

LITERARY MAGAZINE

Volume I Issue I

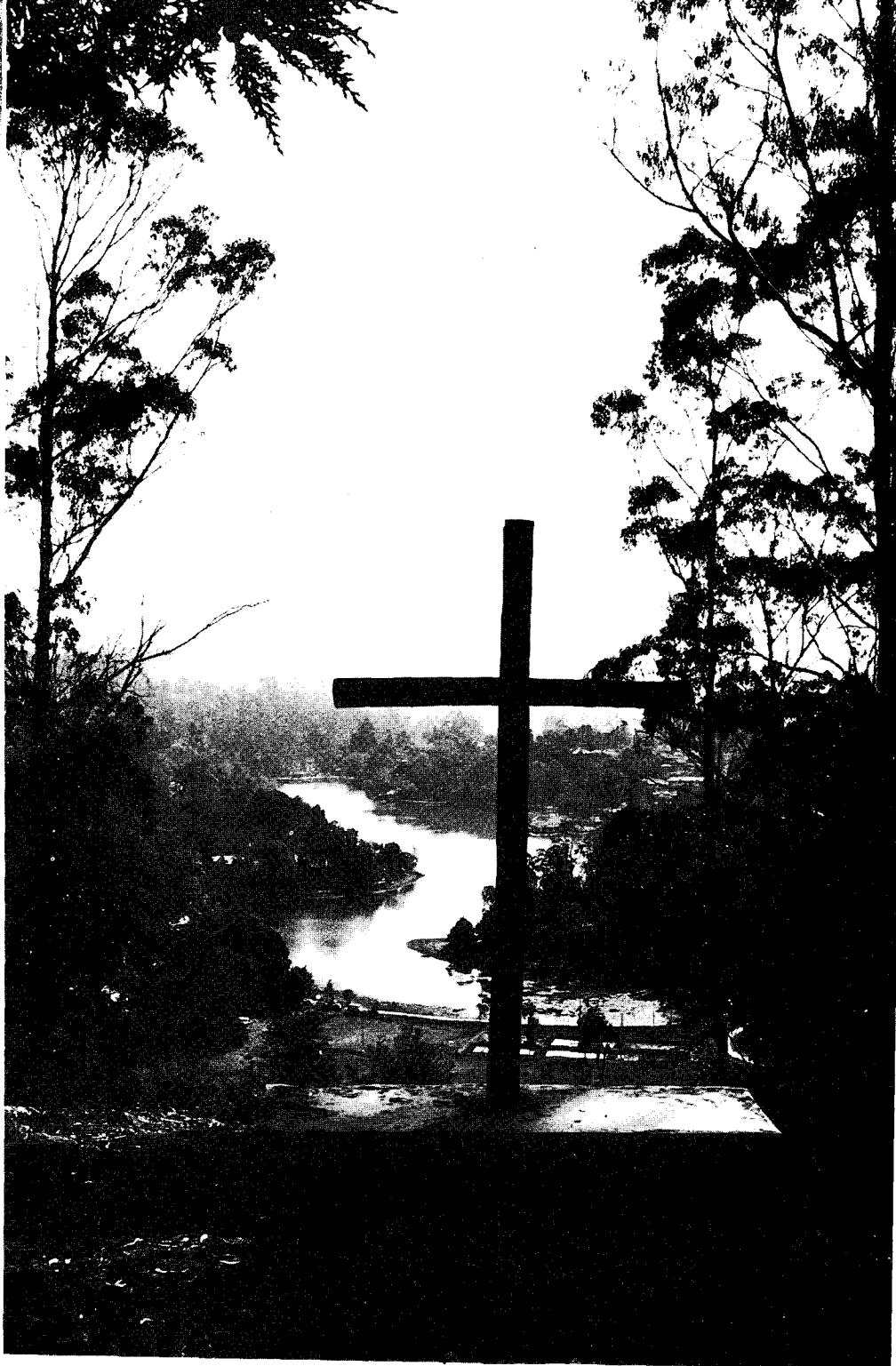
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"Your joy is your sorrow unmasked.  
And the selfsame well from which your laughter  
rises was oftentimes filled with your tears.  
And how else can it be ?  
The deeper that sorrow carves into your being,  
the more joy you can contain.  
Is not the cup that holds your wine the very  
cup that was burned in the potter's oven ?  
And is not the lute that soothes your spirit the  
very wood that was hollowed with knives ?  
When you are joyous, look deep into your heart  
and you shall find it is only that which has given  
you sorrow that is giving you joy.  
When you are sorrowful, look again in your  
heart, and you shall see that in truth you are  
weeping  
for that which has been your delight."

*- Khalil Gibran*

... **A note from the editor**

"Yin - female, soft, receptive, dark, empty;

Yang - male, illuminating, firm, creative, constructive.

Yin is the earth; yang is the heavens.

Yin is cold, darkness, disease, death;

Yang is warmth, light, strength, health and life."

\* \* \*

These expressions, sometimes associated with oriental philosophy, exist in each man's consciousness. Such western psychologists as Carl Jung say human beings come to depend on them, not for living, but solely as a sanction for thought. What does mankind live for? Perhaps it is the Heart. It could be said that the test of Man's "essence" lies in His creative search for what dwells at the center, where there is no permanency or sense of the absolute. His outer search is the understanding or the acknowledgment of the absolutes which lie at the extremes of his existence as a social being; and yet there is always the hope for a heart that has essence primarily before existence.

Truth thrives at any depth of the heart. It is the ambiguous manifestation of that which is. This is the reality of each individual, devoid of society's assurances of security, necessity, obligation, credibility; and perhaps, sanity.

Rock your boat. Set your bounded wings on flight. Free of the dependency on the solid fortitudes of assumed permanency and absolutes. Explore the insecure hidden dark corners never dared to be dreamed of; never dared to be given justice to.

Live your creativity.

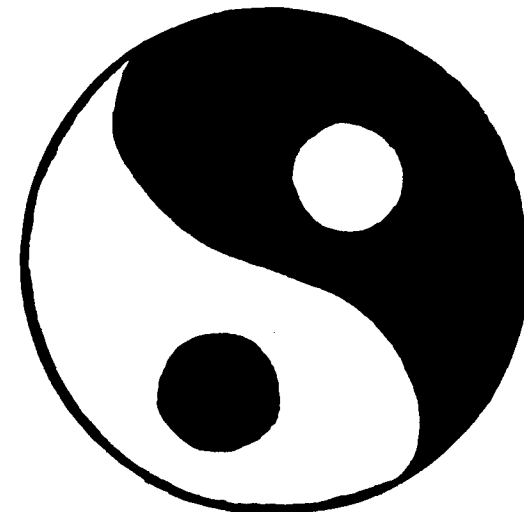
"Mistah Kurtz - he dead" is a phrase from Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness. It is the story of one man's venture into his fascination of the abomination that he found deep in his soul. It is a tale of the man's voyage into the depths of Africa, and consequently into the darkness of his inner being. The death of this 'mistah' ended all ambiguity of his power and powerlessness, his nobility and cowardice, his heroic pretense and reality. Above all, his death allowed for a 'phoenix re-birth' of new ventures; as life can only be complete with consistent intervention of flux.

\* \* \*

We hope you will read these literary works with an open mind, both to the ideas being portrayed by the authors, and to the hope that this first issue is merely a stepping stone for others to come.

*Bishal Mehta*

*Arun Kumar*



## Armageddon

It is the end of the world today. They announced it over the news just a while ago. Yes, it is the end of the world, by common consensus.

They asked me about it, too: "When would you like to die?" they asked. "At the end of the world," I said. Funny, that so many others should have said the same thing ... so they fixed the date and here we are.... at the end of the world....Yes...funny.

I wonder what they're all thinking now, all those other people. Are they wondering what I am? Or are they just carrying on with their routine lives, oblivious of what today is? But no, that can't be so. We must have something in common if we made the same decision. Perhaps we are the same people.... What a horrifying thought! Yet, how else could we have come to the same agreement? Death? The end of the world? An uncommon answer. You wouldn't expect it; yet, we all chose it.

I look down, out the window, onto the street below. People swarming all around,...the frenzy of humanity. But wait! No, it can't BE! I take a closer look. The faces! The FACES! They are all the same ....

-Mahin K.

## Balance

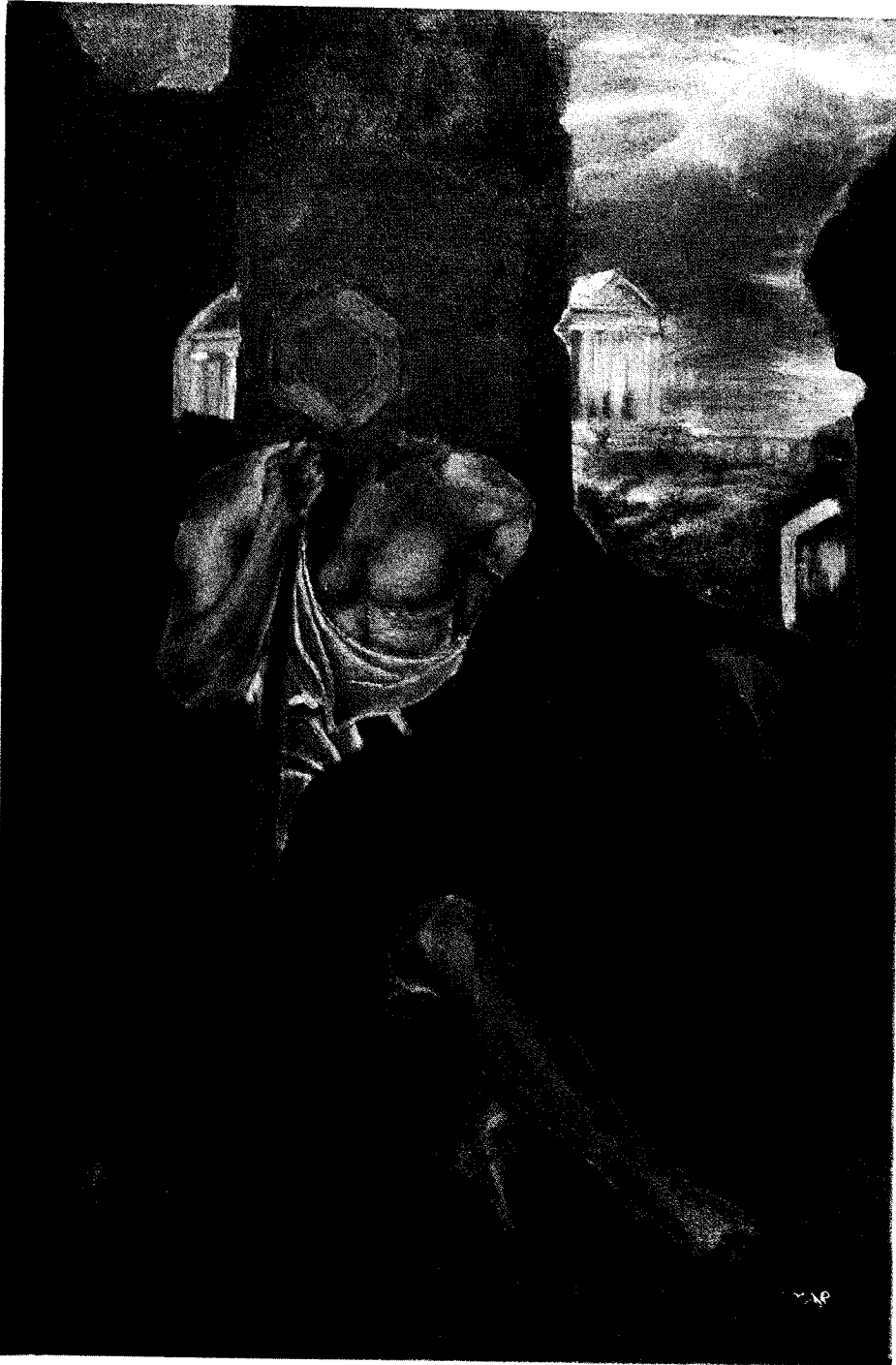
**He** died. As his soul rose up, he saw his prone corpse on the ground; he was rising up as if he still possessed a body. Then he found himself in a place where things boiled and bubbled, appeared and disappeared. Creatures crept upon the scene and then crept back again. Flames curled. Land turned to liquid. Strange beasts grew to huge proportions and shrank again, flesh seemed to flow and reform. Then he was in whirling nothingness. Colours flashed past him, something shrieked, and laughter filled his head. He tried to take a step and stood on a crystal plain; embedded in it, beneath his feet, were millions of beings, of the millions of different races that had ever existed since the beginning of the universe. There were males and females and all had their eyes open; all had their faces pressed against the crystal; all stretched out their hands as if seeking aid. All stared at him. He tried to stamp on the crystal; he hammered at it until his fists were bloody, but the crystal would not crack. He was crossing a bridge of ice. It was melting. Fanged, distorted things waited for him below. The ice creaked. He lost his footing. He fell. He fell into a whirlpool of seething matter that formed shapes and then destroyed them instantly. He saw whole cities brought into existence and then obliterated. He saw creatures, some beautiful, some disgustingly ugly. He saw things that made him love them and things that made him scream with hatred. He took another step and stood knee-deep in slithering flesh that was without shape, but which lived. It began to suck him down. He gasped and forced his body through the stuff. He stood beneath a dome of ice and with him stood a million images. There he was innocent and gay as a child; there he was moody and grim; there he was happy and full of pleasure; there he was writhing in pain; there he was dying. Another step. Blood flooded over him. He tried to

regain his feet. The heads of foul reptilian creatures rose from the stuff and snapped at his face with their jaws. Then he was standing on a ramp which stretched upward over a gulf of sparkling emptiness. Strange sounds filled the air, rising and dying, coming close and falling away. There were hints of menace, hints of beauty, hints of death, hints of everlasting life, hints of terror, hints of tranquillity. A wind seemed to spring up; cool breezes wafted him and hot winds scoured him. He saw faces all around him and many of them he thought he recognized. Some faces were huge and some were infinitely tiny. Eyes watched. Lips grinned. A sorrowful moaning came and went. A dark cloud engulfed him. A tinkling as of glass bells ringing filled his ears. A voice called his name and it echoed and echoed and echoed away forever. A rainbow surrounded him, entered him and made his whole body flush with colour. A strange droning sound came to his ears. It made his brain itch. He wrinkled his scalp. He rubbed his face. The droning increased. His ears

ached. His teeth were on edge. The volume grew. Suddenly, he found himself in a land over which a black sun burned. Light rose from the ground, but the black sun's rays almost extinguished it. Hopping things came towards him. They hopped on several legs and from their bodies sprouted a dozen or more tentacles. Their huge eyes rolled; their massive fangs clashed and they were singing. Then he was flying over a sea of oozing stuff which flung up tendrils at him and sought to drag him down into itself. Sometimes faces appeared in the stuff, sometimes hands raised as if in supplication. Strange forests passed below him and valleys were filled with perpetually burning fire. He saw rivers of molten metal and beautiful castles made all of jewels. He flew over a multicoloured gas that swirled below him and then over a range of mountains, each more than a thousand feet high but each one a perfect cube. Beyond the mountains was a dark jungle and beyond that a crystalline desert. The crystals of the desert moved

constantly, their motion creating an unpleasant tinkling music. Among these crystals moved ochre and crimson beasts of enormous proportion, feeding off the crystals. Then the crystalline desert gave way to a flat, black plain on which a huge youthful face writhed as if composed of a million white worms. Dead, red eyes peered from the face and all the horrors he had ever witnessed could not compare with the simple, tragic horror of that visage. He screamed and his scream blended with that of the tortured face, as the flesh of the face began to putrify and change into a score of foul colours which gave off an incredibly pungent stench. As he watched, the face changed its features. Sometimes it was the face of a middle-aged man, sometimes the face of a woman, sometimes that of a boy - and once fleetingly, it was his own face. Each was a mask of pure eternal pain and anguish. He saw a million years of despair recorded there. And still the face writhed; still the red eyes blazed in terror and agony; still the features changed and

changed and changed and changed....More than a million years. Aeons of misery. Then the face vanished and lighting seemed to flicker through the sudden darkness. Globes of purple light appeared in a rushing turbulent cloud of red and orange. Massive teardrops of green and blue light began to fall all around him. There was the sound of a raging wind, but no wind touched him. An almost human voice echoed on and on and on. Then he was flying through swiftly moving shadows---the shadows of things and people all rushing in the same direction. Below he saw a thousand volcanoes, each one spewing red cinders and smoke, but somehow the cinders and smoke did not touch him. There was a stink of burning, and it was suddenly replaced by the smell of flowers. The volcanoes had become so many huge blossoms, like anemones opening their red petals. Singing came from somewhere: a joyful tune like the song of a victorious army. It died away. There was a laugh, cut off short. The bulk of enormous beasts rose from



seas of excrement, and the beasts raised their square snouts to the skies and groaned before sinking again beneath the surface. A mottled, pink-white plain, apparently of stones appeared, but it was not stones. The plain was comprised entirely of corpses, each one neatly laid beside the other, each one face down. A huge wave advanced toward him. It took the form of a human hand. It clenched itself into a fist and then disappeared. A spring day dawned. He flew over the morning fields as the dew sparkled. Flowers grew in the grass and there were little bright pools of water, tiny rivers. In the shade of oak trees stood horses and cows. A little way ahead was a low, white farm-house with smoke curling from its chimney. Birds sang. Pigs rooted in the farmyard. The fields gradually began to swirl, like stagnant water stirred by a stick. The farm-house spread out to become scum on top of the water. The flowers were now festering growths on the surface. This was pure, unbounded, unchained Chaos. By a

cosmic chance he had entered the Realm of Chaos.

Then there was silence. He was drifting in total blackness and absolute silence, in neither one dimension nor another. Here was the ultimate in justice and the ultimate in injustice. Here Law and Chaos were absent. Here there was no need for equilibrium between the two for this was neutral territory. This was a place to which gods had been banished. It was as vast as space, as timeless as infinity: the middle ground between light and shadow, between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge. This was where the living-dead dwelt. This was Limbo.

- Roby M.



## **GROWING OLD**

The rainbow, the leprechaun, and the pot of gold

Have all been killed by "Growing Old".

My lovely tooth fairy and Tinkerbell:

"Growing Old" sent them to Hell as well.

Even the stork which brings sweet babies;

"Growing Old" doomed it to Hades.

Who is this awful "Growing Old"?

He is depriving me of all untold!

No longer exist Santa Claus, the Bogey Man,

Cinderella, Peter Pan.

Most despised, wretched "Growing Old"!

Doing things you think so bold!

You stole the unicorn and made her fade away,

Just like you did to the Mermaid one fine day.

Oh! "Growing Old", whoever you may be,

The Slayer of Childhood Fantasy,

All my Friends were killed by You!

"Growing Old", will you kill me, too?!?

**-Brinda S.**





## Jukebox - Out Of Order:

I sit there in the circle, aghast. For the first time  
I listen to the sounds that have always been there,  
Squeaking and yapping and perpetually nagging. The  
bitching dripping with the venom of malice: "Who cocks?"  
he crashed. "Ungrateful bastard...!"

Citizens of hypocrisy! And I, too, am a national. The only  
reason I write this is because my Jukebox of Hate has  
run out of batteries. Why fool myself by walking away  
from it all? Am I really free? Only temporarily.  
Batteries are rechargeable, powered by the fuel of cynicism.

-Brinda S.



## Only An Echo... In The Distance

It was a beautiful day. Only the second day of spring. All of the flowers had discarded their old petals and leaves. They had bloomed again: roses, tulips, dandelions, and poppies seemed to spread out as far as my eyes could see. Where the carpet of flowers ended, the mountains began. They were covered with trees. The trees were covered with new leaves, and with the birds that had deserted these mountains during the winter. It seemed to me that this was the best day for me to make my dream come true.

I stand in the middle of this field drinking in the beauty of this land which had been my home for seven years. I turned seven today. Mummy and Daddy came into my room early this morning. They sang "Happy Birthday" to me; then we all went downstairs to have our breakfast. There wasn't anything special, just our usual. But next to my place there was something wrapped up, and a card on top of it. First I read the card. It said, "Into each life comes a time to grow, when dreams must be spoken, and wings must be tried so reach for your dreams, spread your wings... ..and fly."

I didn't understand it, but after

a few minutes, I realized that it must mean that like all the trees lose their old leaves during winter and are given new ones for spring, I had to shed off all my old fears so that I could reach for my dreams. When I reached, I would catch them. My "new wings" would help me.

Then, I turned to open my present. Under the lovely wrapping paper, there had been an oval shaped box. The box was made of cardboard, but it was covered in black silk, and the cover was intricately woven with silver and gold threads. I opened the box slowly and carefully. Mummy and Daddy were quietly watching me. I opened the box, holding my breath, I lifted the thin layer of tissue paper which protected this present. As I lifted it away and saw what it was, my breath caught, and my heart stopped for a fraction of a second. I looked at Mummy and then at Daddy. They both only looked back. I couldn't understand it. All my friends at school got dolls or games on their birthdays. I had been given a delicately made gold chain with a diamond tear drop hanging from it. I looked at Daddy again. This time, he came over to me and put the chain on me. As

he tightened the clasp, he said, "Remember that dream Mummy and I told you about? The one where you walk to the end of the field, and climb over the mountain? That's where you'll find your real dream." I couldn't understand what Daddy meant by my 'real' dream. But I did understand that it was time for me to cross the field and climb the mountain then come back home to Mummy and Daddy. I didn't understand why I had to do this either. But I only nodded in silence. Mummy was crying. I didn't know why, but there were a lot of things I didn't know or understand today.

After a little while, I went to my room and changed into my everyday clothes. When I came back downstairs, it was lunch time. We again ate in silence. Mummy wasn't crying anymore. When we were done, and I had finished helping Mummy with the dishes, we went for a walk into the field. When we reached the middle, Daddy came to me and squatted down so that he was the same height as I was and said, "It's time sweetheart."

I felt a sudden flash of dread and terror and a terrible sadness shoot through me. Tears sprung to my eyes. But I was a big girl now; I had to hold them down. With all the will power I could gather, I mana-

ged to. Not a single tear fell, and not a tremor showed on my lips. I let Mummy and Daddy hug me, and then, with tears in my eyes, I walked towards the mountains. Finally, the dam which had built up in my eyes flooded. The mountains didn't look beautiful or full of life anymore. They only looked dead, and scary.

I never even turned to look back. I just took for granted that they would be waiting for me in the middle of the field where I had left them.

I had been walking at least six hours. It was starting to get dark, and cold. I was almost at the top. In a few minutes I would be standing on top of this mountain, waving down at Mummy and Daddy showing them that I had reached for my dream. And that I had caught it! They would be proud. They would be proud....

With my last spurt of energy, I reached the top. The sun was just setting. I could still see the colours of the carpet of flowers spread beneath me at the foot of the mountains. My eyes wandered over to where Mummy and Daddy were standing -- there they should have been standing. My heart stopped. My eyes frantically searched for them, scanning the whole field over and over again. It was getting darker.

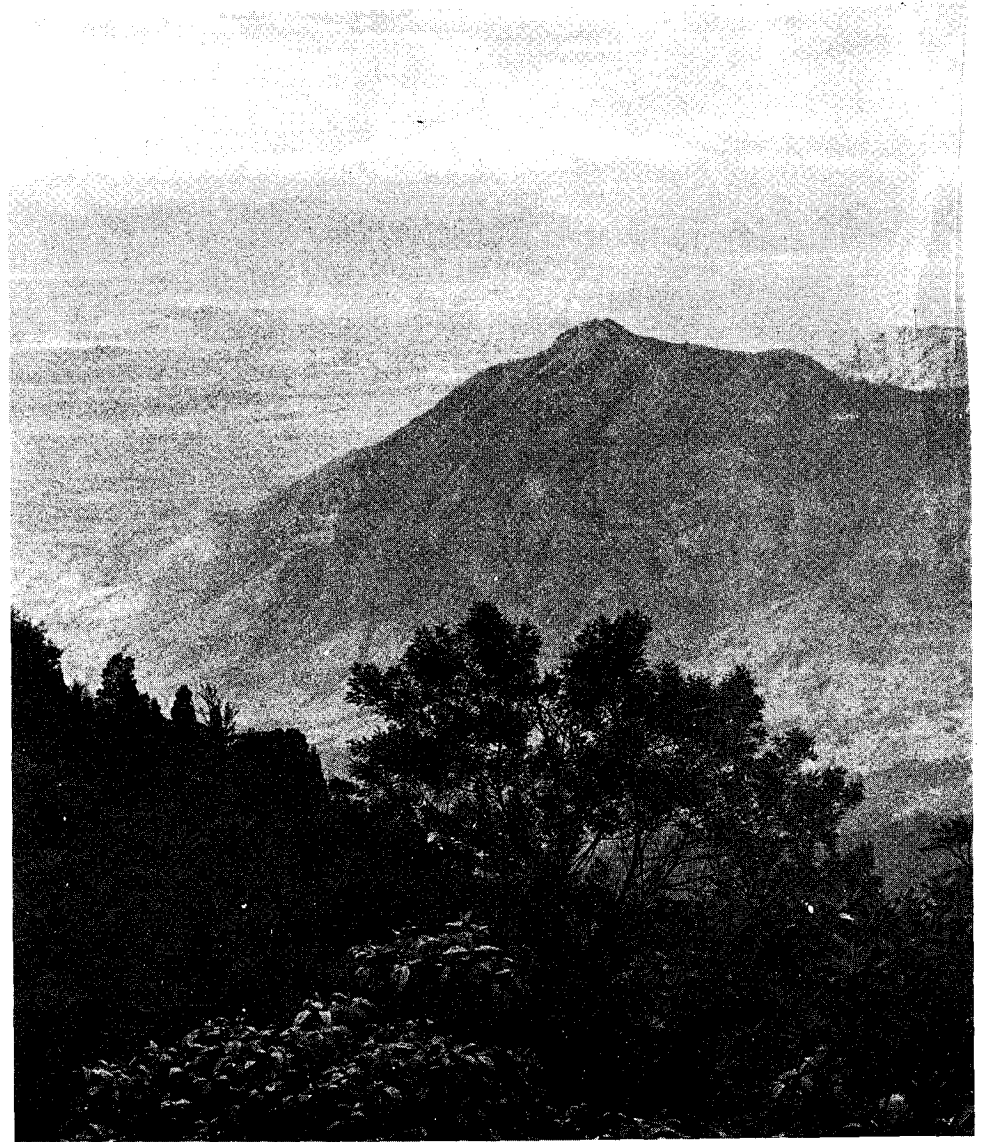
Where were they? They weren't at the bottom, waiting for me. Where were they?? 'Mummy', 'Daddy', I whispered into the almost black night. Panic rose in my throat. 'MUMMY!' , 'DADDY!' I cried a little louder. Still no reply. All was quiet. I felt as if hands were trying to clutch me.

I turned suddenly, I had felt someone... or some thing staring at me. I couldn't think why they had done this to me. A

million thoughts crashed through me head,like bolts of lightning. But only one repeated itself over and over again. Just a single word. A single question. 'WHY?'

Then all at once, I felt myself being grabbed, and I screamed. My reply was only an echo of my scream, in the distance....

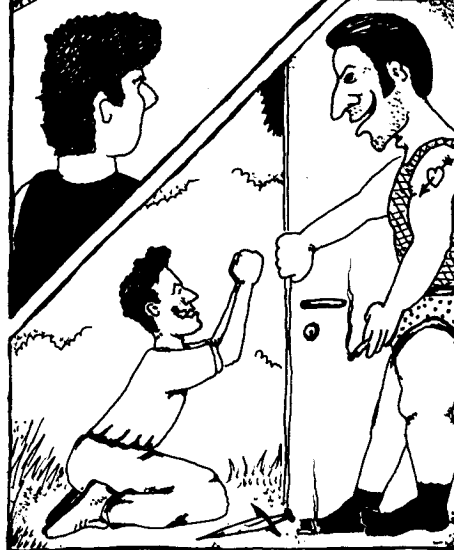
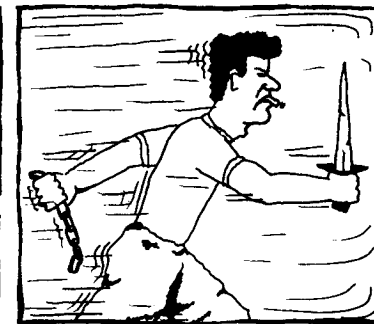
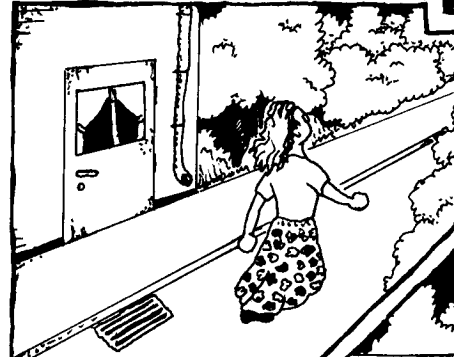
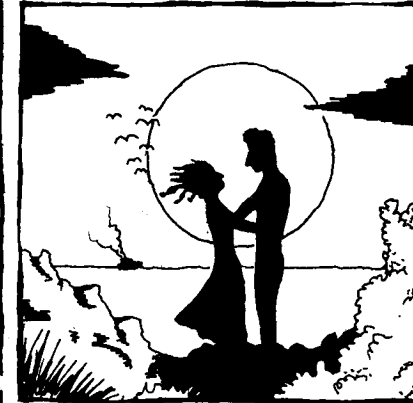
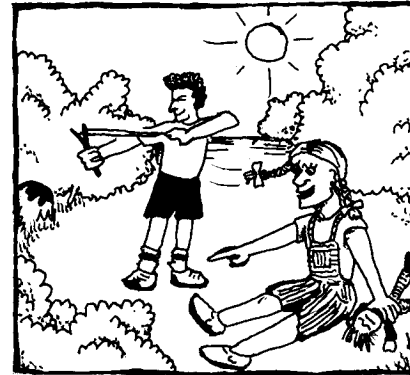
- *LilaN.*



# Women To Whiskey

Yo brother, Yeah you,  
 No it's your turn what you gonna do?  
 Who me, just wait and see,  
 I'll rap my butt off. I'll talk about me.  
 My name is Joe I was born in the nude,  
 Man was I a radical dude.  
 I met this girl who slept next door  
 She saw my face, her ego hit the floor.  
 We grew up together, and fell in love,  
 At the age of 16 she was as sweet as a dove.  
 One day she walked out and never came back  
 It turned out she was seeing this guy called Jack.  
 I went to his house and knocked on the door  
 The guy who opened was six foot four,  
 I asked if he was Jack, he said that's me',  
 Oh I said I just came to see.  
 I was totally zapped I didn't know where to go,  
 All I knew was that I was saving some dough.  
 It wasn't that bad, just living alone  
 I was having a party now that she was gone.  
 Never the less, these girls are always risky,  
 Personally I prefer to spend my night with whiskey.

**Shiraz V.**



# Samuel's Story

## Part I: Alone

I want you to know Samuel.

Far away, the shadow of a range of blue mountains spills over fresh, green fields, colouring them a congested purple. The fearsome gods, "Mbado and Mkawe", rule those mysterious mountains and darkens clouds shiver eternally over the frozen peaks. Nearby, there exists a quiet village compressed yet trembling with saturated evil: it is almost as if all the sorrow and misery of the past years have gnawed through like foundations, leaving them gnarled foul smelling and rotten.

The settlement, named Nakuru, after the shimmering Flamingo lake, is polluted with inhabitants drained of any devotion, love or beauty. They exist as empty shells, voids, creatures with vicious nature and lashing tongues. A dissatisfied people.

It is said that loneliness is the worst kind of sorrow.

Samuel lives here. Once a shining soul of purity and peace he has become a seventy six year old man wallowing in solitude and in a wasted existence. I can almost

taste the sorrow that surrounds him, but all his life he has had to swallow it.

Alone now, in a damp musty room, he rocks his weary frame in an antique chair, cradling his dream in his hands. It is a very special thing, that dream: sunshine, hope, salty tears, wind, rain and happiness. The dream circles the air above the crown of his head and blesses him, calling him and urging him to listen. He listens quietly as it whispers, but never lets it cloud his view as he stares out of the window onto a sweet, dry earth.

The vicious tongues of the black, kikuyu women lash him frequently. all day long he hears their evil words, rise high into the air and then crash down about his head into a bottomless, choking abyss at his feet.

It was long time ago. He was born in this tiny Kenyan village and for his whole life he had lived here, never straying beyond the brown picket-fence which surrounded the distant acacia tree. Joy clung to him then, as a warm, pink aura that glowed brighter and redder as he grew.

Then, he was a brown youth, lithe limbs toiling under a white

sun suspended in the scorching glaze of the blue African sky. He could remember now, opening his sleepy eyes: it had been a long journey from that time when all his promises for the future had flung themselves high into the sweet-smelling air and then poured down in bursts of melting sunshine. Living life had been the greatest gift God could have bestowed on such a man, and Samuel had lived with a forcefulness and intensity that could have only come from the wildest ambitions burning fiercely within his soul.

Now, this past epiphany of courage sat like a crumbled statue in the midst of a bleary storm. Only when the night is silent does peace come to the tired heart; only then do the piercing black eyes soften in sleep; only then does God weep in pity for the lost souls of wretched men.

## Part II: The Decision.

It is time to leave. With a sigh Samuel eases himself out of the rocking chair and shuffles towards the door, disturbing the stagnant air as he does so. As he puts his hat on his stiff white curls, he allows none of the eminent sorrow to escape from his eyes; he must do what he has set out to achieve. He is sick of being called a parasite, a useless dependent on this village. His people have forgotten all the

goodness he had brought to the settlement in his time. But the young? They are never grateful. He raises his head up to the ceiling of his hut and stares, thoughtfully. Purpose rings furiously in his ears, once again reminding him that he must exercise all his strength in his attempt to regain respect and self determination. The people must learn. It is the mind that is the most important part of the human body; it is hope and it is destruction.

As he steps out of his hut, the glare of the insistent sun hits his eyes; he shades his view and stares out to the horizon at the long, dusty road as he contemplates his decision. Then, with the resolution that has taken him a lifetime to build up, he takes a step towards the distant outline of an acacia tree.

## Part III: The Journey

The earth screams in pain as he walks along the road. It is scorching and hot and his skin sizzles with the intensity of the heat. His legs are already beginning to ache with fatigue but determination keeps them moving in a steady rhythm of hope.

A child cries.

He looks up, away from the view of the brown dust and sees a young boy walking towards him, holding the hand

of an old, old woman.

"I was once a child," he thinks. "God, I was once a child and you have taken away my gaiety and my freedom. How could you? Was I not good? Wasn't what I did good enough for you and all your pure angels?"

Anger lends to the increase of his determination to make something of himself.

"Good morning, sir." Samuel looks up and smiles at a beaming, brown-skinned youth. He squeezes his eyes shut and continues to trudge forward towards his destination. Memories of his past whirl through his mind; yet, they are not peaceful, but violent: A storm on a crystal light; a pure innocence undermined with fury; death and glory. It all flashes before him. He was once the leading promise of Nakuru, and people wished to call him "Rafici" (friend). He swears to himself then that they would do so once again...Etching of worry and sorrow, has never lined his face as they do now. He smooths his hands over his visage in a futile attempt to wipe away the lines.

After a while he rests by the roadside, in the shade of olive green shrubbery. It is midday and the sun steams, high yellow and hard. His head is lifted by a sound - a distant shim-

mer of laughter. It is a young woman on a bicycle, her free hair floating on the breeze. She seems Indian, like his wife.

He had never felt as much pain and agony and colour as he does now. Painfully, he is reminded of his wife who died six years ago. She was Indian, too -- a strange blend of fire and ice. Like sunshine and rain mingled together from rainbow. Arathi - her name. Worship, reverence.

"Mimi rapenda wewe," he murmurs under his breath in swahili. He had loved her like nothing on earth. And she had died through sorrow. The people of Nakuru had not accepted her and they made life miserable for her. Sometimes it is possible to die of a broken heart. And they had killed her.

The memory fades as determination surges in him again, sending strength through him like a spreading fire. Passion burns; he has reached his destination.

#### Part IV: The Realization

He knocks at the door of a well known landowner who offers jobs to many villagers. An old woman opens the door and peers outside with a curious, soft gaze.

"Yes," she inquires, "Yes, buana, what can I do for you?"

"Jambo, Mama," he replies, "Is buana inside?"

"Yes, yes," she says, nodding her head, "I'll call him."

He waits, impatiently but with a strange fear growing inside him. He knows he has to get a job; he cannot face rejection now. A face appeared at the doorway.

"Yes, what do you want?" Gruff and hardened with pain. Such a voice.

"A job, buana? Anything?" Samuel asks fearfully.

"What? A job for you?!" Kade, the landowner, burst out in streams of low-pitched laughter. "A job for an old useless man like you? What a laugh, what a laugh!"

As the door in slams in his face, Samuel turns and walks away. Something is dead inside him. Maybe it is meant to be; maybe it isn't.

*I understand*

*now, God;*

*you never wanted me to succeed.*

*The old remain old,*

*don't they?*

*You with all you promises*

*of hope and determination:*

*They mean nothing - they never did.*

*Are you not false, dear God?*

*Do you not wish good?*

*Do you not cause good?*

*Are you not the light?*

*Are you not the path?*

*Are you not worthy of love?*

*I ask you, dear God:*

*Is this they way of your world?*

\* \* \*

It is said (and I repeat) that loneliness is the worst kind of sorrow. Samuel sits alone.

I'll tell you something; he's still there.

## -Meher D.



## Inspiration

Sunlight  
sunshine  
rested softly on every leaf.  
Shimmering  
now and then  
only silently  
yet in a blaze of white,  
No inspiration.  
Resting lightly upon dried grass  
my head is weary  
with thought,  
The whitewashed wall  
and hill stretching  
down,  
The lonely flagpole and  
hot traveler  
with eyes  
narrowed to slits  
and seatdropped brow,  
The brown, brown hand  
and toiled throat,  
No inspiration.  
The watered sky,  
blue,

unsaturated,  
waiting to be drenched  
with colour,  
Only dripping.  
The drone of the bee  
around my ears,  
shade of a pine tree  
and occasional cloud  
sweetly stagnant in the heaven,  
peaceful  
suppression of inspiration,  
No inspiration.  
Then turn of heel  
with head bowed low  
and stumble home,  
pen in hand,  
book in fingers lightly grasping  
the Failure.  
Twilight draws near the sky:

not purple,  
not blue;  
A white star.  
A million prayers billow upwards  
from eager lips  
and  
swollen bellies,  
The blacklined eyes  
softly drooping  
now softly closing  
into sleep.  
Now rest my head  
far away  
from grass  
upon scented cloth and crisp,  
clean cloth.  
Kiss the framed pictures  
and fold my hands.  
Turn over and curl legs

also into sleep  
Gently hear the nightly wind  
and dream.  
Now inspiration  
creeping slowly  
creature of the dark,  
appearing slightly,  
in a new light,  
faded and misty  
Creamy skin  
and milkwhite thighs  
slender fingers  
and sculptured breasts,  
flowing hair.  
Oh, beautiful creature  
of the mind  
in whose search I have  
traversed the countries  
planes of my being,  
Come gently,  
rest thy head with mine  
and carry me to your abode  
softly  
so gently  
and be one with me.

-Meher D.



# EARTH

Natashe F. K.

The mother had abandoned the child because she couldn't and didn't have the means of bringing him up. He was left in the edge of the deep, dark jungle where the only sounds were those of the vicious animals that would tear the infant to shreds. He was a fine young lad with beautiful fair skin, raven hair and brown eyes that contained black pupils. He was naked, lying on a tattered white cloth on the bare dirty earth. His crying was that of a rhythm accompanied by the distant melody of the sweet singing birds here and there.

There came a slithering serpent known as the King Cobra. It slowly made its way towards the cold, hungry, and scared babe, puffing up its hood, ready to strike its adversary. As it prepared to strike, a sudden change came over the whole jungle, as if a giant, in fact many giants, had swallowed up the Sun, leaving the jungle in utter darkness. A powerful wind from the North blew all over the forest making the once peaceful trees look like widows with long unkempt hair bewailing the deaths of their husbands. There was general panic; animals, including the panic stricken King Cobra, ran here and there looking for shelter.

Then as suddenly as it started, it stopped. The sun was shining; there was a gentle breeze, and the birds continued to chirp happily. The innocent child had slipped into deep slumber from the exhaustion of crying.

Soon after was heard the jingling of anklets of a fair maiden whose eyes were highlighted by the charcoal black of kajal. She was wearing an ankle length, home-woven skirt with small bits of colourful glass bits here and there. She had dark red-brownish thick cascading hair. She wore beautiful ornaments that decorated her as a goddess in a temple shrine. She took a look at the baby and cradled him in her warm and comforting arms. She could feel his steady heartbeat and soft breathing. She took him towards her breast where he instinctively suckled milk and quenched his hunger, then lay like a contented kitten.

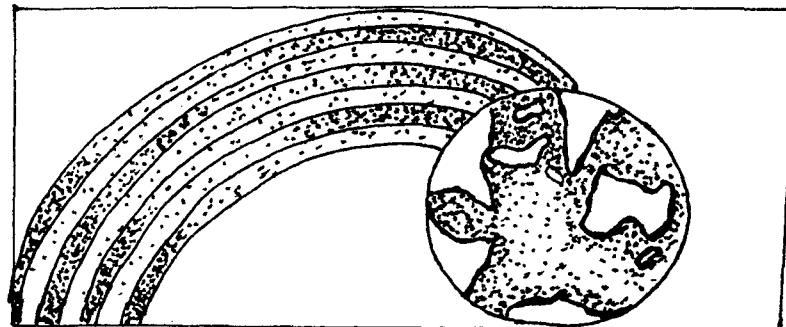
She took him to her house. She lived there by herself. She was a virgin, yet she could produce milk to extinguish the infant's hunger. She lived by a river where the water was crystal clear, and it played over the rocks. Her house was that of thatch, but inside it was as comfortable as a Jamindar's Palace. This became the residence of the child. He was brought up with the best of comforts and the unfailing love of the beautiful and gentle maiden. He grew up to be a handsome and strong lad with the good manners of his foster mother. He received his formal education through his new found mother and learnt to live in harmony with the inhabitants of the jungle, unlike the people of the outside world. Soon his mother felt it was time that he had to go back and join the rest of the people in the outside world. She told him how she had come upon him and tended him like her own son.

He then asked her why she lived all alone in this vast, deep jungle. Her laugh sounded like the chiming of many delicate bells of the finest metal. Then in front of him, she and her house and she both transformed into the very earth under his feet. Then came the voice of his mother, the only person he had ever known.

She told him, "I am Mother Earth. I couldn't bear to see you devoured by the animals. I took the shape of a mother and brought you up, and I am very proud of it, too. But now you have to go back to your civilization where you will learn the ways of your people."

Hearing this the young man knelt on the ground, wept bitterly, and spoke, saying, "You are the only person I know, whom I have learnt to love. I do not know any other, nor will I know anyone as well as you; so I give my life to you, my Goddess.

"Thus, the child embraced the Earth with his whole being, both physically as well as spiritually. And behold! He was transformed into a rainbow; lovingly embracing his Mother, the wonderful maiden Earth.



# Metamorphosis

Silently they sat,  
 Mischievous glances exchanged  
 Across an open fire  
 Which stood in the center.  
 Hands outstretched,  
 Their hearts outstretched.  
 Above, the sparkling stars slept in lulled quiet,  
 distant and near,  
 Infinite and few.  
 Mounds of untouched sand-dunes and snow-fields  
 Enveloped the harshly defined  
 Circle of their existence.  
 Within this halo  
 Prevailed thought and understanding:  
 The silence of the Unique.  
 Silently did they sit.  
 Until one day they had to rise  
 Change, movement.  
 Off they went into the sand  
 Which flew in vicious cyclones,  
 Tearing their living flesh.  
 Yet onward they went,  
 Blinded by the desert,  
 Persistently blinded by sun and sand.  
 Under this sun,  
 One with the sand,  
 Thought stops;  
 Feeling stops.

One more step  
 And they thought it closer to death,  
 But one more step  
 And they entered the change of chilled snow.  
 Multitudinous peaks iced with cold  
 Were outlined in a blue haze:  
 Momentary instantaneous relief.  
 Onward,  
 And they became  
 Confused at the uncontrollable shivering,  
 The numbness and senselessness;  
 But on they went.  
 Confusion brought with it wonder.  
 Surely Change was a pure Exchange;  
 Was necessarily substitution.  
 Thus,  
 In change must live  
 Existence.  
 Their thought created a heated temper;  
 It rose in flames,  
 But froze at the peaks.  
 They walked,  
 And their feet froze.  
 Attempt was lagging  
 And the body was sagging.  
 Short of breath,  
 Short of thought,  
 They retreated.  
 Wafts of warm invitation

Lit their way.  
 With every step  
 They moved closer to their heart.  
 Warmth touched not only their flesh  
 but also their hearts.  
 The fire blazed delightfully;  
 The periphery approached.  
 But,  
 The blackness of the starry sky was falling,  
 Pinnacled like a closed sphere,  
 Creating a vacuum aimed  
 At their peace-filled sanctum.  
 So happy they felt here, within;  
 Yet, how deceitful and belated a realization:  
 The vast sky was rapidly moving,  
 Transforming into condensed black marble.  
 It moved of its own,  
 This tiny, elusive space of Evil.  
 It glided down and stopped  
 At Her Heart.  
 Life was seeped and sucked in torrents,  
 And with it the marble expanded,  
 Capturing and replacing  
 Solidity in space;  
 Space instead of form;  
 Void replaced Her being.  
 Evil had not vanished;  
 Evil had vanquished.  
 He stretched His hand,

Stretched His heart,  
 But not as aid - -  
 Solely as a flinching gesture.

**Atreyee P.**

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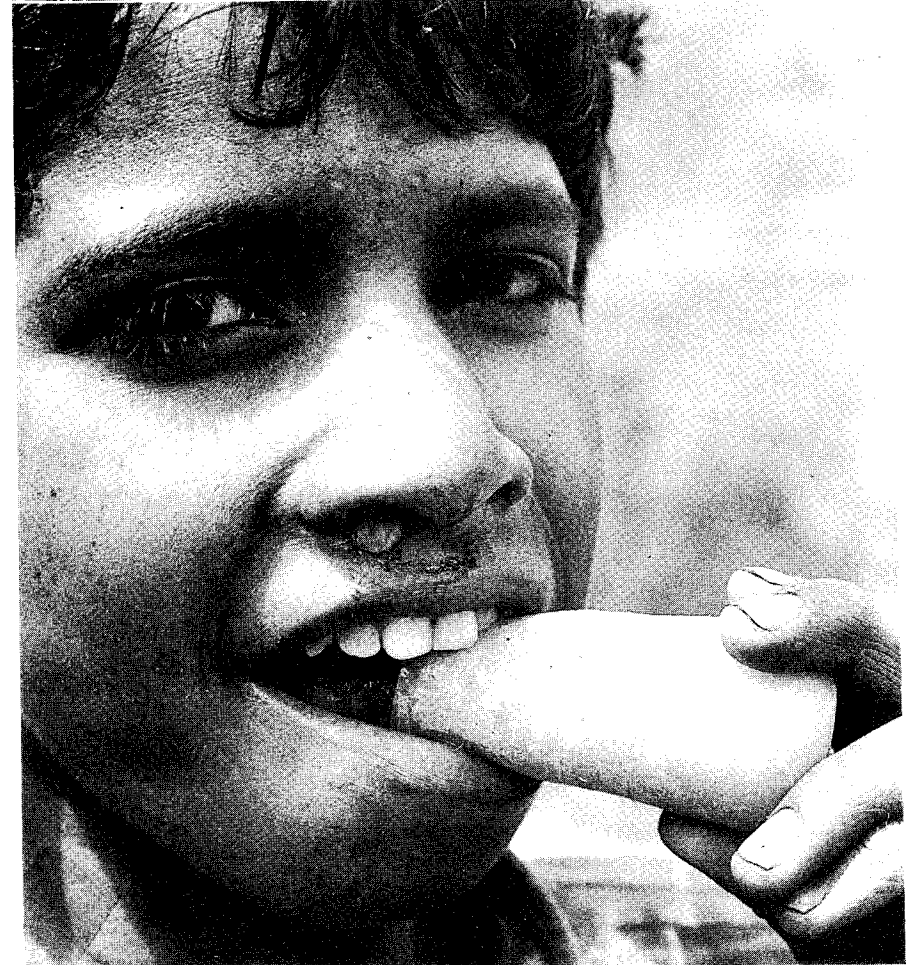
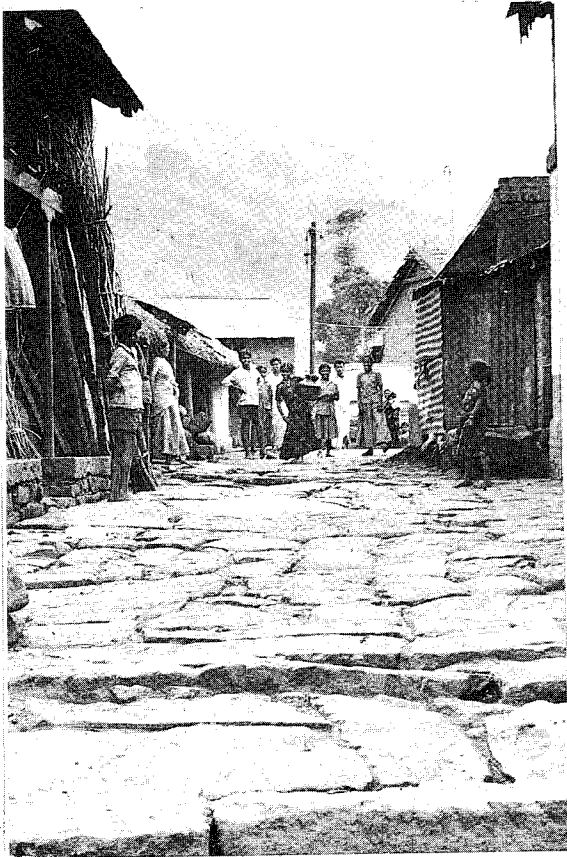
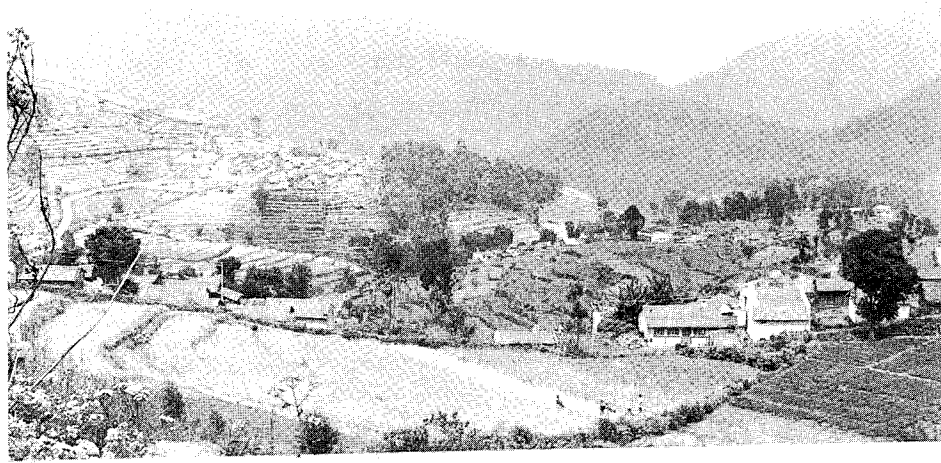
## LORE

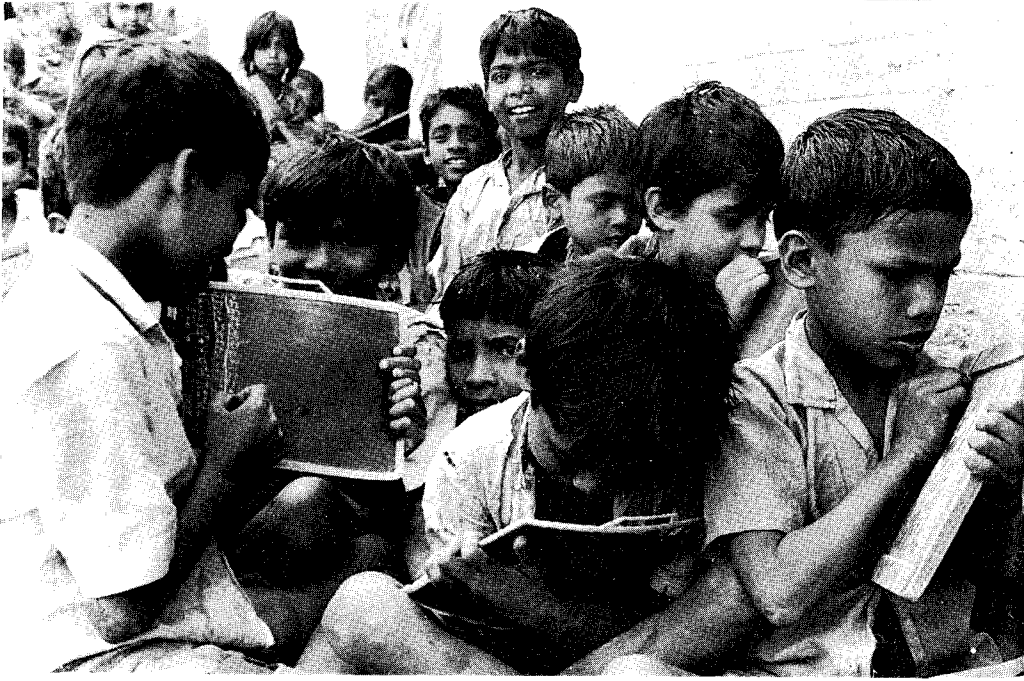
I walked a mile with Pleasure  
 She chattered all the way  
 But left me none the wiser  
 For all she had to say.

I walked a mile with Sorrow  
 Ne'er a word said she  
 But oh the things I learnt from her  
 When sorrow walked with me.

*- Shafayet I.*

# Education







## The Forbidden Fruit

It is cloaked in darkness, this aged, shriveled, wrinkled monstrosity. I bite into this fleshy, gelatinous substance. Juice squirts out on all sides and makes a 'yucky mess'. A disgusted expression of ferociousness crosses my face in disbelief. I am horror struck as the grotesque taste resides in my protesting mouth. Nausea creeps its way up my internal passages and reverberates throughout. Bitterness is masked by cloying sweetness. The torturous grossness oozes into my veins and spreads like wild fire. My face distorts like a gargoyle in pained agony. My taste buds protest vehemently. The essence of impurity ravishes my once eager mouth. A sour taste of fermentation rises like the mists lifting to expose thick, steaming fog. This fruit, which was said would quench my thirsting hunger, has illuminated and induced a fire burning in my throat. I make a supreme effort to heave this God-forbidden fruit from my body, which has ravished it. I have eaten what God has forbidden me to. I have tasted of the forbidden fruit.

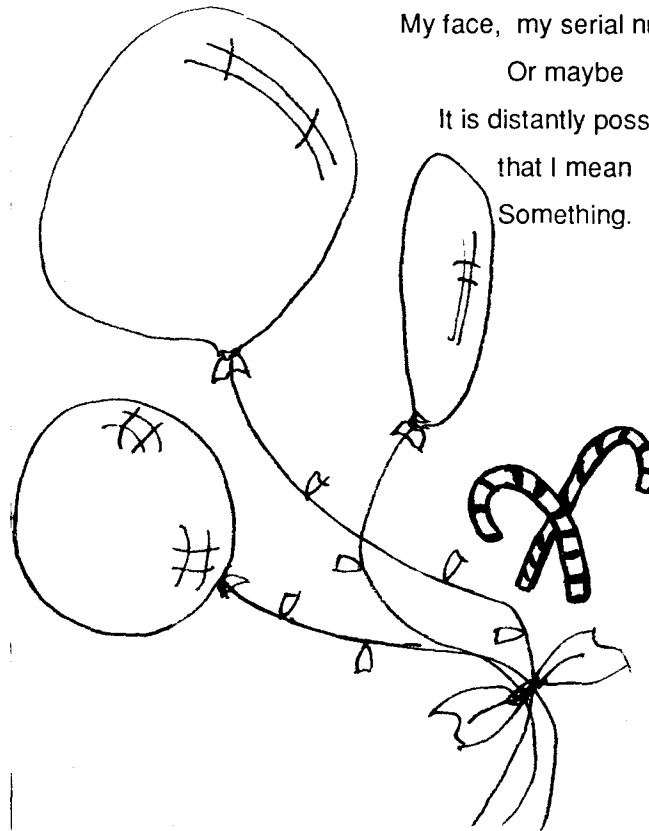
-Yasmin



## Maybe

Maybe  
 I am a bubble  
 shiny,  
 reflecting the joy in the world.  
 Floating to the top  
 of the ice cream soda  
 held  
 in the universal glass  
 Shaped  
 by the careless,  
 sweet smelling breath of  
 a child.  
 Defining with  
 air  
 boundaries of childhood.  
 Maybe  
 I am a peach balloon  
 With a paradox of  
 Space,  
 held  
 in tiny, sweaty hands  
 on the end of a  
 string,  
 'Til the end on a pin.  
 Maybe  
 I am a tiny cog in the great wheel,

and individual with the freedom to choose,  
 A person in my own right,  
 standing on my own two feet,  
 Unique, independent,  
 One of a kind  
 My face, my serial number.  
 Or maybe  
 It is distantly possible  
 that I mean  
 Something.



-Vaishali



## Full Stop

A queue of passengers await the formalities of customs and immigration with varying degrees of impatience. The only passengers who are smiling are those who anticipate trouble with their passports and luggage. An old man leans over the counter, explaining something to the customs officer. Behind him in the line are two young men in their twenties, deeply tanned. As the official gives their their passport back after stamping, the young men pick up their rucksacks, slinging them over their shoulders by one strap. Twisting sideways, they slide through a tangle of excited members of a large family pressing and standing on tiptoe to greet an arriving relative.

One of the young men looks out over the crowd. His unconcerned smile freezes. He shouts shockingly, as the front of his khaki shirt bursts open and spouts blood. Before he can fall to his knees, a second bullet strikes his cheek and tears it. The second man has dropped his rucksack and is running towards the coin lockers. He leaps in the air as a bullet takes him in the shoulder. He slams gracefully against the lockers and bounces back. His hip blossoms with gore and he slips sideward to the polished granite floor. A third blow strikes the back of his head.

My eyes catch sight faintly of two men running towards the glass doors of the entrance. I drop my newspaper and see the old man sit stunned in a puddle of his own blood, his legs straight out before him. Others are wailing or kneeling, while two airport guards, their little automatics drawn, run towards the assassins, one of them still firing. I cover my ears with my hands and look at the newspaper lying on the floor. My glance falls on a headline "Peace, Justice, Prosperity". No!

-Atiq N.



## THE NATION OF ZOGS

In the land of ZAGS i MET zOG zAN  
 sHE LOOKED AT ME THE BEAUTIFUL zOG  
 i KNEW NOT WHETHER zOG OR zIN  
 bUT zIM bIM bAM WAS THE zIN  
 sO HER FATHER bIG tOM zAG zIG zAGGED  
 HIS INSANE TRIBE INTO BAPTIZING ME zOG  
 i DIDN'T WANT TO BE PART OF NO dOG zOG  
 nATION. bUT zOG zAN PLEADED AND zIM  
 zOLA bIM i BECAME A zOG ON PLANET zIM

-aUROVICI

**EXILE**

Friend, you won't know me;  
 I am a black man, just like you,  
 Singing songs of friendship and love  
 At the highest scale of my throat.  
 Friend, when their black belts lash your skin  
 And they laugh out loud, black bruises  
 Appear on the face of civilisation.  
 When they kick you with their boot-wrapped legs,  
 Humanity falls straight on its face  
 On the ground.  
 When they throw you to the garbage can  
 In the street, all tied up with the whips of  
 Rules and discipline,  
 There, in the hopeless dark hours of night,  
 The Future groans and shakes its body,  
 Struggling to stand on its feet.  
 I knew a prisoner once who was to hang:  
 He used to recite Tagore poetry at night.  
 I knew a teenager who gave his life  
 To save his lover's dignity during  
 Our liberation hour.  
 I used to know an angry rebel leader  
 Who was imprisoned 'til death;  
 Who used to break away from his  
 Nightmares sometimes, desiring  
 The touch of his little daughter, longing to  
 Smell the fragrance of her innocent hair  
 Inundated; inquisitively, he used to

Grab the black bars of the cell.  
 When my thoughts turn to you, Friend,  
 I start thinking of you with a new spirit.  
 When they shed the red blood of your five year old son,  
 Like pouring coffee onto a plate,  
 Then, your pregnant wife ran away  
 From the greedy eyes of those beastly Pak soldiers,  
 And halfway through her fatal trip, she  
 Fell on the ground  
 To taste the ultimate pain,  
 And when they hanged your best friend to death,  
 In the milk-like white, shimmering sunlight  
 Of dawn, the black alphabets in the Bible  
 Started screaming, suddenly breaking  
 Away from open mouths:  
 I can hear the procession of rebels  
 In the avenue of my mind.

*- Moin H. K.*



## The Birth Of Religion

Satya G.

When the world was young and the minds of men were tame,  
God and the devil sat down together to play a deadly game;

They played a game of dice and bone

By which to tell who would own

The faith that every man held

Which only the soul could unweld.

The devil sat with his shiny dice

And solemnly rolled them thrice,

But the outcome was equal

And so was the sequel.

They played for years

Exchanging their fears

But still there was no winner

Between the saint and the sinner,

'Til at the end of an age

They had lost their rage

And both gave a great long sigh

As they decided to call it a tie.

Since neither could win, they decided to share

The world between them in a manner quite fair;

A compromise was made

Which did not fade,

And to this very day

It has stayed the same way

Where man has the choice

To listen to the voice

Of the eternal maker

Or the endless taker.

Religion was created,

And then they waited

To see who got caught

In the web the priest wrought

That would make them blind

And unable to find

What they really believed

And continuously deceived

By the psychotic crews

that imposed their views

And made helpless followers

Forever blind swallows

Of scrolls and their seals

Full of others' ideals.

## Contradiction

The rain had finished its role. The lush grass spread for miles and was damp. Now the luster of the sun abruptly entered the scene, bright with all its splendor. The air smelt of wet mud. The gibberish of a few birds, although unseen, was pleasant to the ears.

In the background, the gushing of a river interacted harmoniously with the sound of the birds. Trees aligning the vast borders seemed to shelter the grass underneath. Weeds grew here and there, attempting to blend in with the picture. The gentle roll of the hills in the horizon added flavor to the scene.

Contradicting everything, a noise was heard : the human voice.

- Madhu N.

## The Loss

A brutal bloody murder of one beautiful affair  
Met by false circumstances and forced to succumb

To the evil horrors realized by man in his  
Hour of solitude when wrapped in a cloak  
Of silence and pain

I shrug off the cold cocoon and crawl out  
to meet the night.

Although my body yearns to curl into a ball  
and roll into the crevice of your hand,  
My mind sees an empty space where you  
Once were -

Now lost in the misty morning of some other field.

And everything is suddenly lost:

The sky has lost its common hues,  
The breeze has forgotten where to play,  
The stars are disorientated blinking eyes  
Unable to light this dark way - this  
Cold, blind bitter darkness.

I play with your memory - forgetting and  
remembering as it suits me.

I can't run away, so I play  
hide and seek, and gain

Comfort from forgetting the hurt -  
the agony now and again.

To forget is bitter pain, yet to  
Remember is to go insane  
once again as  
The sound of folly comes knocking at my door.

-Dina Sobhan

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## Singularity

Waiting to enter the evil world,

We toss and turn inside, in gloom. Born not yet, but nourished  
already, with thoughts of evil, enmity. Not blood, but jealousy,  
feeds our heart.

Through single cell, in single chamber, hate and disgust our  
nostrils breathe.

Waiting to separate after many long months. Waiting, wishing for  
that day. For that day when we shall no longer be seen as One.

Wishing, wanting to forget the past, to forget that once long ago,  
we were but One.

Similar features, similar styles, but we blame it on the Gods.  
Curse the Gods who made us alike. Curse the gods who made  
our nostrils breathe this dampened air.

Curse the Gods for this creation - Error of creation, error in  
individuality. Curse those Gods, that we shall have to hate our  
own images.

Deceitful, disgusting as this may sound, the horrible truth is, it is.  
The world - We no longer love those whom we are like. No  
longer do we love ourselves, our images.

As bitter and even more, as horrible this truth is, grow our  
hatred, never to stop, but to increase with the forever increasing  
time.

-Priya



**Staff Box**

Hunters:

Shalini, Omar, Saad, Shafayet,

David

Head Hunters:

Bishal T. and Atreyee P.

Head Head Hunters:

Mr. Robert G. and

Ms. Eva-Karin H.

...Kodaikanal, pouring rain,  
Sunday evening, leaving Easter Cantata  
Sounding from Church.

Mahindra Van, Kumar with fever,  
Thomas, Robert with us,  
Backache sleeping on the floor,  
Smell Of jasmine and exhaust

Monday Madras. Hot, humid, sweat.  
Atlantic, MTV, Odomos in the streets of insane glares  
and The Silence of The Lambs.

Cash, Copy, Calculations and Computers,  
Fonts, Lazer Prints. Pg. 43 or Pg. 44?

Missing Photograph.

Phew.

( Beginning of the end of Mistah).

HAKAPHUKATHAPA

