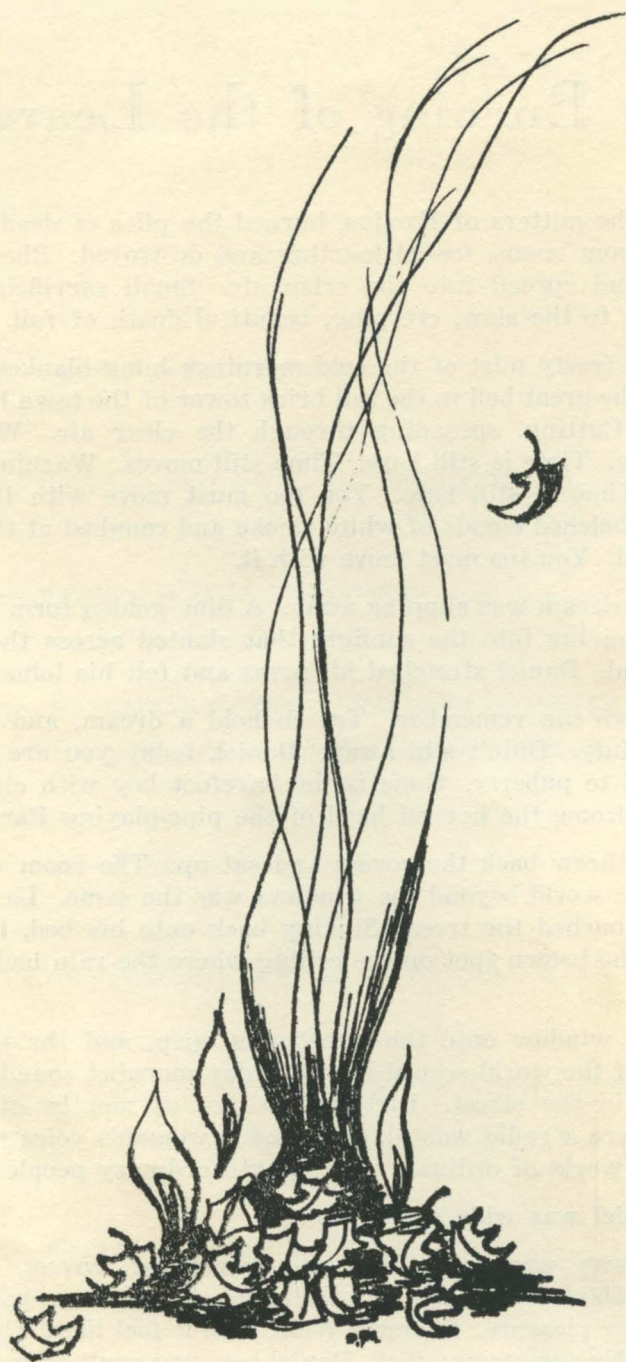
Never can remember. Try to hold a dream, and it slips away. Katy. Didn't slip away. Daniel, today you are a man. Farewell to puberty. Gone is the barefoot boy with cheeks of tan. Welcome the horned head of the pipe-playing Pan.

He threw back the covers and sat up. The room was the same, the world beyond the windows was the same. Last night he had touched the trees. Sinking back onto his bed, his eyes caught the brown spot on the ceiling where the rain had leaked in.

The window onto the street was open, and the morning sounds of the world seeped in. Saturday morning sounds. Kids playing in the street. Dirty words out of mouths of babes. Somewhere a radio was playing, and a woman's voice moaned, "In this world of ordinary people, extraordinary people . . ."

Daniel was wide awake now.

It was wrong. A thousand whispers: wrong, Daniel. Wrong, Daniel. Sin, shame. Hell and damnation. Adulterer! Living for pleasure. Shame? What does it feel like? Can it be tasted? No symptoms. Well, Daniel boy, you don't seem to have the disease. A perfect specimen of shameless debauchery.



He swung his legs out of bed and let his feet touch the cold floor. Standing up, he stretched and walked to the open window. Below him, the street already shone in the morning sun. An old woman was passing under his window. Her mouth yawned to reveal black teeth. A small boy ran out of a doorway, and bumped into her almost knocking her down. Daniel could hear her swear.

And now the kid knows. Goddam, son-of-a-bitch means you don't like somebody very much. Mother, what does Goddam, son-of-a-bitch mean? Crack! A hand swings down and the kid gets slugged. Oh well, nevermind, he'll learn soon enough anyway.

Across the street, an old man sat on a porch and watched the old woman. When she was out of sight, he stood up and began pacing back and forth.

And that old man. Dead and still alive. Lie down old man. All done and I've just begun, and when I'm done an unborn as yet product of somebody's thousand desires will have just begun. And I will sit on an old porch, and hunger for an old woman as she screams Goddam, son-of-a-bitch at a child the size of the child she once held in her arms and called my son. My son! My son! Daniel, my son! And the rotten thing that grows inside me will spread dirt over her old bones.

He turned away from the window.

Morning prayers have been recited. Jehovah is appeased. Jehovah, be on your toes, one of these immutable mornings, old Daniel may just give you some advice on how to run this purposeless pit of agonizing frustration that you belched forth on the first day.

Daniel leaned his elbows on the dresser and scrutinized his bloodshot eyeballs in the mirror.

Little red lines all twisted and tangled. Signatures of beer and sex mixed with desire and a lack of understanding. How much can two little brown and white orbs stand before they begin to show wear? This morning your orbs are pretty worn, lad.

He fingered shaggy wisps of brown hair that hung down over his forehead.

One of these days, going to get a decent haircut. Day of supreme revelation, people will be able to see Daniel's ears. But what will mother run her fingers through?

Daniel, mother's very tired tonight.

Go to bed like a good boy.

Mother's very tired tonight.

He reached down and salvaged his shirt from the heap that had built up when he tore his clothes off in drunken exhaustion the night before. The collar was marked by smears of red lipstick.

Messy business, this sex. Hard on the laundry bill.

He held it up in front of him.

There it is. The mark of a man. Dear old mother, come over here, and let me put my arm around you, while we have a little talk. Please understand, for understanding is of the essence. Little Daniel has gone out and slept in somebody else's bed. What will happen then? Tears? My baby, my baby. And I patting her bowed back, philosophizing, rationalizing, trying to appear humble while pride in my own insignificant virility and manliness is bursting out of my ears. You were a good boy, Daniel. She'll never understand. Daniel is now a better boy.

He opened a drawer of the dresser and stuffed the shirt into the back of it.

Get it cleaned before she sees it.

He shoved the drawer closed.

You have buried your indiscretion in a drawerful of clean, white laundry. Notice, you powers that be, the kid is purged.

After spreading his dirty, creaseless khakis on the bed, he pulled his wallet out of the back pocket and opened it. A five dollar bill was missing.

What do you know, tragic irony. Katy you certainly were no lady. You not only took my virtue, you grabbed my last pittance as well. An expensive empirical experience all the way around. God has shown his justice. Ten lousy bucks? Was it worth it? A question suitable for lengthy and extended philosophical discourse. Mark it up to services rendered. Katy, you sure knew how to render services.

He emptied the wallet on the bed.

Left my old Y.M.C.A. card at least. Hand it to the sleepy unshaven old man on your way in. Can't use the pool unless you do. The world is full of old men, and young men, and dead men. Oh, get morbid. Fifteen minutes out for self-pity, world-pity and wasted pity.

He opened the closet door and took a clean pair of pants from the hanger.

Wonder how long they'll stay clean? Mother washes again on Monday. Better last me two days. Never make it. Be filthy by tomorrow.

The tile bathroom floor was cold under his feet.

He turned the shower knob and a cold burst of water sprang into a tatoo against the shower curtain. Adjusting the hot water, he stepped in and felt the first shock as the still icy water touched him.

Be wonderful if the inside could be washed like the outside. Wash away yesterday's dirt and filth. Be all clean for today. Start fresh every morning. Nothing like a clean smelling soul. Brush your conscience, shine your ambition. Be all set to face the day's tasks. What tasks? Labor in the fields, plow the good earth. Haven't got a field, and the earth around here stinks. Build, with your hands, your mind, build! That's the American way. But what? What can you build that hasn't been built so many times people are fed up with it? You were born too late, old boy, there's nothing left; the original man who never built anything, never built one goddam necessary, unnecessary trifle to make somebody's life one goddam bit easier.

He started to sing, "In this world of ordinary people, extraordinary people . . ."

"Shut the hell up for awhile, Daniel."

Daniel was coming down the stairs.

"Just shut the hell up."

He walked into the living room. Joseph lay sprawled across the couch. His hand was on his head, and his forehead was creased. He had slept in his rumpled clothes and there was a smell of stale whisky in the room.

Daniel said, "Sorry, your majesty, I didn't mean to disturb you. I hope your damn head is about to fall off, and I also hope it does."

"Softer, Daniel, softer. Out of brotherly love."

"Brotherly love, my foot. Daniel, you love Joseph, and Joseph will love Joseph too.

"Where's mother?"

"Next door."

"When will she be back?"

"Any time now. The drawbridge is down. For Christ's sake, how the hell should I know when she'll be home?"

Joseph was twenty-five.

Daniel sank into the green easy chair.

"What'd you do last night, Joseph?"

Joseph turned to look at him out of bloodshot eyes. "Ischar and I finally got the jewels from the temple."

"I just asked."

Didn't have to ask. Same thing as every night. Down to the bottom of the bottle. Just went down to the bottom of the bottle and there I began to drown. Someday, you're going to finish drowning at the bottom of the bottle, Joseph old man, you're going to be drowning and calling for help, and I'm going to tell you that the drawbridge is up, and that the jewels have been put back. I'm going to tell you how much I give a damn whether you drown or not.

Daniel said, "You'd better stop drinking so much. You're going to be a practising drunkard soon."

"Where have you been, baby brother? I've been a member of the faith for quite a while now. Nigh onto four years it's been. And not a sober night in the whole four years."

"Helen'll leave you soon."

Joseph closed his eyes. "Helen should have left me a long time ago."

"Why don't you marry her?"

"Why don't I take one of my empty bottles and slit her throat with it?"

Joseph sat up and leaned his head forward between his knees.

A beautiful girl like that. Why the hell were you born, Joseph? To be my big brother, to be a nogood worthless bastard? To be liked by everybody who knows you? To be loved by a girl whose shoes you shouldn't shine? And I, the critic on the mount. I sit high on my lily white carcass and pass judgment on myself in seven years. You've made a convert, Father Joseph. I too shall become a member of the faith.

Joseph stared at his brother. "Speaking of last night, where were you?"

"Watching for the priests while you and Ischar were trying to get the jewels."



Joseph smiled. "I guess I deserved that. I won't play father. Just call me Cain. Never let it be said I was my brother's keeper. But you didn't get in till after I did, and I went to bed at two."

So early, brother Joseph, how did you find your way home so early?

Joseph said, "What the hell did you do?"

"Nothing much."

"Ho! Ho! I perceive the glint of embarrassment and evasion in my baby brother's eyes. Doing something you shouldn't have been?"

Here's your chance, Daniel. Brag about it. Parade your little escapade in front of idol Joseph. Look, Joseph, didn't I do well? Aren't you proud of me?

"I was drunk."

"A woman. That's it. Little Daniel found himself a woman, or did he buy himself one?"

Daniel looked at the floor.

"Is that what you're going to do now, drink and whore around?"

"What do you mean?"

"Two days after you graduate from high school, you start drinking. Where the hell will that get you?"

Thank you for your interest and concern. I will take your words for what they are worth, nothing.

Daniel shrugged and stood up.

"Where the hell's Mom?"

"How many times are you going to ask me that?"

"Forget it."

The back door slammed and Daniel walked into the kitchen.

Little mother, come hunch over your steaming stove and I'll chain you to the gas burner.

He called, "Ma?"

"No, I'm still in bed. I'm reaching you through telepathic waves from upstairs."

Anna Carey closed the ice box door, and turned to look at her youngest son. She could see the tired lines in his face. It was all there for her to read. She didn't say anything.

Anna Carey was almost fifty. Half a century almost gone, three quarters of a lifetime over. Her once brilliant blue eyes were now dulled, creases cut through her once fine skin. Grey streaked the black hair that was once so soft and shiny. Her grey dress fell in misshapen folds and the bulges that were the

scars of the ravages of childbirth, and age replaced the once lithe curves of her body. Her mouth was a hard line.

"You want some breakfast, Daniel?"

Daniel nodded and sat down at the scarred kitchen table. He began to trace a crack in its top with his finger.

"Where did this come from, Ma?"

She turned to look. "Your father broke a bottle there."

"Why?"

"I forget now. It was so long ago."

A major disaster when it happened. He probably shouted at her, screamed at her, and his big fist brought the bottle crashing down on the table. And she must have cried. A big tragedy when it happened, and it's all forgotten now. All so long ago.

Anna Carey stood at the stove. She couldn't help herself.

"Where were you last night, Daniel?"

Daniel stopped tracing the crack across the table.

Nowhere, noplacel? Just out? Or the truth. Or sink back on the saving like. Got to protect your old mother in her old age. Can't scream the horror of her son's awakening.

"You don't have to tell me if you don't want to, Daniel."

Daniel looked at her bent back.

"I went to a party."

"Did you have a nice time?"

Oh that insipid word nice:

"Yes, I had a nice time."

"You came in awfully late."

"I'm sorry."

Sorry? Why?

Anna Carey smiled to herself. At least you're sorry, Daniel. At least you're still able to be sorry.

"You're father was angry. He waited up til two o'clock and then fought with Joseph."

Daniel tasted disgust rising in his throat. Same old song and dance.

"One damn night I come home late, one damn night, and Pop has a fit."

Anna saw the deep creases worry had chiseled painfully into Patrick Carey's face.

"Your father's just afraid, Daniel. He's afraid you'll fail him, be a failure like . . . like" Her throat tightened.

"Like Joseph?" It was almost a taunt.

"Yes, like Joseph."

"Well, as they say, like father like son." Realization of cruel words and shame forced his eyes to the floor. Someday somebody's going to sew up your mouth, Daniel, old boy and save the world.

Anna Carey turned. Rage had brought life blazing back into her eyes.

"You fool! You poor fool! Until you realize different, you keep words like that to yourself."

"I'm sorry, Ma." Little boys should be seen and not heard.

"Thank God, your father didn't hear that. You finish your breakfast and go down and help him. You owe him more than I could ever make you realize. Even if he was the most worthless derelict in the gutter, you'd owe him respect."

Lazily, ominously the tower bell cried with its metallic voice the time, the time of day. Eleven o'clock. Of the clock eleven hours have disappeared and only their tiny brown footprints remain, drying in the sand.

Daniel walked the five blocks to the center of town.

Patrick Carey leaned his elbows on the top of the glass showcase. His calloused elbows pointing to cigars, cigarettes. Green wrappers, brown boxes, white cartons. Cigars, cigarettes.

A geant, a husky bull of a man. Broad shoulders. Dark hair, shaggy over a creased forehead. Eyes turned inward-outward trying to understand why the sons of men disresemble the sons of gods. A tall, short, medium man, Mr. Just-Like-Everybody-Else made the tiny silver bell over the door tinkle. Tinkle, tinkle, Mr. Just-Like-Everybody-Else is here.

Patrick's deep eyes searched for a sign, a voice of recognition.

"Back of Camels."

"Yes, Sir."

The silver clanked against the glass.

"Thank you, Sir. Come back soon, Sir."

The tiny silver bell tinkled goodbye to Mr. Just-Like-Everybody-Else. Patrick felt the weight of the silver coins on his back, in his palm.

Patrick you make thirty cents. At the rate of a dime a sir in six hundred years you will be speechless and a rich man.

He releaned his elbows on the counter.

Because of his unbelief in an unbelievable God, Daniel didn't notice the three churches like gargoyles staring at the green. The people he passed he knew. The people he passed knew him. He nodded. He smiled. Nodded. Smiled. Hello. Good morning. Mrs. Larkton, mother of three, wife of none. Everybody

knew about Mrs. Larkton, but nobody said anything about Mrs. Larkton. What could one say about a person like Mrs. Larkton.

The tracks, silver shining, twisted right through the main street. The red light blinked, the bell clanged back and forth.

Rocking beside the swinging, red bell-lights, the rusty mile-colored, time colored boxcars, flaunted their mysterious coded numbers, dirt-caked, dirt-scarred. Names of places, unknown, unseen surged into the gaping, all engulfing mind of Daniel. Illinois Central, click, Pennsylvania, click, New York New Haven and Hartford, click, Southern Pacific, click, click, the caboose, red, dragging.

The cities of gold were slipping, clicking by, away. His legs wanted to move, his tongue licked against the dry roof of his mouth. He almost ran behind the bobbing weaving caboose, down the long, paralleled silver snakes that crawled to somewhere, anywhere, everywhere.

Someday, like the old kings of Erin, you will stride into the cities of gold to touch the hearts of men, and hold the hearts of women. But first you must stride into Carey's Tobacco Shop and touch the hearts of cigars and hold the hearts of cigarettes. What a dainty job to set before a king. Yet, side by side you will serve with the king's royal, but senile father, monarch of all he surveys; the smallest shop on the smallest main street of the smallest town on the smallest planet in the biggest universe. Two dust motes hurled into an all destroying, uncreating sun.

The silver bell tinkled.

My father's voice. A timid tinkle in a world where only the roaring of lions is heard.

A newspaper lay spread across the glass top of the showcase. The deep eyes never left the tiny black print, but the words were unseen, uncomphended.

The door closed and the silver bell tinkled again. Daniel stood inside the threshold.

The voice was deep, the word was slow. "Daniel?"

"Yes." As if you didn't know.

"It's about time." Thick hands. Cluster of hair curled on prominent veins crossing and recrossing the backs. Thick hands closed the paper.

"I overslept."

"I know. And I know why."

You see, Daniel? Already your shame has been sung in story and legend in all the houses of all the tribes of the earth.

"You were drunk last night."

"Was I?" Bravo, dear father, your magnificent perception is second only to your gift of golden speech.

"Your room reeked of stale whiskey this morning."

"I was drunk."

Daniel watched his father's thick neck. Already the red tint of anger was surging into it.

"You got drunk and you came in late. I would fire anybody else."

Fire away. I'll go without the blindfold.

"It was the first time."

"I prayed there would never be a first."

"There's a first time for everything."

Patrick Carey's fingers gripped the counter.

"You don't care! That's the horrible thing."

Too late. Too late, to stop now.

"No, I don't care."

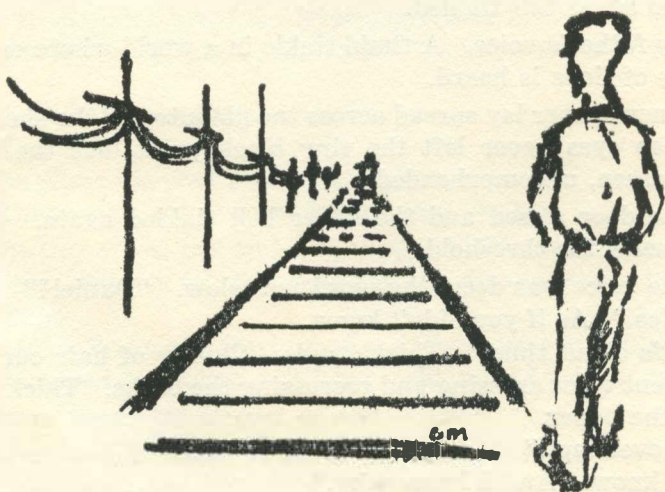
"Joseph! His eyes were wide with disbelief. "You're Joseph!"

"Yes, I'm Joseph."

"I have no son."

"I'm sorry, father."

The tiny bell tinkled behind him. In the distance another trained moaned, beckoned to Daniel. In the air hung the strange, rare smell of fall.



JOHN HICKEY

THE ROCKS

*The rocks
Are the bones of the earth.
Skeleton-like,
They hide under its covering
Immortal,
They will remain when soil and man are gone.*

JUSTINE LEVIN

Give Me the Sea

*Give me the sea, the great open sea
And leave me to sail once more.
My ship and I, as one shall be,
And we'll know not a foreign shore.*

*Oh, let me go once more to the sea,
And when blows the strongest gale,
I'll set no course, just steer to the lee,
That the wind might fill my sail.*

*When I have sailed the seventh sea
Let that great wind cease to blow.
Just sink my ship, and bury me
In that vast, watery grave below.*

BILL SMITH

MARTHA

Martha is her name. She is a straight "A" student. Walk into the living room of her sorority house, and you will always find her studying. Yell up the staircase for your date, and martha's neglected face will severely lift from her book, and resolute eyes will unmercifully chastise you.

While you stand and wait for your dilatory date in Martha's living room, you feel ill-at-ease. You feel as though you have penetrated the sanctum sanctorum of a convent. From Martha's stern face you expect her to command, "Young man, I am the mother superior, and I want you to check with me." You are awed by her presence.

You know she has a weak and sensitive stomach. A blast of stomach gas will cut through her. An acid Slavia will fill her mouth. Her curdled face records the gaseous action, and she looks as though she were tasting the bitter wine of sour grapes.

She is odorless. She wears no perfume. Her black hair is cut short. Her weighty ears have never been introduced to earrings. Dull greens and grays are her favorite colors for dress. Her complexion has been a battle ground, and acne has emerged victorious.

Martha's walk is sexless. Her steps are about as interesting as an Elk's tooth dangling from a fat man's vest. When she moves, she moves fast. She gets to places with speed and officiousness.

Too often had I seen Martha sitting alone. It could have been out of pity that I asked for a date . . . I don't know. Maybe I didn't expect her to accept . . . but she did.

And so I sit here and reflect on my past, my present, and my future. My future is my real interest, for I wonder what the future holds for me . . . me an undergraduate with a baby and a wife . . . a wife who is a straight "A" student.

Jim Browne

"Flamingo," Fall, '54

PIETRO

The stinging blasts of dry air danced around Pietro as he truged the frozen ground with numbing feet. One hand, in the pocket of his frayed overcoat, pressed the possessions he was carrying under the coat against his chest. His other hand, quite red now, clutched the top of his coat tightly around his neck. His head was lowered into the stiff churning breeze, as he hurried through the early-morning air. Little as he was, he was even smaller in this hunched position. Every now and then a quick knowing eye would glance up under thick greying brows to see the traffic light. He hurried across the wide boulevard to the other side. He sniffled a little as his nose lost some of its sensitivity in the biting air. His pace quickened as his thin lips curled in a smile when he saw the little art shop. Almost running now, he passed through the door with the tiny bells. Always they surprised him. He stopped quickly, looked up at them and chuckled.

The old woman with the wise eyes was busy, but Pietro, old Pietro always knew what to do. Unbuttoning his coat, he removed his parcel and laid it gently on the counter. Slowly and almost reverently he removed the stained, tattered cloth in which his possessions were wrapped.

Three canvases were laid out side by side as the old woman with the wise eyes moved over to the counter where Pietro stood. "Hello Pietro," she chimed.

"Good day, Mrs. Allan," Pietro acknowledged, giving a slight bow. And quickly he hurried on to his business, "I have brought you three more paintings to look at."

"Yes," she replied softly, looking down at them through her soft silver rimmed spectacles. She carefully raised one picture at a angle to gain a perspective. She smiled warmly and toned, "She is always so lovely." Her wise eyes wandered over the painting of a young dark girl who always seemed to be laughing. The paintings were always in gentle pastels, but there was little life in them, little art.

Pietro, furrowed hands clasped together, glanced first at Mrs. Allan and then at the painting, "Do you really like it?"

Her wise gentle eyes looked at him over the top rim of her glasses as she said, "Very much, Pietro."

"And the others?" his voice rose a little in pitch.

"Also," she said, "I like them very much also."

"Then . . ."

"Of course I will sell them for you," she smiled as she took them to the window and placed them between two antique vases.

Almost childlike, he gazed down at them, and then he turned and asked, "And the others?"

"You know they are always sold," she said as she went behind the counter and took a little white envelope from a metal box and handed it to him.

He smiled quickly and counted out the money. Then meekly, gazing up at her through lowered lashes, he asked, "And the buyer?"

"Always, the same one."

He looked up and said, almost urgently, "Tell me!"

"Again Pietro?"

"Please Mrs. Allan, tell me."

Wise eyes looked into dark wavering ones, and she said, "She was tall and very dark. She had lovely raven black hair and large dark eyes. Her face was the color of pink rose petals, and her mouth was generous and warm." Pietro, old Pietro, stood motionless, hypnotized by the soft voice and wise gentle eyes. "She was elegantly dressed and carried herself with grand poise. And then she spoke." Pietro felt his tongue quickly dart forward to moisten his parted lips. "She said, 'I would like to see the paintings of the dark young girl in the window.' I walked over and showed them to her. The young woman smiled and said, 'They are lovely. I will take them.' I wrapped them for her and she paid me. Then she left." Pietro smiled, thanked her and started buttoning his coat. He put the envelope carefully in his inside pocket, pinning it carefully to the frayed material with a small pin.

"Thank you, Mrs. Allan," he whispered. Then he cleared his throat and said, "I will be back."

She walked with him to the door, "Yes, Pietro, you come back."

He went outside, gazed upon his painting in the window of the little art shop, looked up quickly at her, and smiled briefly.

As snow began to dance in the hills and valleys of air, he turned and walked away, accompanied once again by the piercing wind.

GARRY GOLDFARB

THE RIFT

*Where waves will wash upon the shore
And stinging salt and singing surf
Bring forth their life amid the roar
And spray the graying sandy turf;*

*Where peaks of purple velvet rise
Above the alpine astors blue
And pines pierced through the azure skies
Stand tall and fresh: intense and true;*

*Where desert sun is warm and kind
And cacti rear against the sky
With grotesque arms my soul to bind
And everything but seems to die;*

*Where gurgling brooks come dashing down
All laughing, dancing, playing games
Through meadows with their emerald gown,
To join some great and wond'ring Thames;*

*Where apple trees lay down their shade
And honeysuckle breezes blow
Across a hidden fruited glade,
And touch the dappled sunlit glow,*

*I've searched, I've searched, to find the lock
That keeps unrest beneath my heart;
But ev'rywhere I go they mock,
"You are a man, and so — depart!"*

by TED BRADLEY

WILD CONFUSION

with the Spray

Here came another wave rolling toward me majestically with its great strength. Up, slowly, over, over, down, in the sudden wild confusion with the spray. All hell was loose; the turbid, aqua liquid, spattered with lacy white foam, was dashed upon the dark barnacle-covered rocks, tugging at the drooping slimy seaweed, as it rushed along.

The sun slowly moved onward through the blue expanse as though his range of sight permitted him to see a more moving scene. Closing the fleecy white curtain after him, he quietly hid himself behind a cloud, shutting off his warm glow from this paradise. The moving seas, however, were not concerned, for Luna was their mistress. Their deep regions followed her to all the corners of the world as her beauty grew every month.

Soon Amon sank wounded toward the horizon, shedding his bright blood on the distant clouds as his florid body fell slowly out of sight.

During the cool evening the water's little white fingers creeped up the virgin sand as the pounding surf advanced and receded. Slowly the waves paused, hesitating, then shyly retreated to brave their courage for another returning plunge.

The whirling leaves circled from the branches on the bank down to the warm sand, leaving their mother's barren arms outstretched toward the sky. Here the leaves lay until they ripened, blushed at the beauty of the scene, curled up their bodies, and were finally dragged to the water by the cool land breeze, scratching the pale face of the beach as they went.

As the leaves were lifted onto the oncoming water, they banked the hard moving waves, then slowly over, down, down, into the sudden wild confusion with the spray.

TIMOTHY R. DEWART

THE ATHEIST

They had left with the coming night, all of them. Actually there had been very few mourners, but after all, Chris had not had many friends during his brief stay on earth; and those who had come were gone by now. They had gone home to their comfortable houses and their families, leaving Chris Burns alone in his coffin in the mausoleum.

It was twelve midnight, and the tolling of the bells in the church steeple rolled across the graveyard with an eerie wave of mystery. A dense fog enveloped the land and swirled between the headstones. The air was quiet as it always is before the breaking of a storm. Suddenly a bolt of lightning turned the landscape fiery red, followed by a bolt of thunder that rocked the earth. In the next flash of lightning one could discern the figure of a man leaning against one of the larger headstones.

The storm had broken in all its fury. Thunder and lightning raged, and nothing could be heard over the howling of the wind. Slowly the man who had been leaning on the manument walked towards one of the larger mausoleums.

There was terror in the soul of Chris Burns as he heard the heavy iron door creak open. He sat up. One could sense by the unnatural movement of his limbs that it was not his heart and brain that moved him, but his restless soul. He saw a man standing in the door-way.

"Aren't you going to ask me in, Mr. Burns?" asked the Stranger. And without waiting for a reply he strode into the vault.

He was tall, with a long pointed nose. As he talked, his small mouth curled into a deceitful smile revealing his sharp white teeth that looked as though they had been fashioned to a point with some sort of file. Black sideburns framed his face, and on his chin he wore a small pointed goatee.

"What do you want?" queried Burns.

"Come, come, Mr. Burns. You know what I want. I want you," came the smooth reply.

An expression of confidence settled on Burns' features. "Who are you kidding? You've got no right to me," he said, throwing one leg over the side of the open coffin and stepping out onto the floor.



"No right?" mused the Stranger. "Oh come now, I think you know better than that."

"You see," continued Burns, "I've always known that you would come in the end, and I've spent my whole life getting ready for you." And so saying, he dropped to his knees and turned his face toward the heavens. "Oh God," he chanted, "in my hour of trial come to my side. Remember the many times that I have praised and given thanks unto you, my Creator, and send away this Disciple of Evil." The Stranger peered nervously around the vault. Burns paused to listen, but there was no sound.

"Oh God, I know you are here watching over me! I have led a virtuous life. I've gone to church every Sunday as long as I can remember. I've lived up to my end of the bargain!" Still there was no sound. Slowly the Stranger began to regain his former self-confidence.

"You can't back out on me now!" raged Burns hysterically. "You gotta live up to your end of it!" But the only sound to be heard was that of his voice echoing through the empty chamber.

Tears filled his eyes and spilled down his cheeks as he collapsed to the floor.

"You're welching," he sobbed. "I went every Sunday and now you're welching, you bastard!"

And with that the room burst into blue-green flame, engulfing the two occupants, while outside the howling of the wind and the roaring of the thunder drowned out the screams of the Man and the laughter of the Devil.

STEVE KANE

J. MARTIN CRUMP

[The following article was written by Joseph A. Page, Instructor in Physics at Bogom College, and published in the October 5, 2021, issue of the Bogom College News.]

Near the beginning of each Fall term here at Bogom, one or two members of the entering freshman class have always asked about the man whose statute stands in front of the library. They have usually read the inscription on the base, "In memory of James Martin Crump (1904-1970) M.D., S.T.B. Professor of Religion and 1st Director of Psychiatric Research, Briffault Foundation" And they ask, "How could he have been a psychiatrist and a professor of religion too?" "What did he have, a split personality?" "Was he a doctor by day and a witch doctor by night?" "Wasn't he being just downright dishonest and hypocritical?"

Each of these short questions can be given an equally short answer. But to those who might wonder how a man can lead such a paradoxical life, a longer answer will be more satisfying. For James Martin Crump was a man well integrated with his times. At first glance he seems a little odd; however, in all fairness one cannot call him dishonest. His was a strange, inverted integrity. The simplest way to understand him is to go back to a hundred years and take a look at the man and his day.

In the late 1920's, shortly after graduating from medical school, James Crump married a beautiful, young motion picture actress. Unfortunately, there was little in common between them except romance, and in slightly less than four years they were divorced. Like many divorces of that period, it was not a painless one. It left scars. In its process Crump became an alcoholic. Medicine in those years had no simple cure for alcoholism. But, still, the condition was not necessarily hopeless. Through a technique employing psychology implemented through religion, an organization called Alcoholics Anonymous was curing many people addicted to drink. Crump was taken by this group and eventually cured of his disability. While undergoing the treatment he developed a profound interest in the methods used in the then two related fields of psychology and religion. After he left the A. A. he returned to medical school and specialized in psychiatry. Then he entered the University of Notre Dame and secured a bachelor's degree in theology. The rest of his life he spent doing research in psychiatry and effecting his findings through religion.

In one of his earliest books there are two quotations which might serve to illustrate how Crump justified his cross-breeding of science and religion. From Carl Jung, an early psychiatrist, he quotes "The purpose of the priest is to establish an undisturbed functioning of the psyche within an organized system of belief." And from a religious journal he writes: "Statistics prove that incidents of insanity is considerably less among Catholics than among any other religious and/or non-religious group of people in America." For him, words such as these gave credulity to a popular old saying of the era that "Man must have something beyond himself to believe in." He seems to have ignored the fact that regardless of what man as a species could not do without, man as individuals were very capable of living happily without any belief in the supernatural, even in those chaotic times.

Still Crump cannot be held solely responsible for his blurred vision. His was a period in human history when the bases for human thought were shifting from the unknown to the known, from the meaningless to the verifiable. It was a period when the predominant, existing cultures were the products of several thousand years of erroneous interpretations of how the world is formed. Science was yet in its childhood. Though it had already been growing for several hundred years, it was far from maturity. Indeed, many people of that age looked down upon Science as an upstart, as an awkward, ill-mannered, adolescent youth. "And what intelligent grown-up," they would ask, "would take as gospel the rantings of a youth still entangled in the romantic illusions of his pre-mature life?" "He is just going through one of those phases," they might say. "Let him go; he'll mature soon and maybe even become a God fearing citizen."

In part they may have been right. Science was young, too young to rule men's minds wisely. As a result, that old man, Religion, who had long since outlived his productiveness, remained on the throne until he could safely pass-on his domain to a mature heir. Had the governing of the psyche been turned over to Science while he was still a youth, his early reign might have caused more harm than good. Though none of you students here at Bogom will ever have the experience, the process of going from a belief in religion to a faith in science is as drastic a change as going from night into day. Such a change can easily cause traumas among people who all their lives have been conditioned to living in night.

Because of this dangerous possibility, a general (and sometimes unconscious) agreement arose among leading men to take

their time in driving away the spooks. They realized that adherence to false beliefs created a climate favorable to the chaos rampant in their world. But they felt that social evolution rather than social revolution was the better of two difficult



choices. The occurrence of this transition in man's thinking from religion to science is why we refer to the twentieth century as the Age of the Great Compromise.

In the midst of such a shifting world was Crump, possessing one of the ablest minds of his time; living a paradoxical life; professing, almost as if it were fact, dogma which he knew to be erroneous; and diligently pursuing a scientific understanding of the human mind. He could have chosen the course of many scientists of his day and followed the advice of an ancient Chinese proverb credited to Lao Tse:

Those who know do not tell.

Those who tell do not know.

He could have engaged in his psychiatric research, unmindful of the mental suffering of the present in hopes of preventing it in the future. But for some reason, perhaps in gratitude for his own earlier rehabilitation, he chose not to ignore the misery around him.

He felt that much of the suffering was due to conflicts between men's immediate experiences and their traditional beliefs. He knew that for men to disavow these deeply ingrained beliefs would involve painful mental transformations and would require much time. Time would be needed to raze a comfortable but rotting old structure which had sheltered man from his world for too many ages. But instead of a new "home" in place of the old, men would have to be conditioned to withstand the previously unexperienced exposure to the real world of their senses.

So Crump, devoting himself to a double task in life, professed a religion to ease the conflict and suffering of the present and searched to prevent conflict and suffering in the future. He did not possess a split personality. He was a scientist and a theologian, but he was neither dishonest nor hypocritical. He was a strangely noble man, meeting life as he saw its challenges — the challenge of the present and the challenge of the future.

Had it not been for James Martin Crump's compassion for the suffering of men about him, we here at Bogom College might have been satisfied merely to know him as a statue. But because of his concern, he earned the privilege of adding three curious letters to the two already behind his name; and each year a few inquisitive freshmen minds ask, "What did he do?" and look down to the inscription, "James Martin Crump (1904-1970) M.D., S.T.B. . . ." and profoundly remark "Who's he, a medicine man and a booga man, too?"

JOSEPH PAGE

Bundles

*Women wearing limp, cotton house-dresses
Carry their bulky brown paper shopping bags
Along sidewalks that shudder in the heat.*

*Great, old trees let down their mossy tresses
Over a stucco schoolhouse, where a bell flags
The day's work to a close. The subtle beat*

*Of running, shouting children fills the air,
As they flow into the street, breaking up the still.
The youngest carry nothing; freely they wave their arms.*

*But older ones are scattered everywhere,
Their arms with bulky brown paper-covered books are filled
And aching, gone with freedom their childish charms.*

DIANE DeSANDERS

When the glacier left the New England shores, it also left the granite ledges stripped of soil and protection on many of its coasts. It is not unusual to see places in the rugged coastline where the water has cut into the solid rock for a distance of many yards. This poem was inspired by one of the most beautiful and awesome of these chasms — Rafe's chasm, Magnolia, Mass.

CHASMS

*Grim granite heights towering above the sea,
Reddish, rusty in the eye of the graying day,
Forming steep walls of slimy, slippery
Descent where the endless swell has cut its way.
Seaweed gravely clinging, slowly shifting
In the black unceasing current, stoically endures
On the rock that guards the menacing
Split that shakes and trembles when the surf roars.
A silent watcher, a brooding force, the chasm waits,
And in its misty, dripping depths a sanctity
Exists, a strange and murky air where fates
Record the endless tearing down of nature's durity.
If even rock must fail, what chance has flimsy man?
A word, a promise — life in the Sacred Lamb.*

RON ATWOOD

By Word of Mouth

"Well who does know the whole story?" The shortest of the three boys piped up as he bent to drink from the white porcelain water fountain in the corner of the hall.

"Jeez, the way I heard it she and the soldier were down by Shelley's mill when the cop turned his flashlight on them," the young bright-faced kid answered.

"You're kidding! You mean he actually caught them . . . I mean, actually doing it? Holy cow! what a scandal!"

All conversation ceased abruptly as three girls cuddling piles of books in their arms wiggled up to the fountain, said their "hi's" and "lo's," took a quick sip of the bubbling clear water, then sauntered on down the hallway.

"Remember, you guys," the shiny-faced kid began again as the girls seemed to be out of earshot, "don't say a word about this to anyone. So far only the three of us know about it."

"Yeah," the third boy, a tall pimply-faced kid said. "We don't tell anybody, at least until we're sure it was Sally. Jeez, I'll bet the soldier had a tough time explaining himself. It's her second or third time, isn't it?"

"Nah, I only heard of one before this. Johnny Cristo told me about her last summer. Not bad at all, if you can stand her face."

"Yeah, nice figure."

"Hell, you can always put a sack over her head." All the boys laughed at this remark, then sheepishly looked up and down the hall to see if anybody had overheard them.

"Hey, look, let's keep it quiet," shiny-faced said once more. "We don't know for sure."

"Okay, okay, no harm done," the pimply boy announced.

The clanging of the class warning-bell scattered the group and sent them pacing quickly down the corridor toward their respective classrooms.

In a matter of a few minutes the corridor was quiet except for the clack of the panitor's push-broom on the base strip as he swept the pungent dustpan toward the gurgling water-fountain, gathered it into a green pile, then collected it and disappeared around the corner, his rubber heels padding in soft echo on the cool terrazzo floor. All was silent for a long while.

At the sound of the next bell, the empty hall suddenly filled with a milling, noisy crowd of book-laden, bobby-soxed, buckle-backed chaos.

By the fountain a broad-shouldered, good-looking boy wearing a blue sweater with a gold "M" on the front propped his books into position as he bent to drink.

"Hey, Mike!!" a weasly little shiny-faced kid yelled as he hurried toward the fountain. "Hey, Mike, can you keep a secret?"

BY MAURICE CODY

OLD SIR JOHN

London was so unlike what I had expected. The sun was shining brightly as I sauntered out of the Tube entrance and started on down the high street toward London Bridge. As I hung the handle of my umbrella on my arm and reached into the pocket of my jacket for my pipe, I happened to glance up at the pale blue afternoon sky. There is was beyond the roofs of the grey office buildings, St. Paul's! I had seen it from the Parliament Buildings far up the Thames. From there it seemed like a giant bubble hovering over the city, but up here, where one could see it in all its immensity, the dome was appalling.

I walked on. I was eager to squeeze all the sights of London into the two short days before my plane was due to depart. Already I had been to the British Museum, Buckingham Palace, St. James' Park, and the Parliament Buildings. Now I just had time to take in St. Paul's Cathedral before I met Mark for dinner back in the Windsor. Tomorrow I could take that four-hour boat trip up the Thames with Mark and feel pretty well satisfied with having seen London. St. Paul's had been magnificent! More than I had expected. Now as I stood on the threshold of the great staircase leading to the street, I felt that I had seen what I wanted to see, and that all the weary miles I had trudged were worth it.

The sky had grown dull while I was in St. Paul's, and now there were a few droplets of rain beginning to fall. The sky was inky black before I had reached the street. I hoisted my umbrella as the giant rain drops began to splatter on the pavement. I ran with the umbrella before me, seeking some refuge from this downpour. I ran into a side street that led down the hill toward the Thames. I ducked in the first doorway I found open. It was a pub.

I let my gaze run slowly around the low-ceilinged room. It was a workingman's pub, and I could tell by the fishy smell that men who frequented it were not used to washing. Several tables lined the wall on the far side of the dimly lit room. On the back wall there hung a portrait of the Queen, a bit dusty, and above that a large Union Jack. It was not these things that impressed me most about the pub, though; it was something far more interesting. There on the near side of the room was the bar, a polished red mahogany masterpiece, ornately carved with mermaids and mermen, and topped by a solid slab of polished

white marble three inches thick. I had never seen such a piece of work before. I had forgotten my wet trousers and shoes as I walked over to the bar. Just when I placed my two hands on top of the cool stone I realized that I was not alone in the room. There, behind the massive bar, stood the proprietor.

"What will it be, sir?" he asked in a thick cockney accent. I was taken off guard as I thought quickly of the drink the guide book suggested that we ask for.

"I, uh, let me see," I stammered, "I guess I'll have a glass of bitter, er, no, a pint of bitter."

"Right you are, sir," he said as a sardonic smile spread over his thin lips. He was a short man, and a little paunchy. He wore a green vest and necktie. The little folds of fat on his neck overflowed his collar. He was unexpectedly neat compared with the rest of the bar. His small nose and ears contrasted with the large blue eyes that twinkled even in the dim light of the room. The thin hair on his head was slicked down and parted in the middle. While he drew the beer I had ordered, I thought how different he was from the pub. The only neat things in the whole place were the bar itself and the bartender.



I could hear the rain beating down outside as the little man placed a foaming mug of beer in front of me. A few bubbles slid down the side of the mug to the top of the bar. No sooner had they landed than the little man was mopping it up with a cloth that he seemed to produce from nowhere, so quick was this action.

"It would be a shame to leave malt rings on such a work of art," I said, lifting the mug to my mouth.

"Right you are, sir," he said, puttering around behind the bar. "Sir John and I are old friends, we are. He takes care of me, and I takes care of him."

"Who might Sir John be?" I asked.

"Oh, that's Sir John what you got your pint of bitter on top of, sir. Sir John's what I calls my bar. You see, most

public house owners call their houses by names like "The Red Lion, The Wheatsheaf, or the Olde Inne, but me, I figure that this old pub was not worthy of a fine old English name like those, so I decided to find me an extra special bar to put in this old nameless room and call the bar itself by an extra special name."

I smiled to see the excitement mount in the face of the little man, and I continued to draw on my drink, which lived up to its name.

"Well," he continued, "I searched all over the city of London for a fitting bar to call by one of our fine names until one day I was at an auction at the estate of Sir John Winthrop. There on auction was this very bar which you see here before you. I approached Sir John before the bidding began, hopeful that I could settle before it went on the block. Every exclusive pub in London wanted the bar that had been on the manor of Sir John Winthrop and his ancestors for centuries, but I was lucky. Sir John took an immediate fancy to my manner, and we struck a bargain. The only string attached to the whole thing was an odd request that Sir John asked of me, that when he died that he be buried in the large compartment at the bottom of the bar."

"What?" said I, in astonishment. "He requested to be interred in the bar?"

"Yes," the little fellow said with a frown. "But shortly afterward Sir John disappeared. Some say he fled to Europe when his creditors sought him. I suppose that he died on the continent. At any rate, I named the bar after Sir John and have done a very good business here by the waterfront. All the fish-mongers frequent my premises. They like my old bar, they do. I'm going on my fifteenth year in this spot, and all because of this here bar, 'Old Sir John'."

I had finished my beer and I said "cheerio" to the little fellow as I made my way to the door. It had stopped raining, but the sky was still dark. A smokey fog was rolling up from the Thames as I glanced out the doorway. I made way for a little shrivelled up old man as he entered. The proprietor's second customer hobbled past me into the dull light inside. I noticed a sudden lift in the hollow sockets where his eyes hid as he passed on. From the other side of the room I thought I heard the bartender whisper "Sir John!"

I hurried up the hill. I was already late for dinner.

By MAURICE CODY

New England Epitaph

Looking across his rough, rock-strewn Vermont farm the grizzled ancient pondered his fate. He had tilled the unfertile soil of his home state for years without profit. Now, in his later years, he pondered the reasons that had kept him among the mountains. The many winters had become his enemy, but he looked forward to them with the anticipation of a competitor. The winters had hardened him like a cutting stone. For as long as he could remember they had swirled out of the north to envelop the land with white misery. But he knew that they had kept him alert and eager for life.

Those same winters that had driven many of his neighbors to milder climates were one of the causes for his dogmatic refusal to leave. Year after year he had defeated them, one by one, until they now seemed to fear this aged fighter. His reward was simple. Every May he reaped his reward when the most glorious spring in the world came to Northern New England. The spring planting was almost a pleasure during those dew-fresh, moist mornings.

As the spring gave way to summer, and the nights were still cool, he knew that he'd been justified in staying. Each day in June and July was like a heavenly gift; they dawned clear, bright, and with a fresh breeze wandering in from the mountains like a long lost friend. In September and October the old farmer had the harvest to worry about, but he still had time to look about him at the wonders bestowed upon his little acre or two. Thousands of painters and artists have tried to capture in pictures or words what our hoary friend had engraved irreducibly in his heart—those scenes of unmatched color and beauty that only a New England Fall can produce.

Our old friend is no longer with us. But he asked to be buried on the top of the hill facing the north. And so it was. He lies facing the direction of his tormentor and his strength. When people ask his children and neighbors why he stayed in this land of cold and hardship, they merely smile that inscrutable smile of the rugged northern New Englander and point to the mountains.

WELLINGTON J. RAMSEY III

THE SHRIEK

It was a drizzly evening in a Spanish city that you may have seen either in reality or in dreams—in the usual street and under the same penumbra of an ordinary Monday evening. It was a site in which all sounds were so habitual that the human ear was no longer sensitive to them—the wind, footsteps, the beating of hearts, or the sound of the muscular contractions of chests letting life in and out of bodies. They were the inhabitants of your city and my city, mechanized by routine into mute insensitivity and separateness. And in this quietude forged by too many sounds, the resentful molecules of the wind permitted one sound to be heard: a shriek of pain—a human sound. Then, slowly, the noise of the city drowned the shriek and once more the auto's horn asserted its sovereignty.

As the young Defense Attorney walked down the stairs of the courthouse, his grin became more and more pronounced until it finally broke out into a laugh of self-satisfaction. It was in moments like this he felt that law, after all, was often above human frailties . . . law was like the conscience of men . . . not perfect, true, but often approaching perfection—And yet . . . The old man had testified that he had seen the “albanil” kill Senor Alvarez with a knife . . . but where was the knife; and how could the old man, half-blind and senile, have seen the “albanil's” face so clearly at eight o'clock in the evening?

However, the last doubt was dispelled from his mind, and the Defense Attorney, proudly, with an even more pronounced smile of self-satisfaction stopped to encounter the “albanil” who had run down the stairs to meet him . . .

“Patron, patron,” the “albanil” said. “I am so hapee to bee freee; for you, patron, I would keel again.”

CLELIA GANOZA



THIS PAGE
DEDICATED TO THOSE
WHO DIDN'T
CONTRIBUTE

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