

**Some of My Favorite Things**

**By**

**Opal Louis Nations**

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## Genesis – The Creation of the Colors of the World

In the beginning of creation, when God made the pigments of heaven and earth, the earth was without downy beige Fallstraw Pink or Angel Good White, with shadows barely seen over the face of the abyss and a mighty wind that swept over the surface of the translucent waters.

God said, “Let there be French Taupe Pink,” and there was French Taupe; and God saw that the French Taupe was good, and he separated the Lace Cap Violet from the Plum Blossom Purple. He called the Lace Cap Violet day, and the Plum Blossom Purple night.

So evening came and it was Plum Blossom Purple and morning came and it was Lace Cap Violet. The first day was Lace Cap and Plum Blossom and French Taupe Pink.

\*

God said, “Let there be a vault between the luminous waters to separate Naïve Peach water from Honeysuckle white water.” So God made the vault, and separated the Naïve Peach water under the vault from the Honeysuckle white waters above it, and so it was; and God called the vault lemon heaven.

Evening came and it was pink water violet, and morning came and it was Plum Blossom; the second day was Lace Cap and Plum Blossom and French Taupe and pink water

\*

## Family Prayers

Bless us for our greenhouse gases that we may scorch things up and raise the level of the sea by between 20 and 140 centimeters.

Bless us our conservation of the malnourished, the poor, sick, homeless and bewildered masses so that we the few may continue to reap the fruits of self-righteousness.

Bless us our want of suffering, loss of life and severe economic damage in the deltas of the Nile, Ganges, Mekong, Yangtse and Mississippi rivers.

Bless us our complete annihilation of the Maldive Islands.

Bless us our loss of soil moisture in the mid-latitudes of the Northern Hemisphere, where most of the world's grain is grown.

Bless us also for the vast desiccation of both Africa and South America.

Bless us the impending dust-storms which shall sweep the great American plains and strip life-soil from around the withered roots of the wheatfields.

Bless us for our ability to change climate, direction and rate of ocean currents beyond reason.

Bless us that with added warmth we are able to make rice sterile and reduce the sexual reproductive capacity of trees.

Bless us our acid rain, our atmospheres full of nitrous oxides and Sulphur dioxides so that we may treat our eco-system to a slow painful exit.

Bless us our mercury in salmon and cadmium in geese.

Bless us our chloro-fluorocarbons for they shalt plunder the ozone of the north so that we may become cancerous.

Bless us for dumping as much lead, zinc and mercury into the Mediterranean as we do our rivers.

Bless us our growing concern for ourselves so that we may turn our heads, close our eyes, take a deep breath, and turn out the light.

## Notes from the Journals of Johnny Topaiga

I don't know about Kierkegaard. I have nothing against him, you understand, but sometimes I want to kill myself. That is when I am ashamed and afraid, when my whole life seems to be a mere small voice inside some wireless radio. But I find strength in something -- my signed photograph of Dolores Del Rio, how stunning she looked in a still from "Bird of Paradise" -- and other things like bacillus and trees. And then I want to go on, I want to go on but keep my eyes tightly shut. I know that I'll never pluck all the despair from my heart but always I look for those things that can save me.

\* \* \* \* \*

When I was eleven, my father committed me to my own moral decisions. It was Martha really. She kept a piece of finely preserved cabbage in her ear. How strange she was and how she loved to talk about Botticelli. Yes, it was cabbage and Botticelli that helped me graduate from unconscious despair, I mean from that stage of seeking and wishing for something that I was not.

At fifteen, I had a traumatic experience, Martha's little green leaf had moldered away. It had left an infection; she could no longer hear me speak to her about Botticelli's Venus, the wonders of the lobed scallop, the buoyancy, the sheer buoyancy of things. This upheaval was of conflict between popularity and standard. I had entered a stage of self-shame, a time when I thought the streets littered with painful, invisible pins. This was short-lived, however, as I made a very sincere commitment. I would let the soft hair on my legs gently caress the smoothness of my youthful cheeks. This actually involved a mystical confrontation. I cannot clarify this very easily.

\* \* \* \* \*

About this time, when alone and thinking one night, I figured that about a quarter of my life had passed. I was mildly terrified. My clothes began to look older on me. They seemed to age before I had time to realize that I, my physical aging, had done this thing. I have been taught about the immortal soul. Oh, how strongly I felt of making it big and strong by placing myself before the mirror, smiling, always smiling. "Your being will remain forever young, if you look kindly upon yourself," somebody told me.

I have also had secrets in the past (even until now.) Dare I tell? Yes, I will say it! It was not Martha whom I loved though we lay together. Truth to tell, it was her ear, it really was her ear, the ear, the cabbage leaf, the curled leaf. How the leaf and the ear excited me. Oh yes, I masturbated thinking of the splendid sight, the leaf rolled like a cone, the ear, as if the ear, a delicate pink invitation to ....

When I was twelve years of age, I fairly well believed that I was a king, or the equivalent, and when things weren't going well I was being conditioned for ruling purposes, my parents were testing me. I could see from their faces that they expected much of my behavior. I caught secret glances, the lowered eyelid, the smile that barely brushes the face but is full of meaning, a pass.

I also had the feeling of being spied on for picture purposes. I felt as if I might be the child torn away from parents at an early age, and whisked across the ocean, on the floor of a wicker basket. "I will return," I jokingly said to myself. "I will join my people."

\* \* \* \* \*

My life as far back as I can remember has been a searching self-awareness but mostly very undefined. I tumbled from one revelation to the next. I oddly remember quite well the first time that complete consciousness "hit" me. I was standing in the bathroom holding a fully agonized tube of toothpaste. I had tried but failed to produce the required red and white strips. I must have been about thirteen years old. The sinking and dizzy sensation of the independence of my existence from those about me was so terrifying and because I had turned both faucets on full, with the basin overflowing, soaking my clothes from the waist down, I had made a permanent imprint. I have never really lost this experience.

I came to a rather strange questioning of myself and agonized over self purpose when, perhaps ten years old, I thought for the first time about suicide and what would happen if I tried to commit the deed. Not that I ever intended to. How large the crowds at my wake, a lake of tears would form and swell, a natural, placid-looking lake, named after me of course. "He was a good fella, never once did he complain of his forbidden inheritance. He lived among us like one of us common folk," I mused.

Perhaps there would be a little squabble between my parents and myself and I would wonder what they would think if ever they found me dead, having committed suicide. Would they lie face down in a bathtub full of water and clench their fists, or would they simply put a small stone monument in our front yard next to where the old nightwatchman

upstairs kept his bicycle.... Not only that, but I also wanted to see the reactions of my friends and others I had known. "Would they raise their hats everytime they passed our house, or would they bring cakes now and then for my mother, and father seeing mother putting on weight, would he run off with a neighbor, that young brunette who always made a pass at him from behind a pair of suggestive panties when pegging out her assortment of underwear flags to dry on the clothesline?

Would my old friends be sorrowful or just mildly regretful that I should be so foolish as to throw away a truly promising life? I felt that this would be the way to find out how people really thought of me, and it would be a way for me to make myself known as an explicit self or thing in the center, right slap bang in the middle of the planetary system.

\* \* \* \* \*

I was thinking about repression, and how one might recover some of our lost feelings. When reciting a particular emotional phrase of my childhood, a weird feeling flowed over me. I began to sweat profusely and, shrinking in mind and body, became extremely afraid of the dark. A flashlight, a flashlight would have soothed me, a flashlight is such a comfort. Somehow a candle or a lighted match can add to one's fear of the gloom. People who make careers of darkness customarily use flashlights, but I had none of these things.

I shook with fright, held my mouth open as wide as it would go in the vain hope that my teeth would reflect what little light-catching glimmers resided there. I even tried holding up my fingernails in a desperate attempt to attract even the faintest glow, but the shadows in the room became shapes, became frightening unknowns. I could not scream. I was powerless to cry, rigid, like an object stripped of motive powers. I had returned to an early infancy state, which everyone knows, when lay helpless in your cot, alone, in an empty house, with every once familiar creak and crack and shadow in your house becoming increasingly horrifying.

The walls were coming for me, yes the walls wanted to avenge themselves of my pitiful occupation. I grabbed for something I could place between my teeth, bit down upon. Perhaps I could make myself so, so insignificant that to take my life the walls would shrink away from sight, not wanting to form any useful means of protection. The dread and perspiration remained with me for a full ten minutes. Slowly the darkness passed away and for seven days I could not think, I could not feel anything; I had become a week-long dream.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sometimes when I try to find out who I am, the person I see I dislike. I avoid looking at myself, meeting people and even when walking about, the sound of my shoe on the paving fills me full of shame. I try to pretend to be someone else, as another I would not have to face these problems. Life is much easier if in a brown paper bag you carry the outer leaves of a cabbage, rolled into funnels small enough to stay in the ear.

\* \* \* \* \*

At a quite early age I saw something which I interpreted from the silver screen as a footman, or even a butler. He was always black and I would imagine have a name like Charles or Henry. I always thought black servants had been asked to seem cheerful all the time. He looked right. The grimace seemed to match the white bow tie, the impeccable dress shirt, a matter of being in tune with one's shell.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was a bright, sunny afternoon and I was in the front yard, transfixed, staring into the cleavage of the brunette next door. She was going through the almost daily ritual of pegging out her wash. Using a dryer spent too much energy. But this was untrue. Every time she bent down to pull a pair of panties from her basket, my eyes retreated into her brassiere. It was one thing or the other, like a juggling act. The tension was unbearable. I used to be impatient, to long for that last piece of lingerie, the panties at the bottom of the basket, the ones which required that deep dip, that extra swatch of flesh.

All of a sudden, my attention was averted. "Something" or "someone" appeared to be walking down through what seemed like thin air, spears of light from a chaste silver tray blinded me, a pair of patent leather shoes flashed like beacons. I was shocked to my very roots. In a matter of about thirty to forty minutes everything I had ever done for which I felt any guilt flashed back and I fought for reasons by which to explain why I had done them and found myself at a complete loss.

This gradually passed away and I realized no one else had seen or experienced these feelings. Even Martha did not see it. Until now I have only tried to tell two people of this. However, the flash gave to me a constant awareness and questioning of everything that I have experienced since – awake or asleep – real or unreal. It took me some time to win Martha back.

\* \* \* \* \*



I can remember that when a child, I was walking along the seashore and suddenly I began to see things at a particular moment in a much different relationship from what they had appeared before. The tall buildings, the freeways, the walkways, the street signs and their garish glow seemed suddenly to actually be, whereas the sand, the blue sky and waves lapping against the shore like the thirsty tongue of a dog, beforehand, had only formed part of a dream.

\* \* \* \* \*

How often have I sat in contemplation and felt that there was a something in me – yet apart from me – that was evaluating my self and my situation. I have spoken before about being beside myself but this was something different. It was like I in one way was taking an inner yet aerial view of self – yet I seemed to be in all three places. By that I mean within, without and above self. Furthermore, I didn't feel like just me. Questions like – “What are you doing down there?” “What's going on inside here” and “Have I always been stranded out here?” crossed my mind. If only I could enter the fourth dimension, how simple the reversal of things, I could collide with my own being, and at the same moment appear ten feet away, waving goodbye and wishing myself all the luck in the world.

\* \* \* \* \*

The other world is “my” world. “I” am the world, with contact, or maybe I should say with a personal audience, a great crowd of people, all “me.” During these experiences I go quite deaf, my own imagined thunderous applause seems to occur too soon. I am letting myself in on some marvelous personal secret or discovery of something. I do not know and yet am fully aware of its content. I'm sure, if only the adulation would stop, I'd be drawn into an overwhelming feeling, one which I am certain would be most pleasant.

\* \* \* \* \*

My life since I was sixteen has been one of fighting plurality. I have not wanted to assume it. It is my feeling that my parents' desire to create this in me, to “put us” (by that they mean me) “on the stage under the spotlights.” This has manifested in me a strong desire to achieve levitation.

\* \* \* \* \*

Having been brought up by immigrant parents, I feel I have perhaps had to recognize some of the harsher realities of life, but only in regard to other women (other than Martha), the fact that other women exist, outside of my experiences with and my desires for Martha, our talks on Botticelli's works, for instance, though now in the language of the deaf and dumb fill my heart with the utmost joy.

Still, other areas of experience do fill me with the severest dread. I learned how to wait at table, how to take orders and serve drinks in the hope that this accumulation of knowledge would build a kind of "buffer zone." With time, however, the "ultimate" questions popped up, and thusly my "buffer zone" was attacked. Why had I walked up one of the legs of the table, at which sat the senator, his wife, and companions? Why had cabbage leaves been found, like rolled cigarettes, in my breast pocket? The manager had attacked me, fired me at a moment's notice. Why was I unable to give "real" answers, when "real" answers ought to have been forthcoming?

\* \* \* \* \*

Particularly frightening is the "idea" of death. Though I find death itself at times to be most welcome, the "idea" of death raises all kinds of anxiety. Does the "idea" of death itself exist? And if so, is it alive, and if alive, can it take life away? And if it can snatch life away, why is life itself considered something special, something more than death? This is nonsense, for if death were a lower or higher form of life, it would have a memory, a very special memory. This memory (because of the likelihood of it being either superior or inferior in regard to its own intelligence) simply would not say to my body: you are 150 pounds of strutting garbage. No, death's memory would indeed reject that idea. Better still, if I learnt to master it, taught myself how to use it, I would not feel as frustrated as I now am. I could create for myself a meaningful life, bound up in death's total unification. Oh, how frightening is the "idea" of death should it wander alone in its own half life.

\* \* \* \* \*

One afternoon as I sat in a room looking out the window at the sun melting behind a low, long pillow of cloud, I was suddenly overcome with joy and cold chills covered my body. The sky was as red as St. Emilion wine, and it seemed to me that Charles or Henry was making himself known by raising his chaste silver cocktail server. The glasses struck one another with the sound of the pealing of bells. It was a touching scene. I was filled with joy and thanks to Charles or Henry who had made me as I am and who was allowing me to live in this world, reflected briefly by the shine of his patent shoes.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have had moments when I can honestly say that I stood alone in a large black void, a total isolation where nothing pierced me – I, alone, in a dead silence. I had no one and no one cared. I cannot go to bed at night and sleep without first fixing my eyes on that fading photograph of the lovely Delores Del Rio.

## Plot Outlines for Popular-Fiction Writers

A motorist drives up to a gas station and asks for some water. The attendant starts to pour it into the radiator and is astonished when the motorist tells him to put it in the gas tank. He obeys orders, however; after which the motorist unzips his fly, pulls out his penis and with the aid of a greasy rag, works up a hard-on. The attendant hides behind a pump and pretends to be busy as the motorist directs a stream of sperm into the gas tank - which had been almost empty before the water had been poured in. The attendant, still hidden from view, asks the stranger what he was doing. The stranger informs him that he is making a high octane solution with his sperm which is prepared in the male body when a list of common objects is conjured up in the mind. The solution produces a high-octane fuel. The attendant is skeptical, whereupon the stranger drives off quite a distance and comes back. The attendant is flabbergasted. But, having seen the man's fluid work, he induces the stranger to sell him the list of common objects. The stranger sells the attendant the list for \$1,000, then drives away - and victimizes as many other attendants as he can find. The sperm had entered the water in the gas tank, but the tank had been divided into 2 compartments, one of which, connected with the engine, had contained gasoline. Many gas attendants from all over the country were arrested by police for indecent exposure and the sale of gas dropped as word spread.

\* \* \* \* \*

A couple of newlyweds, honeymooning in the Austrian Tyrol, try their hand at mountain climbing. When they are at a dangerous spot, the husband slips, the rope breaks and the husband falls hundreds of feet. The body is not recovered. The villagers, who know their mountains, say that her husband had fallen into a glacier which, moving with extreme slowness, will hold the body - frozen - for fifty years, and will finally release it into the river. The bride goes home. Fifty springtimes later, she returns. She is 78 years old and haggard. She goes to the spot along the river where the body should re emerge. Soon she sees a young man—her husband—swimming furiously down river with the current. The faithful wife calls out to him, but her voice is lost under the sound of the gushing torrents. Moments later, a young female swimmer is seen, in hot pursuit, a piece of rope severed at one end trailed the surface behind her

\* \* \* \* \*

A smart businessman tells his wife – a very shrewd woman - that he has invested all their money in a lot of Wall Street stocks, which he feels sure will quickly make them a fortune. She argues with him, begs him to get rid of them. The husband laughs at her. Together, they take a very long vacation in the Maine woods. When they get back to their penthouse apartment in New York, he grabs the newspaper to look up the market reports. The stock has reached rock bottom and is worthless. In a fit of absolute anguish the man jumps out of the window. The woman calmly descends by the elevator, clasping the old newspaper with which she mops up the mess.

\* \* \* \* \*

A drab little woman who pays little attention to clothes, and who has let herself slide quite a bit since her marriage, finds herself in danger of losing her husband to another woman - smart, young, lively and physically attractive. She forces herself to perk up; deliberately, she assembles an alluring wardrobe of expensive, fashionable gowns and goes about the business of being attractive. In the end her husband, seeing all the chic new clothes, realizes his true vocation. He becomes a drag queen and runs off with a young man.

\* \* \* \* \*

John Pond suspects his wife, Sandra, of having an affair with Michael Ditch, his best friend and plans to kill her in a road accident. The Ponds go for a drive, suddenly the car swerves and they hit a tree. Sandra is killed but John manages to free himself from the wreck without a scratch. He even makes it appear that a passing motorist who could not avoid colliding with the smashed car and had come upon Sandra's body, a few moments after the crash, might have murdered the girl and stolen her money. The passerby establishes his innocence, however. A few months later, Pond, driving alone on a lonely road on Long Island, hears a woman screaming somewhere down a lane. He leaps from his car and rushes to the woman whom he finds is his wife. Next to her at the wheel Pond sees himself a dead man. John Pond lets out a scream of terror, and then suddenly a car is heard speeding up behind him. Michael Ditch is at the wheel. Ditch knocks Pond down and drives off. When the police arrive they find nothing apart from a wrecked car with the dead Mr. & Mrs. Pond slumped over the front seats.

## The Moaning of Paradise

Sunrise entered the soul of a man  
and again he forgot it  
then dawn suddenly steeped in memory  
blacked out  
so stars eyes of night  
began a day for themselves  
they approached an ocean's edge  
where stood a hedge wreathed in smiles  
beneath which  
a great wide shadow passed  
"There's a knot in the earth," they said  
reducing with grace

## Celebration

Acres of meadow, tall, stocky, sweep in arcs of wind,  
spittled with dew, tears for the worms to make wells,  
beyond this a house, built so long ago it tints itself in  
accord with the seasons, red brick broad and squat,  
on its own rug of vegetables, trees, fruit bushes and  
an out-house for weighing down one of its raised  
corners

the house, spacious inside, path unrolled by many  
feet up to paneled door under porch-way, interior  
resplendent to high degree, a tropical grace at odds  
with natural things without

personal elaboration, perhaps a state of mind given  
over more to the town than to the orgy of many  
growing things, the hallway a confederacy of furniture  
styles so advanced one is at a loss to disassemble it in  
order to place it again into the earth from which it  
came

a token vase of blooms the only sign of letting outside  
in, flowers die delicately, false drapes conceal non-  
existent windows, a small chamber, chairs in waiting,  
people of the inner court, advisory, armrest to  
armrest, ordered rank, refined tact, double doors  
beyond open into spacious morning room looking out  
over contrast between oily green and watery blue

light distills its space, a shaded corner, crib mounted  
on cradle, smothered with pink lace, ostentatiously in  
contrast with a quiet, austere surrounding, within this  
ceremonial young brier, a warm object although never  
quite unpacked as a gift, shaken and held near the  
ear, as if to assure one that it owns its own melody of  
life

a child, a few days of age, of indeterminate gender,  
so compact its appearance, features as if freshly  
unwrapped of greaseproof paper and tightly bound  
lengths of twine, a red complexion and seems to lose  
hope gradually, the blood fleeing from the epicenter in  
anger, ridding itself, its burdensome incarcerated life

but finding no escape beneath the all encompassing  
skin, body seems to pitch and roll away from

sympathy in its newly acquired state, its unused open air body, the face frightened and cowering, its wants diminishing

it wants to be tighter tied, for its experience of distancing itself with the objects about it is as foreign, as if unassured by a woman whose belly so immense it finds itself impossible to grasp at something to prevent it from falling into an ocean of endless space, the deep folds about the eyes, the strangled cheeks, the mouth barely able to be itself

is it the weight of the face upon it, is it suffering the weight of immense pressure, does the child travel at rapid velocity between birth and its first handful of days on earth? does it enter life from an unknown distance beyond our planet, does a certain innocence burn away as it enters our atmosphere?

should the child have passed into its mother again, should it have arisen into the chest and the protection afforded by the rib cage? are we all exposed to a light, a sun which has made monsters of us? does being born of a woman mean the necessary replacing of our tight bundled selves into a womb in a being we ourselves have mistakenly exterminated from the entire face of the earth long ago

or do we not see them, a manifestation made evident only by the fact that our senses shut them out, are we really in need of light and sun and moon and stars as all other natural things?

or are we to experience them through the eye of a womb which offers us, so readily, the benefits of being able to see beyond ourselves in a manner which allows us to see thoroughly and organically through inside of our momentary being, and on into the smallest microbe which abounds beyond all known and unknown physical boundaries, to understand these things, and be the altered person accordingly

the child's face in some way impresses us of this possibility, so small now but soon to unfold, grow into a shape we call exquisite form, it will soon long for someone



will this someone be a person with whom one can  
share the first few days of life, if able to use such  
eloquence, will she then go on to be the mother of  
another wound up tight in her own elastic belly

the child's hands, how could they then knowing of the  
mother's throwing out of its small raw body, prevent  
itself from birth by pressing against the inner walls of  
the belly, perhaps cling to folds of flesh

or realize its hopelessness and take its own life by  
gently stuffing its hands into its mouth, hands barely  
evolved from the clumsiness of being webbed

this fact brings to mind a fantastic school of water-  
infants, swimming forever beneath the surface of a  
clear lake, the sum of its total life-giving sustenance  
drawn through the ends of reeds, thriving in marble-  
colored meadows upon the riverbed

webbed hands that perhaps were clasped, palm to  
palm, wherein pearls lived, and on occasion the child  
gazed upon them, read its future

the pearls distracted it from its want of growing  
into a child, sink to the lower depths, become heavy,  
be as awkward in movement as a rolled stone

the morning room, the child, the child cries, is crying  
the fast moving sound of speech, is it through joy or  
sadness, makes this noise, an indication that this  
newly born is moving at immense velocity between  
birth and its first handful of days on earth, through an  
eternity

soon to be lost, deep within itself, it cries as if buried  
in snow, from inside of smothering lacework that  
seems to betray its feelings, it appears as if an aura  
of helplessness surrounds it, keeps the child from  
taking flight, born in the wing of its own shrill voice,  
orchestrates the penetrating shafts of light, from a  
height which renders them in a collection of shapes,  
each of them contained and blended into  
nourishments, which bring to life the shapes of things  
once existing in place of all that now appears  
motionless

but the child is left aching with itself, a lost parcel,  
moist, its liquid matter spilling out over its chin infused  
with the salt water streaming from its eyes, as if to  
float itself off on the back of a turtle, born in the sea of  
the child's tears, brought into being by will, and its  
own primitive yet colorful imagination

this fresh warm soul gives off a fuzzy wooly glow, its  
movements awkward, not quite human-like, more a  
model, a prototype all wood and glue, seemingly its  
purpose to determine outcome of super-real  
pregnancy, we have only a working model that  
teaches us the tricks of the trade

next time the mother will have a child, after first  
eliminating all rough and shoddy imperfections, next  
time her newborn will acquire modified  
characteristics, the mother will take care of this by  
putting her swollen body through a series of feats not  
uncommon to the butterfly

she will dream of her next child as being one that  
passes before her frequently, but is in reality far from  
sight, having passed only in imagination, thus  
alleviating all possible anxieties in regard to its  
upbringing and could very well convince herself out of  
fear that this second child appears familiar yet is  
unfamiliar to her

believing that by some right, given her exclusively,  
she will succeed in giving birth to herself, and now  
envisaged the world through the mind and limbs of  
her perfect self

the morning room glows with infant radiation, as if to  
show one that one will have to apply extreme  
passion, if desirous to see how big the child will grow,  
for one is troubled by the look on its face, a  
determined effort of will to grow smaller by the day,  
and by wanting to reach out and grasp the electric  
lamps suspended from the plastered ceiling

one becomes worried of its diet, its wish to swallow  
light, its wish to sustain radiation, the shadows cast  
about the room barely change in accordance with the  
child's movements, as it continues its efforts to alter  
them

the shadows know when a human being is large enough to disturb their accustomed configurations, but less and less of them tempt the child as stressfully they might, as the child becomes increasingly aware of their unstable personalities

the child alone in the home, its cries alter only the direction in which the apples fall from the trees in the tiny orchard at the rear of the house, for they all fall where limbs afford the most effective shade

the cries have filled the spaces in all the rooms of the house, and the house overflows with them, if this continues the home will get smaller, try to soften the sound which jars upon its nerves, making the very foundations sink into the earth an inch by the hour

we will not speak of the Father, for he has been away from the house many months, he is as accustomed to the child as he is familiar with the dawn of a new day, as the dawn itself, as accustomed to the child, as the child its father

the effects of life on this child is approximate with the lengths of silence being shaved away in the depths of its tender flesh, the swaddling blanket wishes to take up the space where its charge is held, it might surely grow by binding, in place of its rowdy jelly, so much sound coming from a bed of lace, a bed only different in size from the lavish wake of a fresh corpse

the large Persian rug hears its cry and freezes a little, the mantle-clock ticks louder to make itself heard, the portraits on the walls huddle together, the glass in the casement windows make superhuman efforts to resist the passing of the light, thus beckoning darkness and rest

the infant turns on its side, and the pillow breathes a heavy sigh, the sofa embraces its embroidered cushions, the side table crosses its legs, one would think this ageless mortal rooted to its crib, for it struggles to be free of it, strong hands needed to pull it free

we might see fine translucent roots growing along its back, fibers clinging to sods of soil, earth not quite earth, may rub lightly to remove parts

time has accumulated rest inside the child, the infant passes into sleep, the crib gently closes in around it, a refined quality of silence, silence which trembles nakedly into the night's hollow chest

back through the double doors, then the chairs in waiting, small chamber, along the hall to the grand oak door

passing through it onto the porch, its roof brutally cutting into the sharpness of the brimful light, a shadow on the pathway where no object stands, yet a train is cast, the shadow is still

no sun could have made this by turning its back, a shadow without attendant form, a few steps nearer, raise the head, look up, the figure of a woman, twenty feet up out of earth-rootedness, no harness, no machine, poised in air, in defiance of gravity

stretched out on her right side, elbow supporting side of head, elbow supported by nothing, except the luxuries of the winds, smile on her face as lightly given as weightlessness instilled within it, the body an effortless form

she floats, because she has given birth, a part of her, the long distended belly-weight is gone, growth squeezed away from her, the earth as yet unaccustomed to the redistribution of her weight, her former self is caught off guard, unable to readjust quickly enough, its lazy mind in the oppressive heat slows down change

Mother in rapture of being able to be her own surgeon, without the pain and emptiness of amputation, only believed whispers ascending in wisps through the walls of her stomach, she will remain a few days, may even turn a golden brown, but will, during a gradual process, take her mind of the leash, set it free

it will wander about, born over the fruit bushes by the gathered smells of the vegetables, he will pass into the essences of sunlight, the will turning into sunlight, the wells the worms made, meadow spittled with dew, tall, stocky, sweep in arcs of wind.

## A Cycle of Mystery

A usually timorous and sullen woman married to a weighty German personality, once father of a wisecracking, tawdry blonde and canteen spoon- playing sister to a gentle-mannered male American ideal of a charming English cousin of a sometimes funny but typically nose-y neighbor and wise and witty mum married to a harassed but kindly father and suave professional friend of a husky-voiced tomboy and sometimes tease though always ready with a smile or a tear for her tired mother, a one-time spinster aunt and sympathetic nurse to a beaming, bespectacled man of effortless heartiness although sometimes henpecked or sinister in front of the petite, squeaky-voiced, determined Mexican feminist sister of a massive hombre with an expansive personality matching that of his daughter, a pulchritudinous, world famous Fifties sex-kitten with small but significant talents developed by a tough ex-cop, sheriff, trail boss and shady investigator, now a solid, dependable, pipe-smoking companion to a nice, placid, pert chorus graduate in love with a go-getting, apoplectic businessman, partner of a chubby hood with a heart of gold donated by a noble but lanky Russian with wild gestures and prominent eyes reminiscent of a minor gangster and downtrodden little man adopted by a torrid cabaret singer once engaged to an incisive but rather stolid, mad doctor and teutonic villain much unlike the poised, debonair or nose-y parker type familiar to the soft-centered, thoughtful bully whose buddy, a rubber-faced impressionist and lovable bumbler, murdered a lanky absent-minded eccentric over a friendly but monstrous matron who kidnapped an unruly weakling with psychological maladjustments similar to those of a sturdy, slow-thinking grotesque female impersonator or wiry Albanian-born, excitable ballet-master and tutor to a rich, soft-spoken, serious-looking, highly respected gentleman uncle of a reproachfully mannered,

pretentiously mean, and strangely burlesque  
dwarf-like sidekick to a suave, high class crook  
whose boss, a lugubrious Scot with inimitable  
gestures and diction, betrayed a bemused  
scoundrel and cad engaged to a concoction of  
blonde hair, defiant expression and immobile  
upper lip which sometimes made her seem a  
garrulous, shapeless but endearing dotty  
spinster whose friend, a usually timorous and  
sullen woman married to a weighty German  
personality

### 3 Major Rock & Roll Vocal Groups of the 1950s

#### The Five Vegetables:

Members:

Mario D'Carrot – lead root –  
replaced by Eddie Cucumber  
Paul Potato – first tuber tenor  
Tony Turnip – second tuber tenor  
Joe Greens – baritone cabbage  
Charles Squash – bass gourd  
Hometown: Briar Patch, Miss.

The group was first cultivated in 1958 and sang at various Harvest Festivals in Mississippi. They all combined in writing a song called appropriately “She Put French On My Salad” in 1958 which they took to Mack Market of Plant Records. Mack liked the taste of the song and released it on Dirt, a subsidiary label. When the song captured the taste buds of thousands of New Yorkers, Rake & Hoe purchased the tune and replanted it on their subsidiary label, Fertilize Records. When Fertilize went bankrupt that year due to poor manure management, it was released on the Rustic label, subsidiary of Rake & Hoe. The record had the distinction of growing out of 3 different labels.

#### Discography:

June 1958	“She Put French On My Salad” – Dirt/Fertilize/Rustic 206
September 1958	“I Dig Your Great Big Strawberry Patch” – Row 1699
April 1961	“Rock Around The Rock-Garden” – Weed 596

\* \* \* \* \*

#### The Jock Straps:

Members:

William Pouch – led tenor – 1929  
Bill Webbing – first tenor – 1946  
Ron Mesh – second tenor – 1941  
Billy Hernia – 1936  
Nicky Support – 1943

The group was first formed in the suspensory department of New York City Hospital where they were all being fitted with post-op supporters at the time. The year was 1953 and they decided to call themselves “The Mesh Bags.” They much admired the group sounds of “The Spinal Corsets,” “The pessaries” and “The Coloslogators,” and were influenced greatly by their orthopedic singing styles. They would practice, naked as always, jock straps in place, on street corners in Harlem, trying to perfect their sound and feel comfortable.

In late 1953 the group changed their name to “The Jock Straps.” Gus Groin, the group’s manager, got them a contract with Arnold Inguinal’s Truss Records and

they recorded their first hit for Komfit Records with the song “Life Is Very Sanitary.”

Even though the group had poor exposure (record-wise) and some censorship and contract difficulties, they have remained one of the East Coast’s favorite prosthetic rhythm & blues groups over the past twenty years. Several of their songs have become Orthotic R&B classics. Today Willie Pouch is editor of a highly successful New York leather bondage magazine and sings only in his giant bathroom with another fellow and a girl. They call themselves “Two Springs and a Pad.”

Discography:

June 1954 “Life Is Very Sanitary” – Komfit Records 304

\* \* \* \* \*

The Obese:

Members: Norm Gross – lead – Phila., PA., Oct. 21, 1937  
 Bud Blubber – first tenor – Cambridge, MD  
 Don “Lumpy” Laskins – second tenor –  
 Southampton, Long Island, NY  
 Dave Bloated Lee – baritone – New Albany,  
 Indiana  
 Clarence Cakes

The five fellows formed a singing group out of desperation in 1955, while undergoing weight loss treatment at Pittsburgh’s downtown “Sweat-it-Off” club. The group sweated and sang each day at the club as they began to develop their pitching and rolling sound.

In late 1956, Clarence wrote a song at the electric trim-it-down reducing machine called “Do The Jello” which he suggested the group record. This was at the same time they had jointly won the human steam-rolling competition sponsored by the highways division of Pittsburgh’s Public Works Department. The puffy pals went to the home of a friend named Tubby Butt, an overweight D.J. in Pittsburgh, and recorded the song over a sagging table of ice cream and potato pies. The room was so small for our overfed fellas, and so poorly equipped acoustically, that some of the members had to lie down and stack themselves up to get the sound of belching-in-harmony they were looking for.

After they recorded the song, they sold it to Corpulent Records in Fat City, where it became an instant hit. A few months later, in early 1957, Swine Records purchased the recording and released it nationally, and signed the group to the label. The brawny buddies chose to call themselves “The Obese” because together, standing clustered around one microphone and



raising themselves on their toes, they could disappear with a crash through the floor.

“The Obese” had Dave and Don, two huge white members, and Norm, Bud and Clarence, who although they seemed slim in body corsets, were pudgy and black. The lardy vocalists were one of the few hit-making mixed groups to exhibit distended visceral signs of pretended malnutrition.

After “Do The Jello” became a national hit, Fleshy Records tried to lure the group to record for them with a fat contract plus all they could eat. All of them except Bud had been over 360 pounds when they signed with Swine. They were not legally bound to Swine because the Swine contract stipulated a very excessive body weight, a load which no longer applied.

So when Fleshy offered more food, they all left for the new label. Bud remained with Swine and formed another Obese group with all pudgy black members while the other four fats went to Fleshy and added another beefy black member named Bill Bumps. At Fleshy they recorded “Diet Soda” on which “Lumpy” belched out the lead, and “When You Grow Too Slim To Remember” on which Norm Gross appeased his appetite. These were the two biggest hits they had for Fleshy.

Swine released “I Can’t Find My Good Thing,” another Clarence Cakes composition, on which Bud sang lead. Subsequently, during the summer of 1957, there were two Obese hits on the charts, “I Can’t Find My Good Thing” on Swine and “Diet Soda” on Fleshy, at the same time. This led to hunger strikes, forced feeding and many unresolved legal entanglements. By December 1, 1957, Fleshy got complete control of the group and its culinary requirements.

Today, “Lumpy” lives in a reinforced steel and concrete fast food restaurant in Miami. Norm is a pig-food collector in New York. Clarence lives in Brooklyn and has slimmed down considerably, this earning the nickname “The Wrinkled Pencil,” and the startlingly reduced Bud Blubber exists on a diet of unleavened bread and holy water. He resides in Pittsburgh.

Discography:

January 1957	“Do The Jello” – Swine 384
June 1957	“I Can’t Find My Good Thing” – Swine 412
July 1957	“Diet Soda” – Fleshy 553
September 1957	“When You Grow Too Slim To Remember” – Fleshy 569

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## Receipts for Certain Luxuries

I was born in a pod  
I was born and was shod  
I was born in a suit  
I have skin made from jute  
I have two disquisitions  
I have three predilections  
I have four blood conditions  
and five more transitions  
I will clap till I'm clean  
I will sprout till I'm green  
I will dance till I'm round  
I will swim overground  
I will sing till I fly  
and will dream when I cry  
I will kiss till it scalds  
I will love you with colds  
I will plough you a heart  
I will steam you apart  
I will snore when I stroll  
and make you a soul  
I can drum with my rib  
I can write like a squid  
I can melt like a tear  
I can eat with my ear  
I can wake like a dawn  
I can take any form  
I can snow like the slum  
I can swell when I run  
I can shrink as I drown

I can vanish when brown  
I can open like a play  
I can multiply all day  
I can laugh like a stone  
and smoke with a comb  
I can sneeze like a cloud  
I can lean like a crowd  
I can heal every death  
I can steal your own breath  
I can reverse the unreal  
I can sew with an eel  
I can sandwich the sea  
and set corpses free  
I can make sawblades of stars  
I can put storms into jars  
I can bolt down your shadow  
and put teeth in pianos  
I can button the sky  
and roll film in my eye  
I can squat like a room  
And soon  
And soon when nature retires  
like a perfectly elegant creature,  
we will have left only the memory  
of our own old wives tales

***Excerpts From***  
**Opal's Lexicon of Free Association**

Absentee	A stay-at-home golfer permitted to play his or her opponent by sending photographs of various strokes through the mail
Acutilingual	A sharp, pointed instrument used to simulate fellatio
Albino	A computer programmer from the Balkan Peninsula
Algebra	A brassiere with cups composed of multicellular pockets of salt-water and/or tiny organisms
Almanac	The art of whacking one's mother
Alpine wall-flower	A shy Swiss who doesn't like to dance
Ambience	A hospital limousine used for transporting mental patients
Ambisexual	A two-handed dildo
Aquatone	Any watersport
Astrakhan	Highly sophisticated fecal waste disposal unit used by astronauts in deep space
Autobiography	A person who writes an account of another person's life while locked in the trunk of his or her car
Automat	Flying carpet as described in old Arabian fairy tales
Bacteria	A yoghurt restaurant or health food dining room in college etc., where patrons wait on themselves
Bangalore	Wild orgy held once a year at Mysore in Southern India
Barbeque	A line-up outside a sex-shop specializing in inflatable novelties
Bedbug	A listening device used by detectives to help solve cases of adultery
Bedside manner	Slang term used to describe the contents of a chamber-pot
Bifocals	A pair of partially blind folk-singing twins

Bikini	An extremely brief two-piece cigarette lighter
Canaan	The heaven of Jewish dogs
Chauffeur	A blatant exhibitionist
Comforter	A quilted toilet bowl cover
Cover charge	Patrons of a restaurant who after finishing a meal and having almost died of fright when handed the check, grab a tablecloth each and with it thrown over their heads, make a mad dash for the exit
Cremate	To drop non-dairy coffee creamer into freshly roasted coffee
Diorama	A scenic display, as in three-dimensional showers of diarrhea against a painted background
Double breasted	A female with overlapping breasts
Enchilada	To shut oneself in the freezer
Fetlock	A tuft of female hair used to excite erotic feelings
Flyleaf	Used to cover over the genital areas of the nude figure in old religious oil paintings
Garter snake	A person with an underwear fetish
Geriatrics	Fun and games devised by German prisoners of war
Goethe	A German sock suspender used to hide rolled manuscript by authors out of favor with views held by the government of the day
Goiter	An inflammation of the lower leg caused by carrying overgenerous amounts of forbidden manuscript under the goethe, hence the expression "goiter under goethe"
Hemorrhoid	A Russian spy satellite in an orbit around the earth
Hypocrite	A baby hippopotamus
Igloo	An Eskimo public comfort station, usually dome-shaped and built of blocks of packed ice
Incubus	A vehicle for the transportation of premature babies

Intestate	A member of a religious order whose doctrine requires the removal of the testicles
Invention	To have only one buttock
Jocular	A type of slang spoken by football players
Kamacite	A kind of solid coal-like fuel burned in braziers in homage to the God of erotic desire
Katakana	The festival of felines which takes place in Japan every year, where trained cats perform all manner of clever and unusual tricks before a festive general public
Labor union	An organization that protects the rights of pregnant women
Lamprey	A type of large moth attracted by the glare of electric light
Logarithm	A traditional song belonging to the old folk music repertoire of Canadian lumbermen
Lovelorn	A shaggy rug or carpet upon which one satisfies one's sexual desires
Maximum	A full-time working mother with a large family
Mediocre	The 15th Century sport of pissing in another's glass of mead
Necrophiliac	A person with an erotic neck-tie collection
Nudge	A particularly offensive nudist (slang)
Nymphalid	False eyelashes worn by prostitutes
Olyphant	An alcoholic's nightmare
Onomatopoeia	A misguided streak of urine
Ordure	To hold out against insult and abusive, foul language
Ouch	A small, upholstered cushion for keeping pins
Parapet	Household animal kept by person or persons living in a high-rise apartment
Passover	Jewish air display
Peccadillo	A small, offensive cucumber

Perverse	Iranian lyric poetry
Pesc	Instrument worn in the vagina in various Spanish-speaking countries to prevent uterine displacements
Petite	A small stone breast or charm kept by men of certain Eskimo tribes upon their radiators to enhance their libido
Petticoat	An undergarment worn to muffle petulance
Pettish	Any non-sexual object that abnormally excites a dog or cat's erotic feelings, i.e. tree stumps or upholstered furniture
Petunia	A poodle with showy, funnel-shaped genitals
Pew	Vomit on a church bench
Phooey	The contents of garbage cans in back of Chinese restaurants
Pile-driver	Instrument for putting small screws into hemorrhoids
Pixie	A professional photographer employed by a gay men's magazine
Plaster of Paris	A term used when describing the guano-covered exteriors of well-known Parisian buildings and monuments
Pneumonia	A large amount of freshly minted bills
Poltroons	Loose-fitting trousers stuffed with poultry feathers and quilted for use on expeditions to the North Pole
Poncho	A Spanish-American cloak with a gusset in the front to accommodate a pot belly
Puberty	The church bench upon which a young maiden loses her honor
Quadrennial	4 homosexuals who meet every 4 years for close personal relationships ( <i>see: quadrilingual</i> )
Rectory	A residence for gay priests
Rotunda	The annual weight-watchers' convention

Rubella	The notorious Spanish noblewoman who gained renown for wearing red polka dot evening gowns
Rumple	To crease the skin of the buttocks
Salami	A welcome mat used by the peoples of the Arab world
Sanitarium	A museum that houses a sample history of women's sanitary napkins
Sari	Hindu word meaning to be full of sorrow, pity or regret
Satchel	A tote bag for carrying Louis Armstrong records
Scalpel	American Indian war axe
Schmaltz	A small-sized malted milk
Scurf	A piece of cloth worn over the head to hide dandruff
Semantics	The study of the development and changes of fluids secreted by male reproductive organs
Semaphore	A sleeveless garment worn over the dress by patients during artificial insemination procedures
Semicolon	Diarrhea
Sheet-music	the sounds of a radio alarm clock
Shrug	A Jewish prayer-mat
Skid-row	Parking lot for snowmobiles
Slip-shod	To wear ice skates
Smog	The fart of a cat
Smorgasbord	A wooden trestle table-top used in Swedish morgues to lay out dead, unsavory-looking bodies
Smother	An overzealous mother
Squee-gee	A Japanese transit official employed as commuter-packer during the rush hours
Subpoena	The penis floating in bathwater



Synod	An elderly member at a church council meeting taking a nap
Tad-pole	A little Polish boy
Tankard	A drunken tank commander
Taxidermy	Cab driver's disease, an inflammation of the skin covering the buttocks
Teetotaler	A golf swing which hits the ball but totals the tee
Testicle	A small, soundproofed booth into which a contestant enters to answer questions on T.V. quiz shows
Thrombosis	A dangerous dob of spittle that sometimes blocks large brass wind instruments with slides or movable sections
Trail blazer	A Day-Glo colored jacket worn by backpackers at night
Trillion	A sub-species of Nightingale
Turnover	A holiday for unemployed Anglo-Saxons, celebrating their deliverance from hope of ever finding a job in North America, i.e. "The beast of the turnover."
Umpteen	A teenage official who administers rules in Little League sports
Urania	An unusual cloudburst of urine that fell over Greece, circa 402 A.D., as recorded by Chas Fort
Vagabond	Any form of chastity belt
Verdure	The excrement of mice and rats
Vice versa	A depraved sodomist
Wind jammer	To fart in the bath
Windlass	Female member of an orchestra's wind section
Xenophobia	The fear of being shut up with a group of Zen Buddhists
Yogi	A person on a strict yoghurt diet
Zenith	Wife of the founder of Buddhist enlightenment
Zucchini	A sausage-shaped bathing suit

## If a Hurricane

Listen for further warnings and advice on battery radio, if a hurricane  
If you see a hurricane coming  
Move into a sturdy basement, if a hurricane  
If you see a hurricane arriving  
Board up windows and brace doors with good lumber, if a hurricane  
If you see a hurricane moving

\*

Check easy-to-prepare emergency food, if a hurricane  
If you hear a hurricane approaching  
Set about emergency drinking water, if a hurricane  
If you feel a hurricane advancing  
Have flashlights and emergency lights ready, if a hurricane  
If a hurricane is attacking

\*

Secure all that may be blown around or torn loose, if a hurricane  
If a hurricane is passing through  
Open window or door on lee of house, if a hurricane  
If a hurricane is due  
Be sure you have gas in your car, if a hurricane  
If a hurricane is assaulting

\*

Stay in a safe place, if a hurricane  
If a hurricane looks offensive  
Make emergency repairs, if a hurricane  
If a hurricane is shifting  
Keep calm, then you will better cope, if a hurricane  
If a hurricane is blowing your way

\* \* \*

**Proverbial Tale**  
**(A text composed entirely of proverbs)**

He was a bold man that first ate an oyster, his hair grows through his hood like a house on fire. Fire is a good servant but a bad master when the sun sets bright and clear soon hot, soon cold, born on the wrong side of the blanket where the bee sucks honey, the spider sucks poison.

Out of sight, out of mind from pillar to post like water off a duck's back much would have more hair than wit soon enough if well enough to burn the candle at both ends to add insult to injury when the mist comes from the hill short and sweet.

She that is born a beauty is half married to smell of the lamp that is well spoken, that is well taken to shut the stable door after the horse has bolted far from eye, far from heart as ugly as sins are not known till they are acted out of debt even out of danger one cannot be in two places at once.

He to whom God gave no sons the devil gives nephews to wash dirty linen in public, to beat about the bush as calm as a clock-strike, while the iron is hot nearest the heart, nearest the mouth where the horse lies down, there, some hairs will be found as quick as thought, bare as the birch at yule even.

Be it better, be it worse, a chip off the old block soon got, soon spent, in giving and taking, it is easy mistaking a pretty kettle of fish, as welcome as water in one's shoes as soft as silk between the devil and the deep blue sea.

Beware of the forepart of a woman, the hind part of a mule, and all sides of a priest as right as rain though old and wise yet still advise to buy and sell and live by the loss as sick as a dog who more than he is worth doth spend a cold hand and a warm heart.

A dog's nose and a maid's knees are always cold before one can say Jack Robinson to catch a weasel asleep in the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is king often to the water, often to the tatter to dig one's grave with one's teeth once bitten, twice shy, once a parson, always a parson, always in the saddle, never on his way to split hairs, to send away with a flea in his ear soon ripe soon rotten if there be a rainbow in the eve as true as steel soon learnt, soon forgotten.

Soon enough, if well enough the singing man keeps his shop in his throat, save a thief from the gallows and he will take your will of it, as the cat did the haggis we cannot come to honor under coverlet, unlucky in love, lucky at play you think all is lost that goes beside your own mouth set good against evil past cure, past

care for a flying enemy make a golden bridge no lock will hold, against the power of gold not to be sneezed at.

No rose without a thorn, no time like the present to cast water into the sea we leave more to do when we die, than we have done be it better, be it worse I will either grind or find it cost more to do ill than to do well to take time while time is, for time will away by hook or by crook.

A rolling eye, a roving heart long absent, soon forgotten love will find a way to flog a dead horse.

We may give advice, but we cannot give conduct when caught by the tempest, whatever it be, if it lightens and thunders beware of a tree, you may go and shake your ears.

\* \* \*

## Something inside every child

There's something  
Inside every child  
Wishing it were older  
Wanting to be bolder  
Just a little bigger  
Bigger grown

There's something  
Inside every adult  
Wishing it were younger  
Wanting to be older  
Just a little bigger  
Bolder, bigger, wise

There's something  
Inside all the aged  
Wishing they were younger  
Wanting to be older  
Just a little bigger  
Bigger, wise

There's something  
Inside every boulder  
Wishing it were younger  
Wanting to be large  
But just a little smaller  
Smaller-wise

There's something  
Inside every rock  
Wishing it were boulder  
But wanting to be smaller  
Smoother smaller  
Boulder-wise

There's something  
Inside every grain of sand  
Wishing it were larger, grand  
But smaller, still  
Still smaller  
Aged away

## Les Plaisirs D'Été

All summer, Sheep's Green and Coe Fen were pink with boys, as naked as God made them; for bathing drawers did not exist then; or, at least, not on Sheep's Green. You could see the pinkness, dancing about, quite plain, from the end of our Big Island.

Now to go up the river, the goal of all the best picnics, the boats had to go right by the bathing places which lay on both sides of the narrow stream. These dangerous straits were taken in silence, and at full speed. The Gentlemen were set to the oars – in this context one obviously thinks of them as Gentlemen – and each Lady unfurled a parasol, and, like an ostrich, buried her head in it, and gazing earnestly into the silk depths, stuck out their wet tongues, and soon made noticeable damp patches in the fabric, as slowly the sunshades spun about.

## Aunt Etty

One spring, when Aunt Etty was quite old, she suddenly announced that she had never heard a nightingale sing, and must do so at once. But as the nightingale's turn did not come on till quite late, she would get ready for bed first.

So, at 10:30, Margaret pushed her in her bath-chair up to the little wood at the end of the garden. She was in a special bird-listening costume of red dressing-gown, several shawls, scarves and rugs; a hot-water bottle and rubber boots; her hair was in a wispy pigtail, and she was without her teeth.

At the moment of eye contact, the nightingale, who had been singing madly up till then, naturally went mute; and with all a prima donna's proper feelings, entirely refused to sing any more.

So Aunt Etty, her nostrils twitching, caught hold of her hot-water bottle, and with all her strength threw it far across the garden where it landed in the cesspool, never from that moment on to see the light of day.

## The Damp British Animal

Once we organized a picnic which no one could call a success. It was just before Frances' wedding. Uncle Frank was very gloomy at the idea of losing her to the other side, and Frances thought that something ought to be done to cheer him up, and to entertain the uncles and aunts assembled in Cambridge for the occasion. So a meadow picnic was arranged, entirely for their sakes, a family party given by the young for the old.

It was a dull, cold, gusty day in June. The aunts sat huddled in furs against the fence-posts, their heavy hats flapping in the wind. The uncles, in coats and cloaks and mufflers, were wretchedly uncomfortable on the tufty, sodden grass, and they hardly even tried to pretend that they were not catching their deaths of cold.

But it was still worse when they had to have tea on the damp, thistly grass near Grantchester Mill. There were so many miseries which we young ones had never noticed at all – nettles, ants, cow-pats... besides that all-penetrating wind. The tea had been put into bottles wrapped in flannels, and the climax came when it was found that it had all been sugared beforehand. This was an inexpressible calamity. They all hated sugar in their tea! Besides, it was downright degenerate.

The trees proffered that grey, maudlin look of dampness. Even the earthworms shuddered like graphic likenesses of galvanic currents, as damp chills of murderous weather penetrated exceedingly the very folly of our souls. Everyone looked down in spirit. Uncle Frank, Uncle Horace, Aunt Ety, Aunt Ida and my long suffering mother.

Soon father felt uncomfortable and peered over his shoulder to see that which troubled him -- the rear end of a cow had stationed itself, quite still, up close to the opposing side of the fence against which our wretched bodies leant as we snuggled to retain warmth and comfort.

The animal's rear seemed to make a series of expressions, as if to relieve herself of burdensome discomforts. Spasms were followed by a foul pungency of air. As if labored, the natural courses of the north wind impressed one as being unable to be in the least turbulent about the spot upon which we all sat.

The heroic survivors panicked and father, the last but one to leave, shamefully gave in and was completely unable to face any more hardships. Aunt Ida alone had still a gallant smile, glued to her lips.



The trees of Byron's Pool could be seen in the distance like a rearguard of defensive pawns, a single vestige of resolution.

## **A Definition of Making Love**

Either of the two divisions to describe the scenario of a warm moving landscape, using domestic solutions distinguished as male and female investment, whose character, a varnish of exuded resin, attracts, and via a localization of pain, permits a combination of ecstatic forms best described as actions which permit the star to enter the body and decorate it innocently with a heavy cold, even flu, by appointment.

## The Hide-Away Man

*Based on Alfred Noyes' monotonous poem, "The Highwayman," Part I, from which random images are withdrawn and replaced by others from The Meat Packers and Butchers Supply Company Catalog*

\* \* \*

The hind was a hock of darkness among the meaty trees  
 The boning a ghostly bacon comb just tossed into the freeze  
 The loader a ribbon of gripstrut over the offal door  
 And the beef-stunner man came firing  
 Firing firing  
 The beef-stunner man came firing, over the squeegeed floor

He had schermer caps in his rubber gloves, a bunch of blanks  
 on his skid  
 A duck filled cook and baker's coat, and bloodstained  
 apron bib  
 They fitted as well as a wash-up suit, his boots by  
 Goodyear Tires  
 And he carried a primal breaking saw  
 To cut and quarter up the raw  
 His horn-cutter sterilized once more on the end of his power wires

Over the gutters he splattered, and triggered his slaughtering gun  
 He grabbed the steer by the withers, confused, the animal's head  
 it spun  
 He whistled a tune to the carcass, spread on the killing floor  
 Then dragged the beast to the drop spreader hooks  
 Valves and rail stops and drop spreader hooks  
 Unlike the cast iron lodestar hoists the chains and gears are for

And dark by the Johnson Hide stripper, an operator stands  
 Where Gus the skinner listened, his face pressed in his hands  
 His eyes were hollows of madness, his shroud pins strewn about  
 But he loved the bull stud's daughter  
 Bess the old bull's daughter  
 Now fifty meat patties, on a food-sharper's route

One kiss, my bonny pattie, I'm after nutrition, I'm miffed  
 And I shall be back with a filmy shrink-wrap, before the  
 morning shift  
 If the foreman press me sharply, and harry me through the day  
 Then look for me by the grinder  
 The butcher-boy AA56 grinder  
 I'll come for thee by the grinder, though the meat-packer bars  
 the way

Gus arose in his PVC apron, He scarce could reach  
her shape  
But he grabbed his neoprene glove from the bench, with  
fingers bound up in see-thru tape  
As the production line of patties came rolling down the belt  
He kissed his Bess on the vacuum device  
the busch pump housing, the vacuum device  
Then he grabbed her tight as a vice, and bent at the  
sealer he knelt

## Songs of The Road Warriors

*The following verses are from summaries made by drivers purportedly submitted to the police when asked for a brief statement on how the accident occurred*

1.

Suddenly the road spun around in front of me and the barrier sprang up and hit me

2.

Coming home, I drove into the wrong house and collided with a tree I'd never seen before

3.

I was driving well within the limit, when a five-year-old shot out across the road from absolutely nowhere and made a large dent in my trunk

4.

A truck backed through the windshield into my wife's lap

5.

The guy was all over the road. I had to swerve a number of times before I hit him

6.

A pedestrian hit me, then disappeared under my car

7.

I pulled away from the side of the road, glanced at my mother-in-law, and headed over the embankment

8.

The gentleman behind me struck me on the backside. He then went to rest in the bush with just his rear end showing

9.

If he hadn't slouched so low in his wheelchair, I would have seen him

10.

I had been driving my car for 40 years when I fell asleep at the wheel and had the accident

11.

I had been learning to drive with power steering. I turned the wheel to what I thought was enough and found myself in a different direction going the opposite way

12.

I was on my way to the doctor's with rear end trouble when my universal joint gave way causing me to have an accident

13.

If I had not pulled the faulty seat belt through the steering wheel and fastened it, I could have turned to avoid the car in the outer lane

14.

As I approached the intersection, a stop sign suddenly appeared in a place where no stop sign had ever appeared before. I was unable to stop in time to avoid the accident

15.

I was keeping my eye on the unbroken yellow line to my left when suddenly it disappeared under a moving vehicle

16.

An invisible car came out of nowhere, struck my vehicle and vanished

17.

I did not know about the brake failure, until I saw the officer waving me down

18.

I was sure the old fellow would never make it to the other side of the roadway when I struck him

19.

The pedestrian had no idea which direction to go, so my car ran over him

20.

The indirect cause of this accident was a little guy in a small car with a big mouth

21.

The telephone pole was approaching fast. I was attempting to swerve out of its path when it struck my front end

22.

Although I did see him step out in front of my car, I could not possibly have seen his foot

23.

I would have seen the road construction sign had the bird not dropped a large deposit on my windshield

24.

When I saw I could not avoid a collision, I stepped on the gas and crashed into the other car

25.

I was thrown from my car as it left the road. I was later found in the ditch by some stray cows

## **To Americans, Owning a Car is like Growing Another Leg**

Last month, Mr. and Mrs. Green of Trenton, New Jersey traded their fourteen-month old son James Jr. for a spanking new collectable black and silver Corvette on the advice of Mr. Patinella, the family broker, who only months before had helped plan Wickatunk couple, Mr. and Mrs. Terpawitz, swap of ten-month old twins for an Audi A6 with impressive crash test results. The Terpawitzes lived only a few miles from the Succasunna couple who last year bartered their adopted Downs syndrome child for a Hyundai Sonata in fair to good condition.

Mr. and Mrs. Nurdecker of Netcong, the first owners of the roomy Sonata, are currently pleased with the triplets they have picked up in a deal with a Boonton couple in exchange for their Kia Rondo with slightly soiled seats once belonging to friends of the Terpawitzes, a Mr. and Mrs. Adam Egging of Pompton Lakes who recently announced in the Ramapo Reporter a give-away trade they had made – the acquisition of an almost new sporty but rather bland Toyota Corolla XLE in a straight swap for the four youngest of their brood whose new owners, a Mr. and Mrs. Burt Bewley of Nutley, a smart business-like couple, are now collecting six month old babes of solid, white American stock as a hedge against inflation.

The Bewleys were the first couple to put infants of immigrant parents on the open market and the first to trade their 81-year-old grandmother for an all-new Nissan Cube for five passengers protected by side-curtain airbags.



## Couple with Courtesy Disorder Sues Airline for Discrimination

A Palm Springs couple is suing Northwest Airlines for allegedly kicking them off a flight in Detroit because they have a disorder that causes them to seek propriety down to the finest detail. John and Jane Smith say Northwest Airlines discriminated against them because they have Emily Post Syndrome, or E.P.S., a neurological condition that can cause compulsive bouts of propriety plus endless, tedious quotations from books on Correct Social Usage and Etiquette by such notable authors as Lily Haxworth Wallace and Emily Post. One hundred thousand people, including England's Queen Elizabeth, are known to suffer from E.P.S.

In the Smith incident last July, the couple eventually was allowed to board the plane and fly home to Palm Springs, but only after the flight crew had successfully freed the first class passengers from sitting bolt upright in their seats with their legs folded left over right. The captain berated, threatened, and verbally abused them after being instructed on proper deportment and told to sit in his cockpit with weighty flight manuals resting on the top of his head for correct deportment, they said. The Smiths filed suit in U.S. District Court at Palm Springs on Wednesday, charging the Minnesota-based airline with illegally discriminating against them because they have a medically recognized disability.

In the complaint, the Smiths say they want Northwest to provide reasonable accommodations for those with E.P.S. disabilities as required by law. The couple also is asking for an in-flight approved policy which would allow passengers wishing to leave calling cards with others in dissimilar classes of seating to do so when the aircraft is in flight and fasten seat belt signs are off.

The couple is asking for a morally justifiable amount of damages for the ill-bred remarks and public humiliation they say they suffered. Smith, thirty-one, is a nationally recognized expert on E.P.S., which can cause endless vocal diatribes on the follies of choosing inappropriate linen selections for the bathroom. About thirty percent have a symptom known as *debutantia* -- compulsive nagging advice leveled indiscriminately at young women on the virtues of "coming out" at a well organized tea or luncheon. Smith has testified before Congress and written books and articles on the misunderstood disability, which can sometimes lead to talking in

your sleep about the newness of going-away luggage and correct note-paper sizes for the single female correspondent.

Smith was table-setting and service consultant for six episodes of BBC television's "Upstairs, Downstairs" before E.P.S. finally got the better of him. "E.P.S. is like any other disability," said Smith as he stood in respectful demeanor or reclined in elegant repose, as the occasion demanded. "Just because we follow the correct order of seating and wait the prescribed fifteen minutes for the stray, tardy guest at dinner doesn't mean we're throwing our right to free expression out the door. This is about decorum and freedom of speech; it's about a medical condition."

As they were checking in, the couple says they told the Northwest ticket agent that they suffered from E.P.S. and proceeded to boringly offer a series of helpful tips on how to travel overnight on railway Pullman sleeping cars, although hints concerning travel overland did not seem appropriate at a major airport terminal at the time. Smith said, after an ugly incident with a flight attendant who said she was unnecessarily lectured about the importance of holding house and patio parties at the correct time and season, that he had never run into any problems before and is a Frequent Flyer on Northwest Airlines.

A Northwest representative called the Smiths into the plane. At this point, the couple claims that the captain started yelling at them for giving a lengthy discourse to the female passengers in the departure lounge on the merits of porch buffets and tea on the Summer Terrace. The captain then told them he would not allow them on the flight because he did not want the passengers all decked out in so-called respectful funeral attire and engaged in processional rehearsal up and down the walkways

The Smiths say they had no such intention, but they began to have E.P.S. symptoms. "We were both giving instruction on the hours for informal dining," said John Smith. After they were escorted off the plane, a Northwest representative, having suffered a verbal dose of mourning card regulation, eventually told them that they could get back on board. "The flight went smoothly with no further dictatorial appropriateness or behavioral instruction," said Smith. "After all, there's no harm in passing out leaflets, even though they define the limited but precise responsibilities of non-active members at singing and sewing circles."

## The Three Bearskin Coats

Once upon a time there were three bearskin coats who lived together in a house of their own in a wood. One of them was a little, small, wee bearskin jacket, and one was a mid-sized bearskin coat, and the third was a huge bearskin great-coat.

They had each a pot for their mothballs; a little pot for the little, small, wee bearskin jacket and a middle-sized pot for the mid-sized bearskin coat and a great pot for the huge bearskin great-coat.

And they each had a wardrobe to hang in; a little cupboard for the little, small, wee bearskin jacket and a mid-sized wardrobe for the mid-sized bearskin coat and a large wardrobe for the huge bearskin great-coat.

And they each had an item to sleep in; a small carryall for the little, small, wee bearskin jacket and a valise for the mid-sized bearskin coat and a great trunk for the huge bearskin great-coat.

One day after they had poured their eco-friendly sugar-free mothballs for their breakfast and granulated the lumps for the little, small, wee bearskin jacket and grated the lumps for the mid-sized bearskin coat and shaved the lumps for the huge bearskin great-coat, they walked out into the wood covered with snow to find cold, naked animals who were freezing to death, as they were very benevolent bearskin coats.

And while they were working up their appetites by walking about, a little old hollow woman with hard rough skin came to the house. She could not have been a good, honest old hollow woman with hard rough skin for first she looked in at the window, and then she peeped in at the keyhole, and seeing no winter-clothing in the house, she lifted the latch. The door was not fastened because the bearskin coats were good, warm, welcoming bearskin coats who gave nobody a cold or chill and never suspected that anybody would harm them.

So the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin opened the door and went in, and well pleased she was when she saw the eco-friendly sugar-free mothballs on the table. If she had been a good little old hollow woman with hard rough skin she would have waited till the bearskin coats came home' they would have given her a half-off coupon for the dry cleaners for they were good warm bearskin coats – a little cumbersome or such, as the manner of bearskin coats are, but for all that very good, warm and hospitable. But she was an impudent, bad old hollow woman with hard rough skin and set about helping herself.

So first she tasted the shaved, eco-friendly sugar-free mothballs of the huge bearskin great-coat and that was too lumpy for her; and she said a

bad word about that. And then she tasted the grated eco-friendly sugar-free mothballs of the mid-sized bearskin coat and that was too gritty for her; and she said a bad word about that, too.

And then she went to the granulated eco-friendly sugar-free mothballs of the small, wee bearskin jacket and tasted that, and that was neither too lumpy or too gritty but just right; and she liked it so well that she ate it all up. But the naughty old hollow woman with hard rough skin said a bad word about the little pot because it did not hold enough for her.

Then the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin went to swing on the hanger-rail inside the large wardrobe, and that was too high for her. And then the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin went to swing on the hanger-rail inside the middle-sized wardrobe, and that was too low for her.

And then the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin went to swing on the door of the little cupboard, and that was neither too high nor too low, but just right. So she swung on it till it came off its hinges and down she came, making the sound of an Indian war-drum as she fell plump upon the ground. And the naughty old hollow woman with damaged hard rough skin said a wicked word about that, too.

Then the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin went upstairs into the box-room in which the three bearskin coats slept laid out on their make-shift beds. First she lay down inside the trunk, but that reminded her of her last day. And next she lay down inside the valise, and that gave her the feeling of being strapped down. And then she climbed inside the carryall, and that neither reminded her of her last day nor gave her the feeling of being strapped in, and was just right to curl up in, so she huddled in a tight ball and fell fast asleep.

By this time the three bearskin coats were very hungry, so they came home for breakfast. Now the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin had left the coat hanger of the huge bearskin great-coat standing in his shaved eco-friendly sugar-free mothballs.

“SOMEBODY HAS BEEN AT MY ECO-FRIENDLY MOTHBALLS,” said the huge bearskin great-coat, in a great, rough, gruff voice. And when the mid-sized bearskin coat looked at his, he saw that his coat hanger was standing in his eco-friendly mothballs, too. They were wooden hangers; if they had been silver spoons the naughty old hollow woman with hard rough skin would have put them in her mouth.

“SOMEBODY HAS BEEN AT MY ECO-FRIENDLY MOTHBALLS,” said the mid-sized bearskin coat in his middle voice.

Then the small, wee bearskin jacket looked at his, and there was a coat hanger in the pot, but the eco-friendly mothballs were all gone.

“SOMEBODY HAS BEEN AT MY ECO-FRIENDLY MOTHBALLS AND HAS EATEN THEM ALL UP!” said the small, wee bearskin jacket, in a small wee voice.

Upon this the three bearskin coats, seeing that someone had entered the house and eaten up the small wee bearskin jacket’s granulated eco-friendly sugar-free mothball breakfast, began to look about them. Now the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin had not closed the door of the large wardrobe when she went for a swing.

“SOMEBODY HAS BEEN INSIDE MY WARDROBE,” said the huge bearskin great-coat in his great, rough, gruff voice. And the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin had not closed the door of the middle-sized wardrobe when she went for a swing.

“SOMEBODY HAS BEEN INSIDE MY WARDROBE,” said the mid-sized bearskin coat, in his middle voice.

And you know what the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin had done to the little cupboard?

“SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SWINGING ON MY CUPBOARD AND HAS RIPPED THE DOOR OFF IT,” said the little, wee bearskin jacket in his little, small wee voice.

Then the three bearskin coats thought it necessary that they should make further search’ so they went upstairs into their box-room. Now, the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin had left the lid of the trunk open.

“SOMEBODY HAS BEEN LYING IN MY TRUNK,” said the huge bearskin great-coat in his great, rough, gruff voice.

And the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin had left the lid of the valise open.

“SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SITTING IN MY VALISE,” said the mid-sized bearskin coat in his middle voice.

And when the little wee bearskin jacket came to look at his small carryall, it was all stuffed out like a sack of potatoes and out through the zipper poked the little old hollow woman’s ugly, dirty head which stank and had no business there.

“SOMEBODY HAS BEEN SQUATTING IN MY CARRYALL – AND HERE SHE IS!” said the little wee bearskin jacket in his little, small, wee voice.

The little old hollow woman with hard rough skin heard in her sleep the great, rough, gruff voice of the huge bearskin great-coat, but she was so fast asleep that it was no more to her than a large quarterback taking off his clothes. And she had heard the middle voice of the mid-sized bearskin coat, but it was only as if a man had undressed himself in a dream.

But when she heard the little, small, wee voice of the little wee bearskin jacket, it was so sharp and so shrill that it awakened her at once. Up she started, and when she saw the three bearskin coats jerking up and down in a rage, she let out a loud scream.

Now the little wee bearskin jacket pulled the little old hollow woman out of his small carryall and gently slipped himself over the arms of the little old hollow woman, and tugging himself on, quietly buttoned himself up.

“I AM GETTING VERY WARM,” said the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin.

And the mid-sized bearskin coat slipped himself over the arms of the little wee bearskin jacket, and tugging hard, quietly buttoned himself up.

“I AM GETTING QUITE HOT,” said the little old hollow woman with hard rough skin.

And the huge bearskin great-coat slipped himself over the arms of the mid-sized bearskin coat, and tugging very hard, quietly buttoned himself up.

“I AM GETTING VERY VERY HOT,” said the little old hollow woman with the hard rough skin as she perspired and perspired and perspired and perspired until there was nothing left of her. So the three bearskin coats never saw her again.

## Tale of One Who Wanted to Fly

El Akmak, known as the finest flying carpet dealer in the whole of Karbala, sat in the market square with his test pilot Ibi. They were placing bets on trained jumping fleas when young Ali approached them. Ali Aba had for months saved every coin he could earn for that great day when he would be able to go up on his own Persian rug, a maiden flight he dreamed of much on nights when the hooka bubbled continuously without respite.

Ali asked to see the finest carpet from the looms of Tehran and was shown a rug, plum in color, its design the very imitation of nature itself. Ali greatly favored it, and so a test flight, twice around the peripheral minarets, was agreed, and as Ibi, in solo flight, bank-turned for the second time over the North gate, a sudden, fierce shower of rain fell upon him, soaking him and the carpet so swiftly and thoroughly that the poor, unfortunate Ibi nose-dived, crashing down upon the back of a camel on its way to Al Basrah, killing him instantly.

“Two a penny,” thought El Akmak, shrugging his shoulders unperturbed. The wise El Akmak personally took up a rug, one with a tree of life design, the second favorite of Ali Aba’s for among other things, El Akmak was a highly skilled flyer having served in the first crack squadron of hearth-rug devils during the Syrian Campaign.

El Akmak maneuvered the rug perfectly, took it through loops, pitches and rolls and six times through the sound barrier. That carpet is fit for an ace, thought Ali Aba, paying through the nose for his newly acquired fruit of the loom. “At last my own aerial fabric,” proclaimed Ali Aba as El Akmak twisted his fringed ends and gave him a quick push to get him started.

Ali Aba rose upon Allah’s air currents in a state of spiritual joy, but alas, his air worthiness was not to last. Caught in the air stream of a transcontinental stair-runner of a floral design, Ali Aba was fatally born upon the wind wrapped in his own rug. The passengers on board flight #737 out of Baghdad were fine. Five Egyptian pyramids were badly shaken, but all was as usual in the carpet-hangars.

## Wishy-Washy Winding-Sheet

Warbling wanton Winifred's weird weak wet-nurse  
whacked wicked Wilhelmina's would-be windpipe  
with weathered withered woodbine wood

when wide-eyed Wendy's wistful womb went wet  
watching wimpled white windows writhe

where-so-ever wiggled wolfing werewolf wine

where wardrobes walk wobbly  
waving waffle-cloths watered with whammy whip-snake

wheeze where-through witched warts  
went winging weightlessly

waiting without word

wither wire-dancing William wheeled whirlpools  
whisked weatherproof with wick waxed wings wild

when withdrawn without wool-worsted  
wiper wrapper winder

webbed wadding-like with welfare weed

weeping well welted

whereas wan world-weary wordsmiths  
wander westward

wondering whether Wesleyan Welsh women  
wear worn-out wickerwork wraps



## The Restaurant

Eating out was a rare and much remembered occasion. Although Roger enjoyed his wife's homely fare, Melinda was always on the lookout for ways of preparing their favorite dishes. She enjoyed eating out, as this was a sure way of picking up a few culinary hints. The El Tamarar's interior had a mock Eastern flavor – a few potted palms, and even a stuffed camel laden with coat-hooks. The furniture was rattan and the pastel friezes of desert landscapes on the walls gave one the impression that Michelangelo must have had a cousin living somewhere in Gaza.

The head waiter bowed, proffered a buttered smile and led the couple to a quiet corner. Once seated and accustomed to the cloak of darkness lit only from the center by a slow-burning candle, they were offered wine lists ordered a bottle.

"I brought you here tonight darling because I have a confession to make to you," said Roger in a serious, confidential tone. "Oh Roger, must you always be so dramatic?" said Melinda, gazing into the glare of the candle flame, a little annoyed. "It's been going on for weeks," he said under his breath. (The wine is brought, tasted and poured into the glasses.)

"It's not another woman, is it, Roger?" Melinda said, taking a sip of the wine, all the time trying to remain calm.

"Not exactly, it's a maggot."

"A maggot!" exclaimed Melinda, almost snuffing the candle with a sudden gust of breath.

"Yes, we confer, I mean, we are in each other's confidence. We share everything, mentally, a sort of collective mind, you see."

"What are you talking about, Roger? Is this some sort of a joke?"

"No darling, and please forgive me for not telling you before. It's just, well, I didn't think it very important."

"For goodness sake, darling, what is all this about!" exclaimed Melinda, taking out a cigarette to try and calm her nerves. Roger took a long pull on his drink and refilled his glass. Then, leaning over the table, his head bathed in a religious aura, he took Melinda's hand gently in his and gazed sheepishly into her eyes.

"It's like this, darling, you see, the maggot lives in my lower left molar, right at the back of my mouth. During the day it spends most of its time crawling over the roof of my mouth, backwards and forwards, always going from one side to the other. I felt a queer feeling at first. It was as if it were trying to get me to speak. I understood later on that it wanted only to trace my thoughts. It's like having a conscience in your mouth."

Melinda gave a sudden burst of laughter and kissed him softly on the right cheek. "Roger, darling, I love you," she said. "How dull the world would be without you," she continued, her cheeks slightly blushed and her smile permeated an inner radiance.

Roger clasped her hand a little more tightly and tried unsuccessfully to match his smile with that of her own.

"I'm deadly serious, darling, I ..."

"Oh Roger, you're such a dear. Whatever made you think of maggots? How bizarre. You do say the strangest things, darling."

"But I am serious, you see. I can't show you the maggot because, well, you can't see it. I mean, it's not the sort of thing you can see. I mean, I know it's a maggot in my mouth because, because my mind makes it so I can see it, and besides, the maggot and I are on excellent terms. I think it adores me. Sometimes it is as if it's the maggot thinking, the maggot and not me that conveys thoughts. Do you understand?"

Melinda began to show signs of being a little worried about Roger's sanity. "Roger darling, you are, I mean, your job, the strain, I think we ought to go away somewhere, take a vacation. You need a long rest, darling. Let's plan a second honeymoon. Let's go to Hawaii for a couple of weeks. Oh Roger, let's go away, darling." Melinda caressed Roger's neck and peered tenderly into Roger's eyes.

Roger smiled and Melinda felt as if he were back with her again, the same Roger Disley she had known these past ten years. The head waiter sidled up to the table with the menu.

"You choose, darling," said Melinda in a fresh, seductive voice, handing her card back to the slim, dark servant of the kitchen. Roger had the waiter lean closely to him as he whispered: "I'd like a casserole of my wife's head, and lightly done, if you please."

Roger thought of a blue carpet boat ride studded with stars across the Kaiwi Channel, sunset under the palms of Kahului, the golden sands of Kailua, Waikiki Beach, as he chewed and sucked upon the bones, and the maggot in a spiraling series of twists and turns well savored Melinda's soft flesh.

## The Inter-Relationships of our Solar System

Engagement rings – some cheap, some priceless – have been found encircling most of our major planets, and now astronomers suspect our own sun, also, may have bound himself to a promise of marriage. Until two years ago, only Saturn was known to have become engaged, but in this case the number of rings indicated a pledge made to all ten of his happy satellites. He clearly loves them all with equal affection.

Over the last couple of years scientists have discovered nine cheap engagement rings around Uranus, a clear indication that he not only adores his own five satellites, but four of Jupiter's twelve as well. Jupiter himself (as far as we know) is only engaged to his nearest companion some 14 miles away.

With lengthy engagements we now know to have taken place on 3 of the 4 major planets, a Boston-based group of scientists said it is natural to assume that heavenly bodies have passions of their own. They cannot be sure but suspect that Neptune has pledged himself to the larger of 2 satellite companions. But to whom is the sun thought to be engaged? The answer, according to planetary experts at Boston University, is "the harem of shapely boulders now encircling like defensive wagons in an Indian attack. "Our sun," they said, "is destined to marry a million brides."

## Buttered Jungle Sandwich

Mandrake wielded his machete, defoliating a path which figured similar to any he may have made on the Bosworth Estate to clear thistle and nettle from around the growth of fruit trees. The jungle stretched on as if the world's entire supply of oxygen depended on it.

Cradled in his left arm, Marmaduke, his pet cat, drowsily ignored the arduous task of pressing ever onward. His striped coat resembled a larger member of his species. He was taken along more out of affection than possible protection but when he wanted, Marmaduke could be anything he wished: a night lamp disguised as a bunch of Beauty Glo Electric Roses, an Insto pressure cooker that actually cooks 3 to 10 times faster, a pack of Turkish cigarettes or just a plain old bottle of Ibuprofen tablets.

Right now, Marmaduke was a Miele Touchtronic W4840, or rather the object being wrung out of the Miele Touchtronic W4840 washing machine. The movie over the Kenmore 800 series dryer was about a young male killer, a strangler who stalked the streets late at night squeezing tasty fresh lemons in his fists – eventually, he would summon up enough courage to perform his dark evil deed.

On this one terror-laden night, one of many, the moon opened with a glass key and out tumbled the stars. Off they went to take up field positions. It rained a little. The dimly lit sidewalks partially reflected the diffused glare of the street lamps like an abstract painting bordering on madness.

The killer's hands were inside his pockets. Lemon juice ran down his legs from inside the pockets of his trousers as a large black limousine sped by. Six blocks on, the car came to a stop, soundlessly as a silver shadow. The car was Lord Bosworth's, and the family crest, two unicorns upon their hind legs, their front quarters resting atop of a shield whereon a happy smiling face was depicted holding in its raised hands for all to savor a piece of bread buttered with Lord Bosworth's own brand of simply smoother, creamier butter, emblazoned the four doors plus the paintwork on the trunk.

## Kayrahoo & the Maid of Grief

(an old Huron tale from *Huron Myths & Tales*,  
freely re-interpreted by Opal Louis Nations)

On a stormy night long ago in tempestuous times, when Huron fought Cherokee in a series of lingering wars, a young Wyandot hunter whose name was Kayrahoo (His-Arrow-Kills) was returning to his camp in the forest at a late hour, across the waters of the great Beaver River. The lightning gleamed, and loud claps of thunder rattled through the lofty trees, bending in the strong winds, that taunted one another from both river banks beside the rocks where tumbled the ice-cold waters – but I should first tell about this young Wyandot hunter.

Kayrahoo was the eldest son of White Wing, chief of the Porcupine Clan, and chose at an early age to live in the wild to hunt game, preferring most of all the solitary life of the hunter, for his was an ideal world, as yet unspoiled by white man's rapaciousness.

One night, while asleep under the stars that filtered through the green leaves of his encampment, he had a dream that produced an extraordinary effect upon him. It was of a female face of transcendent beauty. So strong was the impression it made that he dreamed of it again and again. The beautiful vision haunted his thoughts by day, his slumbers by night.

In time he became passionately enamored of this shadow of a dream. This lasted so long that it became one of those fixed ideas that haunt the minds of solitary men, and at times is mistaken for madness. Such was Kayrahoo, and such the color of his mind at the time I mentioned.

He was returning to his forest camp late one stormy night, across rocks set at distances that afforded a dry way over the strong currents of the great Beaver River. A gloomy mist hung low over the waters as loud claps of thunder rattled through the tops of lofty trees as they struggled in vain to shake off the spirits bent on their destruction.

Climbing up the riverbank, Kayrahoo hauled himself onto a ledge of thick green grass that, as he looked, seemed to stretch like a meadow into the impenetrable gloom. Suddenly shafts of lightning tore through the darkness, their shreds flickering across the pasture, opening a space in front of him. The sight that Kayrahoo momentarily beheld caused him to shrink with horror. The slaughtered bodies of many Wyandot warriors lay strewn upon the grass – severed heads and limbs lay upon bloodstained shoots of matted brush.

Kayrahoo's heart sickened within him and he was turning, shuddering from the terrible carnage, when he beheld a shadowy form cowering as it were at a place more thickly strewn with the corpses of the dead than at any other. A succession of vivid flashes of lightning revealed it more distinctly. It was a female figure, dressed in simple native costume. She was squatting on her knees, with her upper trunk leaning forward, her face hidden in her lap and her long, dark, disheveled tresses hanging to the ground, streaming with the rain that fell in torrents.

Kayrahoo stood as if frozen to the spot. There was something awful in this solitary monument of woe. The female had the appearance of being above the common order. He knew the times to be full of vicissitude, and that many a fair maiden who had once pillowed on reeds of contentment now wandered homeless. Perhaps this was some poor mourner whom the dreadful war-axe had rendered desolate, and who sat here heartbroken on the strand of existence, wherefrom all that was dear to her had been launched into eternity.

He approached and addressed her in the accents of sympathy. She raised her head and gazed wildly at him. What was his astonishment at beholding, by the bright glare of the lightning, the very face that had haunted him in his dreams? It was pale and disconsolate, but rapturously beautiful. Trembling with violent and conflicting emotions, Kayrahoo again accosted her. He spoke something of her being exposed at such an hour of night, of the wolves not far from where she sat, and to the fury of such a storm, and offered to conduct her to her elders.

She pointed to the carnage with a gesture of dreadful significance. "I have no kin of this earth," she replied.

"But you have a dwelling place," said Kayrahoo.

"Yes," said the disconsolate maiden, "it is with the spirits of the dead."

The heart of the hunter melted at the words.

"I would offer my humble dwelling as a shelter, myself as a devoted companion. I am without companions myself, for I am a hunter and live in the forests alone, but if my life could be of help, it is at your disposal and should be sacrificed before harm or misery should come to you."

There was an honest earnestness in the young hunter's manner that had its effect, for the homeless maiden confided herself implicitly to the protection of Kayrahoo. He supported her faltering steps across the plain of death, and by a place where the howling winds had torn out the roots of young saplings. The storm had abated, and the thunder rumbled at a distance. The forest was quiet, that green canopy of sanctuary for so many creatures, slumbered for a while, to gather fresh strength for the next day's whims of nature.

Kayrahoo led the maiden through the darkling glades and winding paths of the forest. A large grey owl stared with surprise at the unusual sight of

the melancholy hunter with a female companion. Upon entering the woven brakes of his camp, Kayraho for the first time blushed at the meager scantiness of his one-roomed dwelling.

When a wood-fire was lit and Kayraho had a better opportunity to contemplate the maiden, he was more than ever intoxicated by her beauty. Her face was pale, but of a dazzling radiance, set off by a profusion of raven hair that hung clustering about it. Her eyes were large and brilliant, with a singular expression that approached almost to wildness. As far as her doeskin dress permitted her shape to be seen, it was of perfect symmetry. Her whole appearance was highly striking, though she was dressed in the simplest style. The only thing approaching to an ornament that she wore was a broad buck-skin band around her neck, studded with beads of many colors.

The perplexity now commenced with the hunter how to dispose of the helpless being thus thrown upon his protection. He thought of abandoning his camp for her, and seeking shelter for himself under the roofs of the trees. Still, he was so fascinated by her charms there seemed to be such a spell upon his thoughts and senses that he could not tear himself from her presence. Her manner, too, was singular and unaccountable. She spoke of her father, Tishon Star (His-Sky-In-The-Water), chief of the Wyandot Wolf Clan, of her five brothers and others of her relatives brutally slain under the merciless tomahawk of Kyulkwe, warring chief of the Cherokees, who had ridden down upon them by surprise with a great band of warriors and had so completely massacred her brethren, sparing not her mother or any of the womenfolk and children. She spoke of this terrible attack just once, then she would speak not again of it, preferring never to renew the pain of her anguish. Kayraho promised also not to talk of her misfortune, and her grief in a short while abated.

The attentions of the hunter had first won her confidence, and then, apparently, her heart, so that there soon followed a warm love and understanding between them. In the infatuation of the moment, Kayraho avowed his passion for her. He told her the story of his mysterious dream, and how she had possessed his heart before he had ever seen her. She was strangely affected by his recital and acknowledged too have felt an impulse toward him equally unaccountable. It was the time for brave wild theory and wild actions.

“Why should we separate?” said he, “our hearts are united, in the eye of truth and reason we are as one. What need is there of marriage rites and ceremony to bind winged souls together?”

The maiden listened with emotion; her heart and mind were of the same accord.

“You have no home or family,” continued he, “let me be everything to you, let us be everything to one another, there is my hand, here is my heart, I pledge myself to you forever.”

“Forever,” said the maiden solemnly.

“Forever,” repeated Kayrahoo.

The maiden took his hand in hers while with the other she lightly pressed his bosom.

“Then I am yours,” she said and embraced him.

The next morning Kayrahoo left his bride sleeping, and sallied forth at an early hour in quest of food, so that they might enjoy a hearty wedding feast. When he returned, he found the maiden with her head hanging over the reeds of the bed, and one arm thrown over it. He spoke to her, but received no reply. He advanced to awaken her from her uneasy posture. On taking her hand it was cold – there was no pulsation – her face was pallid and ghastly – in a word – she was a corpse.

Horrified and frantic, Kayrahoo let out a pitiful scream, and in his raving did not hear the approaching footsteps.

All of a sudden the hunter felt the presence of someone standing behind him, and quickly turning around beheld the fierce countenance of Kyulkwe, warring chief of the Cherokees.

“Be not afraid,” said Kyulkwe, “the Cherokee is at peace with the Wyandot Porcupine Clan.”

“Then come in peace,” said the hunter.

Kyulkwe crept into the camp and letting his eyes fall upon the dead maiden, cried out, “By the spirits of the earth, how did this woman come here?”

“Do you know this maiden?” said Kayrahoo eagerly.

“I know her well!” exclaimed Kyulkwe, “was I who slew her yesterday, with a blow of my mighty war-axe.”

Kyulkwe stepped forward, undid the broad buckskin band around the neck of the corpse, and the head rolled to the floor. The hunter burst into a frenzy. ‘Sorcery, sorcery has gained possession of me!’ shrieked he. “I am lost forever!”

Kayrahoo was possessed with the frightful belief that an evil spirit had reanimated the dead body to ensnare him. He wandered aimlessly into the forest, and was never seen again by his father, White Wing, or any of his clan.