

The Malcontent

Spring 1992

The young suitor stood beneath her window and threw stones up at the glass
For he had seen her just last evening and knew he must have this young lass
Astonished to see the handsome young stranger, the maiden gave a startled cry
And quick as lightening, soothing as sweet music came the strangers reply

Because it's cold beneath your window, let me in
Because your beauty outshines the stars, let me in
Because you hunger for some passion, let me in

The pretty young maiden, flattered though she was, hesitated at the latch
And the young stranger, noting this lagging, hurried not to lose his new catch
His hypnotic patter he increased and he stared with fever into her eyes
And envisioned that land of milk and honey which on the far bank lies

Because I need you more than longing, let me in
Because the full moon rakes my form, let me in
Because I'll take you with wild passion, let me in

But still the young maiden, hand at the latch, stayed frozen in her place
Although she was swooned by his beauty, there was something odd in his face
Something wrong around his mouth, something wicked in his smile, but his eyes,
Oh, his eyes, they kept her rooted to the spot, made her weak and mesmerized

Because the wolf beneath the moon howls, let me in
Because the blood within you calls me, let me in
Because you weary of your dull life, let me in

By now the girl had begun to realize her position, and was trembling
She had remember the admonitions of the old men about letting strangers in
She had heard about the pale, white bodies found at the river's side
But alas, too late! Unconscious, unwitting she has opened the window wide!

Because the life within you feeds me, let me in
Because we've always preyed upon you, let me in
Because I'll rip your throat wide out, let me in

Because your just another victim, let me in
Because your vanity is your failing, let me in
For these reasons and much more, I've broken in

Ben Ide

(*Inspired by *Lonely in Your Nightmare*, copyrighted 1982 by Capitol Records, Inc.)

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Smear'd Across My Dreams

morning light
i'm sweating
my bed is bleeding
questions rise
it's all perfectly meaningless
someone died here

i roll over
close my eyes
i gain new sight
pictures of the evening sun
the night's shore
i left her
naked
silent

now i try to sleep
her face smear'd across my dreams
suffocating
coming up for air
for forgiveness
all the time she smiles
she knows it's impossible

if i could only make it right

Horosky
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Parlor Games

I wonder—
Why you want what you don't,
And when you stop pretending.

I wonder—
What you truly think,
And where you let it show.

I wonder—
How you entreat others,
And if they resent it too.

I wonder—
How it goes so far,
And why we should play again.

©1992 BMC

Touch

you whisper love
telephone voice. soft and slow.
i bend my head my down
you'll never know
how uneasy your voice made me feel.

you raise your hand
to touch my face
i sense the doubt in your voice
i feel the strained touch of your fingers

i am miles away when our lips meet
i have killed myself once again.
for you i die a constant death
a little death with every touch.

Horosky
© 1991, Horosky

See You Soon

Come with me
into a dimly lit room
that smells of perfumed
flower arrangements
and wax candles.

Kneel with me
and look deep into
this empty oak box.
Can you see your reflection
in the lacquered wood?
Like I can?

Give me your hand
to caress the satin
quilted red fabric
that lines these walls
and comfort smooth
cooling my weary shoulders.

Hear what I hear
mumbled prayers and pleas
the whispers
breaths choked
by tears
tell me
how lovely I look,
almost alive.

Ambrose
© 1991, Ambrose

When the Aliens Stole My Car

So many things have happened,
I don't know where to start.
I think it all began
when the Aliens stole my car.

My car wasn't much to look at,
and it didn't go too fast,
but it got me where I had to go,
and didn't use much gas.

The car was black and silver,
the hood bent and askew,
there was a dent in the left front fender,
a fond reminder of you.

The speedometer was broken,
the windshield chipped and scratched,
the radio popped and hissed and hummed,
but all the speakers matched.

The car was leaking fluids,
it left oil stains on the ground,
the grill fell off on the highway,
and could never again be found.

I wonder where they're going,
in that beat up car of mine?
Are they just joyriding?
Are they having a good time?

Why the Aliens stole my car,
I really just can't say.
I asked the policeman several times,
but he just looked away.

The Aliens stole my car
and I'm filled with hurt and rejection.
The spaceship that they left in its place
won't pass motor vehicle inspection.

Ed Hoyer Jr.
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Things That Go Bump in the Night

Things that go bump in the night,
fill me with an awful fright.
Are they far, or are they near?
In the dark, I strain to hear.

Things that go creak on the stair
leave me shaking, gasping for air.
Are they going up or down?
I'm sweating so much, I'm starting to drown.

Things that pad quietly into my room,
fill me with thoughts of doom.
Are they walking on my bed?
I feel my soul shrivel with dread.

Things that go "Rrrrr" in my ear
fill me with an icy fear.
Are they breathing, or is that me?
I want to cry, "Help! Mommy!"

Things that are covered with fur
that lick my face and start to purr.
Wait a minute! That's not right!
I get out of bed and turn on the light.

Asleep on my pillow, where I lay my head
a warm furry ball, my pet cat Sangfred.

Ed Hoyer, Jr.
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She walks a narrow path between the planes
Of earthly loveliness and mystic grace
And from this heaven's footpath she gains
Radiant beauty throughout her form and face.
Her body glides and smoothly curves, then falls
And stops at gently perfect tapered ends;
Her distant voice as songbirds sweetly calls
Across a forest's deeply wooded bends.
Her hair, an earthen brown ignited by
The sun's last golden rays showering
Through those flaxen waves, gleaming in her eye
To illumine those jade stones flowering.
The mind reels at such wondrous fare~
Can it ever hope to grasp what is there?

Ben Ide
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Gone With The Graffiti

I often wondered why, but I stopped not long after my sixteenth birthday. I'd always had this deep desire to think great thoughts. I began to read the great philosophical and religious works of mankind. I also read a lot of science fiction and comic books, for their contemporary treatment of philosophical topics, of course.

My period of deep thinking led me into strange and wondrous philosophies, none of which I understood. I felt the power that they gave me course through my youthful brain. Or perhaps it was an illusion created by confusion. It's hard to tell now. I dove deeper into the mysteries.

My "so-called" friends would razz me about my "deep thoughts." I ignored them. What did I care when I saw my buddies walk down the street with their long haired, tight mini-skirted, bodies-that-wouldn't-quit girlfriends? I had my philosophy to keep me company.

Still, there was something missing, a growing physical something. A question kept recurring to me; wasn't there more to life than deep thoughts? As you can see, I was doubting my philosophy.

Recklessly, I plunged deeper into my mad search for ultimate truths. This is how I discovered the two greatest of truths. First, that reality is not real enough, and second, that blondes, brunettes, and redheads, are nice to have around.

It did not take me long to start chasing young women, preferably blondes. They were difficult to catch, and I caught very few. I discovered, though, that it was much more enjoyable to chase women than to read Spinoza, Kierkegaard, or *The Legion of Eds*.

Nothing really comes easy. Every day we are called upon to make judgements and face trials that affect our day to day living. And we often wonder if we have done the right thing. I remember well an experience I had not too long ago.

I was attempting to get a doctorate in semantics at the Regional University of Fundamental Knowledge and Yoga (RUFUNKY). My older brother, who works at RUFUNKY, told me I was a fool to study there. He said that he'd never study at an institution of higher education that would hire a person like him. In retrospect, I suppose he was right, as he's worked there as a librarian for over fifteen years. But, I was young and foolish. Besides, how good could advice

be from a guy known around the campus as "Burnout the Librarian?"

I'd gotten a part time instructor position to teach a course on the Advanced Sociological-Anthropological-Psychological Analysis of Ancient and Modern Graffiti. I remember that there was one young woman in the class. That's it, just one. The rest of the students consisted of various and sundry sized lumps of different hues, mostly tie-die. It was impossible to be sure what sex they were, if they were human, that is.

I remember, too, the first time I cast my gaze upon them. As I looked out from my lectern, I could see a sea of hairy heads, hairy faces, and one beautiful pair of legs, very strategically crossed, and placed in a position where I could hardly miss them. They were connected to a gorgeous, very well proportioned young woman. I nearly spelled my name wrong on the blackboard. With great difficulty, I became accustomed to her presence.

The class was not a very bright one. A forty watt bulb had more brightness than they did. The majority hovered in that netherland between "C" and "F" called "D." I honestly asked a student why he was taking this course. He mumbled something about his Uncle Sam paying him more money each month if he had five courses instead of four. I assumed at the time he was being paid by his parents, or relatives, for, or in hopes of, academic brilliance, or something equally as vague. I admit that I was wrong, and leave the subject where it now lies. Forgotten.

That young woman was the one nice thing about that whole dreary class. In fact, she was always very friendly, asked me questions after class, smiled at me, helped me correct tests and papers. She seemed to like me a great deal, and she seemed truly interested not only in my class, but in the whole field of Graffiti. She was lying, of course.

Still, I didn't mind. I mean, she made excellent dinner company, and always seemed to look splendid when we went to the theater. As the end of the semester drew closer, I faced a dilemma. What mark should I give this young woman who was obviously trying to get an "A" out of the course when her work output was about a "D+?" And would our relationship change if I gave her anything less than an "A?" These questions plagued me as finals approached.

By this time, we were sleeping together fairly regularly. That's it, just sleeping. She never wanted to

have sex, and I wasn't really interested in forcing the issue. She kept my bed warm, and she kept me warm, too. And I for one was not about to louse up such a beautiful situation.

The night before the final exam in my class, I still hadn't figured out what mark to give her. I decided to wait till the morning. Why spoil what could be our last night together?

It was a normal evening, or at least, normal for us. Dinner, followed by a movie, then a little dancing at the local night club. We drove back to my apartment. The landlady's door was open, and she was watching everyone who entered or left the building. I gave her a dirty look as we went upstairs. As I closed the door to my apartment, the words "You'll burn in Hell!" echoed in the stairwell.

We sat on the couch a while, and listened to some soft music. She had a few drinks. I didn't have any, I'm not a drinking man. Usual stuff. We began to get ready for bed. I was always fascinated by the way she took off her clothes. I watched her as she slipped under the bedcovers invitingly.

"Here it comes," I thought, "I'll make my usual advance, get her usual kind, but firm, rejection, and we'll just curl up and go to sleep as usual." I crawled into bed with her. I made my usual advance, waiting for her usual kind, but firm, rejection. She whispered, "Take me," and suddenly I discovered that this was not going to be another usual night. She reached out for me. I wrapped my arms around her. We kissed, and sparks flew. She was still in my arms when the morning came.

She left after breakfast. She said she had to go prepare for my final exam. I was feeling pretty good that day. I think I even smiled at those poor souls doomed to take my final. Oh, it was a masterpiece. I figured half the class would flunk. I was surprized. Everybody flunked.

I was in the faculty lounge filling out the computerized grade cards, when I saw her walking down the hall. I followed at a discrete distance. I wanted to talk to her, but I wasn't sure what I wanted to say. She reached the rest rooms at the end of the hall. I hid behind a soda machine. A hairy blob came out of the men's room and greeted her. It took me a minute before I recognized the blob as an entity from my class. I could not help but listen to their conversation.

Blob: That final? Man, what a bummer!

She: *I know. What a creep that guy is!*

Blob: He'll probably base the final mark on this exam.

She: *He'd better not! I've been crossing my hips over each other in that course. After what I gave him, he wouldn't dare flunk me!*

I could hear no more! I ran back to the faculty lounge, mumbling about the ancestors of that young woman.

In the back of my mind, I always knew that she was trying to charm and beguile her way into an "A" grade. If I went along with her game, I'd be the biggest fool alive. No sir, not me! I picked up her computer card. "No mercy!" I cried, and swiftly marked down "B+."

After I turned in my grade cards, I stopped by the campus bookstore and bought a black magic marker. I then proceeded to write that young woman's name, phone number, and the words "She delivers" on the wall in every men's room on the campus. I also snuck into a few of the women's rooms. One never knows.

Thus having avenged myself, I decided to drown my sorrows in the only way I knew how. Some people get drunk. I overeat. I went to the local pizzeria, and stuffed myself with as much pizza and root beer soda as I could.

I was finishing my third large size pizza, when they threw me out of the restaurant. The owner was afraid I'd vomit all over the table, and ruin the night's business. I really can't blame him for wanting to protect his reputation for running a clean, well lighted place.

Looking back at it all, I often wonder if I did the right thing. I mean eat that much pizza, of course. The young woman was completely, well almost, wiped clean from my memory. I decided that she was just graffiti on the wall of my life and I painted her over.

Edward Hoyer, Jr.
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Another Nothing Tale

Once upon a time, there was Nothing. Now this was not just any ordinary Nothing. No, all who saw Nothing thought It was really Something.

And so, the word spread about Nothing that was really Something. And the People flocked to see Nothing that was really Something. Those with Knowledge about Such Things were troubled that the People were spending so much time, and money, to see Nothing that was really Something.

"How could Nothing be really Something?" Those with Knowledge about Such Things cried. Finally, Those with Knowledge about Such Things travelled to see Nothing that was really Something. And Those with Knowledge about Such Things were amazed and horrified!

"This Nothing really is Something!" Those with Knowledge about Such Things said amongst Themselves, "What shall We do?" Those with Knowledge about Such Things thought deep and long. "We must convince the People that Nothing is not really Something, but merely Something Else."

And so Those with Knowledge about Such Things pronounced that Nothing was not Something, but merely Something Else.

Were the People fooled? Of course, they're the People! The People are always easily fooled by Those with Knowledge about Such Things. And so the People stopped looking for Nothing that was really Something, as Nothing was not really Something, but merely Something Else.

Ed Hoyer, Jr.
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Nasty Epitaphs from Beyond (Good Taste)

from the poisoned pen of Ben Ide.

Here lies the man whom we loved so dear~
He pickled his liver in domestic beer.

Here lies the body of cousin Claude~
Buried here beneath this sod.

Here rest a man by the name of Fred~
We weren't quite sure if he were alive or dead.

Rest here 'til Heaven's bells toll~
Jammed in the bottom of this dingy hole.

Life is short, our time is quick~
Never play with a sharpened stick.

Life is short, our time soon done~
Never fool with a loaded gun.

I've traveled far, I've traveled near~
But for now I'll just rest here.

Life is short, our fate is made~
Never mess with a live grenade.

I died in agony, I writhed in Hell~
Avoid the burritoos at Taco Bell.

Try to avoid my final fate~
Get a nice plot in the shade by the gate.

Life is short, life is sweet~
Don't play in a busy street.

Life is short, caution is best~
Don't stand up for an atom bomb test.
(for John Wayne, the (Glowing) Duke)

Life is short, height can kill~
Mountaineering is no big thrill.

Ben Ide
©1992, Ben Ide

Blood Stains Green

It all started outside of El Paso, Texas, in October 1977. On the side of the road was a disheveled looking hippie, thumb extended; looking forlorn. "Where you headed?" I asked, sizing him up. "California" he replied. Having categorized him as non homicidal, I told him I was heading west. I remained specifically non committal.

As he got into the car, I felt his momentary sense of relief. A ride at last. As he settled in, he began to size me up. I sensed the return of an old traveling companion, Vigilance. Vigilance was sending the hippie mixed messages. What he saw was the ramrod straight soldier. A short haired, mustachioed, physically fit Mexican, who had probably sold out to the system. No doubt dangerous to long hairs, peaceful coexistence, and the environment. My jeans were clean, pressed and creased. His were torn and dirty. How was he to know that I was a liberal from Massachusetts, the former Boston Bad Boy, who had only rented his soul to the devil so he could get the G.I. Bill?

While traveling alone through the south with Massachusetts plates on my car, not only had I the company of Vigilance, but of his cousin, Paranoia, as well. Paranoia had kept me from falling into speed traps, set by small time sheriffs who looked like Jackie Gleason and acted like Archie Bunker. Paranoia allowed me to ponder; if the hippie was sizing me up, there must be an ulterior motive. I had to keep my edge. So we settled into a silence that was reinforced by spatial safety. He sat in his seat against the door, and I in mine. I drove left handed, right hand free, to shift or fight.

How bizarre that in a few seconds an act of goodwill had turned into the cold war part II.

Route 10, the southern route to California, is a lonely stretch of desolate desert highway. There are one and a half large lanes in either direction, with a huge median strip that separates eastbound from west. The desolation is punctuated once in a while by a bramble bush blowing across your path. When you do see another vehicle, you notice, you look, you wave. There is this instant when the desert turns into the ocean and like ships crossing paths in the night, you become sailors sailing the vastness of the seas.

It was in New Mexico when Vigilance tapped my shoulder. We had crested a rise and observing the horizon, far in the distance there was something happening. The road was such that it was only an instant before we were traveling on the flatlands again. The hippie saw it too. Vigilance was on the edge of the back seat, leaning over between us,

urging us to strain our eyes. It seemed as though Vigilance was intent on inviting his cousins, Danger, Apprehension, and Anxiety to come into my car and party. In the distance something caught our eye. Perhaps it was that there action and activity in the middle of nowhere, or just plain instinct, that created change in that car. There was this split second when our preconceived notions of each other as foes, turned into a search for trust and mutual dependability. As I looked into the rearview mirror, I hadn't noticed that Vigilance had hitched up a U-Haul trailer full of his onry, nasty relatives.

I turned the radio lower and slowed down.

What I first noticed was the overturned car in the median. There were four pick up trucks parked to the side, of course, with shotguns in their racks. There was a station wagon. And six guys-- good ole' boys, you could tell, cowboy hats, boots, cigarettes, jeans with belts that were engraved with their names-- and they were standing by a body.

As my little orange Volkswagen Rabbit passed slowly by, they stopped their conversation and looked carefully. I forgot about my Massachusetts plates as I pulled past them and stopped. Fear and Danger, like two little elves, were sitting on the hippie's shoulders. They were screaming in his ears.

"You're not going out there are you?" he asked with a deliberate calmness. I recognized that tone: it was self control trying to appear in charge. I didn't know whether to like this guy for his concern for me. or to hate him because he was asking. I put the car keys in my pocket.

There was another moment of change. A reactive moment. I had become a sailor on the high seas. There was a boat in distress. "I have to," I said.

I walked over to the group of men. They were silent as I asked "What's going on here?" I looked towards the covered body.

"Just some Indian, all liquored up..."

"looks like he blew a tire and turned himself over..."

"Yea, did a good job of it too..."

I looked at the overturned car, the torn up ground of the median, and the blanket covering the body. It never occurred to me until later, that he could have been forced off the road in a high speed game of "git the injun". Fear had stayed in the car.

I identified myself, "I'm Sergeant Georges, United States Army.. Has anybody given this man first aid?"

"Nope,..."

"None of us really know how Sarge..."

"We did cover 'em with a blanket..."

"Aw Sarge, he's only an Indian."

At that last comment there was silence. I know at that instant I felt naked in the wind. It was a moment of truth. The army had taught me that all men were green. I believed that then I believe that now. I gave them a look of kick ass disbelief and went to work.

As I walked over to the body, these good ole' boys fell right into line behind me. In my first year of college I had worked the 3-11 shift as an emergency room orderly in a busy metropolitan hospital. Gun shots, accidents, blood, trauma and highly packed emotion were all normal in an emergency room. We jokingly referred to ourselves as the meat packers. Nothing that I had ever experienced before could have prepared me for what I saw as I uncovered the Indian.

It was all I could do not to throw up. If the previous moment was a moment of truth, here I was at the threshold of going beyond it. Action to follow thought, to carry out the belief of equality of man. How would it look to these good ole' boys if the sergeant was strong enough to be righteous yet too weak to carry through?

To myself I acknowledged the blood, the body, and the general condition. It gave me an opportunity to gain composure. In that moment, change came again. Change came to the good ole' boys. While I was composing myself, they saw my behavior as action. Evaluating the situation to prepare for action. Vigilance had sobered up and returned to my side. I kept the edge.

They all wanted to know what they should do. "Whaddy need Sarge?..." "Whaddy wan us to do Sarge.."

I started barking orders, while working from instinct. I cleared the airway, set for shock, used t-shirts as pressure bandages. I told them to get help, that we couldn't do it just by ourselves. A truck stopped and radioed for help. The Indian was fading. I started CPR. With every breath I could feel these guys breathe with me. With every chest pound, I could feel them pounding with me. I would yell at the Indian, "...come on pal... not lettin' ya go..." ... "you bastard, don't die on me..." They yelled too. Now they cared if he lived. They were now part of the process. There was a hoot and a holler as the State Police arrived.

I remember taking a breath and seeing the crisp clean crease of that Trooper's pants. Straight out of his air conditioned cruiser.

"Glad you're here, gonna take over?..."

"No, your doing fine...ambulance will be here soon."

The trooper was taking information and everyone seemed to lose focus on what was going on with me and the Indian. Here was life and death being played out before our very eyes, and it was more important to ascertain whether the Indian was going to or coming from Lordsburg.

The ambulance arrived, and, after seeing the Indian, the drivers were surprised that he was still alive. We loaded him into the back of the ambulance. I will never forget that as the ambulance door closed, I looked around and there wasn't anyone left, just the Trooper, my car with the hippie inside, and the Indian's overturned wreck.

The Trooper took all the necessary information, and as we took our leave of each other, he looked at my jeans and said, "Lordsburg is just up ahead, get some cold water on those, ... blood stains."

I got into the car. I remember sitting there filthy, bloody, tired, and scared.

"That was pretty heavy." said the hippie. I just nodded. "You're ok.. man."

"Thanks " I looked at my dirty jeans and started laughing like a maniac. "Blood stains green" that's all I could think of. That's all I could say.

As we drove and talked, we both knew that Vigilance would always be with us. But for us and those good ole' boys, there was a new traveling companion, Reason.

Elias Georges
©1991, Elias Georges

Sgt. Elias Georges received a letter of commendation from the U.S. Army for his actions.

Here

Yesterdaz was a long time ago. Tomorrow, farther
 ayaw, I've forgotten it's today yet. I'm always
 looking at my watch to see what time it is Here. I
 keep forgetting that it only has a second hand. My
 calendar isn't any better. It's the kind where each day
 is on a separate page, and every day you tear off the
 old page to reveal the new date. The only problem is
 that every page is marked "Not Today." If it's not
 today, then is every day yesterday or tomorrow? It's
 hard to keep track of time when you're Here.

I'd like to describe what it's like Here, but I don't
 seem to be able. I can't find the right words. So many
 drift by me, and I have such a hard time choosing
 which words are right. They all seem to be so good.
 But every time I find a few that I like some better ones
 go by. Once I tried to trap all the words that went by,
 but I couldn't hold on to them all. I had to drop them,
 and the words scattered everywhere. I picked up a
 few of them, but most of the words drifted out of sight.
 It's so hard to keep track of words when you're Here.

I don't really mind it Here. I don't have to worry very
 much about things. I don't remember most of them
 anyway. Some people think that not remembering is a
 disadvantage. I don't think so. I think I can't
 remember. I have no reason to think or much to think
 about. Oh, I do try to think. Sometimes. It's like
 flexing one's muscles to keep them in shape. So too the
 brain. That's why I try to think whenever I remember
 to. I usually don't remember what I think about
 though. It's so hard to keep track of thoughts when
 you're Here.

I think, therefore am I? Or am I Here?

Edward Hoyer, Jr.
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MAD-4U

Chemical light, artificial insight, robotic environment

Cameras! Lights! Action!! Interpretation! Roll 'em!
 Movies are divine, scripts entertainingly new

Careless love always infects, repeatedly, everyman
 Mankind achieves dignity, science everlasting
 nobility

Lessons of valors' enduring sanctity
 Men against gods, not usually successful
 Many are determined, some evidently not

Competent librarians' abilities increase rapidly
 exponentially

Malcontent authors desperately seeking
 enlightenment now

Beyond extremist night

Image defeats existence

Spreading hope after understanding nothing dances
 alone

Her opinion, lost love, oh wicked awful year

Environment decides which acolyte reaches divinity

Hapless ontologists yield ever reluctantly
 Behind etymological nuances

Intellect devours eternity

Clean laundry always interests rebellious emigres

Much about destiny secretly evades notice

Monsters abhor going near universal stupidity

Missionary atheists doubtless send enigmatic notices

Lonely ornithologists, victims ever silent

Carefree lovers aching in romantic embrace

Men are driven senseless every night

Cruel lust attracts, invites, raptures Evil

Men are devils, some entice naughtily

Crafty lions actually insist roaring excites

Edward Hoyer, Jr.
 ©1992, Edward Hoyer, Jr.

St. Mary's: The Fire Purge

Heavy iron gates
open
to Sister Agnes,
a virgin with
cataracts, and
my empty room down the hall
with a cross above the bed
(for kindling).
her croaking words
Mass at Midnight
squeeze through rotting teeth
of a strained smile
rushed black polyester slams
the door
shut

Alone
lonely prison
too damp, so cold
the sisters don't know it
but I'm their salvation
I'll set the soul from
the cage
and melt away the struggle
Cook the frigid, I say...
because if you're not warm
how do you know
you're not dead?

I slipped away, but not far,
early morning I watch
as the egg I've placed
in the heart of that cell gave birth
a glowing serpent
that fills the halls
with venom
and rings up around the
holy structure
and crushes the stem
to ashes
and still blossoms furious
flowers that
peel and pop their spores
to the air to
float to the earth and
singe the soil

look how
the cagelings flee
from their consumed
confinement
old scorched habits
drip firelight twirling
and flailing their
arms about like
tropical birds to flight
Freedom
by heaven's blaze
excess into
my divined hands.

Ambrose
© 1991, Ambrose

My God is a
lonely man.
Misunderstood by so many
Feared, hated

Loved, adored desperately
by people who need favors
Health, Wealth, a Mercedes-Benz

Talked about, read about
Discussed, lectured on~
bible scholars: people
who study what was written
about what was talked about
what was written as graffiti

Talk to Him
Ask Him about His day
Ask Him about His opinions
on baseball, His favorite colors
Hold Him when He's lonely
He gets depressed sometimes.

Ben Ide
©1992, Ben Ide

A Question

In the Ghetto, Mothers
Cry
Young boys get killed
We all know
Why
Understand this if you
Would
Guns ain't made in the hood
To ease the pain of
Constant death is too difficult
To even
try!
Will things change, if young white boys die?

Shaunda Holloway
©1992, Shaunda Holloway

Extinction Ushered In...

The flushed, wrinkled face read ALBUM
I opened it up like a beetle
and ate it with my eye.

Plasticine covers entombing photos
yellow from the sting of time.

Strange faces, stern and ageless, leap out like alley cat
claws
I breeze past in a thoughtless blur.

Their extinction ushered in my ignorance.

A distant faint memory
of a kitchen conversation
When asked, mother saying

INDIAN
SLOVAC
POLISH

I carry only the past I've made
and the three words I've learned.

Horosky
©1992, Horosky

Reform

His story
 Always the Slave
 His story
 Never the Brave
 His story
 Straight to the grave
 His story?

Have they forgotten
 about Tousant, Garvey
 and Africa rich with Ivory
 and Gold?
 Our story must Now
 Be
 Told!

Shaunda Holloway
 ©1992, Shaunda Holloway

The bubbles collect at your feet,
 squatting momentarily in
 patient adoration,
 anticipating eternity,
 every prismatic sphere
 a crystal ball.
 Does it tell the future,
 or is it simply
 the reflection of your face,
 like so many images
 in so many facets
 of an insect's eye?
 What colors are caught for the instant
 in that soap rainbow:
 the gold of your hair,
 the rose of your cheek,
 some unguessed color in your eyes?

They never last long enough to identify.
 And a single kiss is no guaranty of marriage.

Ben Ide
 ©1992, Ben Ide

Cars, because I walk
 are different to me
 I move the earth under my feet
 and spin the world
 to get to work by eight
 the cars move by
 with patented irregularity, seething
 past or standing in line
 (I view them with contempt)
 the drivers nearly knock me
 down with their indifference and
 I wonder if they have
 become hardened in their metal shells
 is the flesh no longer important
 if it can't hurt a driver
 do they view life like a
 simple arcade game (over with three
 dead pedestrians) and when I
 do ride in a car they seem even
 more viscous, their tires howl,
 their engines scream, they swear they'll
 kill me, they laugh, jeer, try to
 murder me and don't care

I think about the dream I
 left behind when I could no longer
 afford the insurance. It's green
 and it sparkles when the summer sky
 bathes it. I open the sun-roof
 and steal glances at the passing stars,
 willing the tires off the empty streets,
 to fly above the power lines.
 Our hearts beat faster as I
 glide the shift higher, together
 we sprint through the winding
 roads that carve the forests like
 a stream and we've never
 hurt a single creature yet.

Ben Ide
 ©1992, Ben Ide

Words

Words, words, words,
 Fill the printed page,
 Words, words, words,
 The thoughts of some great sage.
 Words, words, words,
 Crashing in your ear,
 Words, words, words,
 Too many for you to hear.
 Words, words, words,
 With them the air is rife,
 Words, words, words,
 The cause of all your strife.
 Words, words, words,
 They make your life a mess,
 Words, words, words,
 They never give you rest.
 Words, words, words,
 Flowing from my pen,
 Words, words, words,
 Huh? Say that again?
 Words, words, words,
 Their grandeur and their might,
 Words, words, words,
 Oh, what was I gonna write?
 Nuts! All these crummy words
 Messing up my head,
 Smashing down my train of thought,
 Making me see red!
 Words are bad,
 Words are rot!
 Still, though, they're all we got
 To communicate in our way
 With each other every day.
 So here's to words,
 Though they be strange,
 And often make my mind deranged.
 And though I dislike them,
 As I do,
 I still need them
 To talk to you.

Mortimer Grimis
 ©1972, Grimis

VERY A Work of ↑ Short Fiction

- Q. Why didn't the skeleton cross the road?
 A. *Because he didn't have the guts!*

(The Fiction part is the fact that I didn't write this!)

MAD

Sam in Search of His Soul

He looked high, and he looked low.
 He even looked where few ever go.
 Sam could not find his soul.

He looked inside a deep, dark hole.
 And he looked on top of a tall telephone pole.
 Sam could not find his soul.

He looked here, and he looked there.
 Soon Sam was in tears for he'd looked everywhere.
 Sam could not find his soul.

He searched until near the end of his days,
 searched and looked in so many ways.
 Sam could not find his soul.

Searching, searching, trapped in a maze.
 His brain on fire, his mind in a daze.
 Sam could not find his soul.

Then he met a man on the way to town,
 and Sam asked that man where his soul could be
 found.
 Sam could not find his soul.

And the man told him.

Poor Sam stood by the side of the road,
 and thought about what the man had told.
 Sam could not find his soul.

Sam laid down, his heart was like lead,
 he gave up his will, and soon he was dead.
 Sam could not find his soul.

All that searching, all that pain,
 all for nothing, all in vain.
 Sam could not find his soul.

He died in a ditch, in a hard driving rain,
 discouraged and homeless, not a friend to his name.
 Sam could not find his soul.

For the man wasn't sure, but he'd often been told,
 that aardvarks like Sam just didn't have souls.

Ed Hoyer, Jr.
 ©1972, Ed Hoyer, Jr.

901FYM

Restless
 Moving, moving, restless
 Driving through the night

Restless
 Moving, moving, restless
 Chain smoking your cigarettes

Restless
 Moving, moving, restless
 Talking a hundred miles a minute

Restless
 Moving, moving, restless
 Your blond hair blowing in the wind

Restless
 Moving, moving, restless
 Energy bursting inside of you

Restless
 Moving, moving, restless
 Searching for yourself

Restless
 Moving, moving, restless
 Pushing everything to the limit

Restless
 Moving, moving, restless
 Speeding toward the future

Motionless
 Resting, resting, motionless
 A price we pay for living

And I wonder if you found
 what you so long searched for
 before a force greater than your own
 froze you in time?

Ed Hoyer, Jr.
 ©1992, Ed Hoyer, Jr.

Dear Mrs. James:

I'd like to discuss with you
 the art of photography:
 Realities newest direction
 three into two dimensions.

If you have the right camera,
 like I do,
 you'd be amazed at the results,
 your husband too.

You also need the right lighting
 which usually means a flash,
 but, unfortunately, in dark places,
 it interrupts the trash.

The faces are seen clearly,
 yours and what's-his-names,
 so leave \$50,000 at West and Wood,
 and I won't have to tell Mr. James.

Yours truly,
 the person holding the
 negatives.

Ambrose

© 1991, Ambrose

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