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carroll quarterly

fall 1976



*Return tomorrow, colder, wind from the north,
shatter the old hands of the sandstone,
overturn the books of hours in the sunrooms,
and let all be pendulum calm, dominion, prison of sense
which does not know despair! Return still stronger
wind from the north, wind that endears
our chains and seals the spores of the possible!*

--Eugenio Montale

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The Carroll Quarterly is a literary magazine produced by an undergraduate staff, and written by the students, alumni, and friends of John Carroll University. Manuscripts should be sent to the English Department.

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Jerry Kosicki

inside cover

Jerry Kosicki

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WORLD IN FALL

Reading Montale,
and it is happening again,
the curves are flowing golden
in the waterfall
of the world.
As he, I am taken
in her seductive swing
and scent
--chestnuts, smoke and apples,
the erotica of her simmering grace.
Heaven is vertical
in her enormous shedding.
I shall be like Montale.
I know the ferry does not come back,
but I adore the river of its going
the autumned icon of her life.

James Wagner

October
for Richard

Every other year when October came
I understood the leaves along the ground.
The trees stripped of their colors, the flame
In each autumn wind was the month, I found.

But this autumn I am much too merry
To understand beauty quite that sober.
All that I know is that this is the very
First year I have known you in October.

Muriel Orenstein

THIS MAGICIAN

This magician would release his doves
And keep his deck of cards upon the shelf;
He is a bold magician, for he loves
Doing magic with himself.

After his assistants cuff his hands
And bind his ankles in strong chains and locks
And wrap his chest and arms in packing bands,
They latch him in a metal box

And drop the box into an icy bay.
Those who have come to watch grow tense, and each
Begins to hold his breath, as if he lay
Bound in the dark below all reach.

But when the crowd has drowned itself beneath
Imaginary waves, and when it fears
His splash foamed back like a white funeral wreath,
Out in the bay a head appears.

Charles Zarobila

Hamlet

I will build a monument from chaos,
Cry the mad cry,
And be myself
When the sensible thing to be
Is not to be.
Alone but for my father's ghost
I thought I was the celebrant
But found myself the sacrifice
Broken by the fingers of the rain.

Lonzo Browning



--Dave Daigler

Hands
(in appreciation of e.e. cummings)

A line lingers,
fugitive from strife,
clinging to a greyish street--
brick patterns painted mosaic once,
by a child's artist eyes.
The colors lie obscured now,
cloaked by layers of stagnant dust
trod down by a weary soldier.
He patrols relentlessly,
tracing, retracing the bleak perimeter,
with never a truce for rest.
His eyes scan, alert for only enemies,
not concerned with the road's poor state.
(this soldier was that child, once)
The fugitive crawls;
bruised by callous, marching heels,
he drags himself forward,
moving beyond the endless war.

"(nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands)":
a description curiously resisting,
quietly demurring exile to an
oblivion of inattention;

I am a planter,
my fields arid from drought.
(I am the soldier,
yet still that child is me)
I encounter the fugitive;
suspicious of him initially,
I learn to trust.
A stream wends through my acres,
once flowing smoothly, watering crops,
now choked upriver by debris,
reduced to a feeble trickle.
Solitary, I could not clear the jam;
he and I, fugitive and farmer,
we succeed; the stream courses freely;
we plant the fertile loam.
Soon, the harvest:
tendrils of new-born musings,
clamoring to seize a dawn,
thrust aside the husks of
exhausted speculations, long rotted.
Just how small, I inquire within,
are the hands of the rain? And more:
What manner of woman was she,
whose hands not even the rain's
could be smaller than?

A miracle disguised in coincidence:
I glance through a window,
noting with surprise that
a night-shower is falling.
(it has rained all afternoon,
but I paid no heed till now)
I raise up the portal;
this is the particular rain that
twinkles down on cool spring evenings,
a mist
(and a whisper)
as much as rain.
Certainly, I am sure,
if the rain has hands,
this rain has the smallest hands of any.

Thus beckoned, I venture forth,
hands clenched in pockets,
tight fists dry, closed fists safe,
secure from moist intrusions.
Hurriedly I stride,
queasily, nerves stretched taut,
Haunted by the specter of a threat called time,
Hunted by the indignant chimes
of hard steel clocks,
Outraged at such a fool as I,
who would dribble away minutes
in pursuit of mere chimeras.

And, as so often past,
I yield,
submitting reveries meekly,
consigned to shackles of real:

(please believe, I craved not to lose thee)

I stop, a prelude to the turning back,
to renewal of vows to that god called time,
and allegiance to metal priests;

(thou hast not lost me, brother)

I pivot on continuum's midpoint,
between dreams and my defeated trek;
and in the moment of transitive stillness,
I become aware of rain,
the rain I walked too fast to feel,
thought too much, too fast to feel,
clenched fists too tight, too tense to feel;
Fists--slowly I draw my own hands forth,
out from their hiding place,
like nestlings on first flight;
Shyly I offer them,
Open them (and I) to the hands of rain.

laughquick sighsoft teardeep
essence of outpourings are the rain's hands,
pitpattering ever holding ever held within my own.
The rain is a sacrament of sensation,
its mysteries unfathomed by machines,
uncapturable by the mightiest cyclotron;
(yet each droplet that glistens on
caring human flesh contains them)
Tender secrets are these, not brash;
Concealed from dry observers,
they embrace without reservation
those who choose to embrace in turn,
to partake of the touch of rain;
(for the reflected glare from
a thousand open notebooks
cannot equal the hush-lustrous warmth
of a single open heart)

I lusciously amble down the lane,
unfettered senses keenly playing,
no more bound from straying
from the limit men call mind.
No alien here am I,
No outsider peering inside,
No orphan child peeping
through panes of barrier glass;
(for man was born of earth--
his midwife was the rain)
As buds thirst, I thirst;
As they are nurtured,
life's fluid diffusing through soil,
absorbed through roots,
so am I nurtured.
And just as the unadorned smell
of mud belongs,
I belong.
The word for this world is we;
man loses himself through gaps created,
through kinship with rain denied.

Far long since I have held like this,
Far long since I have felt the caress
of soothing hands upon my own,
be they hands of rain or human.
Human--again I ponder,
what manner of woman was she,
with hands so very small?

(the insight dwells in memory:)

My gaze vaults skyward, fiercely
piercing the veil of descending jewels
that refracts my sight's intention;
for I seek the stars, and having found,
I speak to them of recollection.

--You winked above, our silent companions,
while we two were together, she and I,
hands clasped through seasons as constellations
revolved like stately tops;
O stars--can you recall our yearnings?
To you we lofted them, to keep
through time and future always;
(do you still keep them, stars?
Are you where forgotten dreams
endure stasis, awaiting resurrection?)
O stars--after we were finished,
you remained,
masked by the swirl of dying leaves
whipped in a cruel autumn wind;
(we had thought our spring would never end)
I walk alone now,
having cherished, having lost,
one with hands far smaller than rain's,
until she chose to trade them in
for lifeleech mindfull clocks.

I turn, tracing
reluctant steps back to origin;
melancholy, yet sustained by the
sweet fresh cling of rain.
I enter the doorway to the dry lands;
a regress begins:
unbid, my hands flee to pockets.
(already I grow parched)
They quiz me, perplexed by my condition,
compelling me to explain
why I wasted my time in rain.
I struggle with words, uselessly;
my hands twitch and fret,
comfort gone, rancid sweat
now their only moisture.
I notice with horror
the others' hands: they bleed,
an unheeded rush of vital liquid
dripping to the floor
(save from those with veins long drained)

My own hands ache strangely;
fear-filled, I lift them before me:
I wear crimson gloves.
Frantic, I wrap the stains with rags;
but wounds as deep as these,
a bandage cannot staunch.
(and they watch blindly)

O rain, I cry despairingly,
(they do not hear)
Why hast thou taken leave of me,
left me to falter in this mire
of my own spilled blood?

(a small voice inspiralling:
look more closely, brother;
thou hast never truly lost me)

and I see that welling up among
the clots of blood are
shining droplets of
simple rain.

I weep;

tears mix with rain mixes with blood,
a trinity of living;

We bleed, yet dreams persist irreducibly;

(for hands may be held)

Jim Reho

Summer in Cleveland
Everet's Cancer

While Everet is dying in Sweden
the hot rages here.
It is hard to think of a cool death
when brown shopping bags burn through my hands.
It is too hot to be bothered with the sticky smell
which good hospitals should mop away,
and nurses should know what to do, but don't.
Air conditioning should take it out, but it never does.
It is too hot here.
It is too hot to load the shelves.
Everet's sores get cooled twice a day,
and he gets clean sheets when he misses
the pan.
It is too hot in this town
and much too hot to fold away the bags.

Marge Weiss

apologia

no, it could have been done
no other way but violently, at first,
and tenderly, as time went on:
our slow progress,
growing through such weighty cycles,
was precipitated by explosions
as violent as the sun
and the celestial tumult that conceived it;
white light, burning through our gaze,
melted us away to nothing but ourselves,
and we flowed volcanically each into each,
like primal elements consorting to create;
and out of that fire
came a fusion that joins us still
through slower revolutions and insensate cold.

Vincent Casaregola



Carl Morava 7-5-75

in the library

in that casual curve,
the silhouette of a woman's calf
against the whiteness of a tile floor,
is a symmetry that suggests
beyond its sensual self,
the being that's embodied there;
not lustful satisfaction do we find,
nor the clinician's handiwork
to analyze design
and separate nerves and bone
substances beyond division;
there is only a suggestion, a whisper,
like subtle pen or brush stroke
cyphering our minds,
or soft fingers on softer strings,
evoking harmony
which makes the singing
outlast the song.

Vincent Casaregola

the vigil

in small ethnic churches,
old widows keep a vigil,
attending on even the earliest of services.
they measure time in black-beaded sorrows,
while watching over red-glass candles
in unnoticed alcoves of the church--
small candles flaming white within red glass
and blushing marble in repose.

you acolytes, you youthful priests
upon a stage,
never think these wrinkled women
mourn the dead, or try to warm
the marble by their gaze;
they are here bearing witness to the flames
that outlasted long dead husbands
and long fled sons.

they bear witness
to white light flame
incarnate in red blood
that burns in sacrificial consumption,
not like the martyrdoms of brooding saints,
but like the many martyrdoms a woman makes
beneath an altar or embrace.

this sacrifice does not justify the past,
predict the future, or even reveal the present
to their thoughts;
it merely speaks to them of earth and fire,
of dried leaves dancing in the street,
of old faces, ancient eyes, and tiny ever-blushing flames.

Vincent Casaregola

A Wedding Night Gown

Grandmother
you sleep in pale satin, cool bronze, sterile earth.

I sleep tonight
in the gown you wore first in the bed you began six children,
a garment ivory with age,
its lace unravished by moths,
its ribbons a virgin's blue.

I wear my remnant of the raid
when we, the legacy, swept through your home of memories,
peering into cedar closets,
pulling off strings,
tearing flaking paper layers.

With eager fingers
we clasped crystal and porcelain prizes.

Buried beneath communion veils, dried baby shoes,
I found the delight of my eye and touch,
fondled the still pure fabric,
drifted back to the eve you began this life
of home and child, giving yourself up to love.

I pray Grandmother
envelope me now in this silken sweetness.

Let me again uncover
the innocence you left behind.

Sheila A. Haney

FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE

--A SHORT STORY BY JERRY FAIST

They were riding downtown, watching the meter tick over, when she finally admitted it. She was afraid of him. There was no other word, it was fear.

Her hands were moist and cold. Her skin pulled tautly over every muscle, as though she were having a picture taken, or being introduced to the new boss.

"What did you say?" asked George.

"Nothing. I was just thinking."

"Anything in particular?" His arm slid clumsily around her shoulders. He grinned. "They tell me a bride shouldn't be thinking on her wedding day. She should just be happy. Especially now that everything's over."

Everything over? She twisted her gloves as if to wring them out, and wished it were. The glitter and celebration seemed a long way back, like her first day in school or like the time she had been happily surprised by his first kiss. Being alone with him, away from the crowd and congratulations and shining wrapping paper of presents, was unreal--almost unbearable. She wished the taxi driver would quit peeking into the rear-view mirror. Was that a snicker on his face?

"The reception was great," said George. "Just perfect."

"It was nice, wasn't it?" Try to smile, she told herself.

"And just long enough. Where did you get all those friends and relatives? Another hour of handshaking and introductions, and I would have met the entire state of Ohio. Say, I like your dress. Something new?"

"Uh-huh."

"I suppose it's pretty obvious, but I like everything about you." He kissed her hair. "You don't know how long I've dreamed of this day."

It was a compliment and she tried to accept it. But somehow he had changed. He seemed so different from the George she had promised to love, honor and obey.

"And Uncle Harry. Wasn't he a riot?" George chuckled.

She fussed with her skirt, pulling it down over her knees, worrying about the cabbie again. "He was so loud-- and so personal--"

"It was all in fun. I noticed a lot of women were laughing. Even your mother."

"Let's not talk about it, huh?" She hadn't meant to sound curt.

She tried to sweeten her mind with pleasant memories of the day but none of the pictures stayed in focus. They blurred into a bedlam of noises and flashes that poured over her and around her like the sounds and pictures inside a fun house.

She saw George from a great distance, as if he were performing on a tiny stage a hundred rows away. When he squeezed her shoulders he was a stranger molesting her. He was a strong, broad-shouldered man, a tanned, absolute stranger who was abducting her.

"We're almost there," he said. "About five more blocks."

"It was quick, wasn't it?"

"Not quick enough, Mrs. Palmer."

She wished she could have his enthusiasm. She wondered how many brides were scared of the sound of their new last name. Palmer, it just doesn't sound right. . . She knew this fear was unreasonable--or was it? She and George had had a sensible courtship. They knew each other as well as any bride and groom could.

They wanted the same things: children, a good family life, security in what some would call the commonplace of the middle class. The necessities would satisfy them. Let the luxuries worry other couples. They had each other, and that was enough.

At the hotel, George had the fare ready. He added a tip and the cabbie smiled, looking first at George, then at

her. Panic threatened to crumble her outward calmness, but somehow she kept her smile. She followed George and a jaunty bell-hop through a revolving door, up carpeted steps, and through a long, high lobby.

Surely these men in the olive green chairs had other things to do but sit there and study her from behind their newspapers. She might as well be carrying a black-lettered sign on her back, like a sandwich man: "Just Married."

George left her in a chair to check in at the desk. She heard his strong voice: "I have a reservation for Mr. and Mrs. Palmer."

"Palmer...Palmer. George Palmer? Yes...here it is... that's room nine-eighty five. Boy, take these bags to nine-eighty-five."

Mechanically, she opened her purse to fix her face. Grains of rice spilled out, tumbling down her dress and onto the floor. That would be Grace's work, always up to something. A practical joke at a time like this. A couple of men peered out from behind their headlines and snickered.

Embarrassed, she got up to meet George. She didn't hear what he said. She felt a hundred eyes follow them toward the elevator. She wanted to scream.

Somehow she found herself on the elevator, standing next to George, holding his hand, noticing that, suddenly, he needed a shave. There were a few other passengers, all inquisitive. Were their smiles neighborly--or apologetic? She shut her eyes. George squeezed her hand.

Their room was around four turns. The bell-hop unlocked the door, placed the bags in a corner, pulled up the shades, lowered the window, clicked on the light in the bathroom.

He didn't have to smile that way, she thought, the smart-aleck kid. He knows for sure that we're just married. He'll go down and tell the rest of the bell-hops about the couple in nine-eighty-five. George handed him a dollar bill.

George snapped the chain on the door and took her in his arms. She couldn't respond to his kiss despite her efforts to rustle up some show of emotion. What would he think of her if he knew she was afraid?

"I'll have to hang out my blouses and dresses, George," she said, pushing him away. "They'll wrinkle something terrible if I don't." He didn't know they were permanent press.

He noticed her paleness. "What's up? Don't you feel well?"

"I'll be all right. Just a headache from the excitement, that's all."

"Should I ring for some aspirin or soda---"

"No, please. I'll be all right as soon as I sit down and take a breath. I've been on the go since sunrise."

She wanted to stall, to waste the night doing little, unimportant things like looking out the windows, counting the stars, or talking about books. But how could she?

George took her in his arms again. "I'm going to send for champagne."

"No, George, please. I don't want champagne...or soda...or aspirin." She gathered all her courage. "Just you."

If only she could believe that she had just said.

They were sitting on the love seat when the rap came on the door. She jumped up, startled, her hands automatically going to her hair.

George laughed. "We're married now, darling, remember? It's only the house maid."

He went to the door and took the towels.

"Let me take them," she said. "I'm going to change, anyway."

She went into the bathroom and turned the lock softly, trying to quiet the click. Her heart began to beat wildly. She thought of a day long ago when she had picked a baby robin off the grass where it had fallen and cupped it between her two small hands. The bird's heart had pounded fearfully against the palm of her hand. She felt like the bird now.

There is no escape, she thought. The faces of the bell-hop and the cab driver and the men lounging in the lobby overwhelmed her.

She showered slowly, wondering about her new husband in the next room. If only she knew he would understand this timeliness, this fear. He used to be so considerate. Tonight, of all nights, he seemed indifferent to her feelings.

She sat on the edge of the tub, combing her hair deliberately. She paused every stroke to think about her mother, the ceremony in church, and the advice of Father Anthony. What was it he had said: "Sometimes the both of you will feel confused and afraid..." He must not have known George too well, but he sure knew me. Always she came back to the now, to the immediate, to the present, and she

trembled.

Desperately she tried to recreate the ride in the cab, searching for some sign that he understood. Does the hunter ever understand how the hunted feels? One is chasing; the other is chased.

She could not stay locked up any longer. She had married him for better or worse. It was right in the ceremony. With a sense of dread she switched off the light and unlocked the door.

He sat on the corner of the bed, chuckling softly at the Johnny Carson show.

"George," she said, surprised. "George, will you bring my robe?"

"Sure," he said.

She peered into the room and saw him. He still wore his suit coat. His tie was still neatly knotted at his throat.

"Why, George, I thought you'd be in your pajamas."

"I decided to wait for you," he said. "It seemed the thing to do."

He disappeared into the bathroom. She was tense on her side of the door. Then she smiled, forgetting all about the cabbie, the bell-hop and the men downstairs in the lobby. She relaxed for the first time that day.

George hadn't changed. He knew how the hunted feel, after all. She had let fear take possession of her heart, instead of love.

George had tried to be quiet about it, but she had been listening. Quite unmistakably, she had heard the muted click of the lock on the bathroom door.

* * * *

Recollections of Industry:
A Steel Mill on the Ohio River

Great, black, deadly and powerful,
as an iron fungus rising out of the soil,
spreading forth on land, air, and water
to nourish its kind, north and south,
and gouging its sustenance from the earth;
Sign of a land of fire,
servant of those who serve it,
standing, not growing, not moving, yet living,
seeking no place, yet dominant,
outstanding, accented fully in the setting Appalachian sun.
All are of one kind, north or south,
east or west of the river,
city of thousands, town of dozens,
all to common purpose;
All unknown in the earth and water
at the coming of the early ones, the hunters;
unknown, perhaps, of ages to come,
no longer of the ones that fed these beings,
will wonder at them, silent, shadowing,
once great, black, deadly and powerful,
signs of a land of fire,
when all fire is ash, all power weak,
all steel but rust;
and the age of their birth but a memory
in cobwebs on forgotten shelves.

Mike Tripka



--Dave Daigler

THE MIRACLE

The other night
the coupling of the freight cars
awakened me from the silt of dreams
and in my heart
was born again
the awful hood and clank
of orphaned man:
that lone and huddled sack
beneath the railroad bridge
with hands extended
above a failing fire.

But now
the children of the firelight
live again
and their mother sits with them
and with radiant smile
beckons me, also
at last,
to her.

James Magner

Stroll; Detroit alleyway, 1976

give me the crowded cobbled brick
alleyway of the bazaar;
all of the criminal faces strung
in trolley weave round and round,
sauntering in an age of steady quick cadence,
a dollar please
for the waxed honky tonk madamn
and her out of tune banging, thanks
for the memory
of independence
and intoxicated ethnic splendor

give me the world's festival
with its noise and rumbling;
pushing and shoving,
red hots and cold beer,
a touch of breeze, and
a slowly thumping upright bass
with a hint of bloody American tenor
in a distant saxophone
of the summer city night

give me the touch and go
of people trafficking the alleyway
to the empty sky
of a country night alone;
we all wander alone, but together here,
each a sideshow bizarre enough
to keep the other interested

Dennis Archambault



--Dave Daigler

YOURS

Twenty years from now
on some tenement fire escape
or lawn swathed with razors
you will be reading these words
as dusk wanders into rose
and you will love the world
because of ambiguous light,
and my life
will be your blood
in that moment;
that's what it will take
--my dying life
yours
in a summer evening in July
and the sky
wondering rose
into dark.

James Magner



--Dave Daigler

