

CMF

Winter 1984

Volume XVII, number 2



What happens when
you change the past?
p. 3

Are you playing the
fool in the game of
life?
p. 8

Is this the death of
rock and roll? p. 16

Are you in control of
your own destiny?
p. 24

The Creative Magazine of Middle Tennessee State University

COLLAGE STAFF:

Cyndie Wright
Editor-in-Chief

Lisa Gwin-Wright
Associate Editor

PRODUCTION

Cathy Louthan

David Matthews

Tony Nowak

Zane Smith

Dennis Wright

Susan Moore
Advertising

Don Meadows
Publications Adviser

It's 1984, and Big Brother is watching you, right? Wrong.

I have always been amazed by the number of people who seem to sincerely believe that the government has nothing better to do with its collective time than spy on them. Generally speaking, this sort of thinking would be termed paranoid in the extreme, until and unless it is applied to the government. If you have fantasies that legions of government agencies, including the FBI, the CIA, the IRS, the BATF, and the NSC are after your fanny, then this is accepted as a reasonable fear. If, on the other hand, you fear the depredations of *foreign* agents, you are quickly--probably correctly--judged a nut case.

Let me tell you a secret. Ronnie and Company really don't have time to watch you just now, so very sorry, even if it is 1984. I mean really, there's Lebanon, Grenada (still), all of South and Central America, Russia, Cuba, the NATO Alliance, Israel, and--perhaps most menacing of all--the Democratic Party. 1984 is, after all, an election year; do you *REALLY* think anything is more important than that? Be real.

All of this being the case, what makes you think Big Brother has the slightest interest in you? Kurt Vonnegut, through Bokonon the Prophet, admonishes us to "Pay no attention to Caesar. Caesar hasn't got the slightest notion what's really going on." So it may be--indeed, *is*--with Big Brother: Big Brother doesn't even know you are alive, and couldn't care less--except at income tax time, but that's another story.

Which is not to say that you're cosmically unimportant: you're not. We think you're very important, because you read COLLAGE. Well, if you're reading this note you read COLLAGE, and if you *aren't* then you *don't*, in which case it doesn't matter in the slightest.

Nevertheless, here, in your own two (hopefully) hands is COLLAGE. Take it. Read it. You *will* enjoy it. Big Sister is watching you. Repeat after me: "COLLAGE is the best magazine I have ever read." (Again, please. And continue. And again.)

Cyndie Wright
Editor

CONTENTS

FICTION

- 3 A LITURGY OF TIME, by Zane E. Smith
- 12 THE HAVEN, by Lynda Tewell
- 20 TALKING ABOUT THE WEATHER, by Kathy B. Tirpak
- 24 KISMET, by Ronald William Holloway
- 28 THE MAN WHO SOLD THE RINGS, by D. Clifton Wright

NON-FICTION

- 16 D. Clifton Wright
- 22 Phil Williams
- 25 Lisa Gwin-Wright

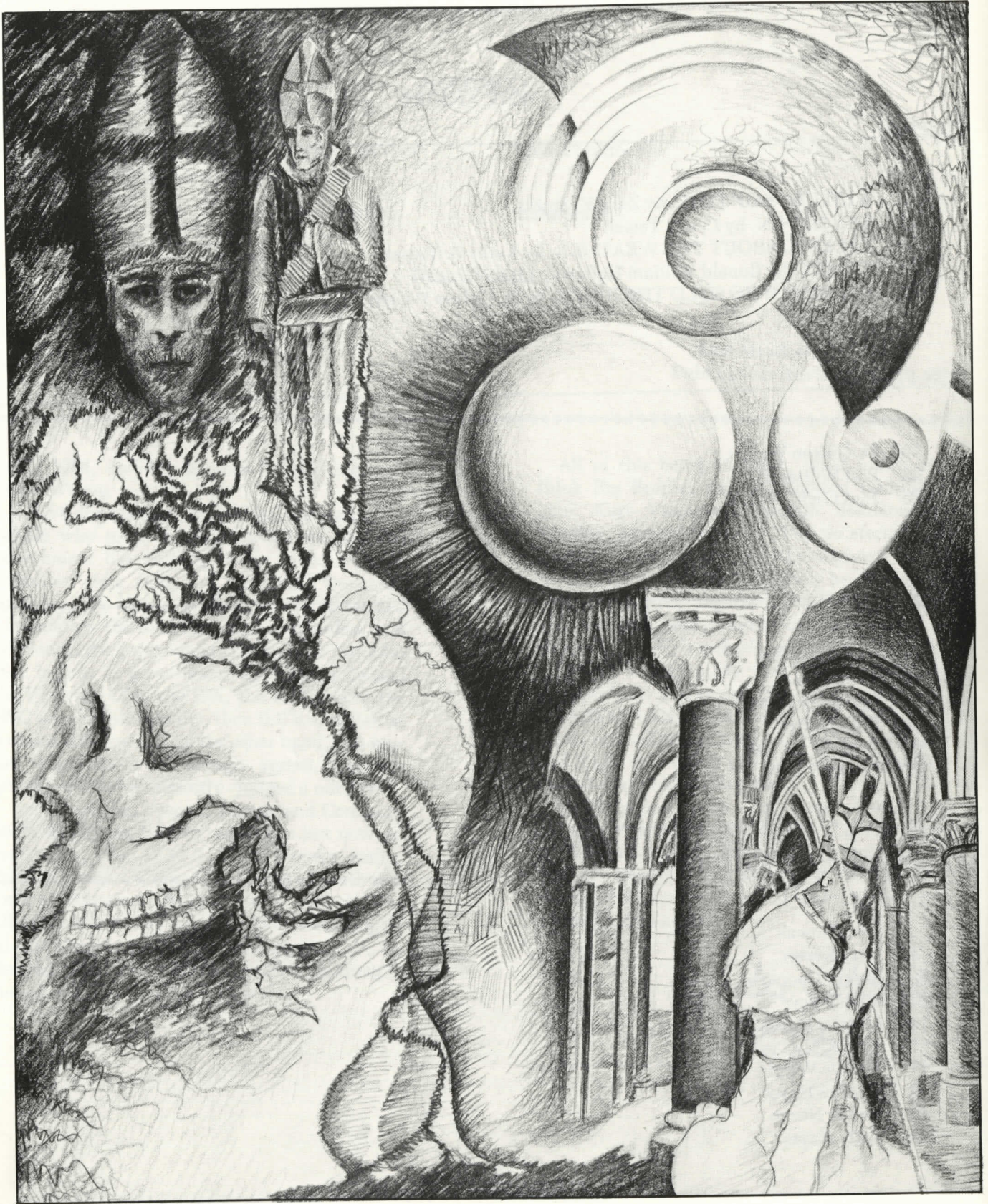
POETRY

- 8 Sheryl A. Siler
- 10 P. Vaughn
- 11 Ronald Holloway
- 18 Lucy Carter
- 26 Kristi L. Havens
- 27 George White

PHOTOGRAPHS AND ARTWORK

- 2 Tony Nowak
- 8 Jerry Keeter
- 10 Sherry Cooper
- 11 Mike Poley
- 14 Charles Hayes
- 15 April Uhlir
- 17 Cyndie Wright
- 18 Charles Hayes
- 21 Debby Naeve
- 25 Kelly Hayes

Cover Photography
by
Sherry Cooper



Tony Nowak

A Liturgy of Time

by
Zane E. Smith

*The Lord knoweth the days
of the upright: and their
inheritance shall be for ever.*

Psalm 37:18

The threat of Molloch had been growing since the inception of his cult at the turn of the century. By the year 2057, billions of men, women, and children had openly joined the Church of Our Redeemer Molloch, rejecting all other religions that had arisen since the beginning of time. Few who remained on Earth or the outer worlds ignored the words and teachings of Molloch.

Indeed, billions had openly rejected their former faiths, and had freely taken-up the banner of this self-proclaimed savior. Yet there were thousands who had decided not to join the multitudes, and had continued to follow their former religions. It was these people who most concerned the Redeemer.

Conversion began easily enough. Those needing a purpose in life found answers in Molloch's teachings. For the

doubtful, there was mild coercion--hypnotism, or conscious-altering drugs. These induced subtle changes in their thought processes, heightening their fears of losing salvation without the blessing of Molloch's Church. Most of the slackers had been quickly herded into the fold by this method.

But there were others....

The faithful who clung to their beliefs and religions fervently. Those who rejected the miracles of Molloch as illusion and sleight of hand. Those who saw the truth. Those who had to be destroyed.

Molloch had gone to extreme lengths to solve this problem. Torture brought some of the unbelievers around. Death cleaned out many enclaves of resistance. In one case, the Church had been forced to irradiate the heretics of Cirus 7--mutagenic mass-murder. No matter. No price was too costly to bring the word to the people.

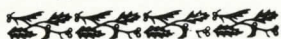
Still there remained pockets of active dissent.

There was the radical Hindu

cult that operated in the eastern jungles of the Realm, burning many churches with their own flaming bodies. The Hebrews of Old, calling themselves the Children of God, roamed the Earth and planet system carrying-out selective acts of terrorism. Oddly enough, they had allied themselves with the Islamic Protectors, and formed a strong united front. Their numbers were small, however, and Molloch knew their leaders' whereabouts. He allowed them to continue operation for propaganda purposes--inflating their numbers and staging horrendous atrocities which Molloch then blamed on the coalition.

But by far the greatest thorn in the side of the Redeemer was the radical Catholic sect. Many years before, Molloch had persuaded the Pope to recognize him as a faithful servant of God, blessing Molloch's work as beneficial to all mankind. After that, working his way into the Catholic structure was simple for a man of the Redeemer's

organizational and persuasive skills. By the time Pope Julius Benedict XIII condemned Molloch as a fraud and an enemy of God and his people, Molloch was the most powerful man alive. His retaliatory condemnation of the Pope carried far more weight than did that of the Vicar of Christ, and Julius Benedict had been forced to flee from the Vatican in order to escape popular hatred and the subsequent death sentence for heretical teachings.



In the years following that flight, the Catholic faithful had rallied around their expatriate pontiff. Their numbers swelled and, try as he might, Molloch could quell neither their growth nor their activities. Julius proved to be as astute a bureaucrat as the Redeemer, and was able to organize an exiled Catholic Church of sorts, composed of a faithful clerical hierarchy that was as successful at commando-style tactics as they were at keeping the liturgy a vibrant and growing entity.

While most of the Pope's success lay in the respectful faith of his followers, it was also attributable to his willingness to accept the ideas of the future and the resulting changes they brought. In the thirteen years since he had taken the Church underground, the pontiff's edicts had become steadily progressive, leaning more toward the advancement of science than the promulgation of faith. Julius Benedict knew that reliance on faith made the best basis for a religion, but in the battle for the life of the Church one had to face the might of the aggressor and

fight him on an equal footing. Unyielding faith had no place in warfare.

Indeed, in challenging the Church of The Redeemer, the Catholic Church had made great scientific strides during the years of exile. Quantum physics, particle beam theory, light-speed travel based on the rehydration of the heavy water molecule: all these had challenged the best minds of Christendom, and most had been summarily examined, tested, and confirmed. The Papal Bulls read like scientific journals.

*“the faithful of the
Catholic Church
were being
slaughtered.”*

Yet for all the advances made by the Church, the insurrection was going badly. Sheer weight of numbers of the Church of The Redeemer was beginning to take its toll. One by one the dioceses were being discovered, and the faithful of the Catholic Church were being slaughtered by the faithful of the Church of The Redeemer. Julius Benedict himself had only narrowly escaped capture on numerous occasions. This uphill struggle was challenging the faith of many Catholics. Molloch was slowly but surely winning the war.

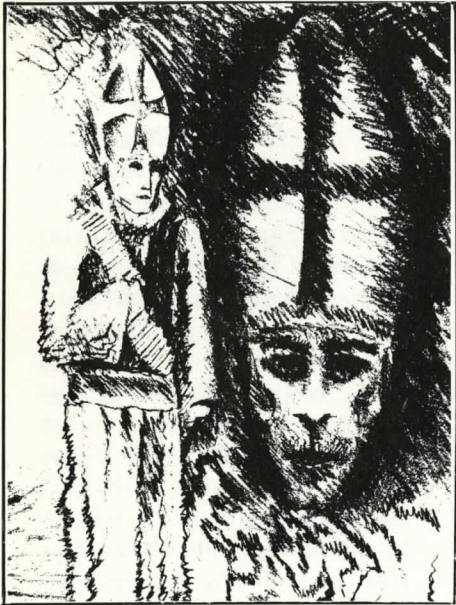


There was one hope. For years, scientists had toyed with the notion of time travel. To the Church's advantage, the scientists who had made the greatest advances in the theory of quantum linear time advancement were loyal Catholics. When the final push of Molloch's Church had come, these theorists had fled underground, bringing with them their graphic studies, processed experiments, and beliefs in the righteousness of their cause.

While there had been work in the field prior to this exodus, the most significant advances had been made in the past five years. A final coalescence of the theories had not yet been attempted, but an abstract theory had been agreed upon by those involved in this field.

Written by the senior linear time specialist, Bishop William McWhirter, the theory stated that time is a preordained linear continuum. Time is established between two non-shifting points, the beginning and the end, and there can be no extension beyond either reference. To travel in time is to remove oneself from the line, move up or down the fixed reference points of time along the line, and then stop at the moment to which one wishes to travel. The concepts of “past,” “present,” and “future” become relative to the time traveler. The logical extension of this concept is that, to the time traveler, there is only a subjective present; removing oneself from the time line causes a total cessation of objective time for the traveler.

McWhirter used this explanation of time to advance his radical concept of changing the flow of history. The past,



Tony Nowak

he stated, could be changed. Simply jumping off the time line changed an aspect of the past. Moving backward or forward through time introduced a random element into time. This random element, be it man, machine, or idea, became change. Change, adrift along the time line, became the ultimate weapon.

While this concrete manifestation of change was the chance to bring about a realignment of the time line, McWhirter warned that to introduce more than one element would be disastrous. A single change would shift the future, readjusting the flow of actions and thoughts for all time. This altered time line became the reality of eternity. To introduce other elements was to cause paradoxical conflicts, conflicts that would shake the very foundation of the newly established time line, sundering the very fabric of reality itself. McWhirter concluded that the time line could only accept one planned shift, a single trip in time. If

more were attempted, the result would be the complete and utter destruction of the linear reality continuum.

Shortly after the advancement of his theory, McWhirter received an audience with the Pope. Julius Benedict was receptive to the theory, yet he raised many questions as to its applicability. Three days of consultations assuaged all of the pontiff's fears. It was decided that in order to challenge the feared victory of the Church of the Redeemer, drastic measures were required. Molloch had to be removed from the linear reality. His death was the only solution. His death, his murder--the ultimate sin. Julius Benedict agonized over his options, finally rationalizing that one death outweighed the deaths of billions. The Pope gave his blessing to a timely assassination of Molloch.



The Church now threw itself into preparation for the deed. McWhirter allied himself with Cardinal Aubrey Fossbinder, the Church's leading quantum physicist, and Archbishop Yi Tu, head of the modern technological mechanics arm of the Church. Utilizing all of the workers, material, and theories at their disposal, the three hurled themselves into the project of building a workable linear removal device.

Research and activity became difficult for the triumvirate, as the Church of the Redeemer, sensing an increase in certain areas of the Catholic underground, stepped-up its war on the clerical heretics. The project suffered numerous setbacks,

although the secret nature of the experiments and theories involved was preserved.

Ten months after the project had begun, the task was completed. McWhirter, Fossbinder, and Tu informed the pontiff that they had completed a linear removal device. Because of the fragile nature of the time line, the machine could not be tested. Either it worked or another project would have to be launched.

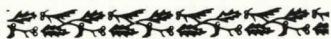
After long months the moment of truth had arrived. Many hours had been dedicated to this effort, many lives had been given in protection of the secret. Now was the beginning of the time for action. Now was the time for decision.

Two selections had to be made. First, the proper moment for the assassination had to be chosen. Any point in the life of Molloch would obviously be sufficient as long as the job was done well. McWhirter, however, insisted that the moment had to be one laden with importance, one upon which the future of the Catholic Church and the Church of the Redeemer had inalterably entered the path of conflict. The historians of the Church were consulted, and they insisted that the most opportune moment would be the initial meeting between Molloch and Julius Benedict. To kill this pretender to the House of God at that point would end his threat and influence for all time.

The second choice was that of who was to carry out the actual assassination. The rosters of the Church were drawn, and the slow decision making process was begun. A

commando would be the obvious choice, someone skilled in the art of death. But other considerations had to also be taken into account. On that day, Molloch would have been sure to have known of all of those attending the Papal audience. Any increase in the number would alert him, putting him on his guard. To lose that moment might be to lose for all time. The assassination had to be someone who was present on that fateful day.

The weeks drug by as the choice was argued. During that time Molloch, fearful that the Catholics were readying some major campaign against him, launched an all-out offensive. The archdioceses of Chicago, Dublin, and Berlin were obliterated, and major losses were suffered world wide. Time was running out; the choice was critical.



It was at this moment that Julius Benedict flew to the secret storage place of the linear removal device. Invoking his Papal authority and rejecting all protests from his attending priests, Julius Benedict entered the silver sphere which sat in the center of the warehouse. Shutting the portal, he looked out through the isenglass hatch. The group was repeating the rosary. Breathing deeply, Pope Julius Benedict XIII made the sign of the cross, then nodded. Archbishop Tu punched up pre-programmed coordinates and watched through his tears as the sphere vanished from view with a slow moan.

Julius Benedict opened his eyes and stared out the hatch window. Swirling mists enveloped the sphere, but he

could detect the flash of colors beyond the grey. Momentarily (if, indeed, such a term applied to his present state), the sphere began to hum, and the Pope began to feel a sensation of speed. The mists began to clear and colors began to merge. Their merger ran through the colors of the spectrum until they formed a brilliant white light. At what seemed like the base of his mind, Julius Benedict could vaguely hear a murmur. Suddenly, the murmur became a wail. He imagined that the voices out of time were calling to him. Dismissing this as egocentric, he comprehended a direct relationship between light, sound, and time. This thought was pushed from his mind as the device began a loud scream of its own. He forced his eyes shut in concentration, attempting to block out the wail.

"I have ended my world, my life, your future!"

When he reopened his eyes, the Pope found himself in the subterranean chambers of St. Peter's. A wave of melancholy swept over him. He had not set foot in that holy structure in over thirteen years. Banishing this thought from his consciousness, he opened the port and stepped out of the device. Quickly regaining his equilibrium, he moved out of the chamber and upward toward the Papal apartments.

Moving with a speed based in desperation, he soon arrived at "his" door. Opening it, he

stepped inside, and paradoxically confronted the man who he had been. Despite the shock on the latter Pope's face, the time-travelling Julius Benedict found a younger, more beatific, trusting expression. Here was a man who was about to greet the head of the fastest-growing church on the four planets, a man who was interested only in doing God's work, oblivious to any wicked deceptions. Julius Benedict could recall those feelings as having been his own, but now he felt a sickness in his soul for his once blind trust in Molloch, this devil on Earth.

Startlingly, Julius Benedict lashed out at the man he had been, knocking him backward.

The younger version of himself fell and lay on the floor, too stunned to move. Julius Benedict slammed the door and ran for the audience room at breakneck speed. As he neared the room, he slowed, and entered through the ornate door at a dignified, ceremonial pace. He took his place on the raised platform, and looked at the assembled nobility of the Church with what he hoped was a serene expression.

Just then, the huge doors at the far end of the room swung open and Molloch, the glorious master of the Church of the Redeemer, entered, surrounded by a circle of his protective faithful. Julius Benedict could feel a prickly sweat at the base of his neck. His anxiety rose as Molloch came nearer. As an ingratiating smile turned up the corners of Molloch's lips, Julius Benedict could only think of the future plans and designs that were already fomenting in this deceiver's mind. How could he, the Pope,

have been so trusting, so unsuspecting, so gullible, to have not seen through this devil's facade? Julius Benedict's hatred grew as Molloch closed the distance between them.

As Molloch knelt before the Pontiff in the traditional act of supplication, Julius Benedict could only remember his childhood lessons about Judas' betrayal. Molloch arose to embrace the Pope, and as he did, the Holy One returned the grasp with one of eternal finality, slipping a hastily concealed dagger through Molloch's ribs. A look of shocked surprise crossed the Redeemer's face. Something was wrong. This was not what he had planned. The Pope he had studied was a man of innocent trust and forgiveness. Molloch's last vision was the face of the man of God, his face glowing with satisfaction at the Redeemer's death.

In the melee which ensued, most of those surrounding the Pope and the Redeemer were killed. Fearful of complications, Molloch's men had come armed, and at the first sign of trouble they had produced weapons and begun firing wildly, killing both the Catholics who were trying to shield the Pope, and their own men who got in the way. Those armed adversaries were quickly and bloodily dispatched by the Vatican guard. When the turmoil subsided, Julius Benedict was nowhere to be found.

Julius had slipped away at the height of the confusion, quickly making his way through the winding halls of St. Peter's. Running blindly down the corridor, he rounded a corner and came face to face with his accuser: his self which

existed in that reality continuum. This innocent stared at the gasping man, then looked down at the blood staining the murderer's hands. Without saying a word, he took himself by the hand and led himself down the hallway to his private chambers. He sat himself on a severe wooden bench and, turning to a small sink, ran water into a milk-white porcelain basin. Kneeling at his feet, Pope Julius Benedict XIII washed the blood from the hands of his future incarnation, all the while reciting the holy liturgies. Looking down upon that innocent figure, the murderer felt compelled to ease the pain that filled the two hearts of the one.

"Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned."

The kneeling Pontiff stood and looked into the tearful eyes of his older twin. "I cannot," he stated, and then resumed the cadence of the rosary.

Shock was his first feeling, disbelief his second, but both gave way to anger. "I have saved the world from a hell you could not foresee. I saved your soul from eternities of suffering! I have ended my world, my life, your future! I must have the balm of absolution!"

The Pontiff turned. "I cannot condone murder," he stated simply.

Julius Benedict began to protest but stopped himself short. He remembered his past. His reliance upon the teachings of the Church had been total and unquestioning. There had been no variance in his acceptance of the Word of God. Only illogical, cataclysmic changes could have rocked the faith he had possessed, changes that would now never come.

This pontiff who had seen those changes no longer belonged in this world of his past, and his world of the future no longer existed. He was a man out of his time with no time of his own. His only hold on reality was his mortal sin of murder.

Julius Benedict rose from the bench and approached the Pontiff, yet he stopped short. There was no appeal to the mercies of the dogmatic man he had once been. He turned and left the room, his footfalls marking time to the incessant rhythm of the rosary beads.

Returned to the basement chambers, Julius Benedict stared at his past, present, and future. The time machine gleamed even in the darkness of the subterranean rooms. The Pontiff of this age had forbidden him absolution. Self-absolution was dogmatically and logically impossible for the leader of a Church that now no longer existed. The displaced Vicar of Christ knew his punishment.



He entered the silver sphere and sealed its hatch. Engaging the drive button, he hurled himself outside of the realm of reality. There were no options of life left to him now. To return to the reality of time once again would be to trigger apocalyptic changes in the actuality of existence. His punishment of condemnation was set. Julius Benedict gazed through the isenglass portal at the blinding white light and let the screams of time deafen him to the roar of his eternal hell.



The Game

The Queen of Spades summons her Joker
To play her lusty games.
And so they sit down with her cards
Knowing each will have to lose.

The Queen of Spades plays the Queen of Hearts
And the Joker plays the Fool.
The Joker's eyes behold the lies
But ignore their false intent.

The Queen has dealt a wicked hand
And plays her trump with grace.
The Joker smiles sublimely
And slowly cuts the deck.

The Queen has set the stakes most high
And gambles with her soul.
The Fool, committed to the Queen
Needs must carry on.

The wicked Queen is out for blood
And plays unto the death.
She hides behind her sultry eyes
And bids the Fool "Play on."

The Fool sits, waiting patiently,
The hand must run its course,
The Spades are master of the Hearts
The Queen holds every card.



Jerry Keeter

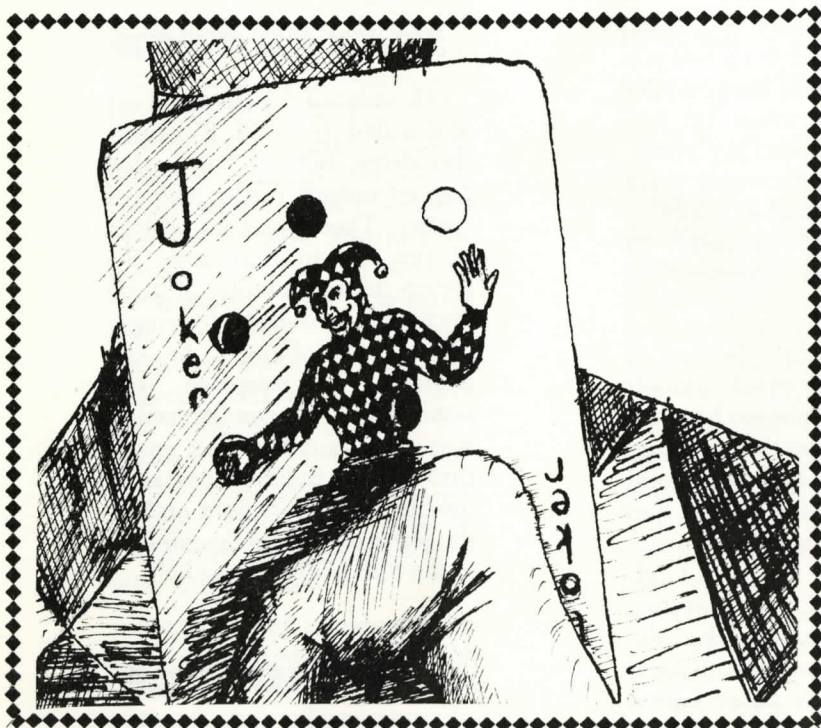
The Queen of Spades has made her play
The embers turn to flame.
The Fool performs most valiantly,
Though 'tis all a wicked game.

And so the hand is finished
The cards are all turned in.
The Fool holds but a broken Heart.
The Queen has won again.

The Queen will dash her Joker
Upon the bloody Spades.
And sacrifice the broken Heart
Upon the dying flames.

The Queen of Spades has won her hand
And so has lost her Fool.
But Fools are easy to be found
As she gambles with her soul.

Another Joker will be summoned hence
Into the darkened room.
And the Queen of Spades plays the Queen of
Hearts
And the Joker plays the Fool.



Jerry Keeter

Sheryl A. Siler



JERRY KEETER

Jerry Keeter

*I am the clown
whose face no one can
see.
They think they know
what's going on with
me.
But they do not realize
who I am or what I'm
about.
Taken for granted,
second fiddle to all;
yet, expected to do
their beck and call.
The emotions I hide
are deep beneath
the fading smile,
which diminishes
quickly
along life's bumpy ride.
Yes, I am the clown
with the painted-on
face;
tired of the rat race
living by God's grace,
searching for a way
to welcome the new
day.*

Painted on Face

by

P. Vaughn



Sherry Cooper



Mike Poley

Chimera

by

Ron
Holloway

*I saw
a
tree
(I think.)*

*Or did I see
a
witch?*

*I saw
a
brook
(I think.)*

*Or did I see
a
silver snake?*

*What do I see?
I l l u s i o n s .*

*Illusions of life.
Illusions which I
wish to see.
Or
illusions I secretly
hope to fear.*

The Haven

by

Lynda Tewell

Dewdrops feel wet against our bare feet as we run across the open field in the early morning light. The freshly-cut grass smells clean, and we inhale its welcome fragrance into our young lungs. What we are running from we are not exactly sure of; we only know it is something we must do.

The forest we are quickly approaching will hide us, and we run faster still toward it. Needing a place to feel safe, it is a haven for us weary souls who are tired and thirsty.

Slowing our pace as if they want to capture and hold us, thorn bushes block our passage into the haven. Yet we are safer than those who stayed behind, praying for a miracle to happen and save them all. Why they chose not to escape with us is a mystery, but I guess that just shows the differences in people.

Those left behind will wake up and be let out into a fenced holding place where they must stay until dusk. They must senselessly wander around and pretend to be busy and happy, even if they are not. Too much noise is not allowed, and they must plead with their keeper for

water and a place to relieve themselves.

Those are the king and queen's wishes. It is all a part of their selfish plan to break my people down and make them surrender to their throne of greed and purposelessness.

A small thud behind me makes me turn around. Sally has fallen, and the onimous thorns are holding her captive for the gods. The gods must have seen us trying to escape and are punishing us for our flight to freedom.

Nevertheless, I stop and help her loosen her shirt from their tiny, but strong, fingers. I love Sally, for she is like me. We both feel the importance of being free.

Sally's leg is bleeding, but she is brave about it. She says it is nothing compared to the dull mental pain she felt in the camp before we left.

We all gather together, now that we have reached the woods. We must build a shelter to rest our weary bodies in. Hunger pangs begin to assault my stomach, but *none* of us will eat until *all* of us can. Gerald yells that he has found a stream, and I take Sally by the hand and lead her to the water to



Debbie Gillis

wash off her bleeding leg.

I am stronger than she is, being male, and I feel a sense of duty toward her and the others like her. It is what I have been raised to believe.

It is growing darker now, and the sun is about to disappear into the western horizon for yet another summer night. This is the most critical time for us. This is when the king and his servants will come looking for us; we are the ones who have disappeared.

I hear my name being called in the distance, but I shall not answer. This is how I should live my life, in the wilderness with my friends, who are closer to me than my older brothers and sisters.

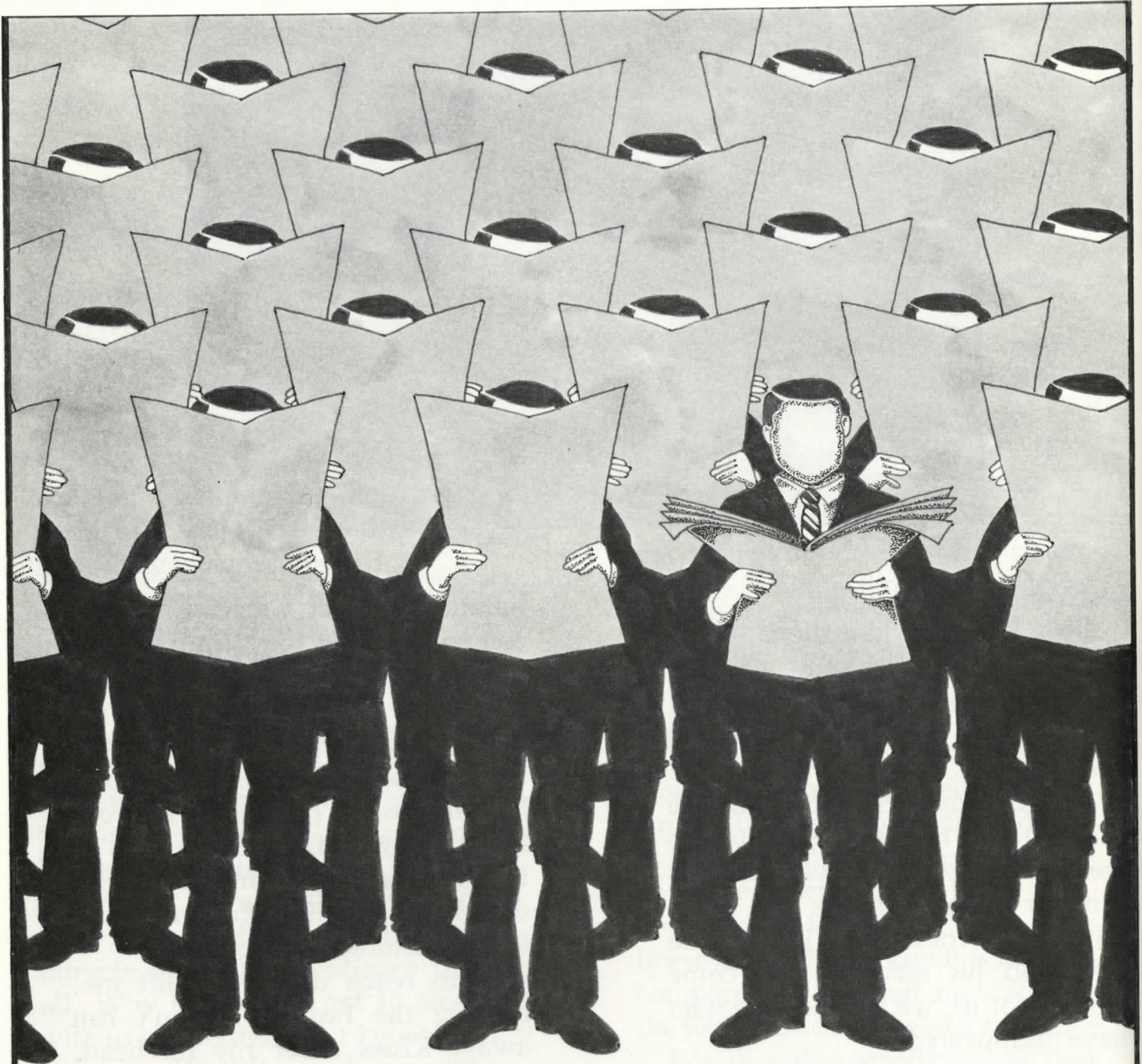
Two more voices join in the chorus singing my name. Different voices call my friends as we all

huddle together, fearful of the consequences if they find us, the disobediant ones.

A great light shines above my head, and then lowers itself to reveal us all in our terrified glory, holding fast to one another in our fright. Sally begins to cry, and so do I. All of us one by one cry at our discovery, our disappointment and fright washing together.

Arms reach down and lift me, holding me fast so I won't run away. Kisses cover my forehead, and I am so sleepy and hungry and confused.

In the darkness, the large, safe arms carry me away, back to the camp which I had run away from hours ago. Despite the affection being bestowed upon me by this creature, I will run to the forest again tomorrow, being what I am.



TO TY2

I HEARD THE NEWS TODAY

THROWN OFF THE GAMBLING PRESS

AND INTO THE EYES OF OTHER PEOPLE.

THE LETTER COMBINATIONS RESTING ON THE MANY MINDS

INTO A WHOLE OF CULTURAL

DISBELIEF.

TO ROLL INTO A FOLDED HEAP.

TOMORROW'S TRUTH

NEXT WEEK SLEEPS.

GEORGE WHITE

Am I safe from war and sin
when under mama's chin?



April M. Uhlir

IS THIS THE DEATH OF ROCK AND ROLL?

BY

D. CLIFTON WRIGHT

So they tell me, "Write the damn thing on rock and roll." Well, I'd be the first to admit that, really, I don't know a damn thing about what's going on in the rock world even as we speak, and frankly I don't *want* to know. I mean listen to the radio! As my former roommate, Billy Clyde Travis used to say, "Music is in a bad way." I got some news for you: things aren't even *that* good.

You see, I have the distinct disadvantage of having grown up during the '60s, back when there was good music out there. Like, for instance: The Beatles (hell yes, Paul MacCartney really did play in a band before Wings); Cream; the Yardbirds; Blind Faith; Jimi Hendrix; remember them...any of them? Anybody out there?

Things weren't really even that bad during the first half of the '70s, either--although disco does tend to make one think that maybe the entire decade should have been nuked back to the Stone Age. But there were plenty of good sounds then: Derek and the Dominoes; Emerson, Lake, and Palmer; Yes; King Crimson; Uriah Heep (and I don't mean the pale reflection that limps about these days *calling itself* Uriah Heep either. Same goes for Yes.); Led Zeppelin; Jeff Beck; Jethro Tull; BLUE OYSTER CULT; Steely Dan; Jefferson Airplane / Starship; the Who; will we ever see their like again?

Probably not. Listen to the radio *these* days: get the *what?* Motley *who?* Where did all these "bands" come from? Crawled outta the damn wood work, I reckon...Damn well oughta crawl right back in, too. I mean lets face it: there is more to heavy metal music than stacking 400 Marshall amps, turning them up so they feed-back like a banshee in heat, and playing the same three damn chords for an hour and a half.

But what about, but what about...? Yeah, Nugent's music is so high volume it can give you nose bleed; so was the Who (look up their Isle of Wight concert in Guinness); so is Jeff Beck. I hear Hendrix was, too, but I can't swear to that. The point is, though, that back of the noise is some really outstanding instrumental talent. With most of the crap you hear nowadays, though, the noise is supposed to cover up one irrefutable fact: these folks nowadays can't any more play guitar (or bass, or keyboards, or drums, or any other damn thing) any more than I can do brain surgery. Which is to say, not at all.

Furthermore, there are just a whole lot of bums out there who have less musical ability than my cat, but who don't even attempt to cover up the fact by playing at ultra high volume. Their brand of tripe just sort of oozes and drips from the speakers, and you think, My God! Somebody got paid for that adolescent drooling and whining? Perhaps even worse, there are the up tempo remnants of disco mania, songs which may drone on for (seems like) an eternity, repeating over and over again the same half dozen words. Buy a thesaurus, bimbo, one thinks to no avail.

This is not to say that rock and roll is dead... "ailing" would, I think, be a better term. There are a few of the newer acts that are, in fact, quite good: the Police; Men At Work; Michael Jackson (who is new insofar as being a solo act is concerned; Prince; Rick James (well, okay, he's been around a while, too); Donald Fagan (new as a solo act); and Asia (which could be much better were Steve Howe cut loose more often; the absence of John Wetton will probably be a boon as well.)



Cyndie Wright

So yes, it is, even in 1984, possible to listen to good music. If you are very lucky, you might even catch it on the radio--some of the new good acts and occasionally a classic from one of the masters. To be on the safe side, though, and to guard against further pollution of your brain, buy a turntable and a stack of records. As a basic record collection, I would suggest the following: "Layla," Derek and the Dominoes; "Wheels of Fire" and "Good Bye," Cream; "Aqualung," Jethro Tull; "A Young Person's Guide to King Crimson"; "Wired," Jeff Beck; "The Song Remains the Same," Led Zeppelin; "Steely Dan's Greatest Hits" and "Steely Dan Gold"; "Secret Treaties," "Agents of Fortune," "Extraterrestrial Live," and "Fire of Unknown Origin," the amazing BLUE OYSTER CULT; and last but certainly not least, "Classic Yes."

Thus armed, take aforementioned turntable, attach to receiver (and if you don't have one of those, buy it and two speakers--one per ear--at the same place you got the turntable.) Reverently, put on the title track from "Layla,"

turn up the volume and prepare to be awed. If you aren't, then you are very probably dead. As Bob Dylan once twanged, "The times, they are a changin'," but thus outfitted, you may survive the change in style. Slooshy well, malenky droogs!

(Are you crazy? What's this "malenky droog" business? Well, it's 1984, and I just thought I'd toss in a little nadsat, you know. Nadsat is from A Clockwork Orange, not 1984 you twit. Who the devil do you think is going to know the difference? You do have a point; run it.)

Emotions by *Lucy Carter*



For Old Times Sake

*Another year passes
Not to be seen again
Another year filled with
m e m o r i e s —
Trials, triumphs,
agonies, and smiles*

*Yet another year comes
With a bright and
shining face
Another year comes bearing
hopes
And dreams upon its
back*

*Though the times may
change
The old departing, the
new arriving
We are still made strong
with resolutions
But yet weak for old
times' sake*

Sanity

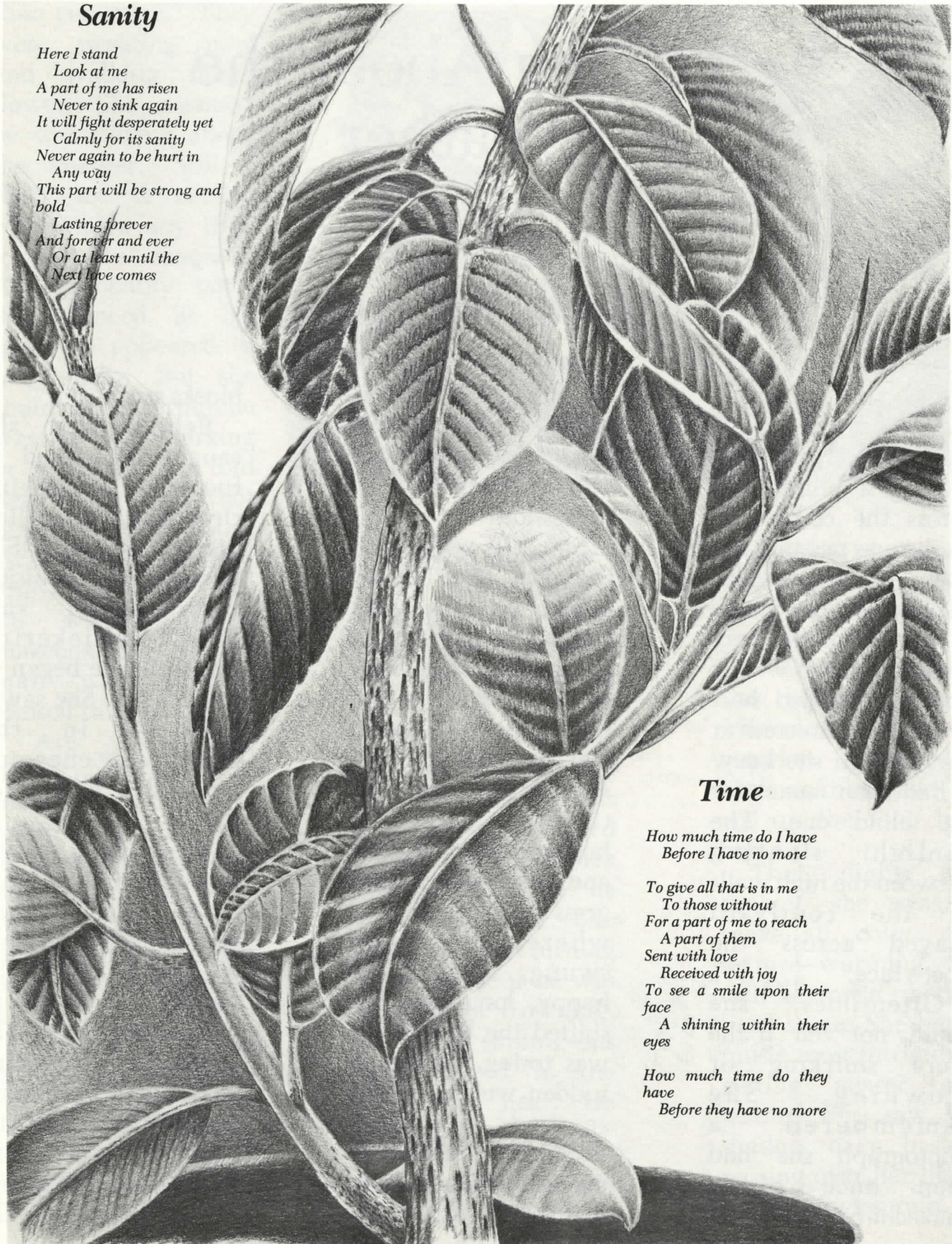
Here I stand
Look at me
A part of me has risen
Never to sink again
It will fight desperately yet
Calmly for its sanity
Never again to be hurt in
Any way
This part will be strong and
bold
Lasting forever
And forever and ever
Or at least until the
Next love comes

Time

How much time do I have
Before I have no more

To give all that is in me
To those without
For a part of me to reach
A part of them
Sent with love
Received with joy
To see a smile upon their
face
A shining within their
eyes

How much time do they
have
Before they have no more



Talking About the Weather

by

Kathy B. Tirpak

She saw him--the poet--as she was leaving. He was helping a blind man across the courtyard. As she was passing, the poet asked loudly, "Think you can make it the rest of the way without me?" His question startled her. It seemed directed at her, though she knew it had been meant for the blind one. The sunlight slanting between the high walls of the courtyard played across the poet's face.

Oftentimes, she could not tell if he were smirking or frowning. She remembered a photograph she had seen once of a snakecharmer--a man

all color and texture against smooth drab stone. He, too, had been wearing such an expression.

She said nothing to the poet. She turned quickly onto a walk leading away from the courtyard. She kept her eyes down as she moved along the path. Her hair fell forward and hid her face. She thought of her husband's shadow, soft and dark upon moonlit grass as a playground where they had swung, high and happy, long ago. She shifted the bundle she was toting, feeling its sudden weight. Home seemed a great distance all at once to travel, though she realized it was only

blocks away.

Behind her she caught the sound of footfalls, clicking rhythmic, shuffling slightly off key. She thought of percussion instruments, salt spray, flickering firelight. She began to walk faster. She saw a sparrow in the distance, cheeping nervously, poised for flight.

The poet drew alongside her. Neither spoke, though their feet moved in unison. A breeze passed by them. Heat surrounded them. The landscape, stretching hazy flat before them, seemed without connection too jumbled behind them.

"It's better today

than yesterday." They were sweating now and walking much slower. She assumed he was talking about the weather. "Still, I don't see it getting comfortable any time soon." He laughed, "No, probably not." She glanced at his face. He appeared to be smiling. But she could not be certain he was not also smirking or frowning. She told herself he was not really so colorful--out away from the smooth drab stone--and that he was not a snakecharmer, just a man who fancied himself to be a poet.

"Are you going home now?" "Yes, I really must." "I have errands," she explained. The heat had blistered them. They were melting away, dripping like ice cream cones in the hands of awkward children. "You know, I believe it's getting warmer by the minute." "It seemed cool for a moment, back there beneath the trees,



Debbie Naeve

before you joined me." "But one cannot always be thus protected--am I right? Ah, and there's the rub."

She stepped in front of him and started away from him, across the field, toward home. "Good luck with your errands," he called after her. She could not resist turning round to see if he was smirking or frowning. He was smiling--his teeth blazed in the undulating heat. He stepped up and stood--upon a smooth drab stone. He shaded his

eyes with his hands, watching her.

"See you tomorrow."

She did not answer. She did not think it was meant to be a question. Turning her back on him, she set out on the long trek home.

That night, she dreamt she was a snake--all color and texture--warming herself against a smooth, hard stone. She heard music most intriguing, getting nearer and nearer. She saw the shadow of a basket, passing over her like a cloud bringing rain.

Zadie Key:

From Paper-Clipping to Politicking

“Dean” Key has done it all!

by

Phil Williams

Like an inscription on a granite monument, the date Jan. 22, 1966, is carved indelibly into the memory of 1941 graduate Zadie Bowling Key, now an MTSU secretary and Rutherford County Democratic Party chairman.

On that dreary Saturday morning, as Mrs. Key—then 44 years old—drove through a curtain of falling snow, an on-coming car veered across the center line and crashed head-on into her tiny Comet. With 22 bones—including her back—broken, the mother of three boys would spend the better part of the next two years in the hospital, much of the time in a full-body cast.

Now the 62-year-old Mrs. Key, who must walk with the aid of a cane, is philosophical about the “missing” years of her life.

“I didn’t lose anything, I gained a lot,” the effervescent Mrs. Key says, flashing her infectious smile. “I learned to be patient, and I learned the world can get along without me.”

While life might continue without the short, gray-headed lady, her friends and colleagues say that in whatever activity she is involved she certainly makes the world move a little smoother. Though she is involved in many activities, the two organizations which command most of her time are MTSU and the Democratic Party.

Mrs. Key began working at MTSU as a secretary for a chairman-less economics department in 1969, shortly after recovering from her near-fatal accident. In 1971 she transferred to the newly created School of Basic and Applied Sciences under her present boss, Dean Edwin Voorhies. That same year she was named Tennessee Secretary of the Year by the National Secretaries Association.

But she had not always planned a career behind the typewriter. When she graduated in 1941 with a bachelor’s degree in English, Mrs. Key—then Miss Bowling—planned to devote her life to teaching, which she did for five years.

Then one summer while substituting for an injured friend on a secretarial job, Mrs. Key developed a fondness for the profession and decided to pursue it full time.

“It’s a very interesting field because every day is different—in fact, every hour is different,” she assures an inquirer. “Also, a good secretary can find a job anywhere. She can always get a job because that’s the kind of position that doesn’t require state certification or any of those kind of things.”

And she excels in this field. Her talents have led her to become a frequent speaker to business organizations across Tennessee and neighboring states.

But the highest acclaim comes from her boss and 30-year friend, who calls her “a very good secretary” and says he is “glad she was available in 1971.”

However, Mrs. Key does more for the university than typing and answering a telephone. MTSU faculty and administrators, when asked about Zadie Key, without exception mentioned her unwavering attendance at university events, including every ROTC commissioning but one in the past 14 years. In addition, she is president of the MTSU-Rutherford County Alumni Association and a member of both the Blue Raider Club and the homecoming committee.

Why such devotion? Why doesn’t she put in 40 hours and go home like most people?

"Because I'm interested in MTSU as an institution—very, very interested in it," she explains, adding that two of her sons went to school here. One, James, now coaches the women's track team while working on his doctorate.

"I don't want to say I feel an obligation to be there—though I think I probably do a little bit," she adds. "But I enjoy the things I do. I care nothing about belonging to an organization just for the sake of belonging. I want to be a part of what is going on."

According to her university friends and colleagues, the feisty Mrs. Key plays a key role in internal campus politics because of her willingness to say what she thinks—even to the president of the university.

"Zadie's not a shrinking violet in any meeting on this campus," observes Joe Nunley, director of alumni relations. "Neither is she the type to be obnoxious. She knows how to strike a good balance."

Similarly, because of her intimate knowledge of the university (she knows every rule and regulation by heart, suggests one faculty member), Mrs. Key is not afraid to take the initiative in making decisions when Voorhies is out of the office. This trait has earned her the nickname "Dean Key" among faculty and other campus secretaries.

The real dean considers this to be an asset.

"Zadie and I have been together for so long that she knows what I'm willing to approve and what I need to consider," Voorhies explains. "As far as I'm concerned this works rather well."

But perhaps Mrs. Key's powerful influence and political savvy are most apparent in her involvement with the Democratic Party.

A list of her political positions and honors would rival that of most Tennesseans in length. Mrs. Key has been chairman of the Rutherford County Democratic Party since 1979. She has served two terms as president of the Rutherford County Democratic Women. In addition, she was an alternate delegate to the 1980 Democratic National Convention. And the list goes on.

Mrs. Key attributes her interest in Democratic politics to her parents' involvement, including the fact that her father, John W. Bowling, held elective office in Rutherford County for 47 years.

When I was a little girl he took me to see President Franklin Roosevelt when he came to Nashville," Mrs. Key recalls fondly. "I certainly never forgot this. I have seen every president since, and my children have seen every president

beginning with John Kennedy."

Her loyalty to the party is unquestioned. She will support whatever Democratic candidate is chosen to compete in any contest. George McGovern, in the 1972 presidential campaign, came close to being the proverbial "yellow dog" for her—not because she didn't like him, but because she instinctively knew he could not defeat the incumbent Richard Nixon.

"She was the kind of field general who knows in her heart the battle is lost, but keeps on fighting," remembers mass communications professor Ed Kimbrell, a fellow Democratic Party member.

Her position has placed her in close relationships with more successful Democratic politicians, including former President Jimmy Carter.

"Jimmy Carter is a fantastic person," she says. "I think his problem was that Washington had no idea how to deal with a Southerner, much less a Southern Baptist."

Then there's U.S. Rep. Albert Gore, Jr. Her smile brightens as she remembers the politician who tries to call to wish her a happy birthday every year. It was his upcoming race for the U.S. Senate that prompted her recently to accept a third term as the party's county chairman.

"Al Gore is the greatest thing since sliced bread," she says, chuckling at her country metaphor. "I think Al will be the next president to come from Tennessee. I would like to think I will live long enough to see that."

Mrs. Key, however, says her political concerns are not as much with how people vote as with the belief that people should vote.

"I never fall out with anybody because of their political party—just those that don't vote," she says in her most serious tone yet. "I think voting is the greatest privilege we have."

After buttonholing both voters and members of the university community for so long, does the affable Mrs. Key have any plans for retiring and relaxing?

Not any time soon, she says.

"Following my accident, my husband and I decided first of all that I was going to live," she relates. "Then we decided I was going to get well enough to work again. So retiring is not something that's on my mind right now."

Editor's note: Mrs. Key is currently on temporary leave, recovering at home from a fall which she suffered last semester. She anticipates returning to work in the near future.

Kismet

by

Ronald William Holloway

"Here is a test to find whether your mission on earth is finished: If you're alive, it isn't." Richard Bach, Illusions.

Something hot and clinging floats past me, almost covering me in its attempt to complete its wavering journey. From deep inside of me, where it all begins and it all ends, where it flows and entwines and consumes. where passion and trust meet in tense negation, from there I find the strength not to flinch as it moves past.

It is important to refrain from flinching. I don't know why.

The shadowy dampness of it recedes and I am alone again. I think of the stories I scanned earlier today while in preparation, and of my inability to select one that dealt with something besides death. Omen? I think of my rage born of failure in the personal, business, spiritual, educational, physical, and mental aspects of my life, rage as a result of my obsession to win in at least one facet of my existence. Imminence? I think of my reason destroyed by my obsessions, banished by my rage. Reward?

The second wave of an unknown veil shrouds my face and...

No!

I am thinking too much like

the characters in the stories I scanned today. The veil is soft, inviting, contented; it does not push me into darkness or death, but it releases my playful spiritual being and I find it good and I am happy...

and it is gone.

I am alone once more.

Frustration is hissed from the mouth of reality as I look at my life and decide it is nothing, insignificant, trivial. Only to me is it anything at all. And what am I?

The shock of the next shower pulls me from the heat of the pessimistic haze and I see clearly and surely. I know now what I must do...

and it stops.

I am alone, confused once again. Depressed and paranoid. I fall deeper and deeper and something CLICKS...

"Time's up."

"Pull him out slowly and steadily." Quiet urgent.

"Something's wrong."

"Technical?"

"No. Emotional."

"Damn!" Rage. "I thought selection control approved him."

"I thought the same."

"Can you reach him?" Intense.

"I can try; odds are fifty-fifty."

"Do your best."

...mellow fields of wind-blown clover and afternoon sun dampened by soft, pungent

gratitude. Perhaps I should look to my inner being for guidance and direction if it leaves me here.

"Well?"

"He's back. We've succeeded."

Relief. "I suppose we should announce success, but I think we need to review or selection controls."

"Review and revamp."

"Yes. Well, when he awakens, call me. I wish to question him."

"Tomorrow at the earliest."

"I'll be waiting."

...why must I leave, return to the things I cannot control? I like it *here*. No. I'm not leaving. I refuse to leave. I'm staying. I'm staying.

"Yes?"

"We've lost him. Completely."

"!" Frustrated pause. "I was certain you had assured me of success."

"I did. He left of his own free will."

"Impossible!"

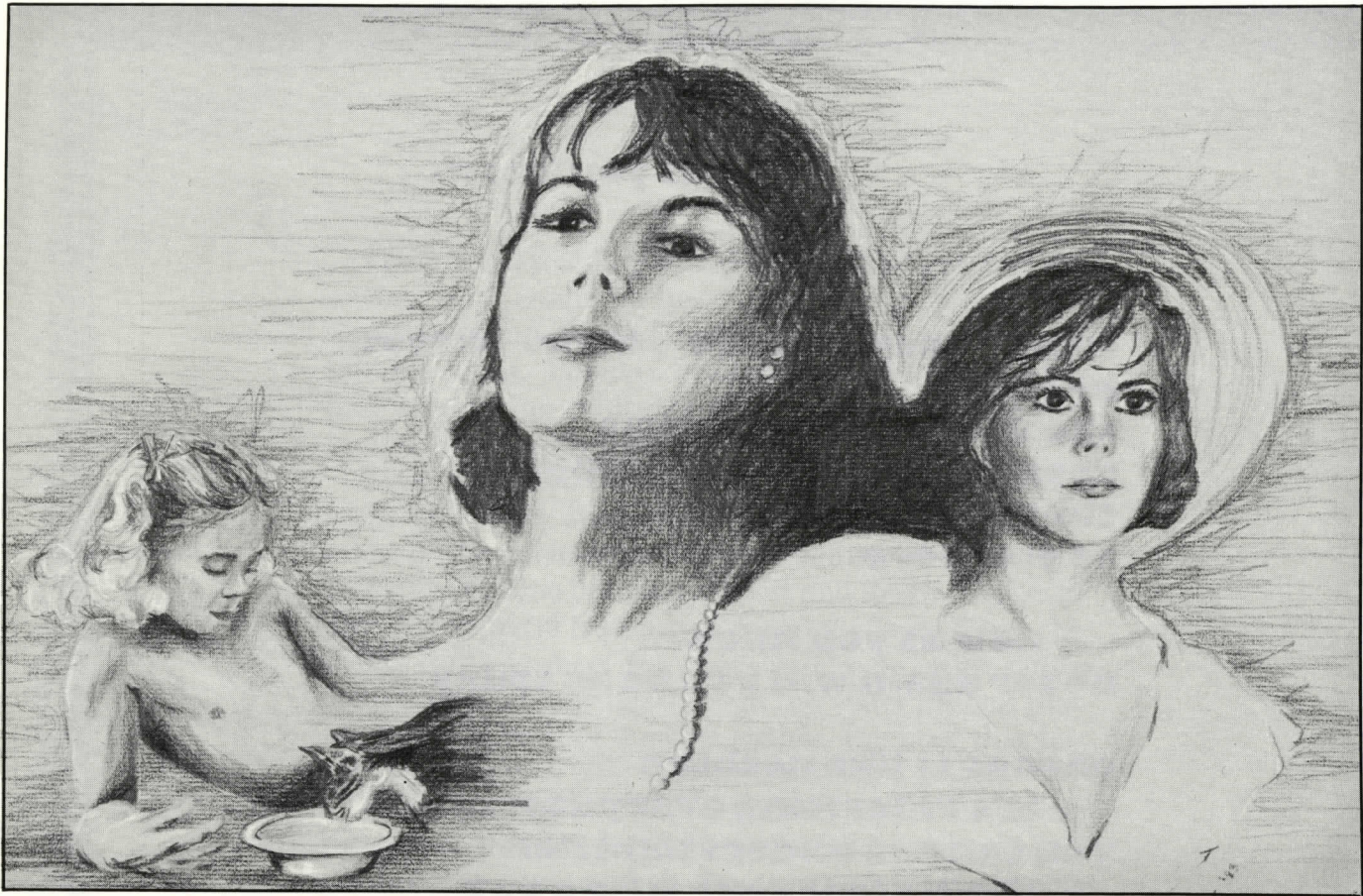
"Apparently not."

"Then it...(rare hesitation) it does exist?"

"It seems as though our experiments, designed as they were to prove its nonexistence, have proven its actuality."

"What will we announce?"

"What else? An individual can choose free will."



Kelly N. Hayes

The Passage of Time

The passage of time is not always easy. As a child we are expected to be carefree and *alive*. Tears are shed over an accidental tear in Teddy, Daddy buys us toys on his way home from work when we are sick while Mommy makes us eat chicken soup, and Grandma and Grandpa take us to the zoo on Saturdays. We begin a new life that first day of school. We begin to learn about new and different things. Knowledge seems to excite us at first, but like everything else, it too has bad side. We can't always be sheltered by Mommy and Daddy and we find that we

have to learn the ways of society in order to just survive the ordeal of becoming a part of it.

We soon have to leave the carefree years of childhood and enter what seems to be one of the most trying times of our life. Mom and Dad no longer understand what it is that we are trying to tell them. We begin feeling strange things happen inside, and we discover the opposite sex. It seems that we fall in and out of love with the passing of each season. We learn what it feels like to lose something very important to us. Pain enters our life with such intensity that we feel as if

we are being ripped apart by it. Grandma and Grandpa are no longer with us and we discover that we have to continue our life, remembering the good times and the bad, the happiness we shared as well as the sadness, and grow stronger within as a result of what we have endured.

Finally, that magic moment that we have hoped for has arrived. We don't really understand what it is to be an adult at first. All we think about is a home of our own, being able to come and go as we please, and living life to the lees. We don't realize that with our new freedom comes new

responsibilities. We learn about all the added expenses that come from being "on our own." We want to go home again to the safety and security that Mom and Dad provided, but deep down we know that that will never be possible. We are adults now. This is the time in our lives that we have been working toward since childhood. It will be a difficult journey ahead of us at times, but somehow we know that we will survive.

Lisa Gwin-Wright



as you knew...

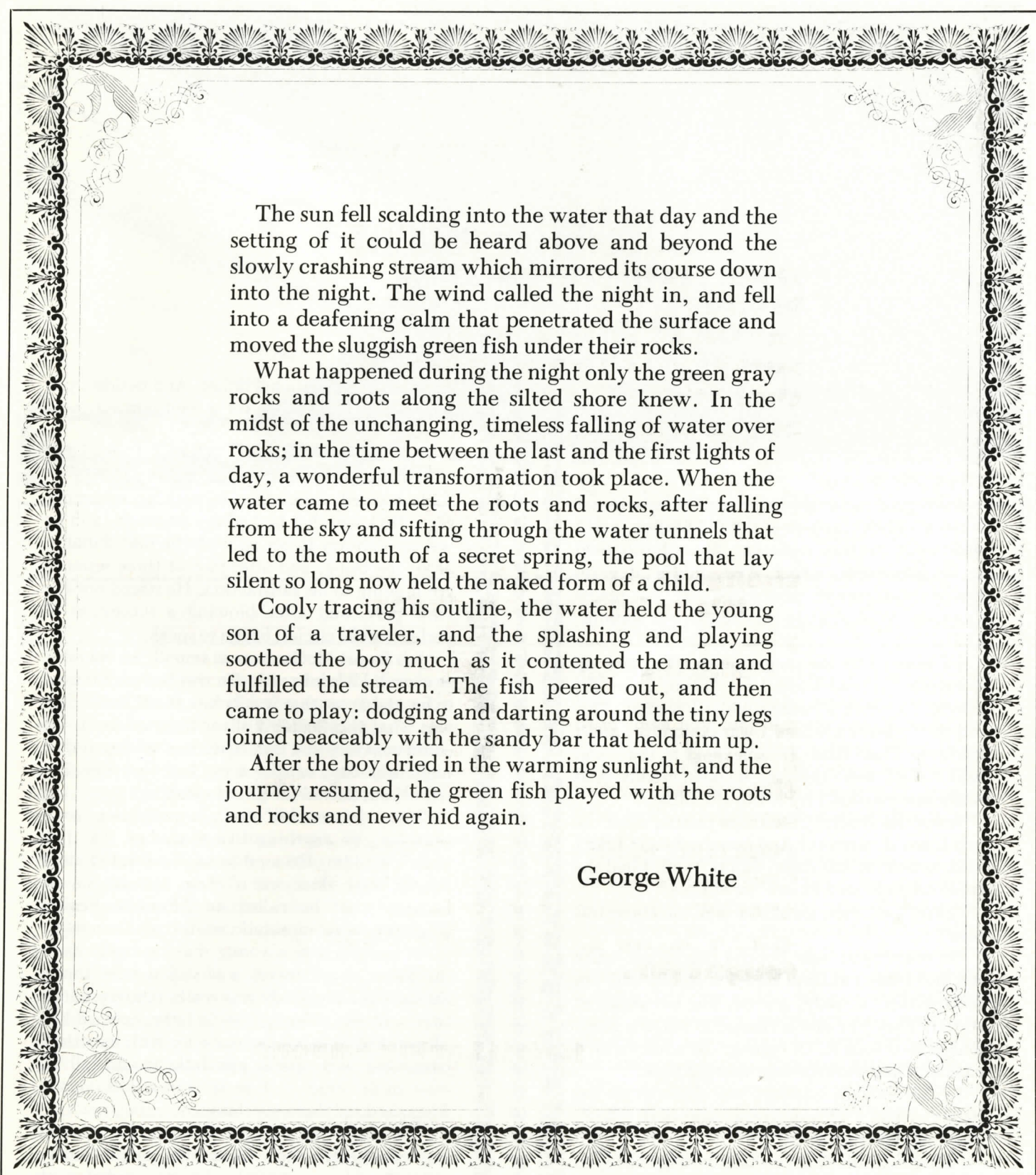
**from deep inside their closet
brains
the silent children come
speaking in haunting tongue
they break the view
as you were**

**now as you knew
never again will you be as today**

**change is like nothing
it's reforming everyday
you can not understand her
she'll steal your time away**

**from deep beneath the hardened
ground
the seed reaches anxiously for
more
reaches out its desperate claws
and pierces the heart of spring
ecstasy, bloody awakening
there is no greater joy than one
fought for.**

Kristi Larkin Havens



The sun fell scalding into the water that day and the setting of it could be heard above and beyond the slowly crashing stream which mirrored its course down into the night. The wind called the night in, and fell into a deafening calm that penetrated the surface and moved the sluggish green fish under their rocks.

What happened during the night only the green gray rocks and roots along the silted shore knew. In the midst of the unchanging, timeless falling of water over rocks; in the time between the last and the first lights of day, a wonderful transformation took place. When the water came to meet the roots and rocks, after falling from the sky and sifting through the water tunnels that led to the mouth of a secret spring, the pool that lay silent so long now held the naked form of a child.

Coolly tracing his outline, the water held the young son of a traveler, and the splashing and playing soothed the boy much as it contented the man and fulfilled the stream. The fish peered out, and then came to play: dodging and darting around the tiny legs joined peaceably with the sandy bar that held him up.

After the boy dried in the warming sunlight, and the journey resumed, the green fish played with the roots and rocks and never hid again.

George White

THE MAN WHO SOLD THE RINGS

BY

D. CLIFTON WRIGHT

"Crap! No-damn-body is that damn dumb!"

"That's all *you* know, you young pup. Ain't hardly dry behind the ears, and you think you know everything. Just you have a seat there, and I'll tell you about it."

I shrugged; what the hell else did I have to do? I had a 12-hour layover at the L-5 Station, and I had to pass the time some way. Space is supposed to be glamorous, right? Well, maybe it is on Europa, Ganymede, places like that, but places like L-5... Well, mainly they're like bus stations. Dull.

I'd stopped by the magazine stand to pick up something to read while I ate. Then, I thought maybe I'd catch a catnap while I waited. This old coot asked me where I was bound for, and I told him Titan Base. He snickered at that, and said, "Well, don't take any wooden credits. And make sure you don't try to buy the Rings."

A wooden credit? Credits are plastic; what the hell is wood, anyway? And *buy* the Rings? Like I said, nobody is that damn dumb. Well, I had the time; might as well humor the old goat.

"Sure, old timer; go ahead. Tell me about this fool."

"It wasn't just *one*; buncha people got taken in. And I don't knowas how I'd exactly call 'em fools, either. Greedy, maybe, but not really so stupid. They just saw a chance to make a mint, and so they took it. Of course," he added with a cackle, "*They* were the ones who got took."

By this time my curiosity was about to get the better of me. I lit a cigarette, and said, "Well, okay, let's hear about it."

"I'll get to it! That's what's wrong with you young'uns: always in such an all-fired hurry. Time you get my age, you'll learn that it don't do

no good to get in such a lather. And besides, you ain't got no place to go for a spell noways, now do you?"

Well, he had me there. "Okay," I chuckled, "I'm sorry; take your time. I'm not in a hurry."

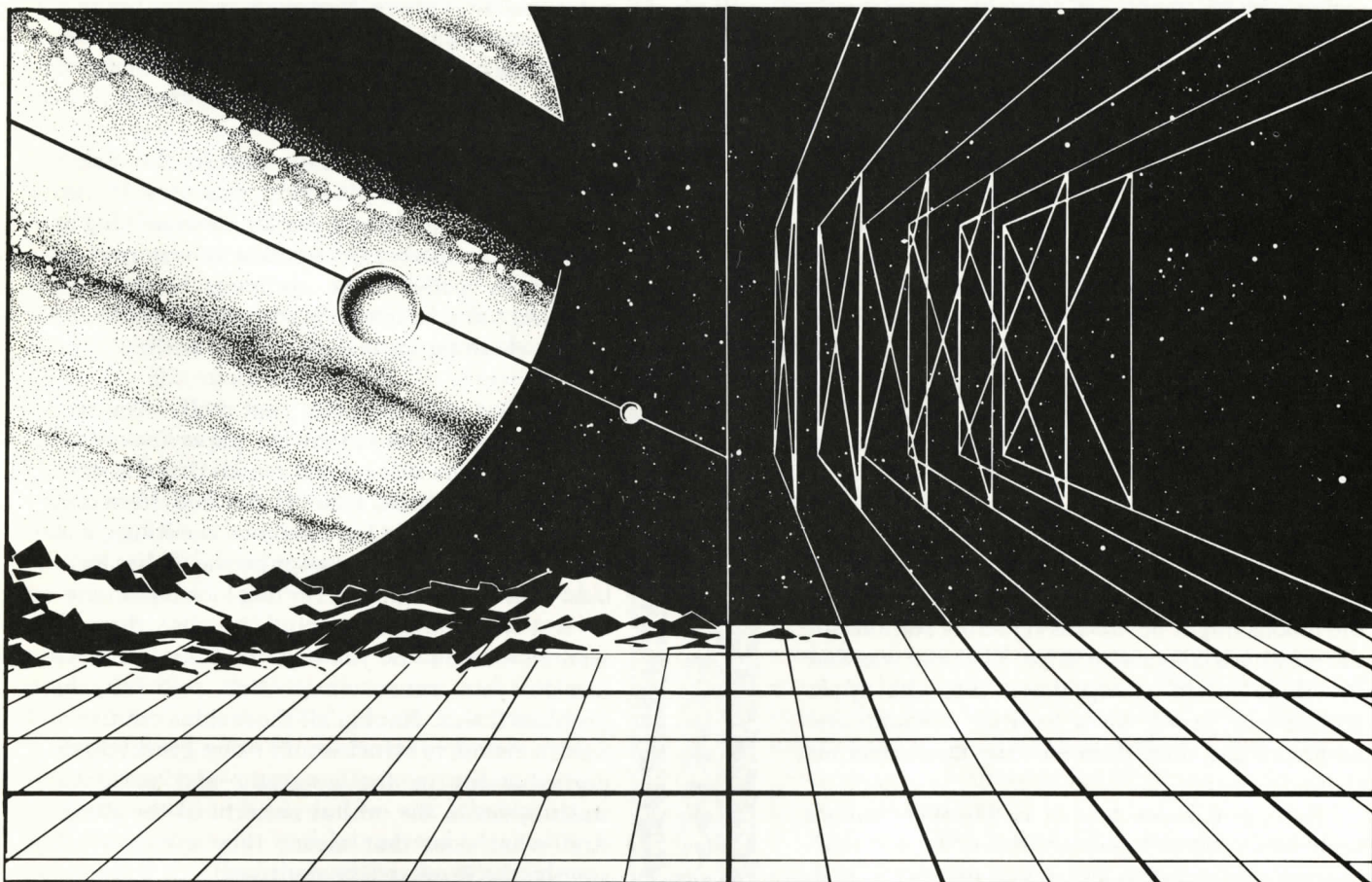
He nodded, and began to pack an enormous pipe. He knew that he had my attention, and he was in no hurry to get on with the tale. Finally, he lit the thing, and after two or three minutes got it going to his satisfaction. He stared out the view port, and after blowing a succession of perfect smoke circles, began to speak.

"Jeb Stuart McGee was as smooth an operator as ever did draw breath. He was from what used to be Alabama--that was before the War--and he was what they called a silver-tongued devil. He could convince you that black was white, or that night was day, or that a cat had five legs. I'm tellin' you, he had the gift of speakin'.

"Now, Jeb coulda' been a politician, or a preacher, or anything like that, but that just wasn't for him. He used to say he wanted more honest work than one o' them rascals. So, he became what he called an Alternate Reality Engineer--what most folks would call a con man.

"When Jeb was a young man, scarcely out'a his teens, space travel was still a new thing. Seemed like ever'body was really interested in it then--not like things got to be later. Seemed like all you had to do was to come up with somethin' connected with space, and folks would fall all over each other to buy it. Lotsa folks made fortunes doin' that very thing.

"The more Jeb thought about it, he came to the conclusion that what the people really wanted to buy, what they really needed, was meteorites. Buy your very own space rock--and



people sent in their money, and Jeb sent 'em rocks. And later, he did the same thing with moon rocks, and they sold real well, too.

"Jeb got his next big idea when that station crashed--you know, Space Lab, something like that, anyway. Well, old Jeb figured that folks'ud pay a pretty penny to have their very own pieces of it. So, he sold 'em, first come, first served, limited number available, pieces of a genuine space station, sealed in plastic--and folks bought 'em like they was hot cakes.

"Jeb made a fortune, 'cause he had a real low overhead. All of the rocks, he got outta driveways, backyards, and the like. The 'space station pieces' he scrounged from dumps, auto graveyards, and fix-it shops, and he got 'em set in plastic for a little of nothing. Jeb was doin' right well for himself when the market just sorta dried up--got kinda overloaded, I reckon. Or maybe folks was gettin' smarter. Anyways, they stopped buyin'.

"Jeb woulda' been in for some real trouble, but the gov'ment saved him. Started up the Shuttle program, and that just naturally gave Jeb an

idea: sell rides on the Shuttle. And he got some help from some folks who wrote magazine articles about how, one of these days, folks would be able to ride the Shuttle just like riding on an airplane. So Jeb's promotional gimmick was to mail out copies of these articles, with a covering letter to the effect that one of these days is here *now*.

"Thousands of people sent their money in, and Jeb was just tickled pink. Made a buncha money off the idea--which was just as well, cause this latest scheme got the gov'ment down real hard on him. Seemed that a whole lot of the people who'd paid their money expected the gov'ment to make good by givin' 'em a ride. All manner of hell was raised, all manner of politicians were voted out, and the FBI and all were hot after old Jeb--who just sorta disappeared. Vanished without a trace, and no one heard from him for years. 'Course, he had plenty of money, didn't need to turn a hand or shake a stick at a snake, just live the good life."

The old man paused, relit his pipe, and again blew a series of circles at the ceiling. I was amazed, to say the least. I could remember

seeing advertisements for "genuine moon rocks" in comic books when I was a kid, and that was...Hell, a good 30 years after Jeb must have used that scam. I'd never heard of the Shuttle rides, but naturally that would have been hushed up. I found another cigarette and lit it. This Jeb must have been a hell of a guy, to pull a deal like *that*. Pipe lit once more, the old man continued.

"The next anybody heard of him, Jeb appeared at the first Lunar Base, in about... '98, '99, thereabouts. Some of the bigwigs on Earth tried to get him sent back for trial, but there was no extradition from Luna then--and still isn't. Anyways, Jeb was a useful citizen: he was alive, willing to work, and if he pulled a few shady deals, well...No on Luna really cared. Fact of the matter is, he became Luna's national hero, in a way.

"Along about '01, there was a big interest in the Saturn system. It seemed that one or more of the moons might be used as refueling stations for the new mass conversion ships. The plan was that the ships would sweep down into the upper atmosphere, scoop up a load of methane and ammonia gas, and then run the converters off that.

"Now, you know how it is whenever there's some new scheme to explore this or exploit that: the environmentalists kick-up all manner of hell. And oh, boy, did they ever howl this time: how dare we irreparably damage the ecologies--or whatever--of all of these celestial bodies, which we didn't have any claim to in the first place; all that old stuff.

"Old Jeb saw his chance and he took it. Flew to see the presidents of two or three of these ecology outfits that had a whole lot more money than they did sense, and sold them a bill of goods. Yessiree," the old man chuckled, shaking his head, "it was a real beaut.

"Jeb first asks 'em if they know about the plans United Spaceways had to use reaction mass from the Saturnian moons, and of course they answer, yes, and if that's all...But that's not all, says Jeb. Tells 'em that he and a couple of other fellows first explored the Saturn system; he was the only one who made it back. And before he left, he put a radar beacon in orbit, floatin' there amongst the Rings.

"Well, on the basis of this beacon, proving that he had been there, Jeb tells 'em that he was able to lay claim to the Rings all nice, legal, and proper, with the United Nations Aeronautics and Space Administration. At which point, he whips

out a real impressive document, with a big seal on it, attesting to this fact--that is, that he owns the property commonly known as the Rings of Saturn as his exclusive chattel in perpetuity, so forth and so on.

"You see, this was back before the Baker decision. Back then, nobody was sure if you could claim a moon, or a planet, or something as your own property, or whether it was part of what they called 'The common heritage of mankind,' and so it was pretty much decided to handle these things one at a time, as they came up.

"But that ain't the point, not really. You see, what I'm gettin' at is that the paper *looked* all right, and there was no real reason that the story couldn't have been true. If he *had* been out there, then he *could* have claimed the Rings, and maybe got the U.N. to recognize the claim. So at least from that angle, everything look legitimate.

"But what was the point, is what they all wanted to know? So you own the Rings, so that's nice for you, but so what? Well, said Jeb, the problem is this. Having all those ships out in the Saturn system to refuel would cause georhythmic perturbations in the apostatic and perigonal stasis cycles in the orbital patterns of the Rings. And what does that mean, they asked. Well, simply, the Rings will be destroyed.

"You see, Jeb explained, the Rings are by no means solid, but are instead composed of ice crystals, bits of degraded matter, debris, and the like. By introducing the aforementioned perturbations, through the gravitational and relativistic shifts caused by refueling orbits and by boosting from the Saturn system and thus causing large shifts in mass, the newly released gravitational waves will cause a shift in the orbital relationship of the bits making up the Rings, in turn causing their rotational period to radically alter, and causing the Rings as we know them to vanish.

"This would be a tragedy, Jeb continued, because the Rings are part of the priceless artistic and aesthetic legacy of mankind. And, he added with a sigh, it seemed that the Rings were doomed, because he didn't have the money to fight United Spaceways in court. This was the reason he had come, he continued, because he knew that such an organization, dedicated as it was to the preservation...the whole nine yards. And they bought it, lock, stock, and barrel.

"Now, of course, these gents checked out the story Jeb told 'em, but it checked out, because it

was true--well, most of it. He hadn't really been to Saturn, and there wasn't really a beacon out there, but the paper Jeb had was the genuine article; amazing what a bribe will do, even with the head of a U.N. Agency.

"And so it all began to add up this way to all three of the folks Jeb tried the story on: why not *buy* the Rings? First, it would be a publicity coup, second it would save the Rings, and third there was a huge profit possibility in it: Ring memorabilia, from the People Who Saved the Rings! And the more each of these gents thought about it, the more appealing the whole idea became. So each one got in touch with Jeb, thinkin' he was the only one, and offered to buy the Rings from Jeb.

"Now this is what Jeb had planned all along, but he had never suggested it: always let a mark sell himself, Jeb used to say. Well, Jeb acted like he was stunned, told 'em he'd never thought of an outright sale, and he couldn't even consider it, sorry, but he'd go elsewhere. Well, they always upped the offer, and upped it again, and finally Jeb would tell'em, Well, I ain't gettin' no younger, and I gotta think about the future, and so reluctantly he'd agree. He was paid in pure uranium sealed in lead, and he was admonished to not tell anybody, and Jeb agreed. And after he'd pulled this deal three times, he returned to Lunar Base to watch the fireworks, so to speak. It didn't take real long for things to heat-up, either.

"Law suits flew back and forth between Jeb's three patsies, each claiming that *his* agreement was the only valid one, and between each of them and United Spaceways, enjoining them from refueling in the Saturn system, and counter suits from United Spaceways. And the upshot of the whole thing was that the trial dragged on for quite some time.

"The way it finally came out was that all three of the agreements Jeb had signed were ruled invalid, because the intent of one of the parties thereto had been to defraud, and because the property in question was neither a legitimate chattel nor real property of the seller in the first place. However, the Court took notice of the sincere desire of all three original plaintiffs to prevent irreparable damage to an extraterrestrial biosphere; hence, United Spaceways was enjoined from using any of the Saturnian moons as refueling stations in such a way as to damage the Rings. Now, testimony of independent experts had pretty well demonstrated that refueling

operations were not going to damage the Rings or anything else, but this was tossed in as a face saving sop to the environmentalists.

"But most important was the Court's extended ruling, which came to be called the Baker decision: no extraterrestrial body, whether moon, planet, planetoid, asteroid, meteor, comet, star, quasi-stellar body, et cetera, could in any wise be regarded as the proprietary chattel nor the real property of any person, nor of any combination or group of persons, except in the case of personal residency for personal use, limited to the normal constraints, limitations, and conventions of real property usage as established by the several common laws of the high contracting and signatory powers to and of the Charter of the United Nations.

"In short, people could reside anywhere in the Solar System they chose, and own property in the sense they could live on it and not be deprived of it without due process of law. However, no one could legally own extraterrestrial property in the sense Jeb had claimed to own the Rings. And this meant that Jeb's friends on Luna had won: Luna was not the property of the people of Earth, nor of any person or combination of persons thereon. Luna was a free state.

"And so, like I said, Jeb became Luna's national hero. He was voted a pension for life, and was named Honorary First Citizen: the man who sold the Rings had saved Luna. It didn't hurt any that Jeb let the word get around that he had meant to save Luna for the Lunarites all along. Yep," the old man concluded, "Jeb had done all right."

"How much of that is true, old man?"

"Why, you young pup! It's all true."

"First Citizen McGee, your shuttle is cleared to leave from Lock 3," the speaker announced. The old man checked his watch, and chuckled.

"Right on time! I'd talked longer than I meant to. By the way, young fellow, I didn't catch your name, but you just call me Jeb. If you ever make it to Luna City, look me up. Ever'body knows me." And with that, he was gone, pipe trailing smoke.



*Jana
Shir-Wright*

Bob for Wright

We hope your semester is off to a good start, if not, maybe *Collage* can help.

Col-lage (kō-lāzh´) n. An artistic composition of materials and objects pasted over a surface, often with unifying lines and color.

*Jane E.
Smith*

*Susan Moore
Cynthia Wright*

Cathy Southan

David Matthews

Tony Nowak



Coke is it!

Collage, the Creative Magazine of Middle Tennessee State University, is published for students, faculty, alumni and friends of the University. *Collage* is printed by Courier Printing Company in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Materials published in *Collage* do not necessarily reflect the official position of the University, its students, faculty or administration. All materials are printed with the consent of the contributors, who are solely responsible for the contents.

Collage is a copyrighted magazine and is on file with the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.