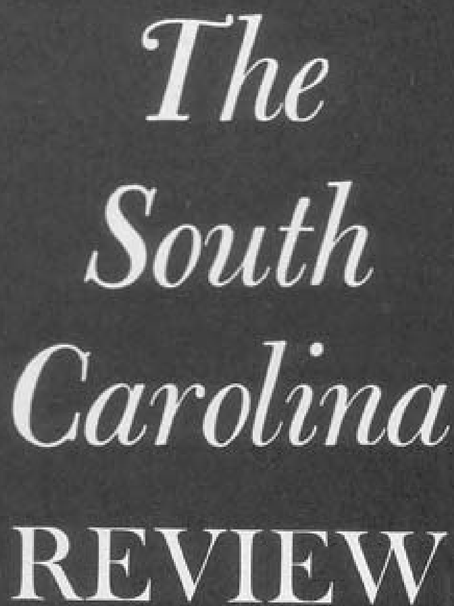

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The South Carolina Review

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The South Carolina Review

Volume 4, Number 2 June, 1972

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Wallenda

Hey what a circus of a name
like magic
a guy would feel guilty
just charging admission
a fellow ought to feel free
to watch a Wallenda
twist and spin and somersault
through the air
of his own destiny
ought to be free spirit
enough like magic
to do his own circus tricks
spinning and twisting
high over the earth
with only large cobwebs
between him and his doom
because you must always pay
admission
for magic in the air

PETER D. ZIVKOVIC

The Writing Contest, 1972

For four years now, without offering prizes or payments of any kind to authors, other than a few copies of the magazine, we have been publishing the best samples of writing that we could get from any source. We have, in fact, been pleasantly surprised by the large numbers of manuscripts that daily pile up on our desks. Nevertheless, at the risk of increasing the burden of editorship, we feel a special obligation to stimulate still further the production of thought and writing among the authors of our state. To that end, we announced a contest early this year: Anyone living in South Carolina, regardless of age, sex, or race, is eligible to submit a story, scholarly article, personal essay, poem, or short play. Winners in each division will receive cash prizes (made possible by the financial assistance of the South Carolina Arts Commission), and the winning entries will be published in the December, 1972, issue. Deadline for submission is August 15, 1972. Complete details are available on request. Manuscripts will, of course, be judged by the usual criteria for magazine publication – vitality and realization of aim.

We wish to make clear that this contest will in no way affect our policy of publishing material by writers outside the state. To restrict the magazine geographically would be unrealistic. We continue to want the best writing available from the widest range of authors. We have already accepted several items from around the country for the December issue and will print them along with the winning entries in the contest.

Once again, we also renew our invitation to readers to support the magazine by sending in their checks for subscriptions and renewals.

The Editors

The Aquarium

All of the fluid, it seemed, had been sucked from the room,
The spongy blue chairs, the shell-like objects on the desk
were high and dry:
Nothing was left of the sea but the small aquarium.

The blue eyes of the man in the room could hardly wink.
Had he seen the sea into this subjection,
His bibulous art dependent on a hidden bottle of ink?

As though it might be home for silver fish, the mirror
Refuses to waver, becomes a monstrous oblong cenotaph:
One does not break and enter tombs without a certain ruffian sense
of terror.

Still, the man can flounder just two steps and get a cramp.
Certain things extend the jagged, cruel touch of coral,
And fumbling with his shoes that seem enmired, he finds his socks
are damp.

The aquarium, then, must be engaged head-on, clear-blind—
The lasciviously tinted shells, little turning wheel, arrogant
bubbles,
Suggest crashing storms dehydrated almost to safety from the mind.

Curiously, rounding the wheel, the silver fish come on to thank
The man for standing there in silence like a pump,
As though an artifice could dread the large inclosure of a dried-up
tank.

CHARLES EATON

The Arrowhead Scholar

1967

In laurel caves above the river
we hunt for arrowheads –
intently scavenging
for those lost cultures grounded

in this shelf of sand
and rock. Once, Siberian visionaries
(dreaming food)
hiked a sunken strait to forage, mutate,

settle this primordial basin. Now, a dam
begins to shroud it, locking in the secrets
of the Cherokee, and those tribes older
who survived prehistory

to civilize this valley – only
tenacious drifts of laurel
high, at the new crater's rim, hide
some final relic

for those who care to race
the drowning hour. For this, my husband and I
have as our guide
my brother, the Arrowhead Scholar,

who can discern out of earth
a handful of points, and each its story:
the type of rock, the age, the use
some hunter young and dedicate as himself

found of it in the laurel there, or lost,
of time and savagery,
beneath our feet. He leads us
with a ripened Eagle Scout's vision of sweet

water, virgin air, forests plentiful
of bone and wing
above these vanished towns
of Keowee, and Toxaway–

and it is reincarnate in his glistening face
as he steps among their leavings
stirring no more sound
than some ghost, until above us, in the greenery,

he begins to sing as he catalogues
our finds–a sentimental ballad
of the maid Jocassee
who went down here, swimming to her lover

(his wife merely chokes for him of cancer,
and disgrace)
and he repeats that song, our father's mistakes
with a constancy

that perplexes me. Last winter,
the doctors at the State Hospital
sent him home
(they said that he was sane)

and now his labyrinth has grown
until I could split my heart
and wrap the pelt around him, suffering
his long-ago face (and mine)

pressed against the glass on Sundays
(Daddy's visiting day)
until our hope was passed. Instead,
my offering is this redemptive afternoon

in which he can forget that it has come again
(the Sabbath)
and his own son waits.
This brutally uprooted past depends

on his wandering hand to salvage
while I and my husband (his keepers, and more–
as long as we are in sight he believes
in happiness)

follow the tentative trail he makes
through laurel and sawbrier, aware
of the dizzying rim
whenever the dark leaves part, before him.

1970: Envoi

The dam arcs
gently as a bird's great wing
(the buzzard of Cherokee legend, whose span
erupted these hills)

and a shimmering Visitors' Center, impressive,
of concrete and steel,
welcomes my husband and me
to a hydroelectric saga, the Story

of Nuclear Energy woven of films, recordings,
animation–but little is said
of what once was here;
of our lost Indian villages, only

the names. From a crowded terrace we stare
the freshly-reflected expanse where drown
a thousand forest colors
and, on the farther bank,

I see my brother's sweat-curled hair
flashing black
amid the green, until the vision splinters
into a flock of displaced, shrieking

crows, and I remember
his burst brain. Of that other, nothing remains

except a sack of flaked stones
gathered by that young man marked of scars

some unhonored gambling debt
had got him: yet, when I saw him last, laid out
for Intensive Care with a towel
loincloth, his reserve

was as fine as any warrior's
who might have carried them. I do not know
what could have been. When Daddy failed us, we said
it was the times

were hard (so many dreams misplaced
of dust and joblessness)
and yet, our faith in better days
turns out the same. Waiting outside those honky-tonks

(*the River Street Bar and the Dixie Grill, with Mama*)
to remind a staggering man
of our claim; and later, when we buried him,
I vowed myself out of soap opera

while my brother—God knows—
must have mistaken the role
as freedom. Whatever, I shall not repeat
this pilgrimage, for him. Technology

has done this place in, in trust
of the future, but I know
(of the Arrowhead Scholar)
that the past must be suffered again

as it is today,
in my brother's form,
moving with his magnificent grace
among the laurel *there, which is no more.*

BENNIE LEE SINCLAIR

GUILT

M. B. Duda

As the Boeing 707 descended for landing at the Miami airport, Maria had to admit to herself that she was curious. She hoped that Ida, whoever she was, would be there to meet them.

"What do you think she'll be like, John?" she asked her husband in the seat beside her.

"I'm sure we'll find out soon enough."

Maria tried to imagine the relationship Ida had had with her father that would give her the right to inform Maria of his passing away. Surely, she must be aware of the fact that Maria's mother, though separated from Maria's father for the past three years, was living with her in Wisconsin. And what was Ida like personally, she wondered? Over the phone there had been little Maria could tell besides the fact that Ida had had a deep Southern accent:

"Oh, dahling, I'm so sahry," she had said.

As John and Maria left the disembarking area, it was not Ida, but a woman named Lillian, soft-featured and well dressed, who hugged Maria and tried to explain how anxious Ida was for Maria to like her and not think badly of her.

"But I'm just so grateful to her," Maria assured Lillian, who then motioned to Ida, waiting at the far end of the receiving line.

When Ida finally approached her, Maria was not surprised to find her attractive. Her dark tan minimized the fact that she was slightly overweight. Her gray hair was cut fashionably, and her clothes were right for her figure. From what she could see, Maria felt that this was the type of woman her father would have chosen for a companion, although it bothered her that she could not see Ida's eyes behind the dark glasses and that the sides of her mouth seemed to droop as if she often frowned.

"Oh, dahling, I'm so sahry," she said again, as if confirming her identity with the woman who had called. "Your father was a wonderful man."

"Thank you," Maria said and let herself be led from the terminal to Lillian's car. "If only I'd known he was in the hospital!"

"I tried to get him to call you, but he said not until he got home again. He knows how busy you are with those three beautiful children. How are they, darling?"

"They're fine. Mother is with them now, but she'll be flying down tomorrow."

"You both look so young I just can't believe you have three children," Ida said quickly, obviously trying to get off the subject of Maria's mother.

"We had them rather fast," Maria admitted and looked at John in the front seat next to Lillian. His strong features first sharpened, then faded in the overhead lights of the slick thruway. Maria could see that he was unconsciously pulling at his left ear, and she knew he was worried about all the decisions he would have to make during the following week. Only thirty years old, he was now the eldest male member of her family and the only one Maria had to turn to for support. Maria, two years younger, was often mistaken for his sister because of her matching black hair and dark complexion, but when people got closer, they discovered that her features were more rounded and far less definitive than those of her husband.

"Let's go to my house first, Lillian," Ida suggested, and Maria could think of nothing to say except:

"Where is my father now?"

"Still at the hospital, darling. We'll have him released tomorrow as soon as you find a proper home. I would like to make a suggestion – the Southern Arms is a beautiful parlor. It's where I took my own husband eighteeen years ago. I'll drive you over tomorrow."

"All right, thank you," Maria agreed as Lillian parked the car in front of a small yellow stucco bungalow.

"Here we are. And that's your father's house, the green duplex across the street. We'll go over in a minute, or you may stay the night with me."

"I'll be going now, Ida," Lillian said.

"Oh," Ida said and seemed uneasy about being left alone with Maria and John. "All right, Lillian," she said finally. "Thank you *so* much."

"And thank you," Maria called as she followed Ida across the small cement porch and into her house.

"This is where I've lived for eighteen years, ever since poor Joe passed away. We never had any children, so it's been lonely for me. I was so grateful for your father's friendship."

She took off her sunglasses finally, and Maria was surprised to see that her eyes were not swollen from crying as she had expected, but were coated with eye makeup. They were a deep, cold, gray color, and Ida seemed to have difficulty looking into Maria's eyes.

"A cold drink is just what you need," she called, hurrying to the kitchen, as Maria sat down on the couch.

Maria looked around and saw that the furniture was neither expensive nor in the best of taste. Blond contemporary pieces were mixed with period dark woods.

"I'm so glad you didn't say more about your mother," Ida went on. "No one knows about her, you know. Your father told everyone he was a single man."

"But she's coming down," Maria said.

"Oh, she can't, darling. That would ruin everything your father built up for himself. Here's your drink, dear. Do you have any questions?"

"We'll have to get a lawyer immediately, of course. Do you know if my father left a will?"

"Yes, it's all here," Ida said, leaving the room and returning with a small tin box. "Andy always gave me his box if he was going on a trip, or in this case, to the hospital."

The way she said Andy startled Maria. She put the accent on the first syllable and made it a short "a" so that it sounded like "Ahndy." Maria had never heard her father addressed that way before, but she knew he would have liked it because it gave his name class and individuality. Her father appreciated such things.

"Your father told me once he would put one of the insurance policies in my name, but I see he never got around to it. He left everything to your children."

John looked at Maria and she knew they were thinking the same thing. Afraid that Ida would see their reaction, she quickly said:

"May I go to my father's house now, Ida? Please?"

"Of course, darling. Just follow me."

Ida led the way across the poorly lit street and Maria could just make out the outline of a small green bungalow, similar in appearance to Ida's house. A huge cactus stood in the front yard, protecting a row of bushes behind it.

"That's a gardenia bush," Ida pointed out as they stood before the front door. "Your father loved to work in the yard."

"I know," Maria said, and resented the way Ida spoke of her father as if she knew him better than Maria had.

"I tried to clean up things because I know Andy would have wanted me to. If you need anything, just call. I left my number beside the telephone."

"Thank you, Ida. That's very kind of you."

Almost reluctantly, Ida left and walked back through the darkness to her house. Maria walked slowly through the small duplex apartment, which was probably identical to the one behind it. There was a kitchen with an eating area and all the utilities, a spacious living room, and a large single bedroom and bath. As she walked through the rooms, Maria searched for things that would remind her of her father, but there was little. He had bought the apartment furnished. She wished she had had the opportunity to see her father in it, but she had either a new baby or was pregnant with another, so that it was her father who came to visit her.

As she came to the bedroom, Maria opened the drawers of her father's dressers and found several of them full of the pictures she had sent with her letters which were stored in still another drawer. There was the first picture her three-year-old had drawn as well as her own bronzed baby shoes. As an Italian immigrant, her father had left material possessions behind him many times, and he had made it a point to keep only that which had personal value.

Maria returned to the living room and remembered that her mother was waiting for her call. She dialed the number directly, slowly, and knew her mother was close to the phone when she picked it up on the first ring.

"Hello?"

"Hello, Mother? How's everything? The children?"

"They're fine, fine. Mrs. Joblanski is ready to take over. When should I come?"

"Mother, there's a small problem . . ."

"Another woman."

"Well, I don't know. I don't think so, but everyone thinks daddy was a single man. Widowed, that is."

"Yes, he would. All right, I'll stay with the children. You arrange everything."

"Mama, I'm sorry."

"It's all right. Just call every day. And take care of yourself, Maria. Good night."

Maria went to bed and tried to sleep, but she was constantly prodded by the disappointment in her mother's voice. Seeing her toss and turn, John guessed what was bothering her:

"It would be much worse if she came and was embarrassed, Maria. It's my guess Ida was nothing but a convenience to your father, but why take a chance on your mother getting hurt? Besides, I think your father obviously wanted it this way."

Yes, you're probably right, John. I hope we both are."

The following morning Ida was at the door with a samovar of coffee and hot rolls before Maria was even awake, although John was there to accept them. Later, she came over to drive them to the hospital where Maria was given her father's personal belongings – a portable radio, his shaving equipment, the clothes he'd worn to the hospital, and his wallet, which still contained her mother's picture.

"Oh, John, look," Maria said, as they handed her the statement of the money he had left in his wallet. "Sixty-six cents. A penny for every year of his life."

After they left the hospital, Ida drove them to various funeral homes, suggesting her favorite, condemning the others. Maria decided on the one Ida suggested to placate her, but it did not seem to be enough.

"This is just a suggestion," Ida said, "but why don't you bury him

at Southhaven Cemetery where my first husband is buried? Then I could visit Andy's grave everytime I went to see my husband."

"No!" Maria said quickly.

"But you haven't even seen it," Ida argued.

"There is a cemetery which my father kept saying he visited because many others from his native village in Italy were buried there. Oakhaven, I think he said."

"Oh, I know Andy wouldn't like it down there. It's way across town and I'd never get to see him."

"Well, that's too bad, Ida, but I think he'd like it there."

"Of course."

Ida drove them home and later that afternoon Maria and John drove over by themselves and picked out a plot beneath a large shade tree. That evening, Maria's conscience would give her no rest.

"Maybe Ida was right, John. Maybe he would have liked it better at the other cemetery, but I just did not think it would be right."

"You know better than she does what your father would have liked," John assured her, and it seemed that he was right as Ida came over the next morning, saying:

"You were probably right, darling, and I can certainly see your point. Could I drive you to a wonderful florist I know of?"

At the florist's, Ida asked if she could have a boutonniére put into Andy's buttonhole as a small remembrance.

"Of course, Ida," Maria said shakily. Then as she left, she turned to John with: "My father never wore a boutonniére."

"Honey, it won't matter now."

"You're right, of course. It's getting ridiculous."

But at the viewing there was no sign of a boutonniére. Instead, there was a small satin pillow covered with roses and a "grandfather" ribbon.

"I thought he would like that more," Ida whispered as she hugged Maria and took her place in the rear to make room for the crowd of Italians her father had met even in his short time in Miami. To her

surprise, Ida even went to the funeral services, but she disappeared shortly after, so that Maria did not get to see her again until the following day when she was sorting her father's belongings, trying to select what she would like to keep and what to leave in the house to be sold with it. When she answered the door, Maria had just told John how she wished there was something she could give Ida to express her gratitude for all she had done.

"You already gave her the greatest thing possible by telling your mother not to come," John insisted.

"I suppose, but I still wish . . ."

Now Ida stood before Maria, with reddened eyes as if she had been crying.

"I just wanted you to know that I made a mistake. I think he will be very happy where he is."

"Thank you, Ida. That's very kind of you to say."

"I was just wondering if perhaps I could have a small remembrance of your father. I thought so much of him."

"Of course, come in. Look at what we have."

They looked together, but since Maria had put her father's personal possessions, such as his jewelry and personal papers, in her suitcase, there was little that Ida saw that she wanted, until she spied the small metal box, now emptied of the papers given to the lawyer.

"I'd love to have the box, since he always left it with me."

"Of course, Ida. That seems most appropriate."

"Oh, and did you get your father's radio from the hospital?"

"Yes, we gave it to my cousin, who left this morning."

"Oh, yes."

Ida started to leave, but turned again:

"Oh, there is one other thing. I gave your father a grill we were going to use on picnics we took together, but we never did go anywhere. Do you think I could have that? He left it in the tool shed in the back."

"All right, let's go look."

John opened the shed and gave the grill, an expensive model, to Ida.

"Good grief, look at all this. I don't know what we're going to do with it all. I don't think the estate wants it. There are some tools I could take home, but we're so limited on the plane."

"I could use some of those things," Ida was quick to reply. "Like the wheelbarrow and the electric shears and those paint brushes."

"All right, take what you want," John said and returned to the house with Maria. They were cleaning out the drawers when they saw Ida go by, pushing the wheelbarrow piled high with tools and garden implements. It was not until she came back and took the second wheelbarrow full that John finally said:

"For a small remembrance, she's managing to take an awful lot. I'd better lock the shed before she cleans it out."

"Oh, John, we really don't know how much she did for my father. It's the least we can do. She's been so helpful since we've been here. The pillow and all. Besides, this should end it."

But it was not the end. Ida was back an hour later to ask if they wanted to sell the chest in the kitchen. Then she would have something *big* to remember Andy by.

"Tell her ten dollars," John advised. "We have to stop this somewhere.

So Maria went back across the street to Ida's house, where she was already rearranging her kitchen to accommodate the chest.

"John said we could sell it for ten dollars," Maria said, and Ida was taken aback.

"Oh," she stammered. "Well, I would like you to see all the laundry I did for your father while he was in the hospital."

She led Maria to a back bedroom where the bed was covered with old faded linens and men's clothing.

"Do you want to keep any of this?" Ida asked. "I do have someone I could give it to."

"No, we have no use for it," Maria admitted, wondering where all the linens were which her father's sister had embroidered so many years

ago. "Please give it to anyone you want to. I wish I would have known what daddy needed so that I could have sent him better clothes, but he always told me he had too much of everything."

"Oh, your father needed so many things," Ida said. "I wish now I would have made him buy all new furniture for the apartment. That stuff he had is in such poor condition."

So that you could take it now, Maria thought. What Ida apparently did not realize was the little value her father put in material things. She could not have known him that well, after all.

"Well, I guess I'll take the chest," Ida finally said. "One thing for sure, I'll never do anything for any man until he comes home from the hospital the next time."

"Well, I don't think he asked you to do anything this time," Maria said and walked out of the house.

Ida later came with the money. Although Maria felt guilty about selling her the chest, she had made a bargain.

"There is one last thing," Ida said. "I've always admired that gardenia bush in front of the house. It would look so lovely on my lawn, and everytime it bloomed, I would think of your father."

"No, the bush stays," Maria said with finality and after Ida left, she turned to John with: "I've got the strangest feeling the house is being dug out from under us."

"All right, it's all over. Let's get these things packed and call the moving company to ship the few things you want to take back home. Wait, what's that up there?"

John was pointing to an attic entrance which they had just seen in the ceiling. He brought a chair from the kitchen and after opening the door in the ceiling, brought down several boxes filled with the embroidered linens.

"I think your father knew what he was dealing with," John said with a smile. "He knew she could never go up there."

"You mean she may have taken things before we got here?"

"Probably. She had a chance to look when she cleaned."

"Those linens have been in the family for years."

"Let's get 'em packed."

As they went outside to check things for the last time, Maria saw that the gardenia bush had bloomed over night.

"Oh, John, let's take them to the grave."

"All right, but we'll have to hurry."

It was after they returned that Ida came over with her friend to deliver the bill. She presented it to John, not Maria.

"What is it, John?" Maria asked, although John tried to hide it from her. He finally took her to the bedroom and let her see it as Ida went to the refrigerator to "take the perishables off their hands."

Maria looked at the paper, an itemized account of the soap powders used to clean her father's clothes, payment for cleaning the apartment, a gas bill for driving them around, and so on for a total of ninety-nine dollars.

"I'll make out the check," John said. "And then we won't owe her anything ever again."

"That bitch!" Maria shouted and strode into the living room. "That cheap bitch!"

Lillian hurried after her and caught her trembling arm.

"Listen, darling, you'll never know how much Ida did for your father," she said, as John swept past them with his checkbook.

"She took away my mother's right to be here," Maria continued. "Get her out of there. Get her out of my father's house!"

Maria could feel herself shaking with anger as Lillian hurried Ida, check in hand, out of the house and back across the street. John put his arm around her, but even that did little good to calm her.

"I'll show her, John. It doesn't matter to daddy anymore, and for once I'm sure of what my father would have wanted me to do. I'll fix her."

"Maria, come on now, stop it. She's not worth getting upset about."

As they stood there, the moving van came for the three boxes they wanted to ship home, and John left Maria to direct the men.

Maria walked out of the house and down the street, stopping beside a neighbor who was pruning his rose bushes.

"I'm sorry I didn't get to his funeral," he said as he looked up and saw Maria, "but I wanted to remember him working in the yard."

"Yes, of course, but did you know my father was married and my mother is still living?"

"Why, no, I didn't."

"Well, she is, but she was too ill to come. But my father still loved her and no one else. No one else meant anything to him."

Maria saw him look toward Ida's house where she sat rocking on her front porch.

"My mother's coming down soon too. Maybe she'll live in my father's house. It's her right, you know, just as it was her right to come to his funeral."

"Of course," the neighbor said, fidgeting nervously, "but if you'll excuse me, I've got some work in the house . . ."

He left and Maria proceeded down the street in plain sight of Ida. From house to house she went, explaining and pointing to Ida until John finally caught up with her, trying to clarify the situation to a stranger who had accidentally turned down their street.

The Black Hero In South Carolina History

A. V. HUFF, JR.

If "the history of every nation," as the philosopher Sidney Hook describes it, "is represented to its youth in terms of the exploits of great individuals,"[1] the revision of national and state histories in the United States, already begun in the wake of public school integration, will continue to accelerate. Much of this revision now centers on the identification and popularization of black heroes. Even though the "great man theory," which reduces history to a series of biographies, is no longer accepted by historians, any attempt to reconstruct the past must deal with a series of significant individuals who influenced the course of the story. The revising of history, however, requires more insight than the simple weaving together of the heritage of two traditions in the South. It is complicated by the fact that a hero, according to a standard definition, is not only "a central personage taking an admirable part in any remarkable event," but also "a person regarded as a model."[2] As long as black and white societies were largely separate, they could celebrate two histories and honor separate canons of heroes. To integrate the two lists of heroes becomes a complex interpretive issue, because the goals of the black and white societies have often been mutually exclusive. In his classic essay, "The Central Theme of Southern History," Professor Ulrich B. Philips identified the aim of white Southerners as "a people with a common resolve indomitably maintained—that it [i.e., the South] shall be and remain a white man's country."[3] In accordance with such a goal, white Southerners adopted a pantheon of heroes which included those who were dedicated to maintaining white supremacy in Southern society. Black leaders, on the other hand, opposed white racism and emphasized in their history the increasing democratization and racial integration of American society. The black heroes thus enshrined had generally achieved prominence by opposing the "central theme" of white Southern history. They had, in fact, worked to change the racist character of Southern society by the use of methods ranging from insurrection to non-violence. The careers of four representative black heroes

[1]Sidney Hook, *The Hero in History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1943, 1955), p. 8.

[2]The definition comes from a dictionary compiled for school use. *Webster's Student Dictionary* (New York: American Book Co., 1945) p. 383.

[3]Ulrich B. Phillips, "The Central Theme of Southern History," reprinted in *The Course of the South to Secession* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1939, 1964), p. 152.

from different periods of South Carolina history will illustrate the issue of developing a satisfactory racially-integrated history of South Carolina, especially for those Southern whites who not only still dominate the social and political order but who continue to advocate white supremacy.

The most widely-known black in South Carolina under the slave regime was Denmark Vesey (c. 1767-1822) of Charleston, instigator of the ill-fated insurrection of 1822.[4] Vesey's origins are obscure, but at the age of fourteen the young slave was purchased by Captain Thomas Vesey, a Charleston merchant who traded in the West Indies. After the American Revolution the seaman and his slave settled in Charleston, and in 1800 the 33-year-old black won $1500 in the East Bay lottery and purchased his freedom. He joined nearly 1000 free Negroes in a district where nearly forty times as many blacks were slaves. Yet freedom was only little better than slavery. Denmark Vesey could hold property, but he had no vote. And though he had legal rights, he was subject to trial before the same court that tried slaves. He had no right to counsel and no appeal from the ruling of the special court for blacks. Nevertheless, Vesey had ambition even in the most adverse circumstances. He became a carpenter, and his reputation for excellent workmanship allowed him to compete favorably with slave labor. By 1822 he had gained the respect of the white as well as the black community of Charleston. He had several wives, a large number of children, and had purchased a residence at 20 Bull Street. His total assets were estimated at $8000, a remarkable achievement.

Vesey became a leader of the African Methodist Episcopal Church which was organized in Charleston in 1816 after the community forced the white Methodists in the city to disband their all-Negro congregations. At class meetings Vesey expounded the Scriptures to his black neighbors. His favorite passage was Exodus 2: 23-24: "And the people of Israel groaned under their bondage, and cried out for help, and their cry under bondage came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob." In his exhortations Vesey identified the plight of the blacks with that of the ancient Hebrews in Egypt. Seeing himself as a Moses for his

[4]The most accessible treatment of Denmark Vesey's life is by Anne King Gregorie in the *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), XIX, 258-59.

people, Vesey began to organize an insurrection, formulating plans, selecting able lieutenants, soliciting funds, and collecting weapons. He based his plan on the words of Joshua 6: 21: "Then they utterly destroyed all in the city, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and asses, with the edge of the sword."[5]

Betrayed by a slave faithful to his white master, Vesey was captured on June 22, 1822, and brought to trial the following day. He and his fellow-conspirators refused to reveal any details of the plot at the trial, but Vesey skillfully cross-examined witnesses called against him. Of those brought to trial, Vesey and thirty-four others were hanged, thirty-four were banished from the state, and sixty-one were acquitted. Denmark Vesey of Charleston took his place with Gabriel of Richmond and Nat Turner of Southampton County, Virginia, as liberators of black people from slavery in the United States, the "land of the free and the home of the brave."

A second South Carolina black hero was Robert Smalls of Beaufort (1839-1915), who was born into slavery but lived to represent his native state in the Congress of the United States. His mother, Lydia Smalls, was a house servant belonging to the McKee family, who treated their house servants well. But "he never forgot," said one of his contemporaries, that "being a slave . . . his elevated position could be changed in a night and the most brutal servitude inflicted upon him, because he was not even master of his own soul."[6] To impress upon her son the harshness of slavery, Lydia Smalls forced him to watch slaves being whipped in the Beaufort jail and to attend slave auctions at the Arsenal. In 1851, at the age of seventeen, Smalls was taken to Charleston by his owner and hired out. Eventually he was allowed to purchase his own freedom and that of his wife, whom he had married in 1856. Life as a free Negro was as distasteful for Robert Smalls as it had been for Denmark Vesey. At the outbreak of the Civil War he seems to have

[5]The extent of the Vesey plot has been debated by recent historians. The older view, that the insurrection involved elaborate planning covering a wide geographical area, has been challenged by Richard C. Wade, "The Vesey Plot: A Reconsideration," *Journal of Southern History*, XXXIII (1948), 143-61. A moderating position is taken by William W. Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War; The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina*, 1816-1836 (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), pp. 53-61.

[6]Smalls is treated by Francis B. Simkins in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, XVII, 224-25, and is the subject of a biography by Okon E. Uya, *From Slavery to Public Service: Robert Smalls, 1839-1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971).

attended secret meetings where blacks "heard the words of hope amid the din of battle and the clash of arms. We began to realize that we were human beings."[7]

Because he was skilled as a harbor pilot, Smalls was impressed by the Confederate authorities to pilot *The Planter*, a transport steamer assigned to Charleston harbor and the coastal waterways. After careful planning, Smalls and the black members of the crew seized *The Planter* in the cold hours before dawn on May 13, 1862, sailed it under the guns of Confederate forts surrounding the harbor and into the lines of the Union vessels blockading the coast. Immediately Smalls became a national hero. A Pennsylvania Congressman, William Kelley, explained the effects of Smalls' exploit. Before it, he said, "there was nothing at all to show that the Negro could do without a white leader, but there comes *The Planter*, which Robert Smalls, the black man, had taken by his own command . . . , showing that your race had enterprise, energy, capacity, and may be trusted to go alone, at least on steamboats."[8] Because of his knowledge of the harbor fortifications Smalls proved invaluable to the Union cause. On December 1, 1863, when the commander of *The Planter* deserted under attack, Smalls took charge of the ship and maneuvered it to safety. Subsequently, he was promoted to the rank of captain and given command of the steamer.

During Reconstruction Smalls became the political chief of his native district and earned the title, "King of Beaufort." A thorough Republican partisan, Smalls won the kindness of whites by his moderate political views and his charity toward the family of his former owner. He was elected to the state House of Representatives and the state Senate, and from 1875 to 1887, with the exception of two years, Smalls represented Beaufort District in Congress. When whites gained control of the state government in 1876, Smalls was convicted of accepting a bribe while a state senator. He was subsequently pardoned by the governor, and a member of the investigating committee agreed with the editor of the Charleston *News and Courier* that Smalls "could not be convicted before a jury of *impartial white men* anywhere on the same evidence today [1895]."[9]

In the last years of his life, from 1889 until 1913, whenever the

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[7]Uya, *Small*, pp. 3, 10.
[8]*Ibid.*, p. 17.
[9]*Ibid.*, p. 86.

Republican Party was in power, Smalls served as Collector of the Port of Beaufort. His last noteworthy public service was his membership in the state Constitutional Convention of 1895. He made a valiant, but ill-fated effort to stop the disfranchisement of black citizens. He pled his loyalty to his native state: "I was born and raised in South Carolina and today I live on the very spot on which I was born . . . I love the state as much as any member of this convention." But he decried the Jim Crow treatment that blacks were receiving: "My race needs no special defense for the past history of them in this country proves them to be the equal of any people anywhere. All they need is an equal chance in the battle of life."[10] Despite the growing bonds of segregation after Reconstruction, Smalls worked quietly in Beaufort for the advancement of both races.

Two distinguished black South Carolinians who contributed widely to the national welfare in the twentieth century are Mary McLeod Bethune and Benjamin E. Mays. Mrs. Bethune (1875-1955), listed by Ida Tarbell among the fifty greatest women America has produced, was born near Mayesville, the last of the seventeen children of Samuel and Patsy McLeod and the first of their children born free.[11] She grew up with the admonition of her grandmother ringing in her ears: "You were sent to Patsy and Sam to be a leader . . . Marse Lincoln has given us freedom, and you have a new day." As young Mary Jane McLeod became aware of the color line which divided her from her white playmates, it seemed to her that the ability to read "made the difference between her and the white child." One afternoon, visiting some white neighbors, she picked up a book and was told: "Put that book down, Mary Jane; you can't read." From that time on, Mary McLeod's greatest obsession was the desire to learn to read. When the Presbyterian Board of Missions for Freedmen opened a school in Mayesville, she achieved her goal. Then she went on to Scotia Seminary in North Carolina and the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago to prepare herself for mission work in Africa. After graduation, finding no opportunity to go to Africa, Mary McLeod turned southward to teach her own people. In 1904 she opened a school in Daytona Beach, Florida, which

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 143-44.

[11] A sketch of Mrs. Bethune appeared in *Current Biography*, 1942 (New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1942), pp. 79-81, and there are numerous biographies for children, youth, and adults. Perhaps the most complete treatment is Racham Holt, *Mary McLeod Bethune; A Biography* (New York: Doubleday, 1964).

by 1923 had become Bethune-Cookman College. Never a scholar, Mrs. Bethune attracted national attention by her initiative, administrative ability, and power as a lecturer. On the platform her five-feet, four-inch height seemed much taller, and her vibrant and dramatic speech, enhanced by expressive gestures, charmed audiences throughout the world. "But it was her luminous, hazel eyes," writes her biographer, "direct and candid, that caught and held the attention of all those who met her."[12]

In 1935 Mrs. Bethune was awarded the coveted Spingarn Medal by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for service to her race. The following year she was appointed Director of the Division of Negro Affairs in the National Youth Administration. In 1937 she founded and became president of the National Council of Negro Women. President Franklin Roosevelt consulted her so often on Negro affairs that she was listed as a member of his unofficial "black cabinet." In 1945 she was appointed by the State Department as one of three black consultants to the U. S. delegation to the San Francisco Conference which framed the United Nations Charter.

Mrs. Bethune, like other black leaders before her, was subjected to personal attack, this time in the United States Congress. The House Committee on Un-American Activities selected her for investigation in February, 1943, and the chairman of the committee accused her on the floor of the House of being a Communist. This attack came despite the fact that the FBI had investigated her the previous year and she had been cleared by the Subversive Personnel Committee of the Federal Security Agency of "any activities which might properly be characterized subversive or disloyal to our government."[13]

Mrs. Bethune received numerous honorary degrees from colleges and universities all over the United States, but in 1949 Rollins College became the first white college in the South to so honor her. "You have in your own person again demonstrated," the citation read, "that from the humblest beginnings and through the most adverse circumstances it is still possible . . . to rise from the humblest cabin in the land to a place of honor and influence among the world's eminent. In paying honor to you we show again our faith in the land which made your career a reality."[14]

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[12]Holt, *Bethune*, pp. 7, 162, 97, 72.
[13]*Ibid.*, pp. 247, 241.

Still active and making a significant contribution to the life of his community as President of the Atlanta Board of Education is Benjamin E. Mays, who was born near Epworth in Greenwood County in 1895.[15] His earliest memory was of "a crowd of white men who rode up on horseback with rifles on their shoulders . . . They cursed my father, drew their guns and made him . . . take off his hat and bow to them several times. Then they rode away." As he grew up, young Mays realized that it was "virtually impossible, to combine manhood and blackness under one skin." He concluded "that I could never do what I hoped to do or be what I aspired to be if I remained in the state of my birth. I had to seek a new world."[16]

Benjamin Mays attended high school at South Carolina State College in Orangeburg and was graduated from Bates College with honors in 1920. He was ordained to the Baptist ministry and taught at Morehouse College in Atlanta until 1924. Then he enrolled in the Graduate School of the University of Chicago, where he earned the doctorate in religion in 1935. Not until his days in Chicago, he recalls, did he "develop my first real friendship with a Southern white man." Carrying with him the memory of the Greenwood mob, he had feared Southern whites "and completely distrusted them." Not until the age of thirty was he able to stop "generalizing about Southern people. [The new friend] was only one, . . . but I felt that there must be others just as honest, just as decent, just as trustworthy."[17]

In 1934 Mays became dean of the School of Religion at Howard University, and six years later he was elected to the presidency of Morehouse College. Countless honors have come to Mays, such as the vice-presidency of the Federal (now National) Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States. But perhaps he will be longest remembered among his own generation for his quiet, but earnest eloquence at the funeral of his former student and friend, Martin Luther King, Jr.

Like Mrs. Bethune and the others before him, Mays has suffered at the hands of the dominant white society in the United States. Added to the usual indignities of segregation were the attacks on his loyalty

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[14]*Ibid.*, p. 273.

[15]A sketch of Mays appeared in *Current Biography*, 1945 (New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1945), pp. 391-93. Recently published is his autobiography, *Born to Rebel* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971).

[16]Mays, *Born to Rebel*, pp. 1, 25, 49.

[17]*Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.

to his country. "Every Southern Negro who spoke out against the status quo," he has written, "was automatically labelled a Communist or a fellow traveler . . . Anyone who attended a meeting where Communists were present, no matter how few, was promptly accused of having Communist leanings." He and other blacks, he said, became the scapegoats of the white South: "How else could a self-righteous white South explain my opposition to segregation and the exploitation of the Negro?" When President Kennedy sought to appoint Mays to the Civil Rights Commission in 1961, the two United States Senators from Georgia opposed the black educator – one because Mays was opposed to segregation, the other because he was "subversive." To the latter charge, Mays replied in his autobiography: "His using these data without finding out the truth about my loyalty to my country was tantamount to using lies to smear me. It wasn't fair."[18]

From this survey of four representative black leaders from South Carolina it becomes evident why simple integration of white and black history is an issue in a white-dominated society. First, each of these black leaders achieved fame in spite of the prevailing white culture. Both Denmark Vesey and Robert Smalls achieved freedom from slavery only to live on the fringes of a society which had little place for and tolerance of free Negroes. After Emancipation Smalls fought against the system of racial segregation which triumphed in the end. From childhood Mrs. Bethune encounterd whites who threatened her. Once, she recalled, when she was only a small girl, bullies chanted: "Some folks say a nigger won't steal, but I seed one in my co'n field . . . Damn nigger goin' to school. Sic'em, Bull!"[19] Benjamin Mays was so disillusioned by mob terror that he left his native state.

Second, each of the black leaders made the plight of his race a major concern of his life. Such an emphasis is a constant judgment on the oppression and injustice which the South, and indeed the whole nation, perpetrated. Vesey's name is forever linked with the slave insurrection which he planned. The triumphs of Smalls during the Civil War and Reconstruction were at the expense of the "Southern way of life." Both Mrs. Bethune and Mays worked tirelessly to improve the plight of blacks through education and the guarantee of civil rights for all Americans.

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[18] *Ibid.*, pp. 209, 227, 230.
[19] Holt, *Bethune*, p. 22.

But the very presence of black heroes and leaders in a society which excluded them and made their rise nearly impossible is a measure against which the ideals and values of American democracy can be judged. The dreams and activities of Denmark Vesey, Robert Smalls, Mary McLeod Bethune, and Benjamin Mays provide a corrective to the easy proclamation of the fulfillment of the American dream. To ignore the lives and thoughts of these men and women is to ignore a major part of the search for the embodiment of the American democratic faith.

For Karla

Your white lab coat suited you.
You showed me in a microscope
a hundred animalculae
as the beginning of my hope.

Sundays we swam in the river. Clear
and clean you cut the water, neat
as a knife-blade. You said, "It is better
to fall and land on concrete

than water unless you hit it right."
Something about air spaces
in concrete — water's packed too tight:
all molecules in apportioned places.

I suppose in our relationship
there were not enough spaces. If you say
you want to break it off, we will —
only don't twist your hands that way.

GAIL BROCKETT WHITE

One Of The Boys

RICHARD FEWELL

There's one for every crowd and a crowd for everyone. You've heard that little bit of logic, in a bar, on a street corner, or on a job. It says a lot about the herd instinct of human beings. People who experience similar triumphs tend to seek out and congratulate one another. Likewise, people with the same kind of troubles are found consoling each other in various manners and ways. Thinking about this piece of folk wisdom reminds me of a fellow named Moe Davis who got tapped on the shoulder one day as he was standing in front of the urinal in the men's room at Pembroke Steel Company.

Moe was a hard-working, law-abiding, church-going family man who, for the most part, was happy, contented, and not beyond doing an honest day's work. That was his problem. I was on the job and watched it all happen.

Moe was the only other Negro on the job besides myself, and as long as I can remember, there has never been a Negro in the "Steelers" crowd. It had been a closed membership crowd. Recently, Tillie Wain had died, vacating a membership. It seems that Tillie had driven up the exit ramp of the Connecticut turnpike after one of the crowd's frequent blowouts. There was a funeral. Tillie's family cried a lot, then left town. The crowd mourned a few days, forgot about Tillie, then started looking for a new member. In their old age, the crowd was getting liberal. Moe was their contribution to Equal Opportunity.

The crowd consisted of the beer-bellied, joke-swapping, court-decreed bachelors who met at Scully's bar every day after work. The leader, an obese foreman, who was always complaining about his wife's alimony over pitchers of beer, had organized the group. His name was Charlie Spovak, but everyone called him "Spovy." He was the one who tapped Moe on the shoulder that day.

With that gesture, Moe had been invited to a friendly game of pool and a beer by none other than the unofficial president of the crowd. Moe never went in for drinking much and was always punctual in his arrival time at home. But being one of the newer employees, he was not sure if he should disappoint the foreman or not.

At the bar, they were waiting for Moe's entrance. Moe really had

no desire to join this group, but he had already been voted in. The moment he showed up, Spovy shouted and waved at him. The others looked up from their beers and smiled. Moe walked past the pool table, the jukebox, the grill, and the cigarette machine to the round table where the crowd stood to greet him. He felt that the whole place was staring at him. Especially, he felt the eyes of the crowd who were sizing him up, trying to see if he would fit into Tillie's chair. Moe looking back at them now, felt compelled to do something.

"Uh . . . next round's on me," Moe said, wondering if that was the right move. Soon, they were slapping Moe on the back, shaking his hand, and telling him jokes. Spovy raised his hand and ordered drinks. Now Moe, through no fault of his own, was one of the boys.

Somewhere near the seventh round of beer Moe found that he had lost the ability to read the time on the Budweiser clock over the jukebox. He had not wanted to stay that long, but every attempt to leave was thwarted by the skillful maneuvers of crowd members like Rozarie, or Puglio, or Bader, or Mickukla, or even Spovy himself, all of whom wanted him to listen to their tales about their ex-wives, the theme of which seemed to be, "We don't let no women push us around."

Misery loves company. You've heard that one also, which is another facet of crowd psychology. If you want to do your own thing, or if you do not want to join the crowd, or herd, those old bovines just might trample you. The individual in a conformist society is an outlaw.

Everybody was laughing at one of Spovy's standard jokes, told twice over. Joe Taconi leaned across the table toward Moe, who had been laughing on-cue throughout this initiation party: "Hey Moe, tell us a joke." Moe was startled. He had not expected this. He didn't know any of the kind of jokes that they were telling anyway. "Naw," he said, "I pass."

"'Awwwm, c'mon, boy, the way you people laugh all the time, you got to know some jokes." Moe winced at the words *you people*. Everybody looked at one another apprehensively. Moe saw that it was his move. He smiled the tension away. Spovy told Taconi to order more beer. Taconi went to the bar, ordered, came back and said, "C'mon, Moe, a joke, please?" The others drew up to the table and echoed, "Yeah, c'mon."

For the life of him, Moe could think of only one old joke he had overheard a boss of his tell. The crowd waited anxiously. "Well," Moe started, "There was this traveling salesman . . ." — everybody looked at each other — ". . . who came to a farm house one day and . . ." Puglio leaned back in his chair, "Hell, Moe, we done heard all them 'salesman' jokes. What we wanna hear is one of *your* kind of jokes, you know, something funny about *your* people." Moe said coolly, "Ain't nothing funny 'bout my people.' " Then he got up to leave, thankful for this opportune moment.

Spovy stood up. "Wait a minute here. You meatheads don't know how to treat a guest of mine. Youse kin all go to hell!" Nobody spoke. "Now leave the man alone. If he don't want to say no jokes, he don't say none, see?" Spovy sat back down beckoning Moe with him. He looked around the table at the agreeing faces, then started laughing, and ordering beer.

It was getting late and Moe knew he was in trouble at home. "I thank you all," Moe said, "but I have to be getting home." Rozarie said, "Afraid the old lady's gonna crack the whip, eh, fellow?" Taconi cut in, "Wee bit henpecked, huh?" Bader added, "*Nobody* goes straight home after work." Spovy put his fleshy arm around Moe's neck: "About that vacation you need to take the family down South . . . ."

But even the crowd can get enough, so around seven o'clock, Spovy, with the largest beer gut in the crowd, belched loudly and gave his priestly sign that the beer meeting was over. Everybody got up, draining their glasses, shaking hands, and talking about work tomorrow. On the way to the door a few made intimate remarks to the busty barmaid. A couple of them lived in the YMCA, one lived in a brother's attic, another in a sister's basement, and some went home to Moma. Moe stood on the corner and watched them all disband into the uninviting, refrigerated night.

Moe became a regular at these meetings, at times telling a few jokes about the "Signifying Monkey." But his wife grew more and more weary of his tardiness and growing outside interest. However, she never said anything directly about it until that night when Moe came home drunk. When the explosion came, it was violent. There was a lot of crying and swearing, during which Moe's cold meal was thrown at him.

It was a long way from the loving hug and warm meal of the day before Spovak tapped him on the shoulder.

Well, situations of this kind never stand still. Things got worse and worse. Every time Moe tried to resume his old way of living, he failed. Nothing gave him pleasure, fishing, reading books, doing church work, as in the past. No matter what he did, with or without his family, he could not revive the feeling of the happy family man he used to have. Things he used to talk over with his wife, he now talked over with Spovy and the boys at Scully's bar. They knew about marital problems, didn't they? They had been through it all and come out on top, hadn't they? Moe found that the crowd was like the Mafia or the Black Muslims; there was no way out, save the way traveled by Tillie Wain.

As time passed, Moe's wife grew more distant and impatient to him in direct relationship to the closeness and patience of the crowd. Moe now looked forward to the meeting with the boys after work. They understood his troubles. They listened to him. They gave him comfort. Hadn't they befriended him when he was alone in the huge, impersonal shop? Hadn't they helped him?

One night Moe didn't get home at all. The crowd had a beer-card party that ended up at Spovy's house, which was really Spovy's mother's home, where he had lived since his wife took his away. Anyway, when Moe finally got home, his wife and kids were gone, and he didn't hear from them again until some papers arrived suing him for divorce, alimony and the kids, all of which his wife got. But Moe was not alone. Every day after work, he had the "Steelers" to share his burdens over pitchers of beer at Scully's bar. They understood when he got drunk and cried one night at the bar, and wanted to borrow somebody's car so he could drive up the exit ramp of the Connecticut Turnpike. Yes, they knew what it was like.

All of this happened several year ago when Moe first came here from Carolina. Old Spovak is dead now, and the crowd has a new leader, but they still meet at Scully's bar every day.

Recently, I got married to a wonderful, sweet, understanding wife. One day when I was standing in front of the urinal in Pembroke Steel's locker room, someone tapped me on the shoulder and invited me to the bar for a friendly game of pool, which nobody ever plays, and a beer. It was my foreman. I said, "Hell, I'm sorry, Moe, but I got to

be gitting on home for dinner." Putting a fleshy arm around my shoulder like a father would a son, Moe said with conviction, "*Nobody*, but *nobody*, goes straight home . . ."

Man with Chainsaw

I took my chainsaw out into the sun.
It cut through pine trees like a tongue through wine.
It cut through oak trees like a tooth through toast.
It spat out in a milky spray sawdust.
After a while I had no more to cut.
I felt the chainsaw purring in my throat.
After a while, wanting something to do,
I took my left foot off abaft the toe.
I took my left shank off first at midcalf
and then, to even things up, the right shank off.
I made a pair of cuts just at the groin
and then a vertical cut on a perfect line
up through coccyx and spine and sternum to
the purring throat and let my head hang free.
My head hung free there grinning at the sight.
The chainsaw hung free purring in the light.
My hands and arms swung like a loop of vine.
The sun shone and everything was fine.

MARCEL SMITH

A Vision of Yellow Buses

In fall,
the country open out
for good or
ill.

When corn
is down; vine
dies;
pumpkins
lie few
and
scattered;
then the pine
appears, where once I walked long
with my second
son
—summer;
even the house
gone,
lost
in the greenery—
where he that son uncovered
for the first time
the sharp
fecund
mystery of a
cone.

Now at an autumnal three o'clock, I watch the toy-like buses
passing down a
country lane:
far,
they are smaller
and
smaller;
they soon will diminish out of sight

unless
–suddenly
sur
prisingly–
from the other direction, one toy-like bus
appears,
grows
large
and larger
into
the distance
into this landscape of
one pine;
one farm house
reflecting
brilliant against
umber trees;
round orange rotting
to diaphanous
white against brown
brittle
of
downed
fields;

and
this
tall
nameless
weed, which as I cross again those fields with my son
will catch
in my
coat, whip
against hand
and leg,
stinging,
scattering.

ROBERT SMITH

First Freeze, 1933
(or hog killin' time)

On that coldest of mornings, we rose with
frosty breaths and donned heaviest work clothes,
mindful that a few stars still twinkled in the skies.

Boiling water spewed up vapor clouds
over the 60 gallon barrels placed
above crackling lightwood fires.

A rifle shot . . . or three or four . . .
cracked through the air from the pasture.
A rumbling, bumping clop followed as the carcasses rode
in the "Hoover cart" down the rugged path
to the yard and fireside.

Dipped, plucked and hung by
back feet; naked white. soft, fat–
then slit from end to end of the belly
for draining and gutting.

We stood and waited
as the strongest man with sharpest knife
began the task . . .
trimming, dividing and
Evaluating.

Women washed out the waste and cut the
chitlins.
Grabbing the smooth white fat, still clinging to the skin
with scant streak of lean, they threw it into a black
washpot to become lard and cracklins.

Talk and laughter . . . "Now we'll have meat!"
Bacon, fat back, cracklins, pork chops, fresh
back bones and spare ribs,
shoulders, hoghead cheese, pickled feet . . .

And hams for the Landlord.

C. Smith Campbell

Wake Up So I Can Tell You Who's Dead

ROBERT DRAKE

I've had insomnia ever since I was a young girl – way back before I ever married. And I've been to just about every doctor in captivity in this part of the world; and they all just say, well, yes, that's the way some people are and there's nothing, really, you can do about it. And that's not much consolation either: they'll probably all come to my funeral and say the same thing and go on about how they can't *believe* I'm really dead, which won't do *me* much good, I must say.

And of course you don't want to make a life work out of taking sleeping pills, and I said that before we ever had any of this drug problem business or whatever you want to call it that's coming out over the radio or television every time your back is turned. I suppose it would scandalize the American Medical Association to death (not that I think they'd take much notice of anything *I* said), but I think the doctors themselves are partially responsible for a lot of this foolishness right this very minute – prescribing pain-killers every time you stump your toe or bat your eye – until people have just about forgotten that life ain't one uninterrupted shower of rose petals and you've got to hurt *some* just to know you're still here. But I'm a back number, as I'm sure most of the folks would tell you around here. Seventy-five years old next October and buried my husband twenty years ago in June, but I'm still able to kick, though perhaps not very high.

But anyhow, there are a lot of nights when I can't sleep until way up toward morning, and I've tried reading and walking the floor and doing needle work and just about every other home remedy in the world, but I don't want to get started on that sleeping pill business. Like a friend of mine that was always talking about herself and her ailments and complaining about having "blood pressure," which I told her she'd *better* have if she expected to be with us long. Anyhow – always taking pills "to rest her heart," according to what she said the doctor told her. But I just told her she'd better watch out or someday she'd rest her heart permanently, if you know what I mean.

But anyhow, now that I'm living here in this duplex, all by myself on my own side, I don't really *have* to get up for anything in the morning. So the nights I have trouble sleeping, I just finally doze off about six

o'clock and sleep till noon or after. And who cares – unless it's some of those fool neighbors without anything better to do than wonder whether I"ll be found dead in the bed if they don't see my shade go up at daybreak, the same time they get up themselves? I used to have one woman down the street that would call up about eight, to ask whether I'd had a "good" night, though of course I knew what she really wanted to know was whether I was still living. And I guess she had visions of "Lonely Widow Found Dead in Bed: Overdose of Sleeping Pills Suspected" dancing in her head. But I finally put a stop to that and told her I'd call her up myself if I had any notion of dying or doing anything else really important that touched on her any time soon. And that was the end of her.

But God help me, I may have fallen out of the frying pan into the fire because of what I did to this damned old big house a couple of years ago. My children were all after me, since none of them lived here, to have somebody in the house with me. And I never could make up my mind whether they were afraid for me to stay by myself (I don't believe in guns any more than I do sleeping pills, but I've got a meat-cleaver under the bed) or whether they thought that would be a good way for me to supplement my income or whether it would be like having a resident keeper to look after me so *she* could find me dead in the bed instead of the neighbors or just what. Anyhow, I just proceeded to take this old house and divide it up into two apartments and didn't say "boo" to my children or the neighbors or anybody else. But I thought that ought to hold them for a while anyhow. And, just to keep everybody quiet, I had the carpenters leave one connecting door from my living room into the living room on the other side of the house, so everybody could peer into everybody else's business up here and keep an eye on everything the other one did and find each other dead in the bed if it was really necessary. Now you certainly don't have to associate with whoever is living in the other side of the house if you don't want to, and I can keep that door locked any time I get good and ready. But anyhow, they can all come in and find me dead in the bed with very little trouble, if they want to; and we'll all keep up appearances that way. Silliest thing in the world, don't you think? *Whoever* finds you dead in the bed here is bound to be a friend or some of the kinfolks: it's not like you lived in a city and your body had to be discovered by perfect strangers.

Well, anyhow, the first renter I had was little Mrs. Dawson that worked down at the discount dry goods store, and I never thought I'd hear a peep out of her. And I didn't really, and we got along just fine and used to visit back and forth at nights when she was home. But I had to hear all about how she was separated from her husband because he'd stepped out on her one time about twenty years ago. (And who the hell wouldn't, the way she acted, always thinking some man was probably lying in wait under her bed every night to "get" her — she could have put her mind at ease on that score if she'd ever bothered to look in the mirror — and never drinking even Coca-Cola because she didn't approve of "stimulants"?) And then it was all about what "he" said and what "I" said, and she'd never in this world give him a divorce or look him in the face again, and so on and so forth. God forbid that I'd ever tell my inmost private affairs around so promiscuously, and I hope I don't, and I've told my children to tell me so if I ever start acting like that. And knowing them like I do, I'm sure they will: they don't much miss a chance to set me straight as it stands right this minute.

But anyhow, Mrs. Dawson — named Estelle — was a nice little woman, and I was glad to have her with me. And she didn't talk about the time when Horace walked out on her *all* the time. And after all, you can't just read silly women's magazines and watch people getting deeper into trouble on TV serials or even Lawrence Welk always: you need some folks around you, even if they do get under your skin.

And Estelle and I got along just fine; but, lo and behold, it was a year ago last Christmas that I got the surprise of my life about her. After it was all over, I looked back on it and remembered that she'd been talking a lot lately about "forgiveness" and such like and being big-hearted and so forth and so on. I didn't think much of it at the time: in any case, it was certainly a lot better than to have some dried up old harpy boring you to death with what her husband did or didn't do or what "Papa" or "Mamma" said that's been dead forty years and you couldn't care less. But anyhow, Christmas morning — I told the children to wait and I'd come to see *them* after New Year's (I didn't want to be around all that commotion with the grandchildren any more than I could help) — Estelle exploded into my side of the house through that connecting door that I'd forgotten to lock the night before. And there I was laid out dead to the world because I hadn't gotten off

till way in the night, long after I'd put the Midnight Mass at St. Patrick's in New York City to bed. (The Lord knows what Papa would say to that — Baptist from his head to his heels — and especially now that they're all trying to talk English rather than Latin and more dangerous than ever — or that's what he'd think, I imagine.) Anyhow, in roars Estelle like a screaming eagle (I used to think of her as more on the order of a sparrow or at least a wren, which shows you can't ever discount the effects of passion) and screams, "Miss Ada, get up! There's a *man* in my apartment that wants to see you!"

And I rose up from the bedclothes looking, I'm sure, like Mrs. Lazarus and says, "Godamighty, what in the world are you talking about this time of the night?" But Estelle sort of ducks her head and giggles and says, "Why, it's nine o'clock in the morning, and there's a *man* in there asking for you." And I was so mad I wanted to tell her to go ahead on and enjoy herself and I'd take the left-overs. But I thought that might shock her to death; so I says, "Who in the world is it that's foaming at the mouth to see me in the state I'm in?" And she says, "It's Horace: he's come back!" And all I could think of to say was, "Lord have mercy!" And she says, "Isn't that the finest Christmas present you ever heard of? You've got to come see him right this minute." And I says, "Well, if he's waited twenty years to come back to you, he can wait a few minutes longer till I get my shoes on and my teeth in. So go hold him down till I get there."

Which I did in due course, and it was all just one big love-feast. And I couldn't help but wonder what my dead husband would have thought of it all, to say nothing of the children. They all of them were always much more inclined than I was to worry about appearances and what other folks would say. But I just tell anybody that gets after me about that just to tell whoever cares to examine my bank balance: I sure ain't rich, but I'm solvent. And I've found most such inquirers have a great respect for that condition, though I've never sat down to figure out exactly why.

But anyhow there was Horace after twenty years and apparently not much the worse for wear, and I for one was glad to see him and thought he was just what the doctor ordered for Estelle and even me too: I just liked to hear a man's voice through the wall now and then. But then of course, as I've told my children, that's not reason enough for me ever to want to get married again. And Horace and Estelle seemed

as happy as if they had good sense, though he was about the laziest white man I ever saw in my life – wouldn't even carry Estelle's groceries from the car into the house. But they settled down, and he made her give up her job at the discount store. He'd been working in Memphis all those years, and he had a nice pension for them both to retire on, to say nothing of Social Security. So that was all very well, though I wasn't a bit surprised when they decided to buy a little house out in that new subdivision north of town – FHA loan and all that, you know.

But anyhow I did miss them after they moved. Estelle wouldn't ever have to worry about either Horace or making her living again, I thought; and I supposed she could put up with a lot if that was the case and was happy for her. I did get sort of tickled once when I was thinking about it all and it occurred to me that it was all like maybe somebody had got the wrong ending for an episode on "As the World Turns," and everything had turned out all right, for a change.

Well, I was not just dying to get anybody else in the house after they left unless it was somebody that wouldn't bother me one way or the other and wouldn't take any notice of whether I paraded around the house in my nightgown all night long when I couldn't sleep or whether I was even dead in the bed or not except more or less to just give the general alarm and let my children and the undertaker take over. But I may have outsmarted my own self when I rented the apartment to the specimen I've got now – Inez Whitefield, a retired practical nurse that came from out there around Fisher's Crossing back in the beginning. I'd seen her working out at the hospital but that was about all my acquaintance with her, but I did think that maybe a retired practical nurse was about as good a one to find me dead in the bed as anybody else.

But I hadn't figured on what all would go with the deal, if you see what I mean. The fact that she'd been a practical nurse ought to have tipped me off, to say nothing of her being a member of the Assembly of God, which is nothing in this world but Holy Rollers that have gotten above their raising and are too prosperous to shout – same pattern as the Methodist Church, really: out of the tabernacle and into the country club, which is at least movement if it's not progress. Of course, the Episcopalians have been there all along (and I'm one myself – married out of the Baptists and into them); so any "movement" they make

will have to be in some other direction, which might not be such a bad thing either. But I don't expect anything much from *them* in that line till after I'm dead.

Well, Inez moved in and brings her "davenport" that let out into an extra double bed for whatever Fisher's Crossing connections happened to be lying around loose and her funeral-home pictures of Jesus and what must have been the entire department of Woolworth's artificial flowers, though I believe they're now called "permanent." But what really set the whole thing off was a cemetery easel – poinsettias for Christmas, lilies for Easter – that she kept in her living room when she didn't have it out at the graveyard at Fisher's Crossing in her folks' cemetery lot. I soon found out that wasn't all the baggage Inez had brought along either. There she was at age sixty-five or over, big as a bear and larger than your life and mine too, and wearing pants suits in various pastel shades and with apparently a separate wig to match each shade. I don't know what color her hair had been originally, but it had been through so many rinses and bleaches that it now looked pretty much like second-hand straw. So I thought some sort of wig might be just as well for her, though I could certainly have done without the pants suits.

But that wasn't all. Inez also brought along her two divorces, her "complete" hysterectomy ("ovaries and tubes too"), and a red-hot Holiness preacher from up the creek somewhere that she said was dead to marry her but she was still thinking it over – I'm sorry to say, out loud and in public most of the time. Her background as a nurse of course made one body and any of its functions about the same as another to her, she said: she didn't have any time to take any notice of *them*. And she'd as soon as not open the bathroom door and hand me the morning paper when I was stark naked in the tub or anything else. But bodies dead or alive didn't seem to faze her: it had all been her "calling," she said. And whether it was yours or mine or hers was too much for her to worry about.

So, in a way, Inez was something of a relief from Estelle, who I think always secretly hoped she would have the privilege of finding me dead in the bed. To Inez, that would simply have been all in the day's work – nothing to make a production of at all and just one more old woman less. But she did take a great interest in the news of accidental and untimely deaths, largely, I suppose, because they *were* untimely

and unnatural. Inez seemed to think nature always knew best: it was her training, she said. And I used to wonder whether she was a Darwinian out of her sphere: I didn't think the Assembly of God would take much stock in that. And when nature wouldn't cooperate, why you just had to wade in and make it shape up, whether it was with a laxative, a sleeping pill, *The* Pill, or anything else. And she used to devil me to death about not taking any "medication" for my insomnia until I finally had to remind myself that she *was* from out at Fisher's Crossing, where the most anybody had ever heard of "medication" was Lydia E. Pinkham or Black Draught and really didn't much care which was which.

But anyhow, it was whatever happened contrary to nature that really seemed to get Inez started. And she was on the phone nearly every morning to spread the word when somebody she was kin to or had remotely ever heard of (it amounted to about the same thing) had gotten shot, run over, knocked in the head, or just plain killed. And of course she was always right there to get the weekend "body count," when they told you on the Monday morning TV news how many people had been killed across the state over the weekend or the holiday season or whatever and also how: automobile accidents, electrocutions, drownings, even one time a man crushed to death by a mobile home, which I, for one, thought served him right for living in such a monstrosity. And then she would come baying into my room, where I'd probably still be fast asleep, and shriek, "Miss Ada, Miss Ada, wake up so I can tell you who's dead!"

But, morbid or not, Inez does have her uses; and I've been entertaining myself for some time now, when I can't sleep, by trying to imagine various roles for her to play: Madame Defarge or maybe even John the Baptist with a sex change (which wouldn't have bothered Inez in the least) were real possibilities, I thought. But one night last week when I was really having a bad time and was even desperate enough to try counting sheep after Johnny Carson, the *Reader's Digest* and even a right strong hot toddy had all failed me, I got to thinking that maybe Inez was more than a Darwinian out of her element and a wiser commentator than she knew. If she was one to whom both death and life were but different sides of the same coin, one body the same as another, she was also the one to wake you up to tell you who was dead. And what was more important than that: who was really asleep or awake, really alive or dead? (Being found dead in the bed wasn't

a matter for speculation at all: it was just a fact.) And don't tell me I'm just being morbid either: how do you know who's alive unless you know who's dead?

It was sometimes hard to say these days who the living and the dead were: what else was the evening news all about, really? And then I recollected from way back yonder somewhere when I was in school a thousand years ago that somebody in American literature — Thoreau, I think — said the only way for a man to get waked up sometimes was to get run over by one of those newfangled railroad trains. (In the case of Inez, it was more like getting hit in the head with a sledge hammer.) How deep asleep you were had a lot to do with the strength of the remedy necessary, I supposed. In any case, I thought, I'd spent a good part of my life (against my will, mostly) wide awake and ought to be about the brightest person I knew. Anyhow, the idea of Inez in the role of an observer or news analyst, giving both the Associated Press and David Brinkley a run for their money, was a novel one and, I thought, about as valid a part for her as many of the folks that were already playing it — and they might as well not turn up their noses at her, Fisher's Crossing or not. To cap the climax, I even began to wonder whether they couldn't make some use of Inez up in Washington and hung fire for quite a spell, trying to decide between the Supreme Court and the F.B.I. I could even imagine her, if necessary, refereeing a wrestling match between Martha Mitchell and Lady Bird Johnson. But about that point, I got so carried away by the drama I'd set in motion, I forgot all about insomnia and finally went on off to sleep.

A Test of Talisman

Even as the first few miles
fall between us
small and separate fears
lay seige to my heart;
the shadows of clouds passing the window
move among my thoughts,
cold.
disquieting,
the color and shape of premonition.

I am trespassing here,
for we are heavy creatures of the earth,
my unborn child and I,
and do not take so easily
to shifts of altitude and speed,
sending us after our prayers,
taking us where dreams alone
can float without encumbrance.

I am trespassing here,
clinging to the charm of superstition,
a metal talisman
whose weight and meaning
are earthly properties
a link with slowly rooted things.

Will these wings that kept you safe
through a thousand dizzy leaps
down,
        down
through the nesting games of sparrows
and the sober search of larger birds for carrion,
these wings now pinned above my heart,
will they remember
and return me too?

KATHLEEN SUZANNE PLATT

Plumeria

These trades wipe the dusk
off this tin moonshine.

These ladies and gentlemen
resident in their tropical stuff
passing and gathering on the grass

sip laughing across
at the cruise ship lit yellow –
a banana on tin –

and as last night the trades go
scattering blossoms and schemes.

E. S. Miller

Laboratory: Biology

We have seen nothing.
Small pieces of mail sit in "h" or "i"
so when James H. comes most of my flipping
will go. Don't blame the dirty pictures.
When we moved, up the stairs, sat around
    cut specimens
I vomited into them. Mastication of jaws
and feelers working when ends reach out.
We freeze them. Check for temperature.
Color, blood count, number of gills, legs.
Something is pressing: lungs today?
Their staring at us
    with black hoods open
makes me think of the death of Prince Albert.

William D. Elliott

The Calculus

When I could not even lift my head
And was not more
Than plaster and pulleys,
You carried bedpans
Changed ice packs
And by sheer brute will
Held the pieces scattered by that car
Together.
And even when I, with leg near healed
And scarcely a limp
Had convinced you
That this time,
This time I really meant to leave you,
Some unknown plaster
Some unknown force held
Surely as a cast.
Tonight
As you lie asleep beside me
I trace the moon along your spine.
I have heard a broken bone
Grows stronger than before
But somewhere,
In a faint fluorescence
The tiny cracks still show.

JONE BUTLER

Reviews

Little Chicago Suite, by Bennie Lee Sinclair. Winston-Salem, N. C.: The Drummer Press, 1971. 41 pp. $1.95.

We are in the midst of an amazing time in American poetry, a flowering almost without precedent or parallel in history, except, perhaps, for the rich poetic renaissance of the late 16th century. The language of the tribe, our tribe, is being refined, tested, purified, and not by a few great artists but by many voices, a joyful plenitude from every region of this country. The paradox, the one great flaw, is that this wonderful and inexplicable harvest is occurring at precisely the time when much that is fine and rare must go unnoticed because of the shrill clamor of the marketplace and the commonplace problems of simple distribution. That is, more excellent and varied poetry is being written by Americans than ever before at a time when it is most difficult for readers who care to find out what is being written and by whom.

It would be a shame for those readers to miss Bennie Lee Sinclair's poetry.

Little Chicago Suite has an intelligent and perceptive introduction by the distinguished poet Mark Strand. Strand accurately identifies some of the general qualities which give Bennie Lee Sinclair's voice its own original sound and tone — its "disarming directness," its "odd mixture of innocence and authority," its deep humanity. In these observations Strand is correct. Bennie Lee Sinclair's book deserves his commendation, though it does not need it. Nor mine for that matter. Her poems speak very well for themselves.

It is worthwhile, I think, to observe that the poems also have particular qualities, yes local and regional ones, which do not in any way detract from the general virtues. It is not a "regional poetry" that Bennie Lee Sinclair writes, but her language, her subjects, the dance and music of the five senses which she celebrates, all begin in a known and loved *place*. In this she is, by any definition, a southern writer. Just so the variety of accents, the use and shine of the speech of real people (and a variety of *them*) and real places. Her range is wide and deep, from the lyric and formal to the angry, the satirical stance, but in every case, in all tones, she speaks in an accessible language. The familiar becomes new, the ordinary regains its mystery.

Take this stanza from her "Kathy" as an example of the graceful movement of mixed feelings and the ease of magical transformation:

> She has never heard of Emma Bovary.
> Relinquishing her brief parole,
> she sets the ironing board
> before the television, props the baby
> against a chair and, sighing,
> takes the curlers from her hair.
> So goes the wonder of her days.

Bennie Lee Sinclair can handle that most difficult and challenging of contemporary forms, the narrative poem, and proves it well with "A Short Epic in Defense of the Goat Man." She can fix the old ways, more precisely than any photograph, as in "Decoration Day." She can conjure up the speed and fury of our times and does so with extraordinary vividness in "On the Death of Fireball Roberts."

The variety and range of peoms in this book, the consistent integrity of the maker, would make this volume an achievement by any critical standards. But it is also, for the same qualities, a promise, a beginning. There is much energy spent, line by line, but in the end there is a sense of energy remaining, intact. A bold assertion (in a context of real modesty) that there are good poems coming. They will be worth waiting for. Will grow and bloom in their own time. Meantime we have *Little Chicago Suite* to be grateful for. More than apprentice work, but she tells it well (herself a skilled potter) in and through the voice of "The Apprentice":

> Myself,
> I have yet to be judged. Seven years
> in the potter's house
> shall teach me technical skill: but whatever
> I make of my clay will depend: will depend

GEORGE GARRETT

George Garrett. *Death of the Fox*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1971. 739 pp. $10.00.

George Garrett's *Death of the Fox* is a stunning novel about Sir Walter Raleigh and Elizabethan England.

First, let's talk of what the book does and does so brilliantly that one is a bit awed by that accomplishment. *Death of the Fox* recreates a culture, an era. With a Defoe-like reportorial eye for detail combined with a researcher's knowledge of Renaissance England, it reestablishes the England of Raleigh by remarkable details of dress, food, place, architecture, gossip, and feeling. In addition to Raleigh, it magnificently introduces upon its great national stage the Queen, King James, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Sir Henry Yelverton, and many other figures of Raleigh's day. One could almost call this historical novel a genuine novel of manners if one, like Trilling, defines manners as "a culture's hum and buzz of implication."

Garret's style appropriately evokes the exuberance, the richness of the time. A mellifluous prose summons, almost revivifies, the atmosphere of the past, as in the following passage from one of Raleigh's reminiscences: "Time was as the tide of the river for us. We rode it, floated upon it like the Queen's barge. Her barge was a glorious thing with gleaming brightwork, awnings of cloth of gold, silken pillows and lacquered oars, and it was pulled steady and skilled by a crew in royal livery. The barge moved down the river, fireworks fountaining explosions overhead, kettledrums beating, trumpets sounding proud and clear across the water. Her barge in moonlight, riding the Thames, that is a proper figure for our time."

How Garrett has interpreted the character of Raleigh should have been suggested in the title. For Raleigh is presented as the most versatile among a coterie of versatile men, the most polished gentleman of a glittering court and age. Writer, adventurer, courtier, soldier, philosopher – Raleigh is all of these. But cleverness or shrewdness is never, I think, the emphasis. Raleigh, *in sutu*, yes; but primarily the Raleigh of legend, the mythical figure who, for example, soothes then signals the executioner.

The events of Raleigh's life are recounted in great detail, often by Sir Walter himself, often by some of the other characters, such as King James and Sir Henry Yelverton. Unfortunately, this method does not achieve sustained direct action. Neither does it hold the reader's attention, especially if the reader is an amateur in things Elizabethan. In fact, I can hardly imagine an amateur reading the book without ready access to reference books. The chronology is also a bit confusing, though the actual time span is two days – the last two of Raleigh's

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upon earth. And the sentence style — if that is the phrase — has a deadening effect — particularly since that style is consistent through 700 pages. The phrase-like sentences become soporific.

I must therefore characterize the novel as idiosyncratic. Although the flashbacks and the multiple perspectives are recognizably normal parts of a modern novel, the style creates a series of retrospections that damage the heart of the narration; for when the reader looks for a character with vitality, what he finds is relics in a museum of words.

Becoming a legend, as I am sure Raleigh would admit, has some distinct disadvantages, a major one of which is that legends are subject to the whims of time and talent. In *Death of the Fox*, if the reader is willing to settle for less than an engrossing story, he will find here the fullness of an age in all the sensuousness that language can give it, for Garrett displays an astonishing knowledge of one of the more versatile men of a complex time.

RUDOLPH D. BATES

Robert Drake, *The Single Heart*. Aurora Publishers Inc., Nashville, 1971. $4.95

As in many other collections of short stories, some of the stories in Mr. Drake's *The Single Heart* are good and some of them are certainly less than that. Even so, Mr. Drake is in good company, as Allen Tate indirectly reminds us when he favorably compares this "beautiful collection" to *The Canterbury Tales*. If I remember correctly, not all of Chaucer's *Tales* were rated AAA by the Pilgrims. The host, for instance, objected to the "drasty ryming" of Sir Thopas's tale and informed the Monk that his "tale annoyeth al this campaignye."

In this collection Mr. Drake presents twenty-five stories averaging about six-and-a-half pages each. They are, as we are told on the book jacket, "recollections of stories and events as related to him by special people in his life — his mother, cousins, and friends." In the way in which Mr. Drake presents them — usually first person, old aunt or grandmother point of view — they are charmingly recollected, but not all worth the retelling, even though one need not read them all at one sitting, of course.

One thing that works against Mr. Drake (and perhaps it ought not to) is that what he has done with these stories has been done better

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in passing by William Faulkner, Eudora Welty, Flannery O'Connor, Katherine Anne Porter, and other "Southern" writers. Somehow, by comparison, he seems often to be stretching to achieve the homeliness, usually through the homely philosopher, that is so essential a part of each of the stories. The result is an overpowering sense of sameness in most of the tales.

Nevertheless, if one thinks of the effect of the whole collection, rather than singling out individual stories of weak content, he is very likely to have words of praise for Mr. Drake. Some of his narrators (without seeming to be aware themselves) tell the reader of small lives, lives locked in by provincial attitudes, by lack of knowledge of selves and the forces confronting them, or of inability to fight the forces if recognized, lives locked in by an overriding sense of guilt and by debilitating religious practices.

The sense of place is often strong in these tales. Mr. Drake makes it easy for the reader to visualize an ancient sage on the shady side of the porch on a hot afternoon thoroughly enjoying telling the story about the troubles Mrs. Leggett, "who was the biggest Baptist you ever saw in your life," had trying to get her husband to go to church. It wasn't only that Mr. Leggett, a house painter, might be too drunk to mount a ladder; he was mortally afraid of water, to boot.

The old cliche about something for every reader will not work with these stories. There is a great deal of the same thing for a certain kind of reader. If you don't have time to "sit a spell" and listen to a long series of observations upon life—some very penetrating as they evolve from the entire story; some not above the level that "Eustace was afraid of love, which does involve a big risk always" and "when your husband's gone, you're just a fifth wheel"—then you would do well to by-pass this one. On the other hand, wouldn't you like to find out at first hand why Allen Tate also favorably compares this collection to *Winesburg, Ohio*?

WILLIAM J. KIMBALL

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CHARLES EDWARD EATON lives in Chapel Hill, N.C. His stories and poems have appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly, Harper's Magazine, The Saturday Review, The Sewanee Review,* and many other magazines. His fifth collection of poems, *On the Edge of the Knife,* has recently won two prizes, the Roanoke–Chowan Poetry Award given by the N. C. Literary and Historical Association and the Oscar Arnold Young Memorial Award given by the N. C. Poetry Council.

WILLIAM D. ELLIOTT teaches in the Division of Humanities at Bemidji State College in Bemidji, Minnesota. He has studied the writing of poetry and drama at many schools, including the Breadloaf Writers' Conference and the Universities of Michigan and Iowa. His poems and stories have been widely published.

RICHARD FEWELL is "an evening student at the University of Bridgeport, a veteran, a postal worker, a married father of two, and a Black American from Rock Hill, South Carolina." A story and several of his poems have been accepted for publication in *Black America.*

GEORGE GARRETT has recently joined James Dickey in the English Department of the University of South Carolina after many years in the writing program of Hollins College, Virginia. He is the author of half a dozen books, poetry and novels, the latest of which, *Death of the Fox,* is reviewed in this issue.

A. V. HUFF, JR., is assistant professor of history at Furman. He is a native of Columbia and received his undergraduate education at Wofford. His forthcoming book, *Langdon Cheves of South Carolina,* will be published as a Tricentennial Study by the University of South Carolina Press.

WILLIAM J. KIMBALL is professor of English at Converse College in Spartanburg. He is a frequent contributor of articles and reviews to many magazines.

E. S. MILLER has recently retired after many years as professor and administrator at Stephens College in Columbia, Mo. He has published scholarly articles and poems in many magazines, including *PMLA, Antioch Review, Botteghe Oscure,* and *Southwest Review.*

KATHLEEN PLATT has a full-time job as mother of a three-year-old daughter. She has also held jobs in Washington, D. C., and studied in Dublin, Ireland. Her poems have appeared in *Hibernea* and *Icarus* (Ireland), *Poesia* (Peru), *Sand Castles,* and elsewhere. She is a native of Charleston and now lives in Clarion, Pennsylvania.

BENNIE LEE SINCLAIR lives near Campobello, South Carolina. She is a frequent contributor of stories and poems to this *Review*. Her first collection of poems, *Little Chicago Suite*, appeared last fall.

MARCEL SMITH teaches English at the University of Alabama. His poems have appeared in *Arlington Quarterly* and *Kansas Quarterly*.

ROBERT SMITH teaches at Francis Marion College in Florence, South Carolina. He is a graduate of Johns Hopkins Seminars.

GAIL BROCKETT WHITE lives "in New Orleans in a commune which includes my husband & 2 fellow poets." Her first book, *Masques*, appeared this spring.

PETER D. ZIVKOVIC teaches at Fairmont State College in West Virginia. He has published over 100 stories and poems and a novella, *Bezich*. Windfall Press will soon bring out his first volume of poems, *Little Book, Little Book, Where Have You Been?*