

9-1968

The Muse - September 1968

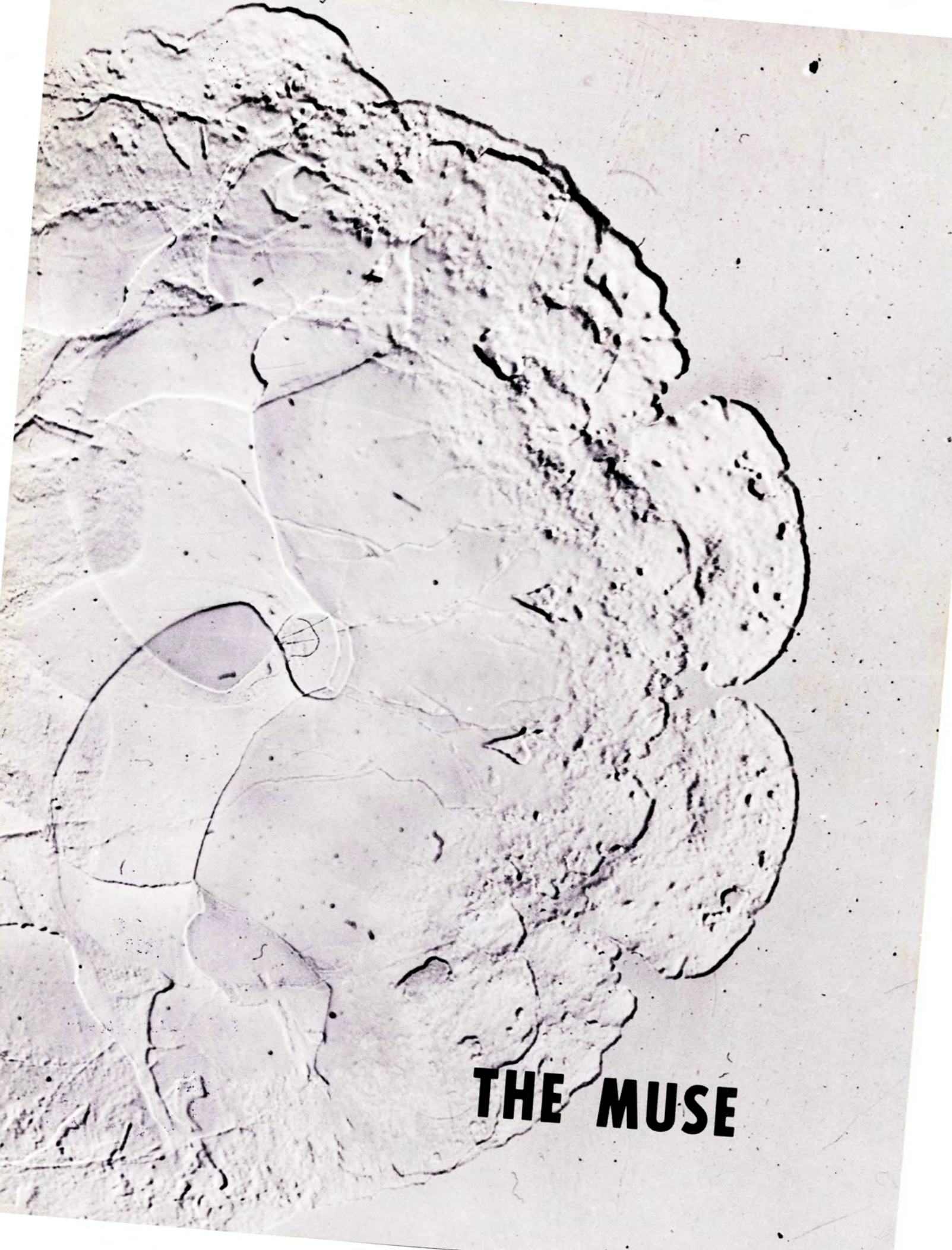
Wandrick

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THE MUSE



THE MUSE

Volume III — September 1968

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS STATE COLLEGE

editor-in-chief: wandick

literary editor: karen yanoff

art editor: abby

staff: patrick c. mc phée

mimi pinsker

laura craig

eve pimigsal

faculty sponsor: dr. jacqueline krump


"The Muse, like Beatrice in MUCH ADO, is a spirited girl who has as little use for an abject suitor as she has for a vulgar brute. She appreciates chivalry and good manners, but she despises those who will not stand up to her and takes a cruel delight in telling them nonsense and lies which the poor little things obediently write down as 'inspired' truth.

W. H. Auden

A special thank-you to Rebecca Conviser and Jeff Donaldson whose art classes contributed to the magazine.

contents and credits

writing		art and photography
	cover	les klug
	1	les klug
	2	
	3	
	4	les klug
b. a. skinner	5	abby
wandick	6	les klug
connie erickson	7	
	8	d. walgrin
wandick	9	les klug
joseph zulawski	10	abby
	11	susan katz
karen yanoff	12	
	13	les klug
b. a. skinner	14	
	15	les klug
conrad pitcher	16	les klug
conrad pitcher	17	
bill carson/karen yanoff	18	abby
	19	abby
wandick	20	jeanette s. flores
	21	alma tyiska
karen yanoff	22	donna jean o'connor
	23	les klug
	24	les klug
zulawski/karen yanoff	25	
wandick	26	jeanette s. flores
	27	abby
	28	jeanette s. flores
zulawski	29	abby
	30	
	31	les klug
	32	les klug



we drew the blinds,
quit the light
and sat stiffly.
we were ill at ease
and didn't want to see ourselves,
but our eyes became accustomed to that darkness.
our love, my neighbors said, was an obscene thing,
at which they guessed.
their lips were fed by vomit,
and too
they peek.

ignore them, my fallen dove,
around you I build a temple of kisses.
you are profound.
in you are the crevices of love,
hidden and warm,
we will hide.

meanwhile mary

*today is
the day
tomorrow was not
and yesterday will not (bring)
what today is*

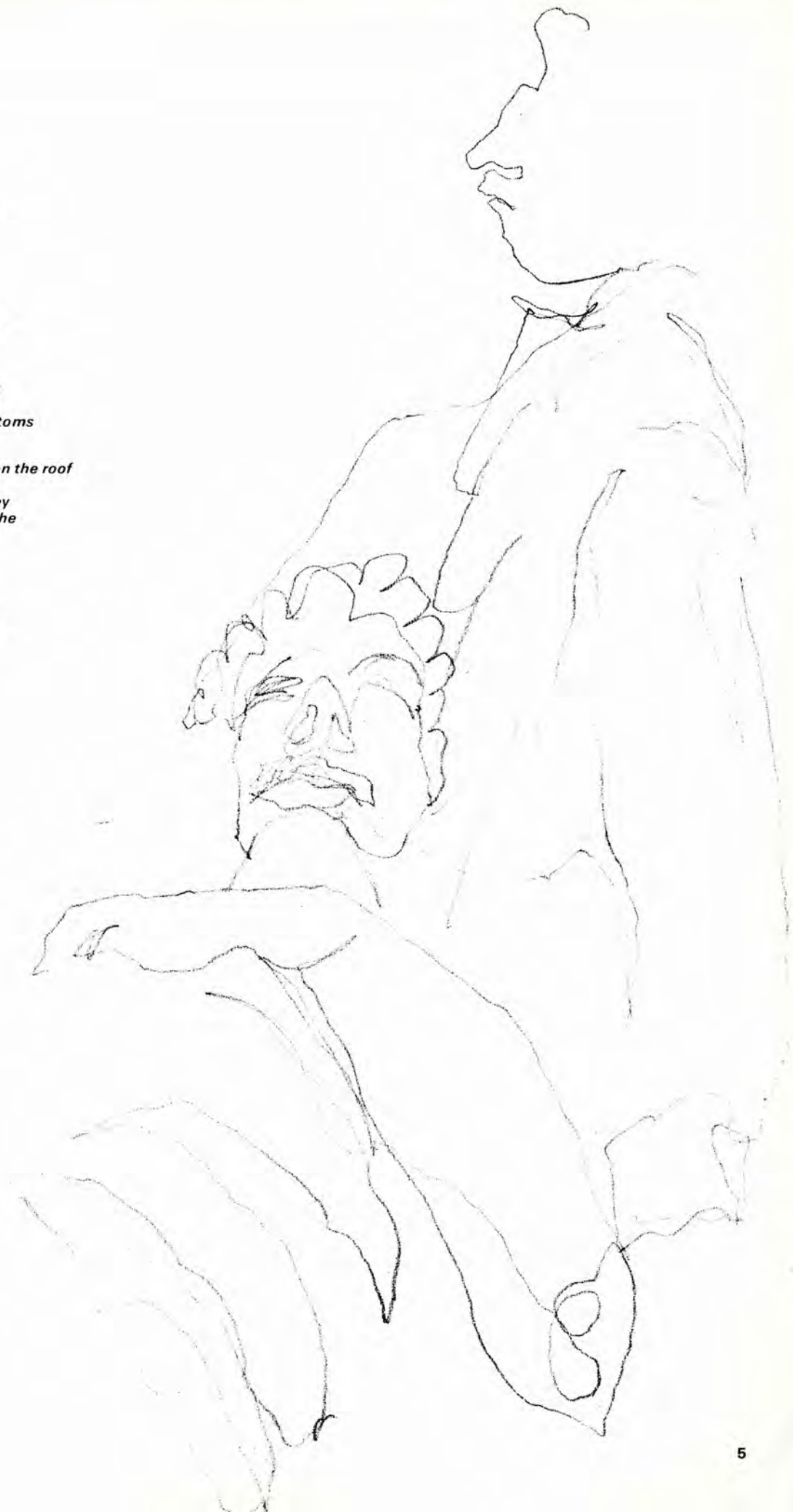
*meanwhile . . .
mary is in tijuana
a long way from today
(or so she hopes)
and even further from the truth*

*meanwhile . . .
mary is on canal street
greeting the customs inspector
with many a sheep smile
but he will not approve her customs*

*meanwhile . . .
mary is clinging to shingles on the roof
with canal street below
breathing from the chimney
as they burn the waukegan cache
(all four hundred pounds)*

*meanwhile . . .
mary is in the sky
a long way from the ground
(and so it is)
and even further from herself*

b. a. skinner





untitled

*thought-beads recall smoke-dimmed eye hours
imaging the moments and the instants of me
swimming in your hands,
drunk off the gaze in your eyes;*

*pool-swept
towards a quietness like thinking,
i am held by solitude,
rocked by this gentle mother,
lost sinking losing dying time-sequenced holidays
when your soul sang glad song,
as
a longhaired, greeneyed girl waves across tables
in this cafeteria from afar,
smiles,
and i am left to consider the charm of her hello*

wandick

Can you remember
a time
when you plodded
along
some obscure city street
that's buried
in the depths of nowhere
in your eyes?

And the night air
inebriates you
causing a fallacy
in gravitation
and negativity
like a black cat
crosses the pathway
of your searching mind.

The night exhales
asthmatically
as if it were diseased
with pneumonia.
And its cold piercing
breath
entangles you,
and your joints stiffen
and lock,
and your entire body
shatters.

So you draw your arms
closer
to your crusted shell
that's been sealed by
the horned hands
of time,
the crippled hands
of life,
and the bleeding hands
of love,
All at your creatively
masterful command.

And you nestle
your beaten chin
to your boney chest
that even a coat
refuses to cover.

All there is to
guide you
is the blaring light
of street lamps
whose artificiality

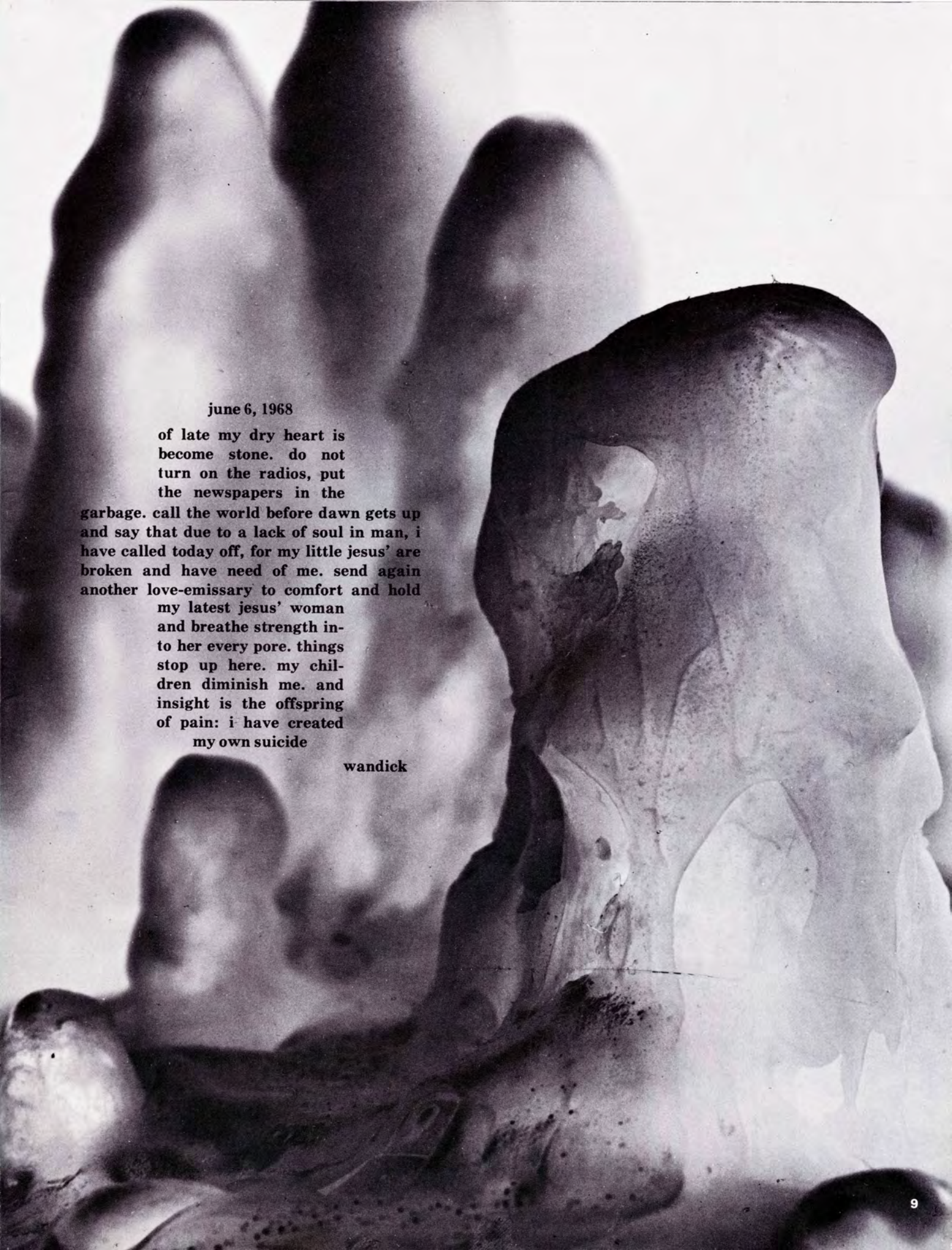
*So you turn
your stare
toward the black sky,
and the rays from
your burning eyes
yearn to bore holes
in the tarnished steel
atmosphere.*

*Those damned stars
they're a lot like people
you know.
They all have individual
brilliance
and character,
yet they all look
the same,
and they all act alike,
moving along
with a current they're afraid
to drift away from,
clamoring a lot of
trivia
that includes even your name,
and like the people
you know,
they are impossible
to reach.*

*What's it all worth?
Who the hell knows?
I guess there's a
reason,
but you have to make
your own.
And what are you
doing?
You're plodding
along
some obscure city street
that's buried
in the depths of nowhere,
where a black picture of reality
haunts you,
and the silence of FREEDOM
shatters your ear drums!*

Connie Erickson

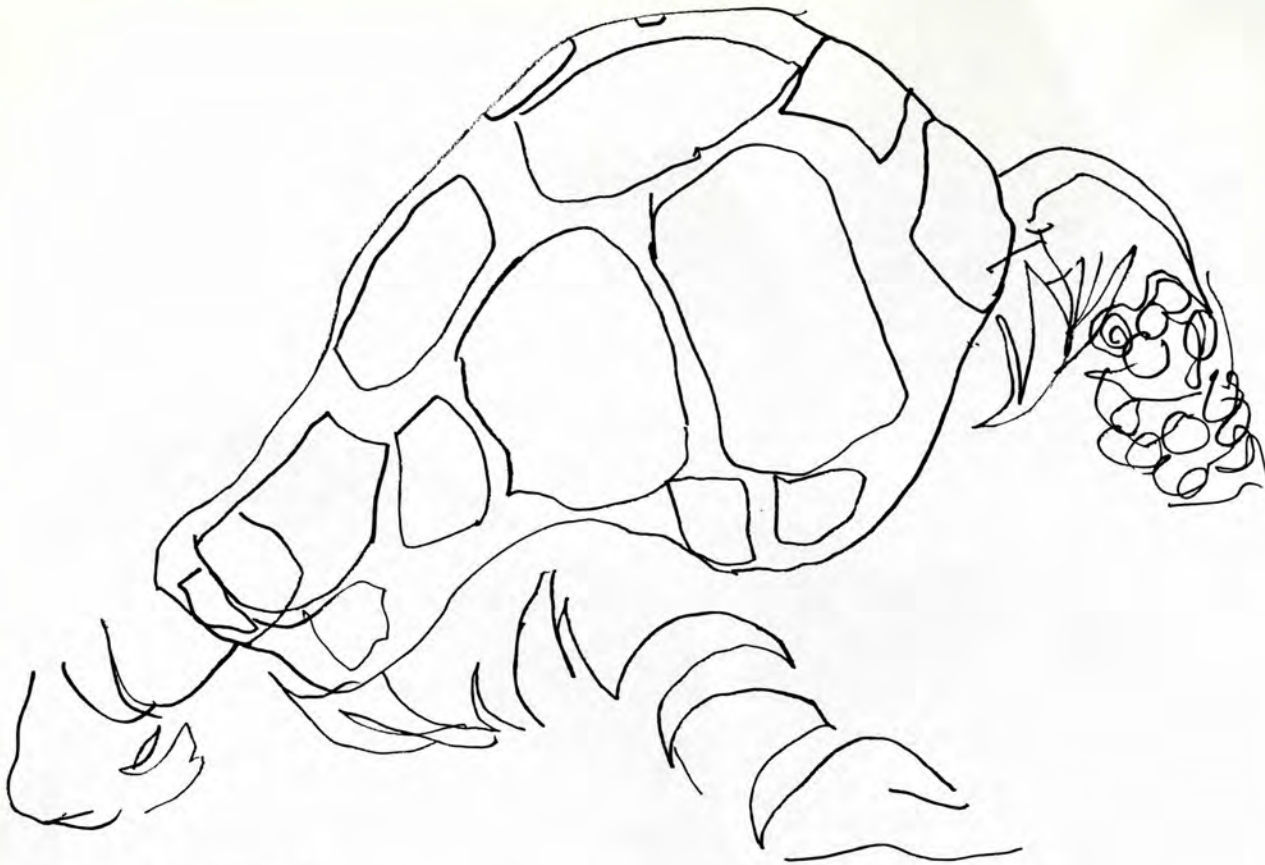




june 6, 1968

of late my dry heart is
become stone. do not
turn on the radios, put
the newspapers in the
garbage. call the world before dawn gets up
and say that due to a lack of soul in man, i
have called today off, for my little jesus' are
broken and have need of me. send again
another love-emissary to comfort and hold
my latest jesus' woman
and breathe strength in-
to her every pore. things
stop up here. my chil-
dren diminish me. and
insight is the offspring
of pain: i have created
my own suicide

wandick



Tell me of the beauty of war.
Tell me of heroes grand.
Play me a martial tune
And let the strafers strike.

Raise high our mirror to the world:
Our image is flawless,
Our cause is just
And God has touched us on the shoulder blade."

But, lo, I thought I heard another voice too:
Soft, persistent, like a whisper of death.

No, it was many voices
Saying but one word:
Nuremberg! Nuremberg!

THESE MEN WILL BE AT THE ETERNAL NUREMBERG:
Mirrored image don't you see
My conscience sorely bothers me.

In the napalm strike
Was I the baby grasping there
Or did I plant the flame?

THESE MEN WILL BE AT THE ETERNAL NUREMBERG:
Mirrored image don't you see
My conscience sorely bothers me.

Did I defoliate the land,
Or sow the seeds of rape?
In whose womb is there bastard life?

THESE MEN WILL BE AT THE ETERNAL NUREMBERG:
Mirrored image don't you see
My conscience sorely bothers me.

What of the epaulet
on the Uniform of Death,
is it lighter now?

What of the Dome and Seal
where the napalm brewed,
does the flag fly high?

THESE MEN WILL BE AT THE ETERNAL NUREMBERG:
Mirrored image don't you see
My conscience sorely bothers me.

Someone said:
idealism is but a trick
and with deft surgery and psychiatry
severed conscience from a human brotherhood.

THESE MEN WILL BE AT THE ETERNAL NUREMBERG:
Mirrored conscience don't you see
My image sorely bothers me.

These men, yes,
But especially, I will be at that eternal Nuremberg
frustration bound.

My pen, alone, not I sought humanity,
looked upon these crimes
And spoke



When I was a Child . . .

*When I was a child,
just testing my strength,
with a barely whispered voice
I could stop the wind.
Stop blowing, I command you, stop blowing!
Then trees would not sway.
Papers and leaves would not
dance from curb to curb
and I was very pleased.*

*When I was a child,
just testing my strength,
I could hold the sun in one hand
without it ever burning.
Then clouds would form
and rain would fall
to spoil all my fun.*

Karen Yanoff



the apple polisher

*it is churchday in me
unconstitutional ungodly
lit a taper on the sun
for the living
and hurdy-gurdy barrel organ
echoing
to gold stars on plaster heaven
the colors abandon the cloister
anon anon anonymous
and heavily ever thereafter
forthwith ever therein. anon
no ceremony
no unction*

*unhinged
gazed in the several-eyed face
of stone jesus
sorcerer mumbo-jumbo
over a gold cauldron
having shown a mirror
to the cockatrice
drained me of formaldehyde
laughed a joke with jehovah
no ceremony
no unction*

b. a. skinner



elton and int

a is for she-male, creatures of clairol and mr. hefner
plastics of red, white, and blue
tube tenderness and "i love you—
occasionally . . ."

apple-roach: if you'll step with my daydreams,
in time i'll step with yours—she-males and all
then,
perform for me,
upon my five cent
oval mirror
as i slip down the spirals
of your closing ear . . .

here, dream makers and situation seekers,
have we,
the or that
twice virgined maid,
a shallow hen



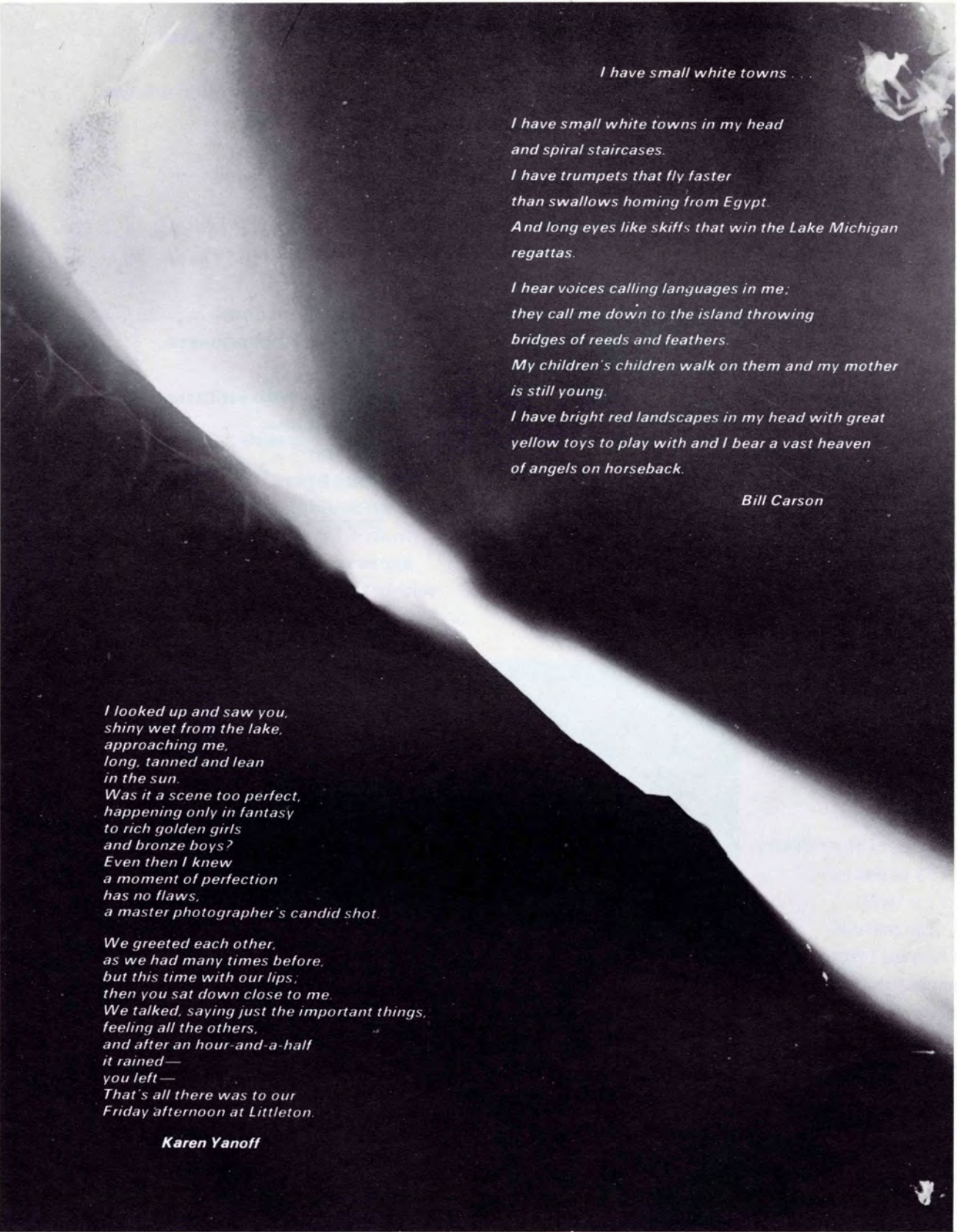
upon her continual theater
far from white artemis,
she places her presents
before we feet, a challenge
to our protected virility . . .
call her,
the black eyed pisces,
the orb lined plattered blank,
big busted shanks, they
which reach to consume
our evanescent man-medals . . .
and call her words,
which now come from her
mouth: smoked tongued words,
they
which entice, mistakenly,
in so loud distaste,
bugged eyed sucklings . . .

it is as if
she, ash baby of dachau,
a troll, positions herself,
beneath that bridge,
one may erect between male and female,
and demands satisfaction
from those crossing . . .

it is as if
she, were almost crafty,
but she is not—
hardly a troll
this she-male—
she has no bridge,
or occasion to,
she has no mind for
blackmail, what must be a tempting game
she squats
to the side
and begs faintly,
a kiss for her black eyed pisces . . .

she thrives upon the taste
of those,
fallen globes, destroyed worlds,
self raped apples,
which litter the mind . . .
a she-male of the genus,
demanding,
demanding tender tongues
to caress her blood silver
scales,
to bathe in the come
of anticipated conquests,
to,
intoxicated with fantasies,
ignore that she,
amidst her
dubious finery,
is an avoidable experience
from which we may be
excused,
within these: incense, int and er,
we sample
her offer,
that of,
a dimer's and a nickel's antidote,
a withdrawal into her satisfaction,
a capitulation to the phallic maze
she presents—
the mystic taste of,
orbs spawned upon fantasies of white honey
malts,
revolving, as we rest
before her marble counter;
revolving, as we forget,
"we may reject, if so moved—
her's is an avoidable experience"
revolving, as she taunts
us to caress her scales,
to feed our starved
sucklings
with the juice of apples . . .

c. pitcher



I have small white towns . . .

*I have small white towns in my head
and spiral staircases.*

*I have trumpets that fly faster
than swallows homing from Egypt.*

*And long eyes like skiffs that win the Lake Michigan
regattas.*

*I hear voices calling languages in me;
they call me down to the island throwing
bridges of reeds and feathers.*

*My children's children walk on them and my mother
is still young.*

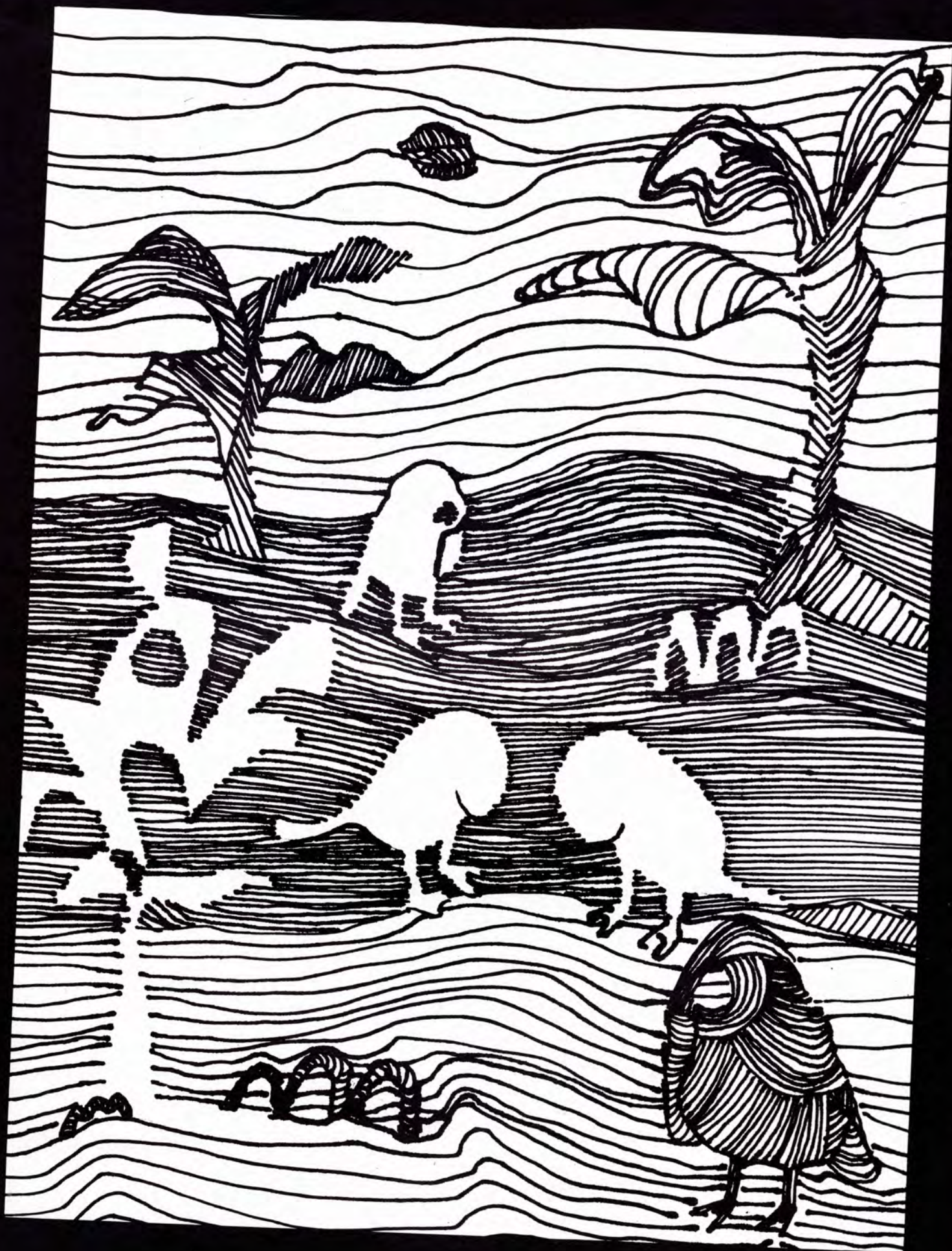
*I have bright red landscapes in my head with great
yellow toys to play with and I bear a vast heaven
of angels on horseback.*

Bill Carson

*I looked up and saw you,
shiny wet from the lake,
approaching me,
long, tanned and lean
in the sun.
Was it a scene too perfect,
happening only in fantasy
to rich golden girls
and bronze boys?
Even then I knew
a moment of perfection
has no flaws,
a master photographer's candid shot.*

*We greeted each other,
as we had many times before,
but this time with our lips;
then you sat down close to me.
We talked, saying just the important things,
feeling all the others,
and after an hour-and-a-half
it rained—
you left—
That's all there was to our
Friday afternoon at Littleton.*

Karen Yanoff



BLACK WOMEN

*we are not hard women.
the child still remains.
we shrill and cry loud our circumstanced world,
for its hypocritic sheen with no promising praise.*

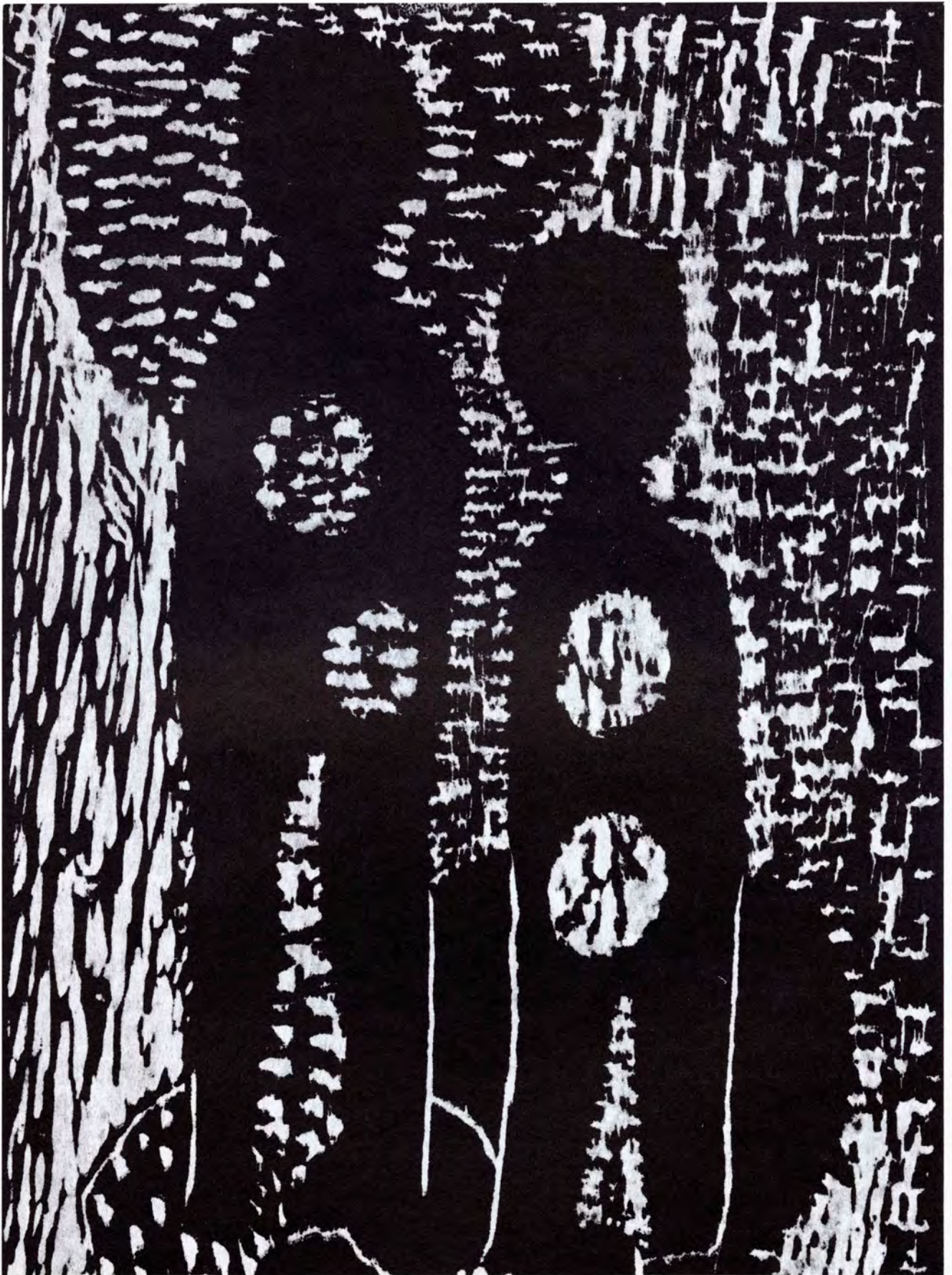
*we women are not hard,
although love is quick and fretful like our cholic babies.
our world is off-gray,
peeling,
and black like our faces which live the abruptness
of the temporary, the human.*

*at night, dirt is indistinguishable from the darkness
and this is what fucks us to a near stone.
we shrill and cry loud encountered hardness
and this is what's seen,
our reacting hearts.*

*this place itself is hard.
this place itself is cold.
this place itself is the nigger.
color its women if anything soul.*

wandick





Sleeping:

*Not all saw
the glowing dot
of lime-green luminescence
that spread itself
and danced before closed eyes
as new spring grass in uncut fields
sways
beneath night star eyes.*

*Deftly it sprang from
mouthes to feet to hands
to eyes to tease them with the
tingling strangeness of it.
Swift and silent light
falling from their dreams
as meteors from the sky
drop
from out of
nowhere.*

*Some tried to get it in mid air,
but it fled their fingers
with a teasing undulation
a taunting
catch me if you can.*

*Each pirouette mocked them,
tracing patterns in the air,
thought puzzles for their brains
to piece together.
Sent by the underworld of their souls,
essence of their dreams, what message!*

*They cannot hold you with their senses.
Too bright for eye they must not
stare straight at you,
thing that is no star to wonder at,
but a living emissary of all hopes.*

*Too hot for mouth
your name they will not speak
for you would burn their tongues
to end all blasphemy.*

*Nor may they hold you locked in fists
for you are illusion
slipping through their fingers
as wind through
palm-branch slits.*

*Like giant hibiscus without scent,
a pungency that could diminish all other victims
of the jungle,
you give no sound,
for it would be a crash and clang
a bang and boom
louder than all tympanies and cymbals.*

*Then, suspended by an unseen string,
it jerked and twitched in place
before them,
another puppet of a greater Being.
Its light snuffed out, the
world changed into a whirling blackness
being sucked
down
down
until
those who saw knew
knew!*

*Somewhere there lives
that green glowing thing,
Hope of all Dreams,
Reality of all Visions,
Final Truth of All Lives,
Answer to all men's Question:
"What will be when there is
nothing left of me?"*

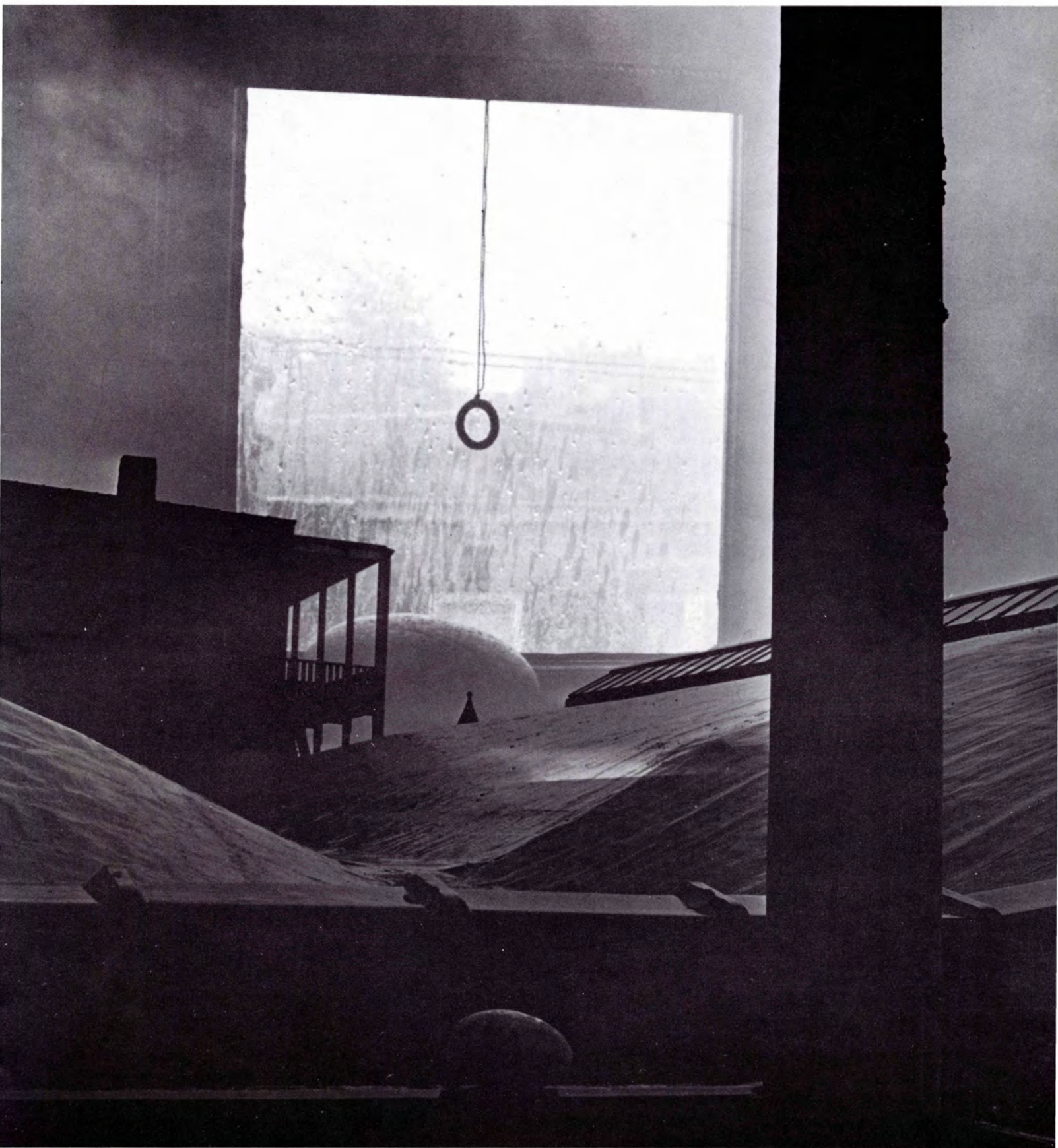
*"In some dank tomb you'll sleep alone,
Unknowing and Unknown!"*

Dear Dylan,

Yes, we all sing in our chains like the sea.

Karen Yanoff







*Men dream
and in the silence
of unawareness
our lost visions pass us
moving out beyond the stars
that plot the course of
mortal dreams
markers of immorality piercing
soft velvet nothingness
of eternal night.*

*Dreams spark, burst
blaze and burn to
dim and die
only to flame again
gold and red
green and blue
five fine points
of heavenly light.*

*Oh, man,
see yourself luminous in the
limitless night,
glow in the radiance of glory. But man looks down,
sees the ground,
black ants on blades of grass,
a lesser community than he.*

*Oh, Man! look up.
See the Gods' ecstasy.*

Karen Yanoff

*I built a shell
played inside
and said hellow to me*

*then I raised it up a mite
peeked out into the world
and said hello to thee*

*we built a fence
enclosed us in
and became each other's blind*

*you grew big and I concerned
a child was born, it cried
and we left our fence behind*

Joe Zulawski

stranger

it is a july night.
a breeze blows the curtains making shadows.
a child's voice is mingled with traffic's sweep
and stuttering flow, and a plane cracks the sky
with thunder

i have found your eyes of quiet summer lightning
in a green crystal sky, heightened by the sensuous
sungold setting of your hair;
i have found peach-leaved lips, double moons to my nights:
and i have found lust shrouded in a kiss; this is all.

sitting here half-drunk and reeling from
the remembered pressure of your lips and probing tongue
one chance night,
i am forced to wonder if he who sleeps with you now
knows where his heart is in this Easter Egg Hunt called
desire . . .

july,
the child's voice,
traffic's stutter-flow interspersed with silence;
and i have searched everywhere

wandick







you died my dear
the funeral was a simple thing
we said some words of praise
closed the cover
kicked the dirt
and put you from our thoughts
why disturb our dreams?

your horizon is past
you're dead
we said our words
cried our tears
and turned to go
why did you follow us back?

Joe Zulawski



*trim and tidy
neatly spruced
carcard beauty
seldom used*

*play with me lady jane
the oil stove is burning low
and on a green mountain
outside the window
a little dog lonely and sad
flutes a tune*

*prissy missy
a tailor cut
social bouncer
with a lofty strut*

*lady jane your cerebellum drips
thoughts on vaginal walls
of a sulphurous scent
the sad dog cooes a call
his cries creep along the grass
toying with each leaf*

*wrinkles ironed
starched fullness
covering the
jiggle gimmick*

*lady jane the placid placket at your throat
has a will of its own
sommoning gentlemen's finger-tips
the echo of the dog returns
rising like a mountain goat
from crag to crag*

*foundation build
girdle bounded
circumference
garter dangling*

*lady jane get up from where you lay
the ground is soft
and we have sowed our seed
the same dog smiles open-mouthed
catching his boomerang voice
which has had experience*

joe zulawski



