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The Flamingo

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Fall 1966

### Flamingo, Fall, 1966, Vol. 51

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Fall, 1966

Volume 51

The *Flamingo* is the Rollins College literary magazine and is published three times during the academic year.

# Flamingo

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Ronny Kessler

## ***PREFACE***

*Quicquid agunt homines . . . nostri farrago libelli*  
Juv., Sat. I, 85, 86

*Whate'er men do, or say, or think, or dream,*

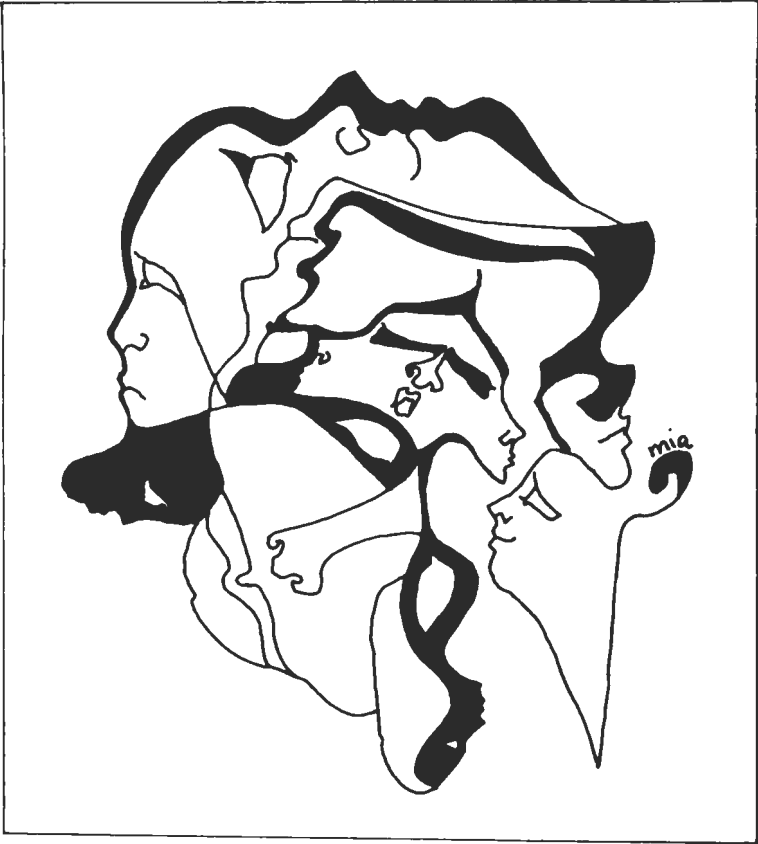
*Our motley paper seizes for its theme.*

Pope

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*The Many Phases  
of  
Angela Thirkell*



TO BE PRESENTED IN APRIL:  
THE ANGELA THIRKELL  
LITERARY AWARD





Prose

## “THERE GOES A CUSTOMER”

It was a hot night and when he got off the bus, Arnold decided to stop in at the corner drugstore for a coke before going home to bed. He'd been working all day, had slipped out for an hour at six to eat some dinner, and then gone back to the office to re-type a report due in the morning.

If anything, the drugstore was hotter than the bus had been, so he didn't bother to sit on one of the counter stools, but stood close to the counter, putting his hands on the sweating marble, while ordering a double-coke.

Ordinarily a neighborhood crossroads, the store was deserted except for a group of four — three men and a woman — perched on stools at the far end of the store. They blankly regarded each other in the mirror behind the counter and seemed engrossed in doing nothing. Arnold realized then that it was late, almost eleven-thirty, for he recognized the cigar-clerk and the porter among the group at the far end. It was the pause before closing time.

His coke was served up quickly then, pushed over the counter by a wispy little man with thin, unruly tan hair who smiled, half-apologetically, half sardonically as he plunked the glass down. Under the tan hair, a soft, wet mouth slowly mobilized to speak. “Saw you today,” it said. “Walking down Sixth Avenue. You didn't say hello.”

Arnold, thinking about something else, was startled to hear a voice. He turned to look at the soda-jerk and was surprised by the half-suggestive leer that met him. Leaning back from the counter, he tried to figure out what had been said. Then he shook his head and smiled.

“Didn't get it,” he said.

The soft, wet mouth went hard, and the eyes showed up then, tiny, glimmering, sunken in a puffy skin. They glittered and the body of the man behind the counter twitched nervously. “You don't see. You don't hear. What the hell are you?” The mouth rasped and carried an overtone of hysteria.

“You don't see,” it repeated. “You come in here every morning for breakfast. You call me by my name. Tom. Then today, on the street, Sixth Avenue, right up here near Twelfth, you act like you don't see me!”

Arnold was dismayed by the man's aggressiveness. The group at the far end of the counter was looking at him, trying to fathom the situation. Uneasily, he realized he had to say something. There was a hint of forced joviality in his tone as he spoke: “You must be mistaken. I wasn't on Sixth Avenue today.”

The counter-man's hands came into view then, holding several dishes. Down they went, the dishes, splashing hot water all over the counter as they landed in the partially filled sink. Quickly, the hands were wiped off on a dry towel.

“Coke is ten cents, the double-size,” Tom said, extending his hand over the counter. “Ten cents.”

Arnold looked hard at the hand; it was pulpy and red. He realized that some defense was at work in Tom which required an assertion of position. Sighing, he took some change from his pocket, selected a dime and placed it in the outstretched hand. The hand retreated slowly, grasping the dime delicately, as if it were loathsome to the touch. The feigned delicacy of that coarse hand was insulting. Arnold felt a flush creep to his face and he began to get angry.

A smile had slipped over Tom's wet lips, a sly smile intended to be ingratiating. “If you wasn't on Sixth Avenue today,” Tom said, “where was ya?”

“My office.”

“Downtown?”

“Fifty-second Street.”

Instantly Arnold hated himself for saying that. It was none of the soda-jerk's business.

“Fifty-second Street,” Tom repeated, disbelievingly. He walked away, wiped a spot off the counter, came back. He was smiling again, the same sly

smile. "Where was you at one o'clock?"

Arnold pulled the coke glass away from his mouth and put it on the counter. He choked away his annoyance. It was no business of this man's where he had been at one o'clock. Yet, even as he considered what his answer should be, he saw a slow grin of triumph break over those soft, wet lips and he carefully sat down on the stool nearest him to control his temper.

"At precisely one o'clock," he began, when he could finally speak, "I was walking uptown along Madison Avenue on my way to lunch."

"Madison, eh?"

"Yeah. Madison."

"Then you must have a double. I'd of sworn it was you today. Me and my wife was walkin' down Sixth. You was walkin' up. Just in front of the antique store there I said to my wife: 'There goes a customer.' Then I say hello. You just keep right on walking. Don't even wave.

"I said to my wife: 'Gee, that guy comes in every morning for breakfast, calls me Tom, but now he won't say hello in the street.' She says, 'Well, if you'd only get a decent job. Maybe he doesn't want to talk to no soda-jerk.' I say, 'He's no snok.' Maybe it wasn't you, like you say. But if it wasn't you, boy, you got a real-life double."

"I haven't been on Sixth Avenue all day."

"Boy, I would've sworn it was you."

Tom picked up his rag again and shined another spot on the counter. He seemed to have dismissed the entire matter.

Arnold sighed, hoping the stupid inquisition was at an end. The whole situation was absurd. He wasn't answerable to Tom or to anyone else. Naturally, if he saw a man on the street, he'd say hello to him. Evidently, a counter-man's life was an empty one, to judge by the remarks of Tom's wife. 'If you'd only get a decent job' — how often he'd heard that from his own wife. Women were such fools about social position. He felt a kinship with Tom for a moment; the fault after all was Tom's wife's.

But as he reached for his coke to finish it, he saw Tom staring at him again. He left the coke on the counter. Uneasily, he knew the whole thing was going to start again, and he felt hunted.

"Of course," Tom was saying, "you know where you was at one o'clock, but if you weren't on Sixth Avenue, by God, I need glasses." There was a nastiness in his tone now. He'd been thinking about it, that was obvious; he'd been pondering and mulling all the time he had been shining the counter.

"I told you my wife was with me," he continued. "That's her, the blonde, there at the end of the counter. Maybe I need glasses, but my wife sees everything, knows everything. If that was you on Sixth today, she'll know."

At the far end of the counter, the group of three men and the woman turned abruptly away to disguise their avid curiosity. The woman then leaned forward casually and looked down the counter at Tom. "What's the matter, honey?" she called, strangely falsetto and harsh in the quiet store.

"This guy here. Did we see him on the street today or not?"

The blonde squinted down the counter. Pursed thickly with the effort of her squinting, her mouth appeared strangely distorted.

"Can't tell," she said. "The light's too bright back here."

She spilled off the stool onto the floor and walked stiffly to the front of the store, halted about three feet away from Arnold and stared.

"Sure. This is the guy we saw today. You said hello to him, Tom. He wouldn't even look at us."

She glared insolently for a moment, then turned, walked back to her stool and sat down. Nudging the man next to her, the porter, she began talking to him in a low tone, never taking her eyes away from the mirror which reflected the image of her husband and his quarry.

A sullen silence filled the store. Arnold began to wish he'd never stopped in. They were all so righteous and stupid in their ignorance. It was mean, little people like these who made life intolerable. He fumed. The pushers, the clutchers, the tuggers-at-sleeves.

He was tense with anger now, and his hand shook as he picked up the glass to finish his coke. As he did so, he noticed the group of four was engaged in a whispered conversation at the other end of the counter. He began to be afraid then.

Perhaps they would deliberately begin an argument with him, gang him and beat him up. He thought of retreating. Retreat, he knew, however, was more embarrassing than staying, for it was practically an admission that he had snubbed Tom and his wife that day. Very casually he took a cigarette from the pack in his pocket and, as he placed it in his mouth, a brilliant light flared across his vision and he started nervously.

It was Tom holding a lighted match. "Light?" he said with his same half-sardonic, half-apologetic smile. When the cigarette was burning he broke the match and threw it on the floor.

Tom leaned over the counter, spoke confidentially. "Well, I guess we did see you, after all."

"No."

"You just heard my wife."

"She's mistaken."

Tom's face went red. "Are you calling my wife a liar?" His eyes were fairly popping for all their minuteness, and saliva was bubbling at his lips.

"I didn't say she was a liar. I said she was mistaken."

"Mister, you've got some nerve. First, you lie about being on Sixth Avenue today. Now you call my wife a liar."

"I called her no such thing."

"What's the matter, you don't want anyone to know you were on Sixth today? You got a girl you don't want your wife to know about, huh?"

"I wasn't on Sixth. For God's sake, I wasn't on Sixth Avenue today!"

Arnold found himself sweating, not from the outside heat — he had forgotten that — but a cold, icy sweat. The whole business was absurd. Furiously, he turned to his tormentor:

"All right, then, if you insist — your wife is a liar, and you're a liar too!"

Silence descended upon the store again, this time sharp and ringing. Arnold hung onto the edge of the counter tightly; he knew he was losing control of himself. In the mirror, he watched the group at the far end of the counter put their heads together again. He wanted to run out of the place, never to return. He struggled to look at Tom again, and, when he finally managed it, he saw the soda-jerk strangely inert, a bewildered expression on his face as if it had been slapped. Then he heard the sound of weeping. It was the blonde.

"Now look what you did," Tom said sullenly. "She'll cry all night. Never saw a woman like that for crying. Must be something wrong with her." He looked at the blonde woman for a moment, then he said patiently, "Aw, don't cry, honey. It ain't nothing if this guy don't recognize us on the street. Let him be a snob if he wants to."

All of a sudden Arnold was sorry for Tom and his wife. He hated them for the inquisition they had put him to, yet he felt unmistakably sorry. It expanded in a wave, that sorrow, and it included himself and the whole sick fabric of human relationship. He thought of Elaine waiting for him at home. Elaine who always came to the door to greet him eagerly, expectantly, the way everyone looks eager and expectant upon first meeting; the same Elaine who went to bed and cried a little one night in three. Sighing again, he concluded he was a disappointment to everyone.

He was a little surprised to hear himself saying something he hadn't meant to say, but the words choked their way out. "Okay," he heard himself say. "You win. That was me on Sixth today. That's what you want me to say, isn't it?"

"Nothin' but a dirty snob," Tom sneered.

Arnold watched the counter-man walk back to comfort his wife, then he quickly left the store. All the way home he wondered who had been on Sixth Avenue at one o'clock that afternoon looking like him.

— DARNAY HOFFMAN

---

## *Makes the World Go 'Round*

"You're a *vurry nice purson*," her Ohio drawl rolled across the front seat—from right to left—the short distance they sat from one-another. He didn't acknowledge the compliment, not knowing whether it was *put-you-on*, or not. "Vurry nice . . . and refined," she insisted, nodding her head vigorously, for emphasis.

"Because I can whistle Handel's *Firework's Suite*, first and last movement, and all the Mozart *Horn Concerti*?" he kidded, pushing out his lower lip in mock-pout.

"Yes," she laughed. "And, in general."

"Cathy, are you trying to back me into that old whatsit—that self-repudiation bit?" he smiled lazily.

Suddenly she pointed, "Look out on the left! A cat! There's a cat in the road!" He brought the car to an abrupt halt, trapping the grey-white tom in his high-beam. That cat-crossing-a-country-road-at-night arched its spine and revealed the fires (actually just the retinas reflecting light) in its eyes. Mike tapped the horn once, then again. Scared, the animal fled, and they drove on.

"Mi—ike? What do you think about . . ." she stammered, "about marriage?" Cathy turned suddenly and pretended to look out of the window at nothing—at black trees. He glanced over at her, unnoticed—or so he thought—for she watched his reflection in the window, and then looking back, allowed him to take Her All in—the black, sheeny hair, and eyes. The Elizabeth Taylor features that you rarely see . . . but when you do. . . . And her leanness—not skinniness—but leanness, and flat chest. And the Pell Mell in the veed embrace of her exquisite fingers, unpolished nails. Then he re-directed his attention ahead of him, so that he could parry the thrusts of *one* dangerously winding road.

"Marriage?" he stalled for time.

"And babies," she teased.

"Do you want to marry me and have babies and live happily for ever and a day? Hmm?"

"Just—answer—the—question," she laughed.

"Marriage! You know, Cathy, that in the past, oh, two years, I've wanted to write—not wanted—but, well, I had this creative-writing teacher in high school who once told us—um—you can't come into this course with nothing—and expect to come out a Hemingway."

"I don't like Hemingway," Cathy smiled, reaching for her pack of Pall Malls.

"Nor I," he countered, holding out the car-lighter to her, badly, shakily. "But *that's* not the point. This teacher said—I mean—you have to *have* it. You have to feel compelled to write."

"Like gambling, or eating?"

"Exactly! It's madness. You can go for months without writing a word, and then POW! (He accidentally pounded the horn, startling them both.) Sorry! . . . And then, you sit down . . . and write—I do, at least—for hours. Am I boring you?"

"Nnnnh," she had smoke in her mouth. "Not if you answer my question."

"Mmm, I will. So that's the way it's been with my writing. Sick, sick. I mean I was really hung on it for a long time, you know. No wife for me! Women, yes, there would be women. But no wife! And no kids! Encumbrances, all!" he growled.

"Women, yes, women," she mimicked the *au-Tarzan-that-he-had-sounded*, and then she broke into a throaty laugh—not one of scorn—but one of affection, that fell in a rapid diminuendo. Good-natured Cate, she—he thought.

"Yes, women—but not marriage," he repeated.

"Not marriage?"

"Nay, nor babies sticky-fingered and bawling!"

She said nothing. They both sensed the still-August-muggy air that would be so for weeks.

"But then, just recently," he touched her shoulder as a man does when he's talking to another man when trying to emphasize his point, and he felt, immediately, the gaucheness of the thing done, and withdrew. She smiled *that's all right*. "Recently, this accompanying loneliness, an artist's blessing—and cross to bear—it's . . ."

"Lonely-man-in-a-room thinking of lonely-man-in-a-room?" She drew a deep drag.

He nodded. "'One is a Wanderer'? Thurber? You must have read it, too, then?" he asked. But it didn't register with her, so he said forget it. "Cathy, an artist deceives himself into believing that he is merely an observer of life rather than a participant in it. You can write—one can, that is—all night, but some time one has to stop, and when he does there's nobody else there—just a yellow legal pad, half-filled. And then one must go out of that room and walk. The way Thomas Wolfe did, to shake it off."

Removing a piece of tobacco from her tongue, "Used to walk at night, did you?"

"Thomas Wolfe."

"Oh, I thought you meant . . ."

"No."

"Oh!"

He felt that he was overdoing it—talking too much, with his young man's exuberance, his oh-so-you're-as-interested-in-this-as-I manner, like when he used to come home from school and tell his parents what he had learned in biology that day—carbon chains, homeostasis.

"Wolfe, the lonely man, walked, driven, compulsed. Writing—it's sickness, immaturity. It's living a half-life to the hilt—all the while you delude yourself into believing that it's the greatest."

Cathy sat entranced by the dramatics—his arm-waving, the conviction (if a little schoolboyish) with which he spoke. Not that she could fully understand. Not that she wanted to.

"And so, marriage." He paused. "It is best, I'm sure. It's the good life. A man must create order out of disorder. God, what a bore I am!"

"No, no-no," she whispered, brushing a shock of black hair out of the corner of her mouth. "A man must create order out of . . ."

"Disorder. Yes. A man must roll with the bounces—must grow up and stop trying to remold—to shock—the world with his brilliance. And for what? To join the ranks of the miserable greats? Did *you know* that Tolstoy . . .no, what's his name—the other Russian with a T.?"

"Trotsky?"

"No, fiction."

"Uh . . ."

"Turgenev!"

"Turgenev?"

"Turgenev, yes! He said that he would have given up all his works and all of his genius if only he had had some one to come home to at night. A man *must* be a husband and a father—it's best—like Odysseus was." She smiled at that, but not so that he could notice. "To grow old with the woman that one loves. To *be* henpecked. To have children. To structure a parcel of this cosmos." He waved his right hand and stopped the car.

Cathy looked up, surprised. "Yes. Go on."

"That's all," he shrugged, and then started the ignition again. Then, "Hey, where are we?" He turned it off. She didn't answer, but locked her hands about his arm, for the first time that night, and lay her black hair on his shoulder, close enough for him to be extremely aware of it.

SCOTT KASS

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### "EIN MUSIKALISCHER SPASS"

These are the words, not of a prophet, but of one who has seen this hopefully misbegotten prophesy fulfilled. I know what I speak and I speak what I know, for I have seen these things on the streets of Bogota. At the midnight witching hour as I wandered somewhat somnambulistically, during the twilight fours or fives when sleep still sought to cover these eyes with darkness against the rising sun, and in the full light of the late mornings and afternoons I have been as one of a million lonely witnesses to the same trial in the hours of sadness.

In my dreams I have heard voices that seek to betray sweetly what my eyes and ears really see and hear and know, for their words beckon like the low whisper of a woman in love:

"There is a beach on the northern coast of Colombia, halfway between Cartagena and Santa Marta, that the natives simply call La Playa Encantà."

When these voices chant their visions my senses leap to take the awareness of that other world . . .

"It winds for miles along the coast, a long trek of crystal white sand that glimmers in the furious sunlight from cautious dawn to ebbing twilight and the ocean is passion red like a bishop's cloak under the spell of the sun's fingertips. And yes stranger, during these brilliant hours the shore burns bare feet, but in the night it is cool to the touch."

But these visions are cheap consolation for what at times I really see. And I question the vague faces of these voices and I wonder if such a place could really be. And the child cries: "Yes! For half my life is dreams or I could never be."



Then the sudden blare of a horn — just a near miss — and I am back in the heart of this crowded city once again. At this hour of night the bars shed their many-colored lights into the street and the voices from within can be heard to sing:

“Ojus que asesinan . . .”

Yes, once a pair of eyes did mean my life.

“Morena, me muero de pena por tu querer.”

And I still die each day with the memory of her eyes.

In the theater fiction is sold cheaply — wholesale dreams — a way out for a sullen city. There is scratchy music before the show and it makes one uneasy. To think that once these theaters were segregated and that men sat on one side and women on the other — for movies in those days were erotic experiences. Clergy never attended, but they censored.

And when it was over the traffic had died down somewhat and there were fewer taxis and less chance to get home, so I walked again the grey streets under the many-colored shop and bar lights.

And there was a church on down the block — Gothic — sky-piercing and hidden like a monstrous silent shroud of the world of darkness, pushed back to the end of a well-lighted park.

As I passed a bar the Mexican music blared out, so on just another impulse I sought the door, but it was closed and the trumpet player was drunk-off-key anyway so I went down to the street again.

Just outside another theater on the same block with the drunk-off-key trumpet player and his band was an old blind man with a gnarled face and frame that reminded me of the torture of the olive tree. He was playing his harmonica and at his feet was his tin cup. I walked past, pretending not to see, thinking God made it so impossible for one man to bear the world's woes on his own shoulders. The blend of the Mexican band's music and the blind man's music caused a queer sound: together they were off key in the strangest way. Mexican Mariachi trumpet and a lone harmonica with hollow eyes. I went back and gave him a peso, but it felt like a stab in the back, for it would only buy one drink and only so much deliverance.

Yes, in the midst of the modern, well-lighted shopping arcade a silent, sullen, crippled beggar waits — crouching motionless and twisted on the sterile floor of tile, leaned against a marble pillar underneath the Diner's Club sign. And yes, my friend, he waits for you and me.

And on the Avenida Caracas a little priest crosses the street with a monastic waddle without lifting his prayer-filled eyes from the ground during the busiest of traffic, as if nothing of this world could possibly touch him.

It is a pity that the streets of this sullen grey city are filled with trash, most of which blows free with the wind.

**GEORGE LUIS DEWEY JR.**

Bogotá — A night of August — 1966





NOTE TO THE READER: According to many trying-to-make-a-name-for-themselves Saturday Reviewers, the trouble with much contemporary American fiction is that it deals with autobiographical incidents drenched-to-dripping with the maudlin and self-pitying. The work you are about to read is very much in this tradition. How does that grab you?

I had been in the little league for three years and I was now 13, no 14 (what's the eighth grade?), yeah, 14, and had gone hitless all year, but they kept me in—I don't know why. Yes I do. I was the only one good enough (would you believe foolish enough?) to squat behind the plate and signal one finger or two—fastball or curve—from Jimmy Panos, the first Greek I ever knew, and unlike the Pisans who were excused from school on Thursday afternoons to go to catechism—he went to Greek school, which is what I knew now—Greek—and that's why he was always late to practice on Thursdays, but it didn't make any difference because his father was the manager of the team, the Indians, sponsored by the Finkburg Moose Lodge. And he was rich.

Jimmy was the fastest pitcher in the world, and I tried to signal “2” (curveball, remember) as much as I could because his fastballs killed my catcher’s-mit hand, padding and all—but I tried not to let on, and would stand up and whip the ball back to him, which usually went over his head into center field because I didn’t have good aim and which always caused Mr. Panos to scream at me from the dugout: “WHADDYATHROW?” which is Greek for “I say, what the Hell did you throw it wild into center field for, ya jerk kid, ya!” none of which he dared say, because my parents were sitting in the bleachers and eating hotdogs from the vendor which my mother said if she closed her eyes and didn’t think about the dirty hot-dog stand she’d be able to eat them and “Yeah!” Dad replied, “but you’ve never tasted better and you know it” (which she did). Mr. Panos always treated the whole team to orange pop (or Pepsi) and hotdogs (lotsa slaw, Joe!) after a game; even the benchwarmers who were “JUST AS MUCH A PART OF THIS HERE TEAM AS ANY UH TH’ RESTY YUH!” It was the best part of the week to get those hotdogs Thursday nights around 6:15 after school when we were hot and tired and sweaty.

Remember I said I never got a hit until—you won’t believe it—what turned out to be my last time up at bat in the little league. What can I say: with two and one on me I hit a clean single through first and second. I couldn’t believe it either, but jogged to first base like it was nothing new (there’s *sang froid* for you). Jimmy had moved from second to third on my hit, and then Richy got up to bat. Richy was the best guy on the team and he thought he was Mickey Mantle because he wore No. 7 and had a Mickey Mantle mitt and three Mickey Mantle baseball cards and because his father had bought him a Mickey Mantle Louisville Slugger, size 32. And what did I care? I wore No. 8 and thought I was Yogi Berra for it. So I let Richy be what he wanted to be. Every guy on the team was somebody—even the benchwarmers—except that they were Detroit Tigerses and Boston Redsoxes, not Yankees like the rest of us.

As I was saying, there were two outs and Richy now had three and one on him and JEEZE! ALL OF A SUDDEN I BROKE FOR SECOND AND WHY’D I DO THAT? I WAS WAY TOO SLOW AND WOULD GET THROWN OUT BY A MILE. All I could hear was Mr. Panos screaming “WHADDYSTEAL?” from the dugout (or on top of it, probably, by now), which was Greek for, “OH, PRITHREE, WHAT THE HELL DID YA STEAL WITH TWO OUT AND THREE TO ONE ON RICHY AND WE’RE BEHIND FOUR TO NOTHIN’ IN THE BOTTOM OF THE SEVENTH, YA JERK, YA—AHHHH, NUTS!”—none of which he dared say because my parents were in the bleachers and proud of their kid who had just stolen second base.

And I didn’t beat the throw, even though I did slide like Willy Mays and then some. The kid tagged me by a mile and the ump (some goony-looking social worker with an Earl Warren complex) thumbed me out and I felt like . . . THEN HE DROPPED IT!!! THE KID DROPPED THE BALL AND THE UMP YELLED SAFE!!!! As I brushed myself off I whispered, “Thank you, God,” because when I was 14 I didn’t know whether there really was a God or not—but just in case . . .

Richie grounded out.

SCOTT KASS



*Fog*

*The fog comes  
on little cat feet.*

*It sits looking  
over harbor and city  
on silent haunches  
and then, moves on.*

CARL SANDBURG

# FUTILITY

Veiled prophets carry  
    2-tone  
    Signs  
Knocking their ashes  
    into plastic  
    ears  
Thronging birds  
    yield to  
    hypocritical  
    roadsigns  
Not knowing which  
    path to  
    Limp toward.

Steel forests shelter  
    mechanized bodies  
Unable to distinguish  
    among  
    Themselves  
Looking at one  
    another only  
    Thru mirrors  
    hung on  
    Opposite walls.

Assymetrical amoebae  
    lead a lively  
    tune  
    Rising out of  
    the pattern  
Walking along  
    the shore  
    with sandals  
    On.

The unmolded and  
    the  
    Colorblind  
Crawl  
    behind

Content . . . .  
**RIC GARDNER**

---

I can't  
run as fast as  
you can  
But I  
    can  
    trip  
    you.

**ROY CAFFERY**



## my soul is a contortionist

my soul is a contortionist.

my soul is a secret laboratory where a mad scientist is at work creating weird life forms out of old dead flesh from a million lost creatures.

my soul is attics and basements where strange vermin scurry up and down stairs and behind walls groaning and gnawing.

my soul is a high-tension electric wire complete with transformers, insulation, 'danger keep out' signs, and a little lame man sitting by the 'on-off' switch.

my soul is god playing cowboys and indians with himself.

my soul is the linkin' tunnel, the gorge washington bridge, the static island ferry, and other connectors of shores over and under.

my soul is a gordian knot.

my soul is a three-ring circus without spectators.

my soul is a fabulous lost diamond mine deep in the jungle for which there is only half a map, and thirty-three safaris spent half of last year stumbling around swamps with sextants and compasses and natives and bundles and tents and rifles just trying to find it, while one poor s.o.b. traveling all by himself stumbled onto it entirely by accident, but was cut off by a landslide and died just inside the shaft clutching fistfuls of jewels.

my soul is a continual orgasm between day and night.  
my soul is the millenium of sunsets perfectly realized on bad-grained film in  
a penny arcade.  
my soul is a psychiatrist's paradise lost.  
my soul is a home for aged salvation vendors.  
my soul is a galaxy the astronomer computed the position of and is still look-  
ing for.  
my soul is a waterfall off the world's highest mountain which most emphatic-  
ally ain't everest.  
my soul is a butterfly collector with baggy pants chasing an F-100.  
my soul is a lightweight high flying aircraft with rubber-band motor stretch-  
ed to the breaking point.  
my soul is a typewriter with half the keys missing.  
my soul is a mouthful of feathers.  
my soul is a very deceptive and scalding ice cube.  
my soul is a grandfather time bomb running two hours slow.  
my soul is a fly-propelled garbage truck gathering the refuse of heaven and  
hell.  
o my soul, get thee hence, thou art a constant torment,  
my soul, yet i love thee, you're all i really got.

— C —

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## THE NIGHT OF THE FLEA

The stagnant smoke clouds the glass  
As you run backwards and cannot stop  
“The brake,” you scream, “the brake”  
“It's stopped,” he answers  
“Thank God, I was going to fall,” you sigh

You sit on the corduroy cushions  
Smelling peanut butter and stale crackers  
Dreaming of the dripping sun  
Feeling like pronged pine needles  
And seeing all the beards and tresses  
As on MacDougal Street  
At midnight on a Tuesday  
But you cannot remember  
Is it Tuesday?  
For you have no recollection  
Because Tuesday is only an hour  
Then comes the snap  
Of a clandestine din  
And Tuesday becomes twenty-four hours

But then you walk into the café  
To see blinking red and green on the chords  
Looking like dancing candle flames  
And after the song ends  
You leave the arena



And you wonder  
And you wander  
To develop your flight of mind  
Babbling on  
Like the clichéd brook  
For there is no Minotaur  
In your cerebral labyrinth  
You are a free Theseus  
And your memory  
Rushes like Mercury's feet  
To all the boundaries  
Leaving you with no doubt  
About Heine's conclusion  
That no being born is the miracle

And the hands toll the morn  
That your night was like a flea  
Which jumps from dog to dog  
To feed and to annoy  
Only now you can starve  
Unlike Gandhi  
For you are being punished  
When you feel the teeth of Anubis

**ED WOODYARD**

## HAIBUS IN ABSTRACTION

An expected word,  
Left unsaid, wounds far deeper  
Than a wagging tongue.

Worry not  
About what people think of you,  
But how seldom they do.

**“THE FATHER”**

---

o temple of darkness where my eyes pray,  
night so filled as worlds in waterdrops  
with magic maelstroms swirled in emptiness  
(o inventions of our silent dreams),  
nimbus of my awful angel,  
whirling cloak of the goneman day  
(as i these sphinxthoughts think)  
behind this blooded mask  
in language of hallucinating birds  
and polyglot of unicorns,  
murmurings of sea where such fish swim  
as split the wave in bright-eyed night,  
these litanies as darkness echoes back the chanted calls,  
uttered liturgy, epiphany of hearts,  
as i who must his much-as-waking dream  
make spindled out in such frail webs in wind,  
invisible circles hung by these noneotherthan deathless hands  
(as yet no other burned or burdened by their threads),  
as earth's eye bends all timeless heaven's flesh  
to blink the night from day,  
as i rise up with arms outstretched,  
(my shadow prostrate on this hill),  
trace with these tranced eyes,  
stars so still,  
such deeper darks  
as each to each unknown  
are hid beneath the dailydusted faces,  
as we die in-and-in  
(our thought to chaospit)  
such pathos-making deaths:  
humanity rides a pale blue horse,  
is born with feet in abyss;  
and cheshirecat eyes the last to fade  
in darkness flood;  
i see my people and their multicolored sufferings,  
strapped to the wheel,  
pageant of pains and tragic effigies,  
though lost as a wandering word conceive  
unspoken dreams;



mystery in her white-shrouded arms  
so gently bends to clasp these suppliants;

and i am at the center,  
casting out my strings of sight  
by mirror to my own eye,  
into my own and holy and terrible night  
(where none, not even dark, may enter),  
holding in my two cupped hands  
the core of nothing  
that bubblesoul is surface of;

and now the oracle of dawn  
is answered by the rhythmic birds,  
as a kiss or force of fingers pressed on eyes  
brings back their sight from such dark realms  
to grasp, reflected in the white warm tear  
(and i too weep, and may our tears  
mingle in some warm ocean),  
the spreading of the sun's bright wings  
as so near mine these new lips sing  
the omen of a kiss.

**DONALD JAMES**

---

FROM THE CHANTS OF OLD MEN

Today youth is gone — and I inhale and exhale the pain  
of pinched fingers in the doorway —  
and I am trapped.  
The song of songs have died and turned to a grey bitter dust  
and in these hours I spit on the pitiful  
stump of life.  
But in gazing down the glassy rained-on streets of memory  
something still in my ears  
is ringing.  
“Una rosa por el amor — un clavel por el sueno”  
and somehow strangely it seems a blind promise  
of something still to come.  
Now all I ask is the faintness of your smile  
o bright and dawning day  
And the murmurings of love from your sea-moistened lips  
o darkest hours of the night,  
For by these things I'll watch  
for that which is yet to come

**GEORGE LUIS DEWEY JR.**



*This Night In Awe Of Thee*



seeing the world through flame  
the changing shapes  
as shadows danced to be so lit  
and flashing over starlike eyes  
the leafwinged pixies flit  
and dancing in the mists on rainbows leapt  
so quietly as child in arms has slept  
as wept through mirrorglass so thin  
and delicate as bubbleskin  
the flowervoices sing  
as tongue-tied birds  
their words so whispered in the whistlebynight  
as bells of pink flowerskin on fingertips  
among the laughing leaves  
so lovely in the sumac summer  
in the circle of druidical trees  
as worlds dipped in beatific lights  
as dreams  
as two in puppetlove  
in bubblelove  
so secret as the thousand moondrenched clouds  
so rinsed in silverlights  
as light and dark entwined  
so night might find  
metamorphosis in this green grove  
apocalypsis of our love

**DONALD JAMES**

---

Force me to turn my head  
To an eye in the sky,  
Or bend a knee  
    or two  
before you're through  
doing what "you must."  
My inner-ear throbs softly;  
And now the rhythm quickens  
And the throbs thud,  
    thuds pound,  
    pounds clang,  
As you beat soft fists  
Against mushy chests,  
My innards shriek the  
Shrill cacophony which bleats out  
    the warning:  
Cages hold emptiness.

**N B G**

# DEPARTURE

i

At least no scented letters reach me now,  
And loom a fibrous pattern that darkly beckons  
From the past the yellow forsythia  
That flared beside the stonewall in New England.  
It was not departure from the land,  
Nor the brutal hiss of tires on asphalt  
That unwound the delicate, twining strands  
Around my mind littered with wet footprints  
Of night, elusive fragrance, and purple chords.  
The place was become a melody, a maze  
Of variations on a single theme,  
Distorting the silver surface of the conscious.

But the coming of the letters now is done,  
And the lady is, beyond words, gone.  
New England is a place alone and distant,  
That possibly exists in her alone  
Beyond the silent sky. The yellow image  
Has faded as the moon fades in the sun.  
The image lived and died in letters alone,  
And life itself leaped and lunged, or subsided,  
As the letters, more a thing of letters  
Than of wet grass or Picasso's table.  
At last I know the gesture of the teas  
On mauve afternoons, the fierceness found  
In ruddy brick churches, the lilac smell,  
The shadows in museums, and even the hush  
Of falling snow are not the living image  
Of New England, but reflections only  
Of a woman loved.

ii

Walking by the sea one wonders  
About that man Ulysses  
And the woman, Penelope:  
Those who seem to whisper  
From the far edges of the water  
Bright syllables of ancient love, come  
Down to this still coast.  
Was the shore of Troy  
Like the wind-lain Florida littoral?  
And what if Penelope had failed?  
In a ship with red canvas sailed?  
One begins to doubt this man,  
Ulysses, as the soul is seen  
Silhouetted in the jagged grass  
And turning in the boats in Stump Pass.  
The shadow of New England, the breath  
Of lilac just had to pale in the pungence  
Of an orange torn open by teeth.

The sudden ascent of the gull  
Shatters the surface of the sea,  
And water reels beneath the rain  
From the wings. In an agony  
Of white the water captures then  
The clear reflection of the gull  
In the flaring burst of spray;  
But the bird rises, ripples lull  
The white fades into silent blue,  
And the shadow is forgotten.

iii

New England is gone with the sand the wind  
Picks up and puffs into the sea oats.  
The place is conquered with footprints  
Wasted from the beach. Leaving seems  
A thing of mind as well as of substance.  
Time and distance and the hot wind  
Divest the soul of memory and the rustle  
Of the whimsical. Only remain  
The torrid wind, trembling sea, and sun . . .  
And most surely the singing, sensual sun  
With all nuance of color burned together  
In a single blast of blinding light.

Only on cool nights in the moon  
Is there a hint of New England.  
Only when the wind comes off the water,  
Rasping in the narrow trees, then you come  
Coiling on your shoulders; into my dreams  
You come, dripping salt on my face.  
Then New England and remembrance drift in  
With the moon, and should the sun  
Descend on girls in yellow dresses  
On Easter morning, that too  
Might stir my blood.

Yet at last I am departed.  
But to depart completely, to be done  
With letters and daily longing  
Is to be done with a part of the self;  
And the emptiness is filled with terrors  
Rising on the wind and the vacant stare  
Of the moon.

**ROBERT YOUNG**

RECEIVED

JAN 9 P.M.

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE  
ROLLINS COLLEGE