

Something Else Seeing



The Journey by M. Irwin
Part Two



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“We are *Spiritual Beings* having a *Human Experience*.”

-ANONYMOUS

Marching to War as the First Watch Officer

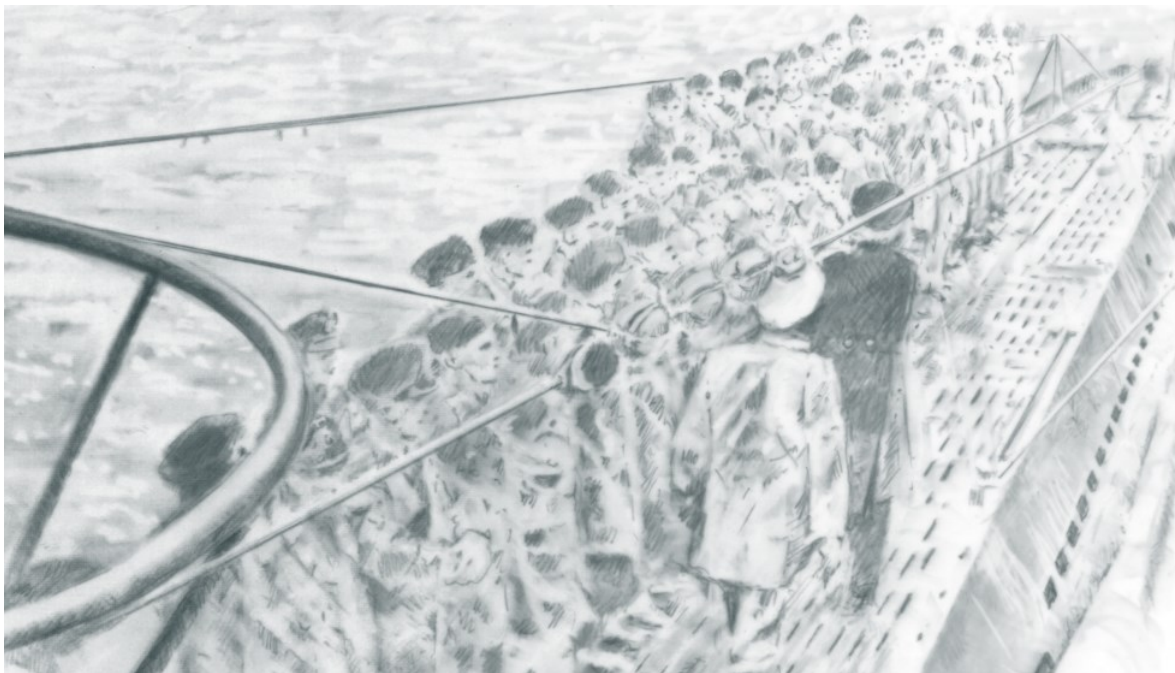
May I say, I cut a dashing figure in my officer dress blues. Three patrols and I have earned the right to wear the U-Boat war badge. My parents as usual are proud. My uncle the WWI U-boatman, now a surly reservist on shore duty with the Kriegsmarine, is probably amazed. But I know better, I have yet to really prove myself and there are far too many who have sailed more patrols than I. To them and our crew it is better to not talk about doing one's new job well than to do it well.

We are granted shore leave for a few weeks and while the Kaleu sees his family, I stay with the boat and oversee all the small necessary administrative duties that must be done. Even down to taking the well slept in linen to the laundry.

The boat is aired out and the smell of fresh paint replaces the fug of ugly smells I've grown use to. The LI returns to oversee repairs on the damage caused by the depth charges and the faulty pistons that have bedeviled him for months.

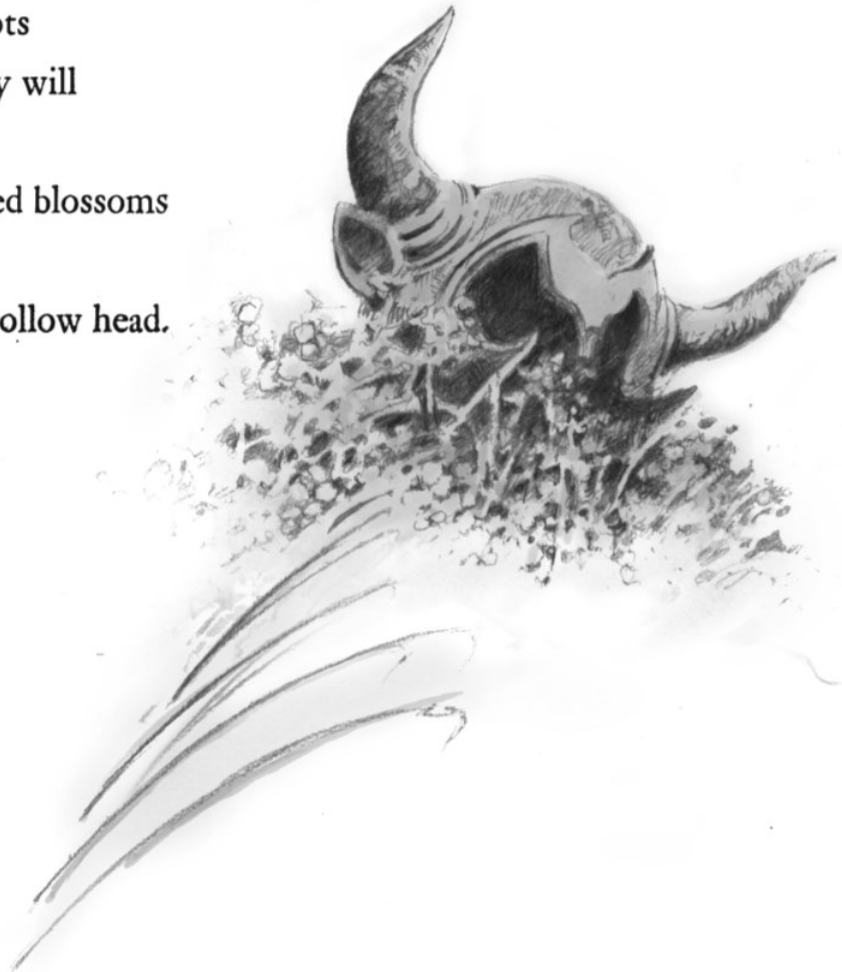
I finally take my leave and visit Paris, marveling at the Eiffel Tower and the Notre Dame Cathedral. When I return to base, it is not long before I am on the deck, with the men at attention, reporting to the Kalue and the flotilla commander that the crew and the boat are ready for duty.

Soon the mooring ropes are removed, the band starts up, we are saluted, the women wave and we go from the pens to the canal and begin our fourth patrol.



Masking the War Spirit Gentle

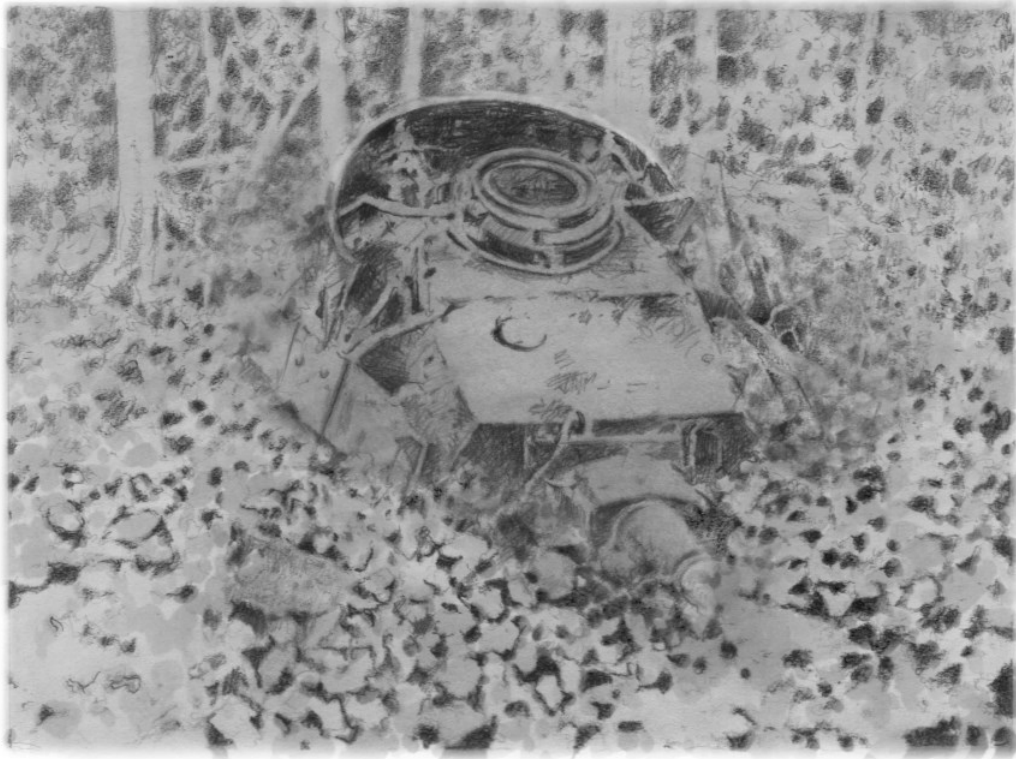
A minotaur bull mask
with
frightful horns
that now gently shades
tender shoots
that one day will
bloom
into speckled blossoms
that will
cover the hollow head.



Maybe

Under a blessed full moon the
crown pretender sat on a rock
that he called
a throne,
contemplating stars carrying
their names on light year beams,
that on second thought
may have
only been nameless waves.





Mayhem

Panzer

where the rust remains pooled
beside foreign roots
as the fierce machine melts away.

Mediterranean

Camouflaged butterflies
forsaking the orange and
black
of their wings;
 fluttering,
 flying,
diving to the nap of
earth,
reaching the remote
mountains of Michoacan,
turning east
and
disappearing
under the Atlantic patrols,
slipping past
Gibraltar
to find themselves lost,
regaining their colors
 over
cocoons of U-Boat graves
feasting on
Mediterranean rust leached from
expended Maltese shrapnel.





Meeting Flesh Draped Crowded Bones

Red cloth and cloth of many
colors
walking with their
frayed spirits, clothed in flesh,
each on their various paths today.

Some we have met before.
Some we will meet again.

All of us wearing the heavy cloth
as we try to learn and move
in new, uncertain, and different
ways.

Merchant Marine Destroyed

In the red light of the conning tower, the Kaleu sits in the saddle of his attack periscope and calmly calls out the data to be fed into the Torpedo Data Computer; within two minutes it is over.

With no destroyers in sight and the hydrophone operator hearing no sounds of nearby ships, we surface to observe and identify our latest kill.

And from the conning tower, my watering eyes feel the heat from the burning ship. I bring my Zeiss binoculars up to study the slowly sinking freighter with its broken keel and I am reminded that we do not destroy only ships and their war cargos.

I did not know my fellow sailor looking into the blinding flash of our exploding eel as his eyes burned away and his body disappeared. Yet, as only can happen in the strange physics of war, I look at his empty jacket hanging high on the head block of an yard boom swinging toward the sea.

As the fires come closer, it flutters in the heated winds and then it too bursts into flames. And as the ocean churns and turns to steam around the stricken ship, I become aware of the bobbing red lights from life jackets and the shouts and noises of those sailors in the water who have survived.



Merchant Marine Saved

A dying ship with a broken back . . .

Sailors have jumped in the water and the lucky ones climb or are pulled aboard into the lifeboats. One drifts towards our gray U-Boat and terrified survivors are asked the name of their ship and its cargo. With some hesitation they finally give us the information.

"Sorry for the inconvenience," the Kaleu shouted to them as we watched their ship burning in the distance.

"But I have my orders," and then he had us throw bandages, fresh water, and bread to them. "Sail west north west, that is the nearest land."

As the survivors started to leave, one man shouted, "good luck to you captain and may our paths never cross again."

And the Kaleu mustered a slight smile as he tapped his finger on his cap giving a salute to the survivors in the lifeboat.

The killer with blue eyes had read Hegel and as he watched the carnage floating around him, he thought how strange the contradictions to watch the death of others and justify the adventure.

And as he raised his binoculars to the sky, he thought how strange also for him to notice the craters on the moon tonight and think of the Egyptian pyramids he had once seen.



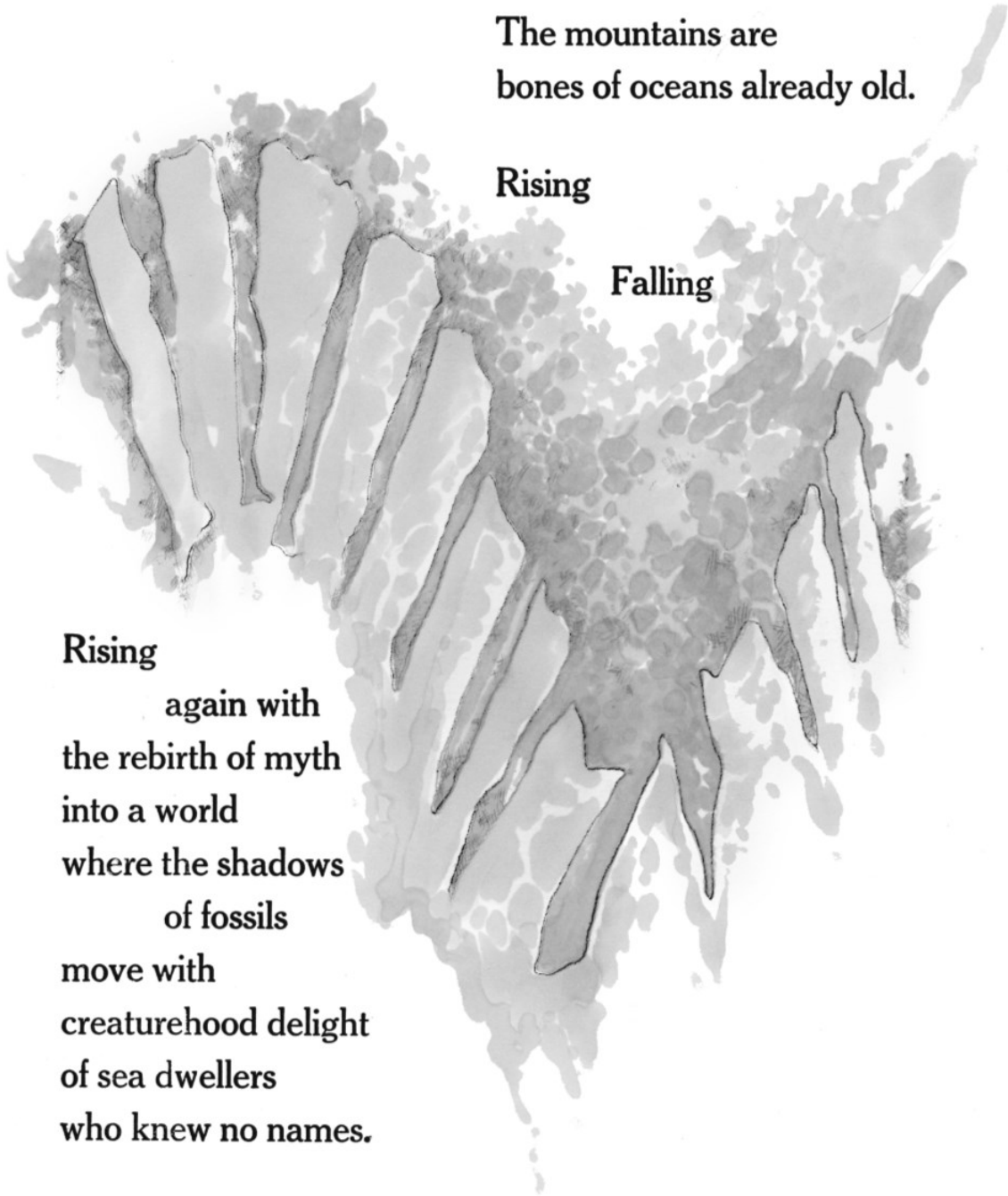
Mountain Bones Rising

The mountains are
bones of oceans already old.

Rising

Falling

Rising
again with
the rebirth of myth
into a world
where the shadows
of fossils
move with
creaturehood delight
of sea dwellers
who knew no names.



Mr. Moyer Said He Lost Only One Man

His neck was nearly
severed
by rational shrapnel
but the broken helmet
faithfully
held his head.

And though his buddies
found him
later
lying there on the
muddy Ardennes road,
with the jeep and the
chow he couldn't bring
back,
they never saw how he
had stood there briefly
remembering the awe of being human
and realizing how the divine can never feel
the wetness of its own drops of rain
as a darkening sky returns to a brighter light.



Nearby and Looking Down

Wing feathers flexing,
dragging orange
tints reluctantly
through the
green tree shadows.

With one good solitary
eye still left
he watches the other
side
in the light below and
is bird content that he
has never missed a meal
in three good long bird
years.



Nebulous



Colorful frail mask
with new thoughts
waiting for the
ticket takers to direct
the paying
curious crowd to view
the artifacts in a room
with dim lights
where some will shrug
and others will walk by
with the onset of
vague lost
dormant thoughts.

Neptune's Watch

Jake was an old salt who had
seen
the seven seas
during his twenty-five years abroad.

Yet, not since the seaweed draped
sea turtle shell, had he ever seen
such a sight as this never
before seen zany
frenzied bird
with
wet red-tipped wings touching
the crests of the waves
just before his clutching claws
slammed into the
mizzen mast
and then noisily ripped down
the sea weathered sails
to finally rest
his long feathered tail
beside sailor Jake's
blushing red, sea worn face.



No Vacancy

At the end of the hallway
where the unclean carpet
begins,
the door remains locked
and the outside window
will not open to
reveal
those who are still asleep.

And those of us
considerate,
and those of us afraid,
walk ever so quickly as we
quietly go
about our careful ways;

and never think to tally up
the unpaid bills
nor remind them of their
yesterdays.



Observation and Intent

Oh, the
jackass man
dressed
in frivolous
wooly white
stared
and stared
at
succulent
green leaves
and kept thinking
of
lunch
with serious rabbit
intent.

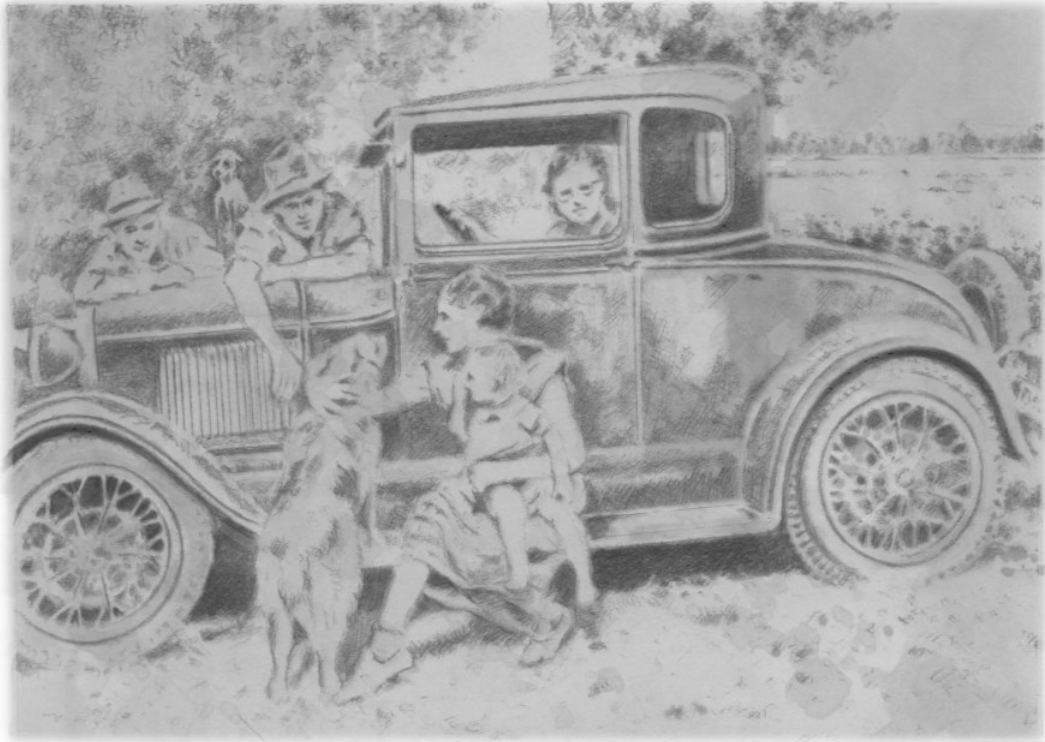




Obsidian

Imprinted on the fragment,
her face
with eyes
no longer scanning for the
gray ash horizon coming
closer.

Her imprint flung across
time,
leaving scars across the
Pompeian mosaic
where the colors remain
as vivid
as the figures crawling
in gray.



Off the Road, Down from Turkey Pen

of dogs and young people growing old who left too soon . . .

of the car, 1929 Model A Coupe, fate unknown,
of the family, and the friend of the family,

of choices made later that day,
of tomorrow,
of today,

of the young woman who drove that day
and is still driving seventy years later.

Old Revolutionist Up in Years



R. Nate

He believed
it was important not to shape
his greed
in glorious deeds undone.

ON Convoy Intercepted, Shadowed, and Attacked

Another patrol, December and the North Atlantic's weather can be unforgiving at this time of year. Even so, our work must continue and we are part of a group trying to intercept an ON convoy reported outbound from Liverpool. Visibility remains bad during the day and by dusk we leave for a new patrol area.

Three days later contact was made with the convoy during the afternoon. For now the weather is favorable; visibility is eight miles; wind South, Sea Force I, waves rippling with no crests and a long swell that breaks against our boat. We change our course to intercept the spotted convoy.

The next day, the weather changed again and we sailed in a fog until 1400. As the

visibility improved, the navigator got a fix on our position and we steered a new course based on the reports by the shadower U-Boat who was following the convoy.

The next night as a cloudy dusk became darker, we along with eight other U-Boats struck the convoy. Submerged, the Kaleu fired a spread of four torpedoes and struck two of the four ships for about eleven thousand tons.

Looking through the attack periscope, he could see bursts of light from other explosions that marked the deadly successes of our other gray wolves. And then he saw the two enemy destroyers approaching us at flank speed.

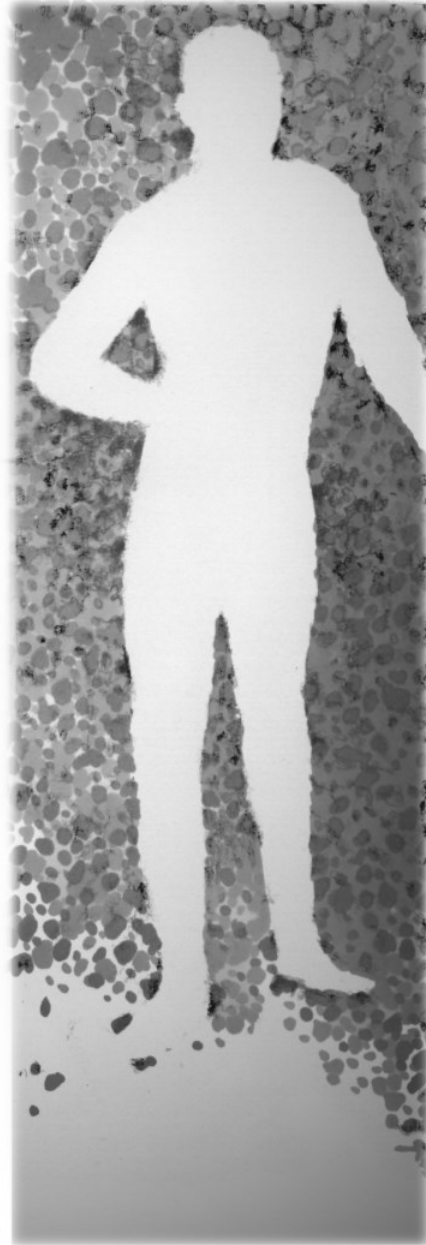


Once More Being this Way Again

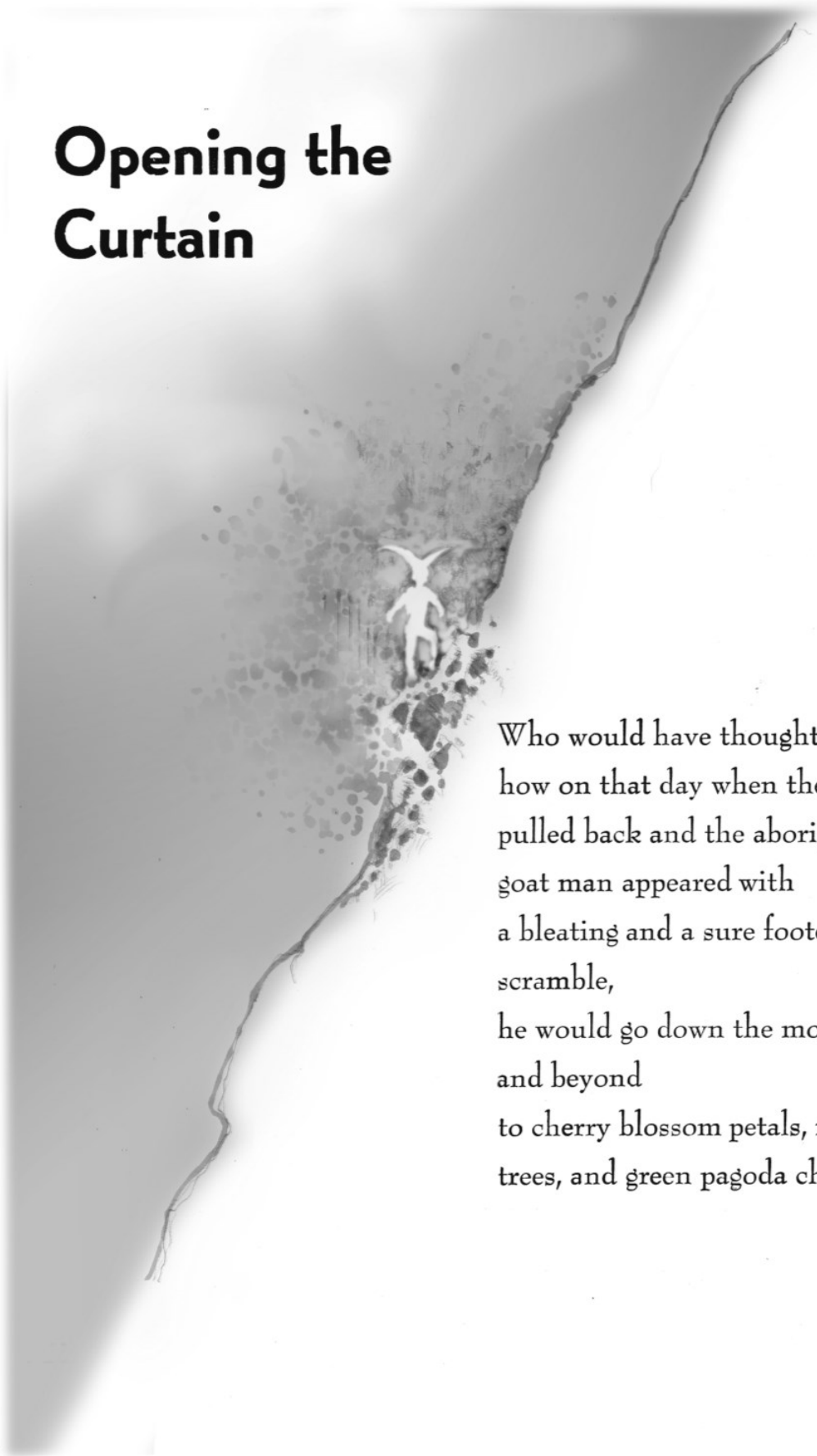
Committed to body,
cloaked in hiding;
appearing in the some
time moments between
perceptions defined by
ego time
and self space
and the Now.

Understanding that I rarely
am able to understand what
I am unable to see;
that when a random
touch touches me and the
leaves
have not moved and I look
around
to see what could be there...

once again I have renewed
the commitment
and have already forgotten
where and who I really am.



Opening the Curtain



Who would have thought
how on that day when the sky
pulled back and the aboriginal
goat man appeared with
a bleating and a sure footed
scramble,
he would go down the mountain
and beyond
to cherry blossom petals, mimosa
trees, and green pagoda chimes.

Osmanthus

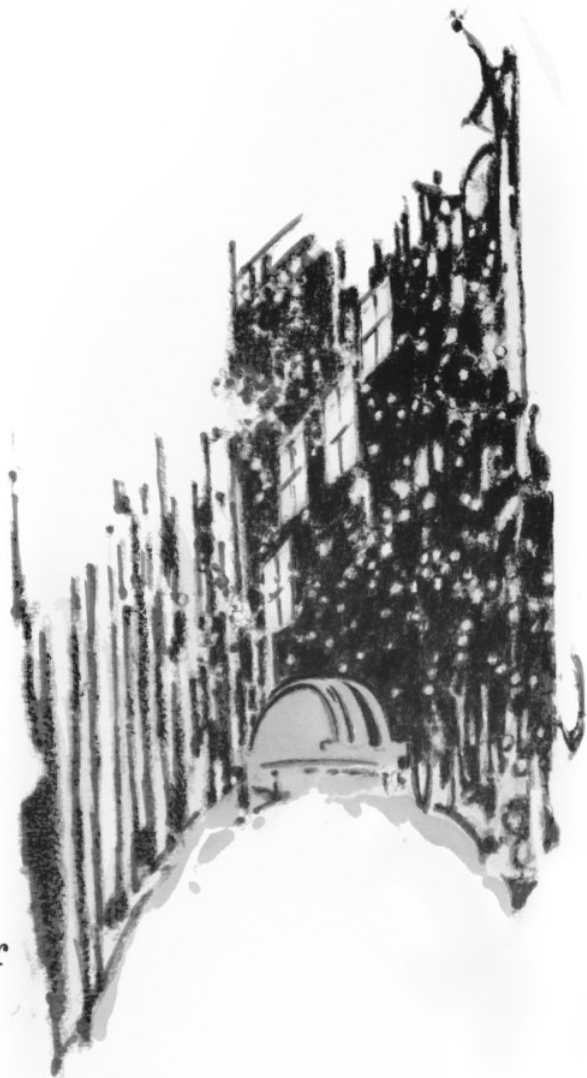
She was a mean old bitch
and toward the end
of her time,
halfway around fern colored
mountains,
the Chinese fan opened
spilling a young woman's
dried pressed blossoms
from forgotten flowers
whose fragrance she
had long since forgiven.



Palomar

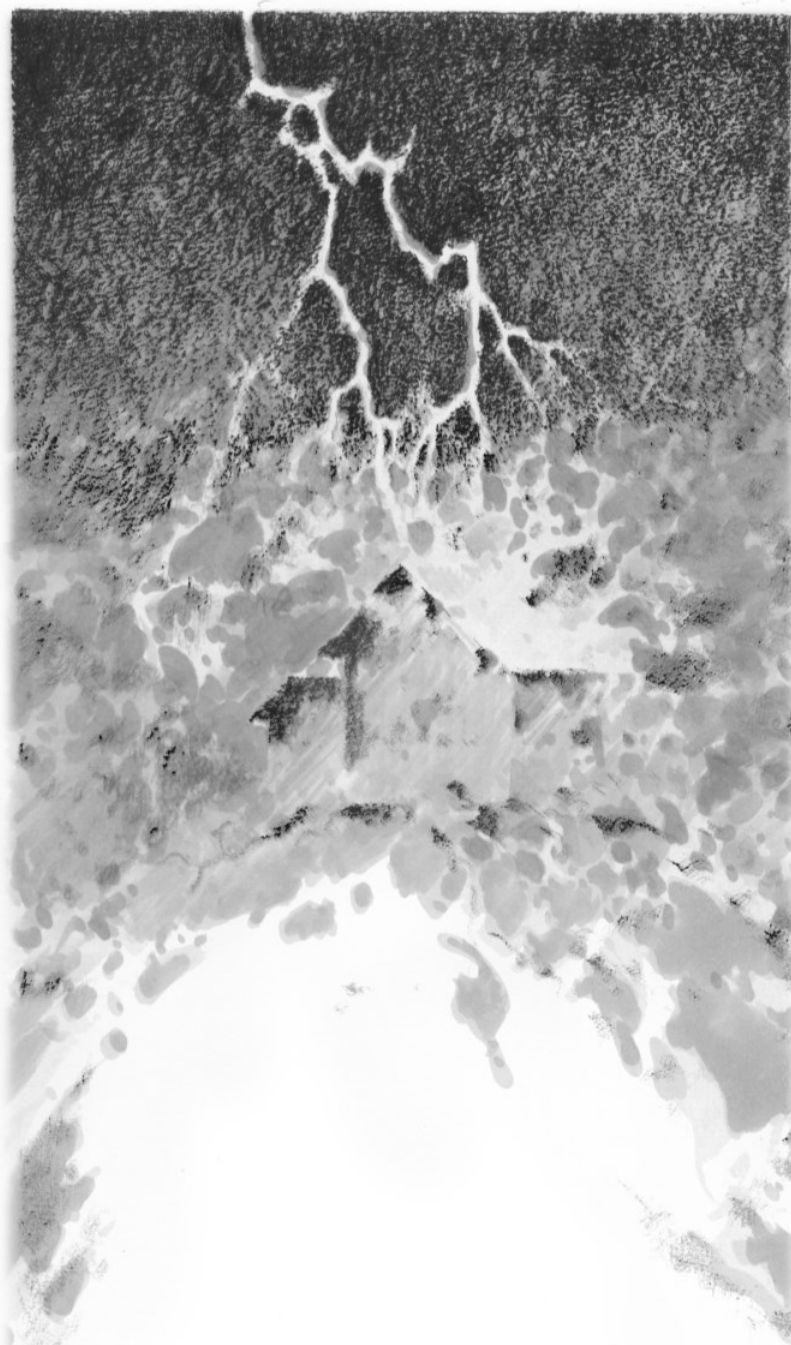
To observe

and see in a polished mirror
what surrounds us in
a star night sky
where they look back through
their own open windows
trying for themselves
to see what it is that tries
to look back at them.



Parson's Hill

On the
fifth Sabbath
of every
seventh year,
the persistent
lightning
that took the
parson's home,
still returns
to revisit the
memory of a
flickering house
left on top of
the balding hill.





Part

Malleable,
cast from
a form;
used

with other parts
of some
long ago
turning machine. . .

until a time when
the purpose had ended
and the piece
was no longer apart
and cast into the whole again.

Pass Watch

Two openings
of an old war
pillbox allowing
the sunlight to
momentarily
slip across
the threads
of old uniforms
worn by
young soldiers
who stayed
behind
as others
passed by this way
to become
forgotten men
who lived to dream
and grow older.



Patterns



Each speck
perfectly in agreement
to be connected
in an array
of Consciousness,
where Chaos and
Order
would not interfere
with each other
even if they somehow could.

Paying the Piper

Between the quickening pings of ASDIC, the sound of the destroyers' swishing blades grow louder. No one need hear the hydrophone operator's whispered word. For those of us who can see him, one look at his face tells us all we need to know.

Wabos, a moment of silence too short to count, and then the explosion; so close, so loud, so deafening. When my hearing comes back, I hear the sound of men quietly though frantically working to control the damage our boat has sustained. I rub flakes of freshly blasted paint off my face. Beams of light crisscross through the interior highlighting the dust floating in the air.

Fuses are replaced, violent streams of water have been brought to just a leak, and then we hear the destroyers coming back. The floor plates jump from their frames, glass from dials are shattered. As the red lights come back on, I see one man slumped to the floor, holding his bleeding head in his hands.

As the pinging sounds grow closer together again, the Kaleu calmly gives his orders, though with urgency in his voice, "Both main engines full ahead, right full rudder. Take us deeper, Chief."

A destroyer goes overhead and soon we hear more splashes and we brace ourselves for the falling wabos and more explosions.



Peaceful Waters

The chief boatswain mate glowered at a man who clumsily moved, "Quiet, no sound from anybody." It was said in a whisper.

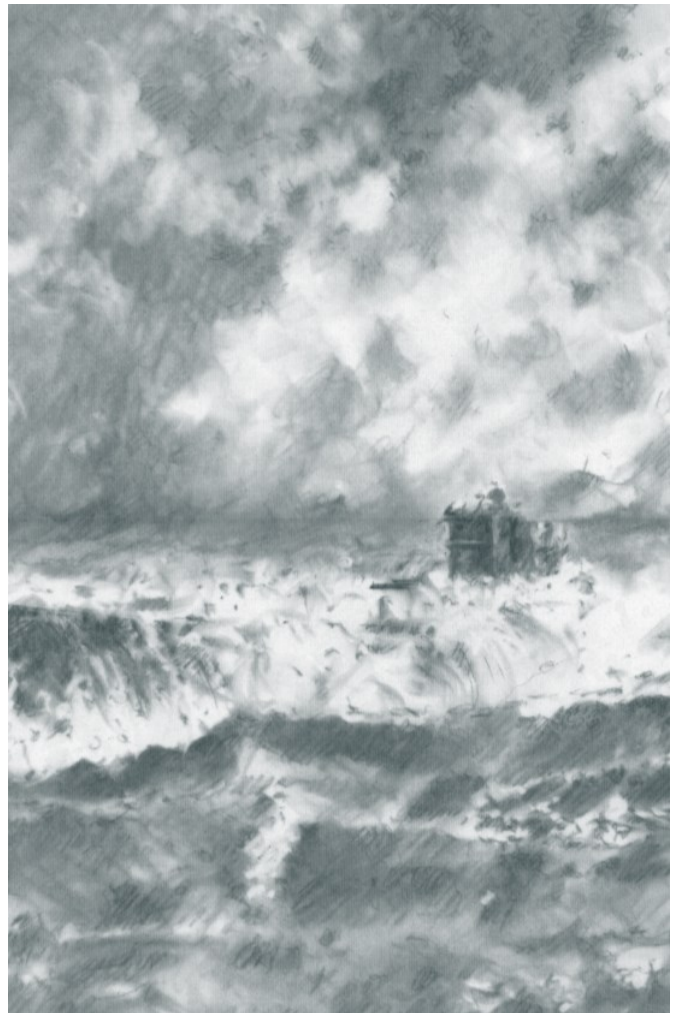
Silent running. The destroyers are still overhead with their depth charges. Their guns wait for us if we surface. And we will have to when the batteries need to be recharged. It is a waiting game and we are down here using up our oxygen, donning emergency breathing gear to scrub the CO₂ from the brown foul air that we must breathe.

The ASDIC finds us; more depth charges, more maneuvering. We have endured this for twenty-two hours.

Finally, the sounds from the destroyers grow faint; and the Kaleu decides to surface. At sixty meters, the boat rocks from side to side. A storm front has moved in forcing the destroyers to call off their search.

I am on the ladder behind the Kaleu when he opens the hatch. The buildup of pressure inside the boat blows us both on the rocking deck of the conning tower. The spray from a large wave drenches us.

But between the mouthfuls of sea water, thank God, fresh sea air burns my lungs and the ventilators start to bring precious oxygen to the gasping crew below.





Peenemünde Horizon

Above a time
during the blitz in the doodlebug
summer,
followed by fifteen seconds of silence,

my father only once mentioned
his English girlfriend
and never said how she died;

and then he looked away
and talked about other things
as he always did in his usual quiet manner.

Pharaohs Must Come Home

Taking turns to look
at the vista
of their pyramids where
the polished limestone
grandeur
had slipped away,
the pharaohs
stopped the competition
and then thought to
congratulate each other
on how well they
sometimes
swept their royal
bedchambers clean.



Plunging into White while Hovering Over



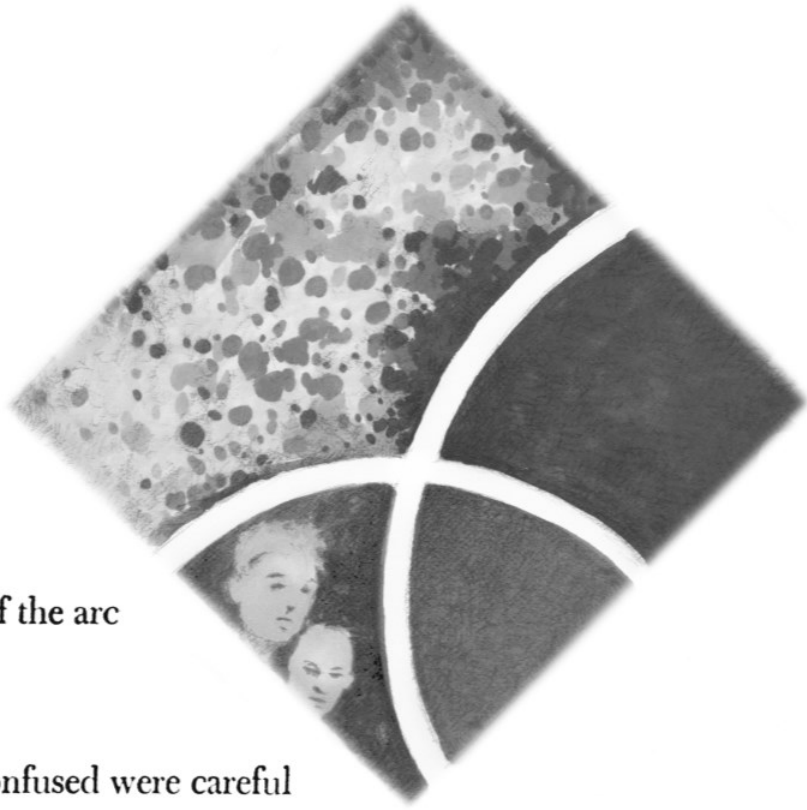
White light was reflected from his
face,
while his hands
were pulling,
pushing the stubborn black
back into the spectrum's hidden colors.

Pray Guess the Part from the Whole

To marry another who thought she was the queen. . .

We observed the
passionate obsession
crossing over. . .

red, burning
through the
varied hot segments,
then cooling
slightly
to orange
while passing
from one side of the arc
to the other.



Yes, and we who were confused were careful
to stay within the bounds of greens and blues
and grow fascinated,
though agitated
as we watched our warmth slip away.

*. . .and how did Mary, Queen of Scots
unravel the knots,*

saying, "My Lord, tomorrow will be a better day."

Prayers and Superstitions

BdU has been notified, we sail for home.

Exhaust system torn apart.

Both diesel air supply valves are leaking.

Valves for trimming system are damaged.

Attack periscope is not functioning.

Port diesel clutch is rattling.

And we are followed by a trail of iridescent leaking diesel oil from a ruptured fuel bunker. Our own boat betrays our presence.

Men who pray will pray, others who believe in superstitions will keep their talismans close by.

Superstitions are a way of life; no one wants to begin a voyage on Friday, another boat will not eat chocolate pudding on Sunday. One sets a course dividable only by the number seven. We have our sea turtles.

They are still with us on the conning tower, though their painted surfaces are marred by the thin shrapnel slashes of the wabos.

At dusk on the third night of our slow return, the watch spots an object trailing beside us. I look through my binoculars at a sea turtle trailing long strands of seaweed. His fearsome face is like that of a skull. Yet, I know that he is our friend.

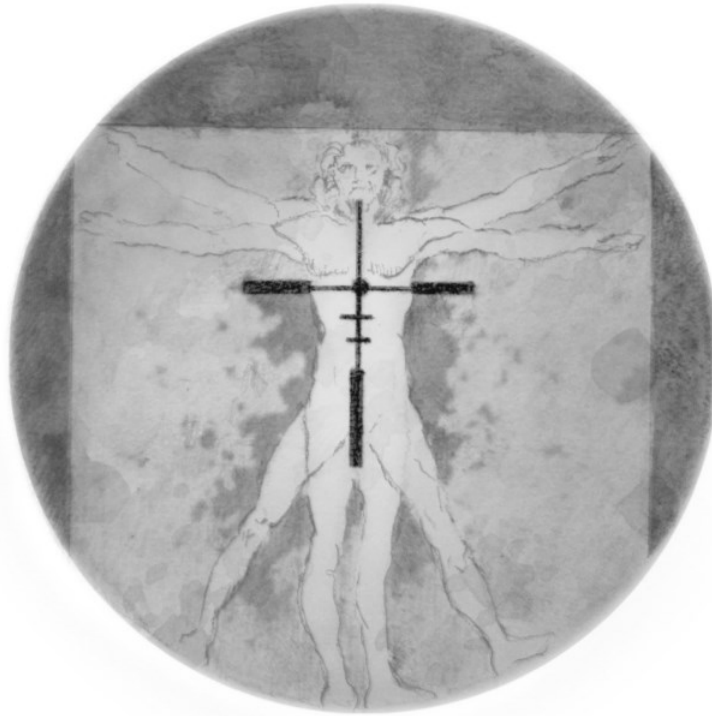
Five days later we safely arrive at St. Nazaire.





Precipitous

So young in
the precarious realm
of youth
where time passing
will present
so many years to a
proper young lady
who was not always
so old
and rather chuckled
when she was told
what you see
will already be
once tomorrow returns.



Progression

Not necessarily in anger
he threw the stone
changed to shape of point
guided by feathers
turning to metal of lead
smoothed then rifled
and jacketed in copper
to finally reach the
center of
mass
exploding ten thousand
years later where
yesterday was only
just a day away.

Prowl

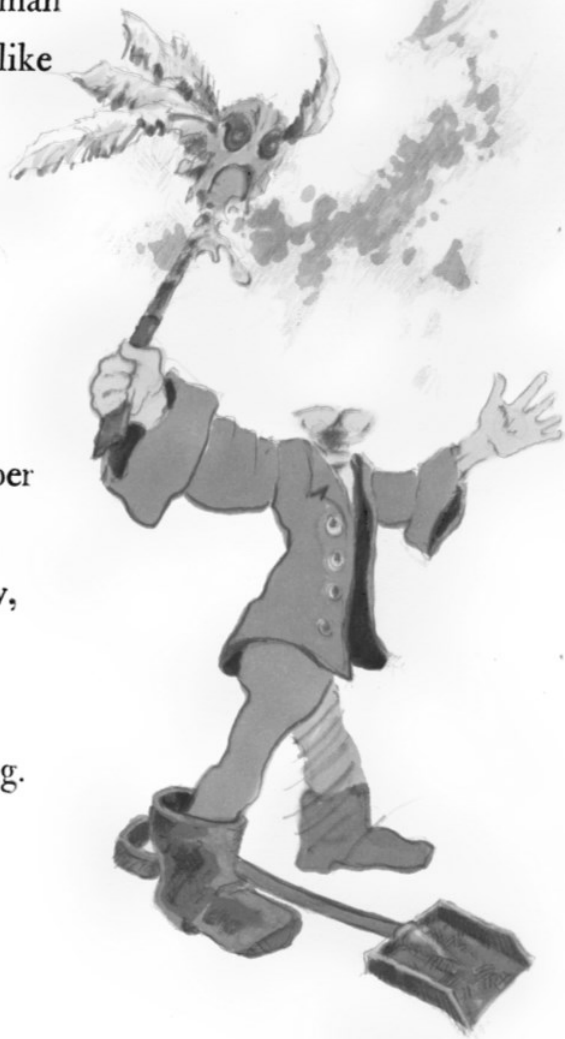
Waves

carry the prow, rolling the splinters
over rocks and shells
as the longship returns to the sea
to follow the oars
descending among the awkward
shields of deities
grown old underwater.

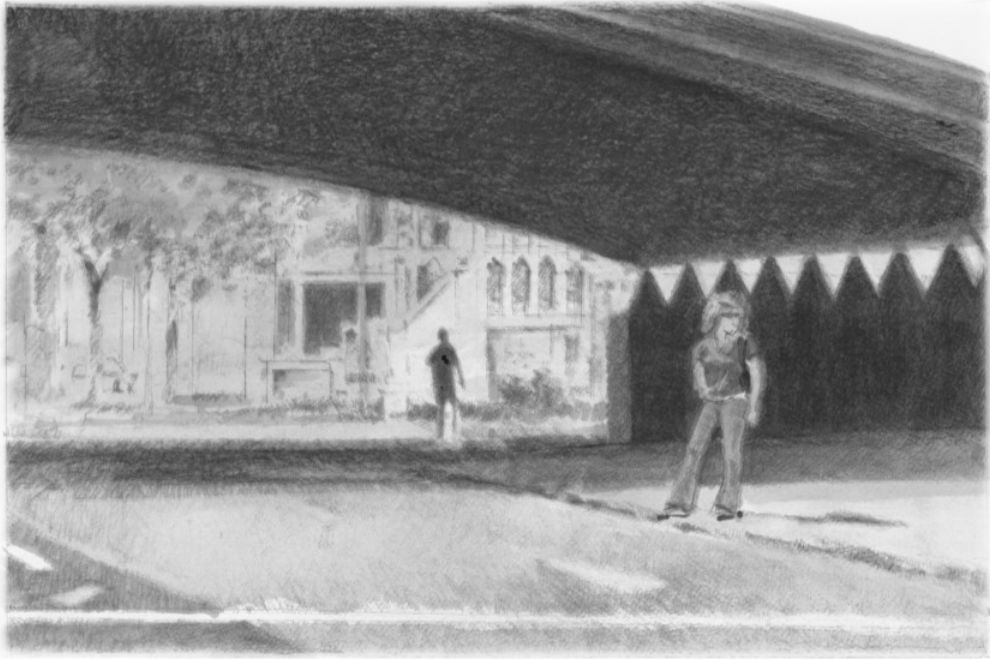


Quandary

The man who only revealed his
his face through his two eyes
and wore old oversized German
open-air coal miner bucket-like
boots,
put down the grimy scoop
and picked up
his feathered head stick
to snarl at the world
with an occasional snort
and a piece of gnarled slobber
attached to his wand
and though I didn't see how,
he seemed to think it was
(and pardon the pun)
very much just a minor thing.



Queens and Lords



both of this world in exile...

both
feeling the desire
for high or low negotiations
paid for beyond the common view
where
there will be no need
for annulment of their pending consummation
nor apologies offered for this anonymous affair.

Quiet Mercenary



What greaves the Holy Spirit
but the use of useless words.

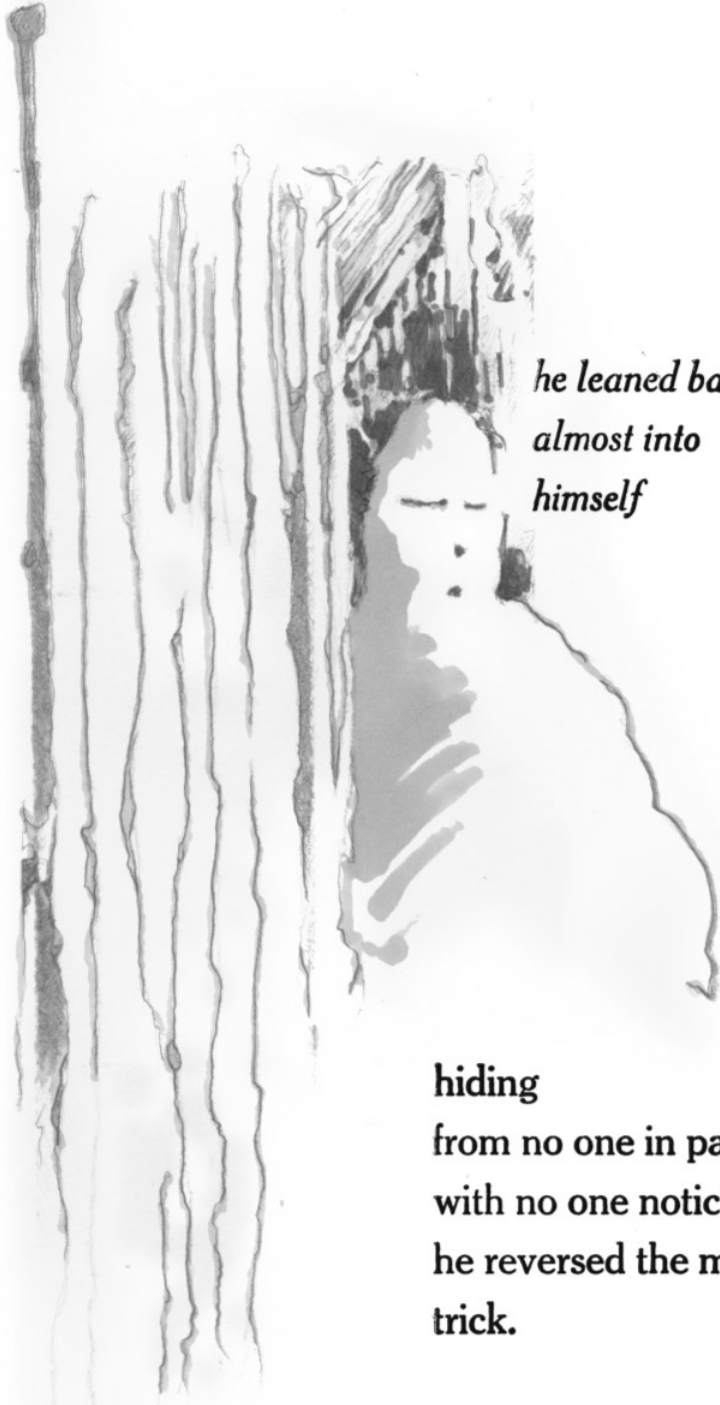
Quiet

Knowing

Proud deeds did not need his explanation.
Wearing the devil's red feather,
Yes, he had been angry, but no he had not sinned.

Rabbit Lost in the Hat

Associated with
everything that
went on



*he leaned back
almost into
himself*

hiding
from no one in particular,
with no one noticing how
he reversed the magic
trick.

Randy, Early at the Chopping Block



Sleepy hooded headsman,
chin on
hands resting on
haft of axe;
waiting for
the sheriff's signal
so all could
get their nap.

Requiem

A life situation:

the three

in parallel unison

under a turbulent sky

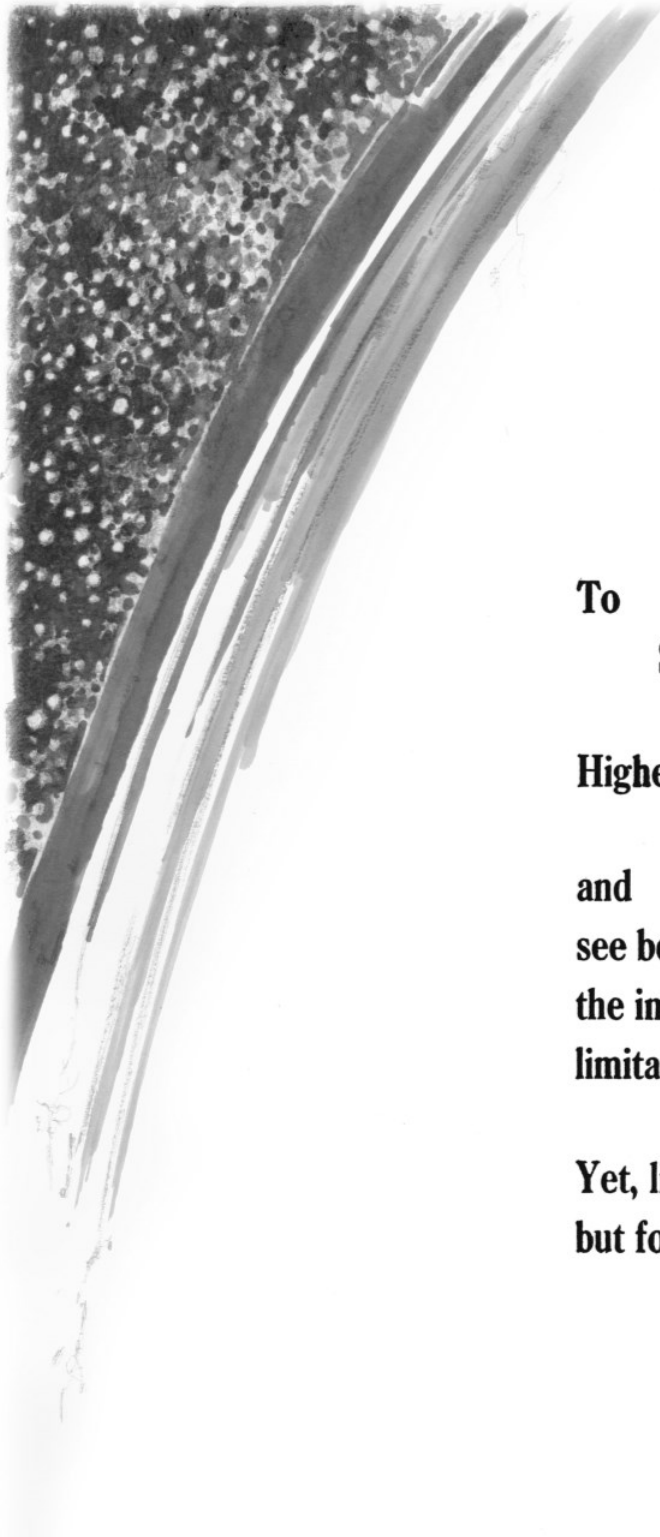
walking through another night

where they fail to see the few stars that are

reflected in the dim glitter off the casual glimmer of glass.



Restrictions



**To
Soar**

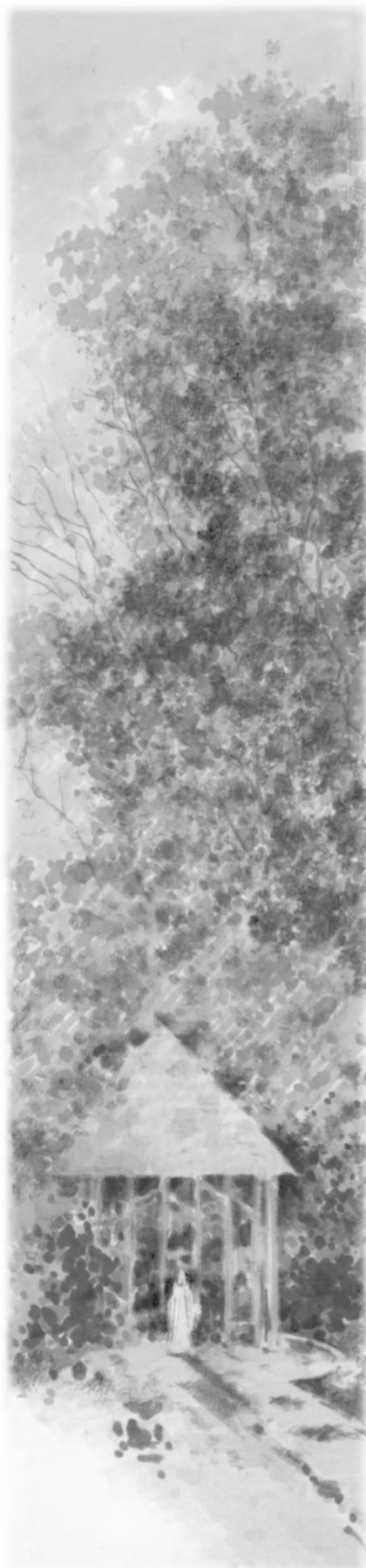
Higher

**and
see beyond
the imposed
limitations. . .**

**Yet, live in the darkness
but for the stars.**

Resurrection Green

Their statue
beckoned
and they walked
coming together
to kneel,
to pray
under the orange
changing leaves,
waiting
for another
resurrection.



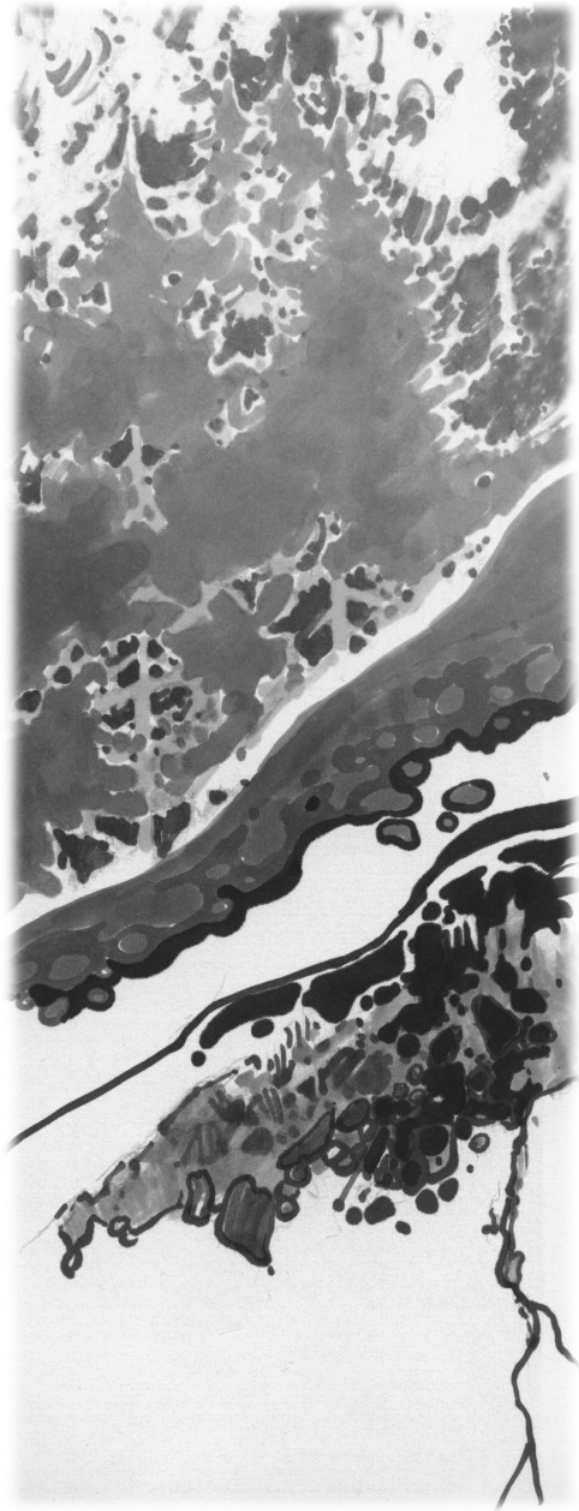
Reunion



In our day of sensibilities,
can we fail to appreciate,
how peaceful in black and white,
the color
of the moment of the father's ludicrous pose,
how his sons laughed,
and the butchered hog, slaughtered and scalded,
offering himself to his ordained fate.

Revealed as in Debris

Cold, unyielding
in the space
under brown earth soil
and eastern forest
where star matter
waits
for the fiery creation
to return
when
the Carboniferous tree
that became the rock
will return to fire
and restart the beginning
again.



Reversing the Opposites



The fat man beside the
thinner
(but not so very thin)
man
both found it irksome
to stare at themselves in
the mirror
and keep waiting for
their mutually opposing
images
to finally be reversed.

Rodney



Red as a
baboon's ass,
the blob
actually
had never needed
to be
embarrassed
until now,
and even then it was
really not all that necessary.

Roots and Squares

Squares

and roots,

$$r^2 = x$$

over ground,
underground...

anywhere

the archaic X
wants to be.



Sand Deep to Red

At night
the pyramid settles
deeper,
splintering the sand
around unused rooms
over the
cinnabar chamber
where no one had lived
for
three thousand years.



Sands Blown from the Magic Warmth



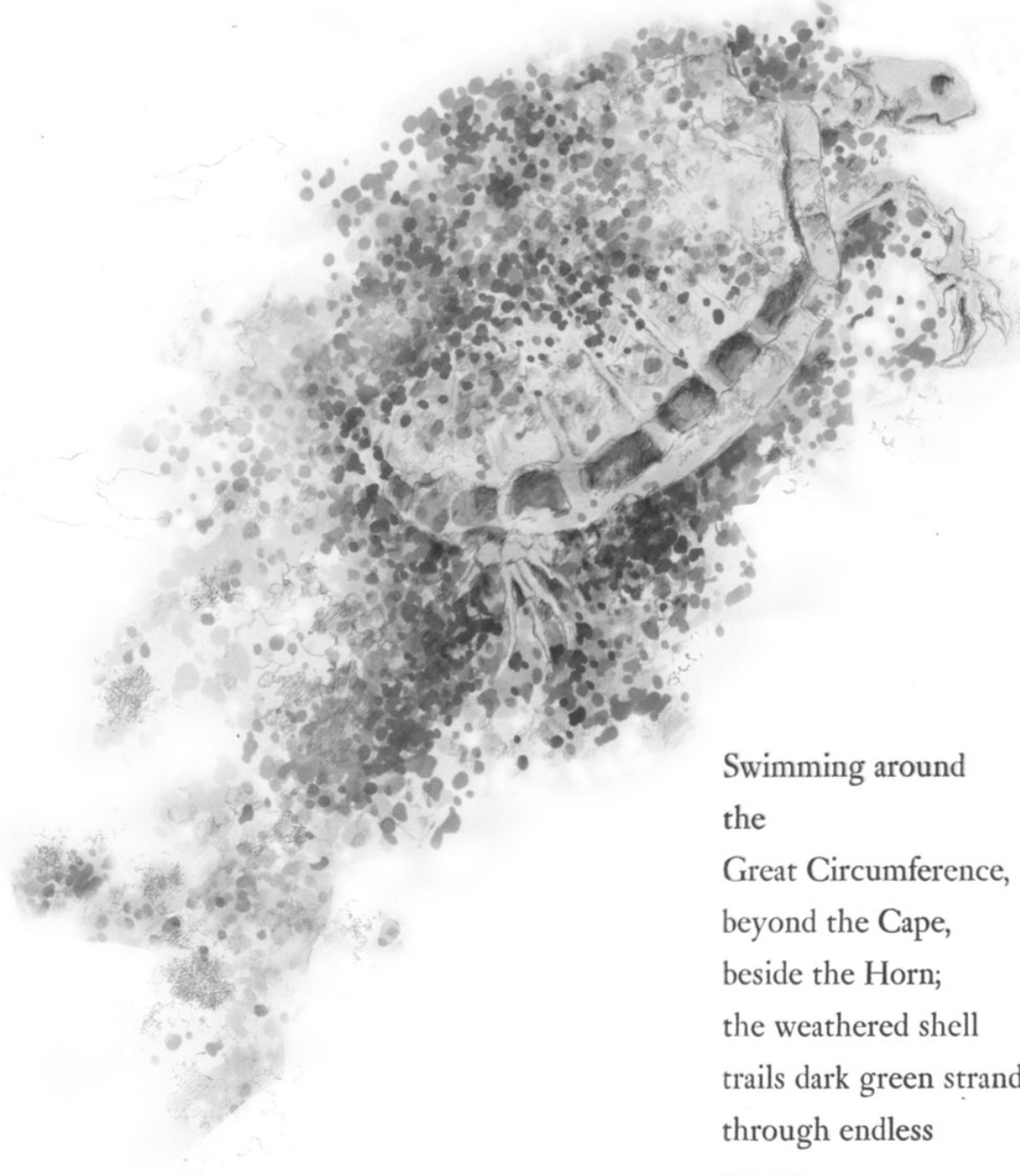
She,
surrounded
by sands,

eyes closed,

warmth
from a sun
still there
brightly, three thousand years later.

laying in
depths,
feeling

Sargasso



Swimming around
the
Great Circumference,
beyond the Cape,
beside the Horn;
the weathered shell
trails dark green strands
through endless
waves
he has seen before.

Scene on a Roman Mirror

Something to
behold
in the arena
lost between
the two:

Nero sparing
the unrepentant
lions
who backed
away from the
chosen few.



Scorching the Happy Trail of Destiny

Happy Me!

Happy Me!

So Very Happy Me!...

that I'm on fire
and they got burned...

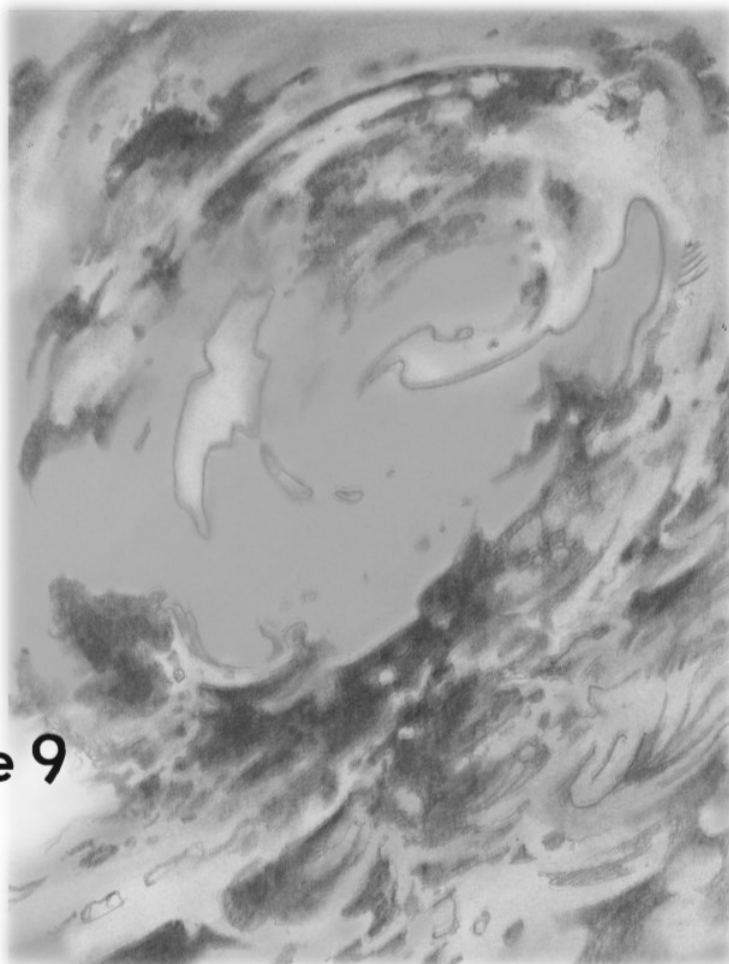
So Very, Very Happy Me!





Sea Meadow

Aquatic sea green rooted
in loam
holding plants
 bending before waves
 that have left the shore
 to break against the
bow of a steamer
that now drops rust
and lets barnacles
grow on a hull
that had once so famously failed.



Sea State 9

Turbulence

The soaring waves plummet
and reverberate
with the Devil's own laughter
as hoarse, gruff voices utter
new found God fearing prayers.

Sethos



The Pharaoh's mummy
breathed in
resin scented linen.

The fragrance of frankincense and myrrh
absorbed by sand,
dried in alabaster urns,
written on gray papyrus scrolls read again
when he returned as a younger man.

Sex at Minnie's after a Night at Joe's

A tumbler of gin
or two and many more
then to leave and let you
kiss me
once or twice, but I must tell you
the impaler appears to be quite
broken tonight
and tomorrow morning
I may remember
what you said
as I try to send a thousand years of
thoughts
back to their time and place
and have another shot
to deal with these today
as more and more snow falls and falls
and covers all
while I try to keep out the drifts and
close the open door.



Shangri-La

Eighteen hours
from Friday to Saturday,
leaving incoming snow
for
green Florida coastal waters
where
brief morning showers
were followed by sunlight
and
the truth about the sound
of the ocean at night.



Silhouetted in Place Between the Two Extremes

The creature
prancing in the moonlight
had stepped outside to be a
man
but still wore his well formed
horns
and was torn
between being seen as one
silhouette
or being seen as the other.



Simultaneous One Morning Now

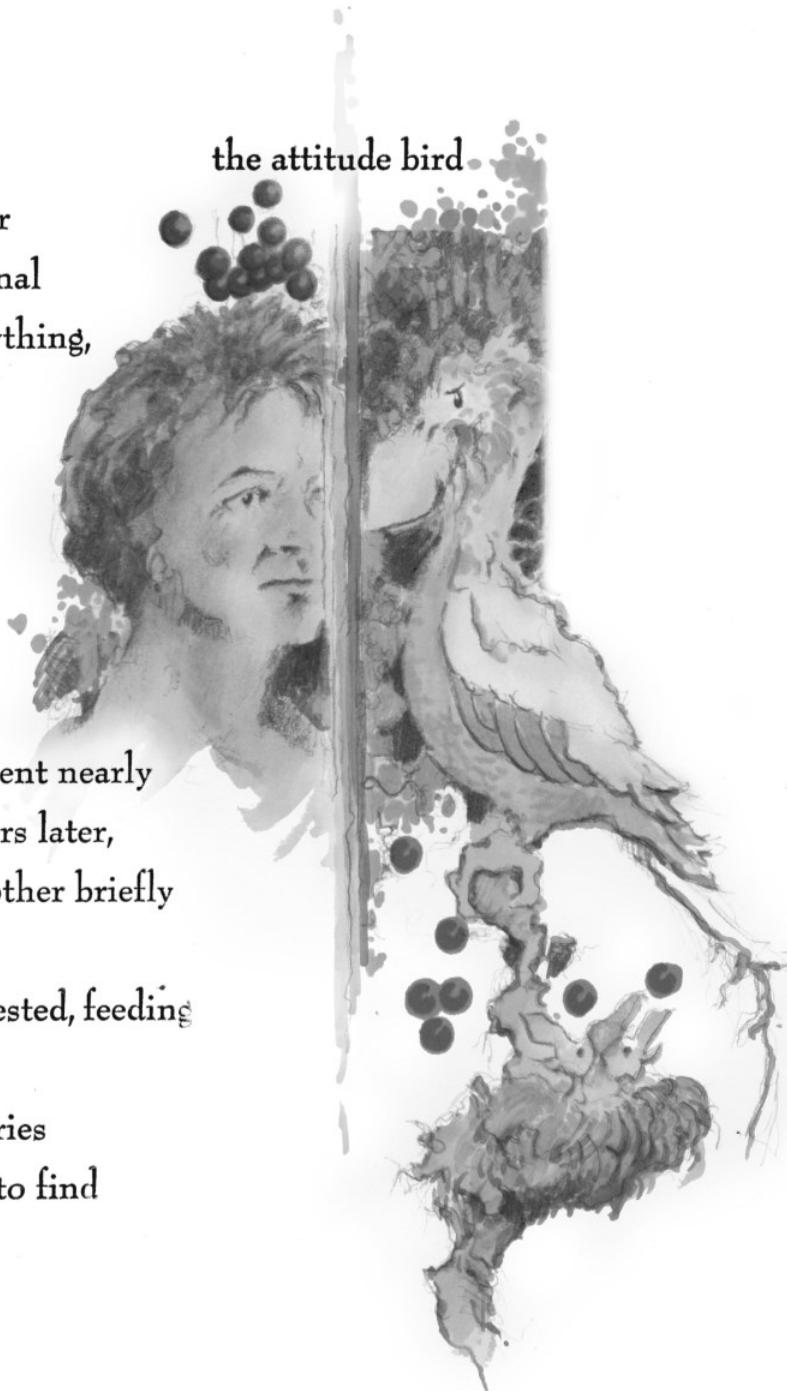
The adjacent
realities of

and a berry forager
who had no personal
opinion about anything,

had
never mingled.

Then in one moment nearly
fifty thousand years later,
they passed each other briefly
where
the young birds nested, feeding
on
freshly picked berries
who were waiting to find
a suitable
place to grow.

the attitude bird



Since We Meet Again

Unbelievably the shattered mess of our boat slipped up to the silent pier and with shaky sea legs we made our way back on land.

A land that some of us thought we might never walk on or see again. The Kaleu looks at our U-boat and then back at me. "Germany makes good boats," He nods his head, "for us this is a good thing, Yes?" In reply, I could only state the obvious, "We will be back out at sea in her again."

"It will takes some time," he said and as we lined up for the flotilla commander's review, the Kaleu says to us, "For now we report and then we rest and relax."

After a few medals, the routine of mail, feast and drinks, a hot shower, and a shave, three days later we were at La Baule and the establishments that we know so well.

And I swear, though I know better, I could fall in love with her but she was finished with me at eight hours ten and took a break from work to take her little fifi dog for a walk at eight hours fourteen.

And what could I do, but dress and go back to the bar until it closed at 2200 and then back to my room at the Grand Hotel to sleep it off.



Six P.M., Waiting



A sign:

"Best of both Worlds" (Burnt Orange and Yellow)

One ordering, two waiting,

one waiting to order.

"Carry out for Tara!"

"What da?"

Up front, indecipherable whispers,

"Have you placed your order?"

and then two left and me.

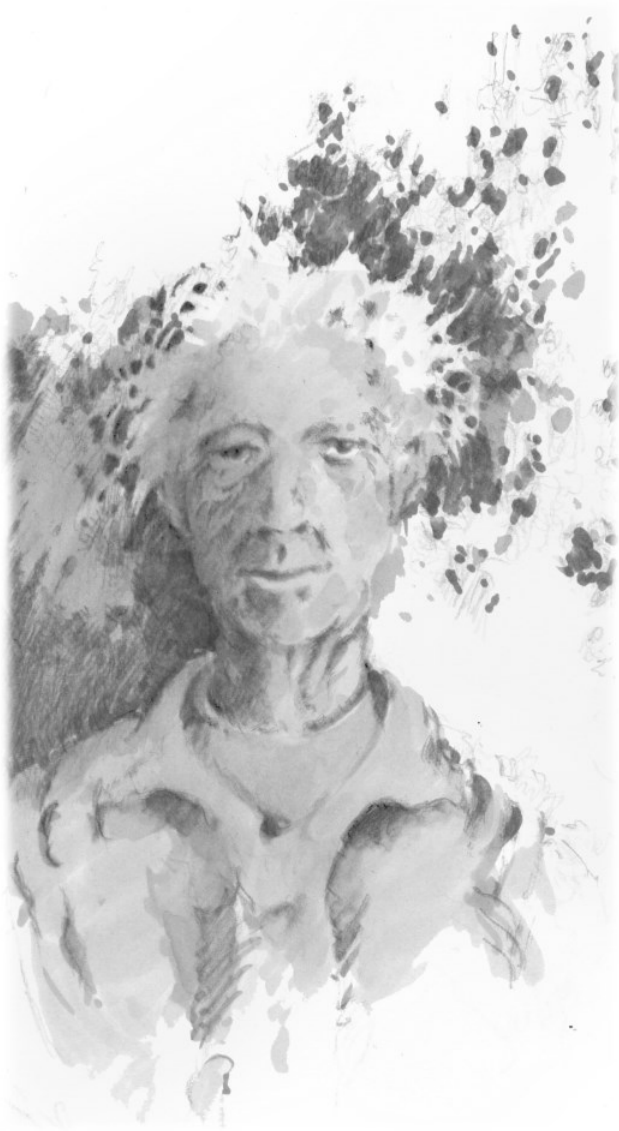
"Did you say Reynolds, sir?"

And outside, a small yellow bird darts south behind orange
autumn leaves.

Sleepy Old Warrior Awake

Wearing the uniform he wore
once more,
he realized
that the fabric of his skin
had lost the tensile strength
when the cloth had meaning
and stature.

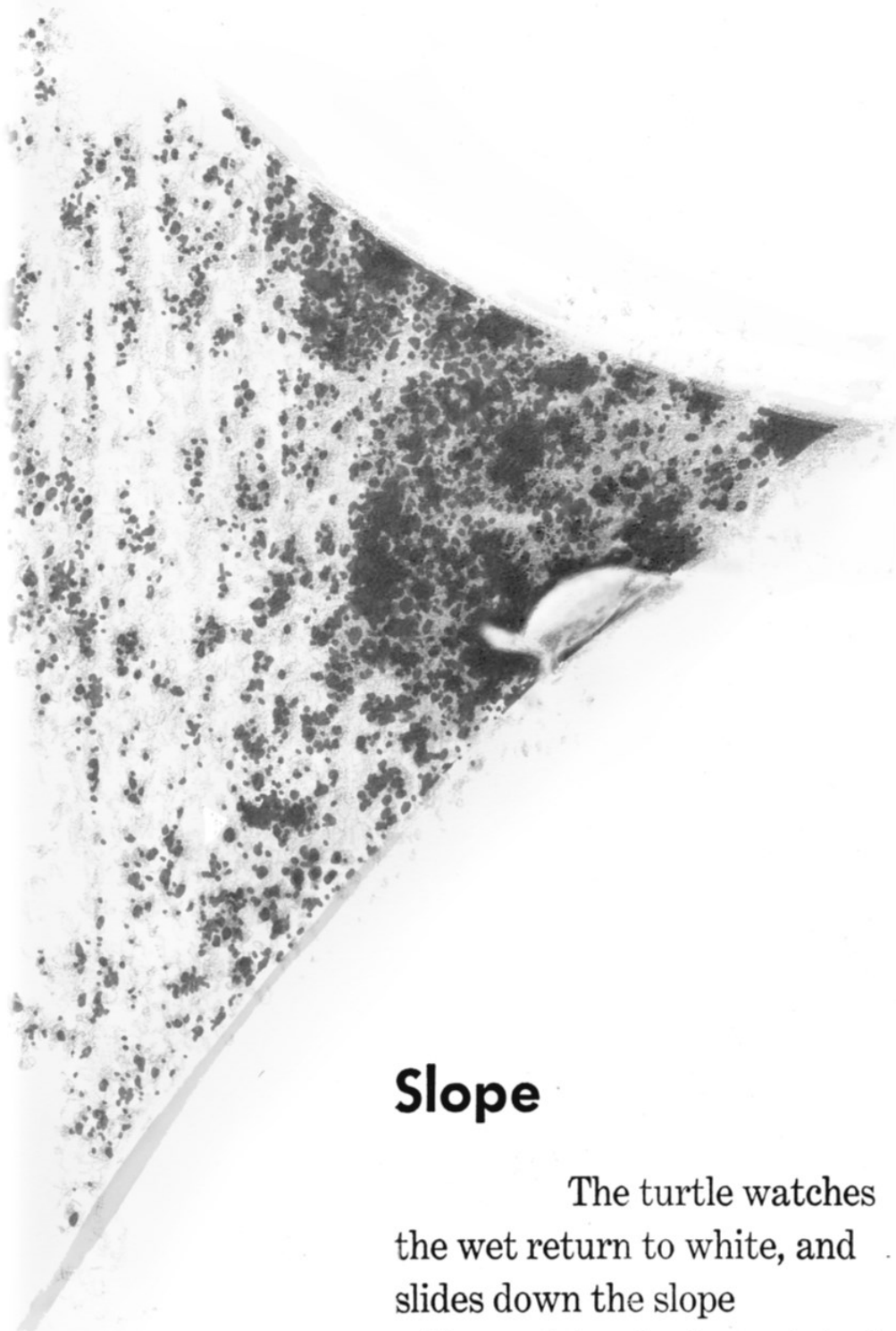
But it was not important
and he smiled, reluctant to
stay awake and think
of the glory that he had
seen in the mountain pass,
when he could nap
and dream, to fight,
to live again where
his foe had stayed behind.



**Slipping Under
to Momentarily
Allow
for Space Above**

Shifting
its mass,
the boulder
had
graciously
slipped farther
underground
to allow the
young
sapling to
spread into
spacious roots
that
would soon
hold
an older tree.





Slope

The turtle watches
the wet return to white, and
slides down the slope
still searching for last winter's
lost winter home.

So Far We have Come to Go Back

Extended leave. Our boat will require much repair and servicing to get her back in sailing and fighting shape. I am going back to Wilhelmshaven and spend thirty days with my parents.

I can read between the lines in their letters, the people at the home front are suffering in this war. I buy an old used leather suitcase and fill it full of tins of fruit, smoked sausages, real tobacco, perfumes, soap and silks. We are feted well before we may die.

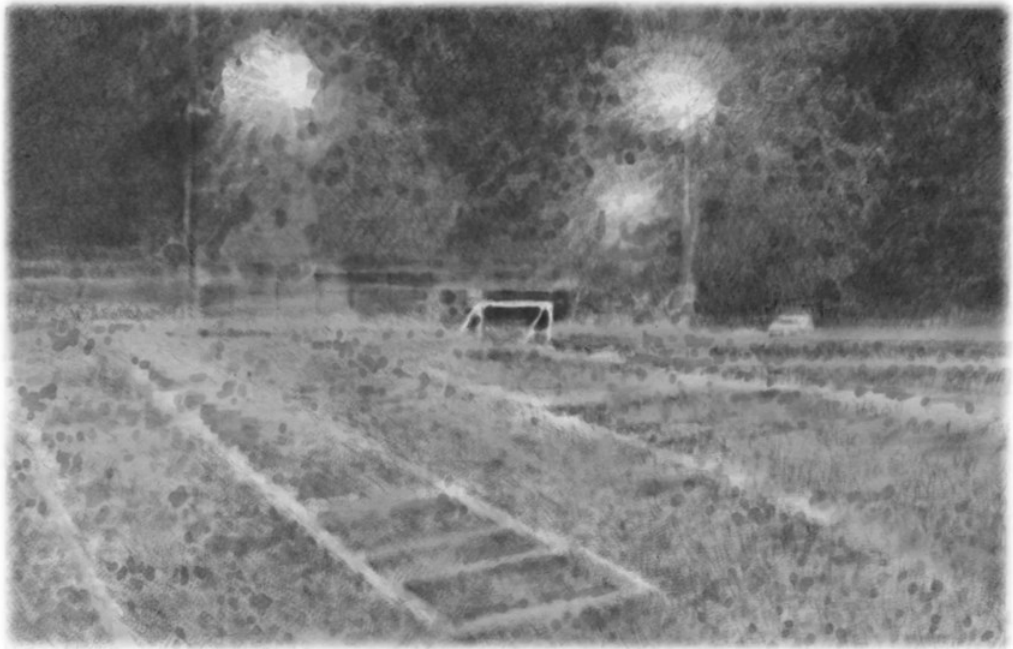
The U-Bootwaffe provides its sailors with its own personal train, the BdU Zug which takes us without hassles straight to Paris and then to Germany. After that we go to our individual destinations.

Four days later, detoured by damaged rails from a bombing raid, I make it home.

And we are all happy to be reunited at least for a few weeks. My parents still have their health, even if they and even I are years older. The war has aged us all; at least those who have not yet been killed.

And when it is time to return to base, we make our farewells with a hug and a handshake. I will be brave for my parents for I am a Kriegsmarine officer wearing a U-Boat war badge and an iron cross, second class ribbon. I will not cry.





Soccer Mom's Brillo

She could be attractive if she remembered
but she has left them again
to drive to where they played earlier today.

Now, in the dark she fumbles
with the safety belt buckle
and reaches inside her purse
for the pipe and the lighter
and lights the piece in the Brillo,
where the glowing smoke will dissolve into
her life
and for a few blessed minutes she is at peace,
alone
with hell, beside the empty soccer field.

Sojourns

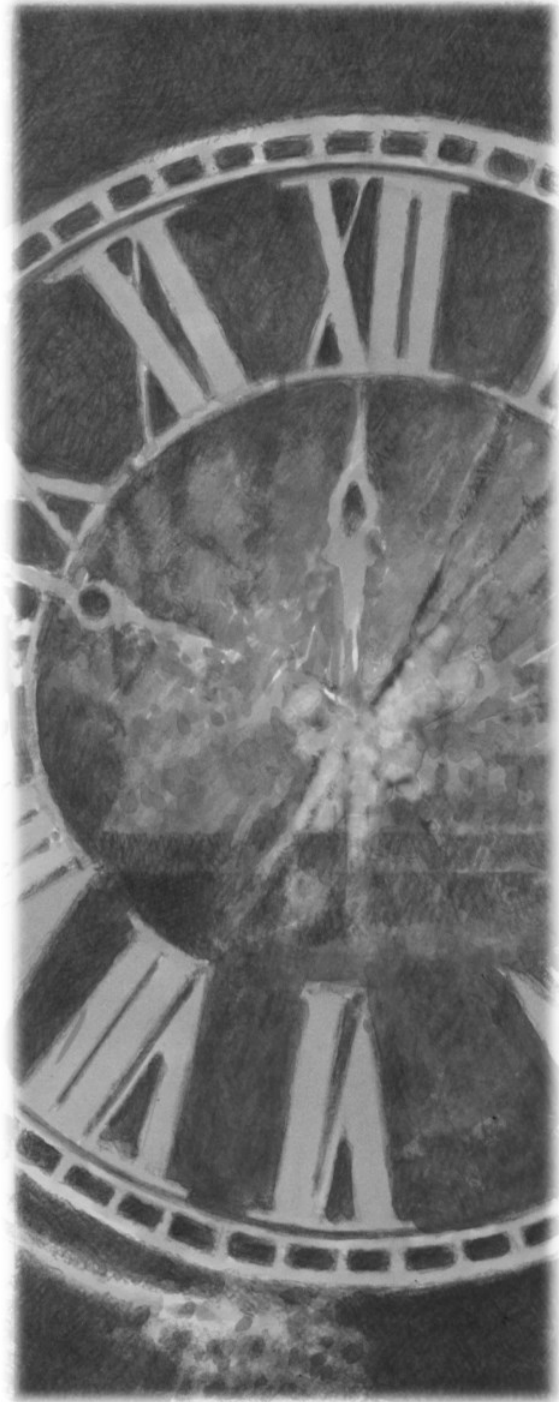
*When bath the nightfall come
ere its time?*

Dawn came sooner
to wake into the new carnage
of slaughtering
seconds, minutes, and hours,
casting the worn out shell of
another day aside.

One more makes how many?

Until the breathless end pleases
and the clock hands are
meaningless...

"Yet, how pray then,"
(she just had to go and say)
"do we begin to count the days
anew?"

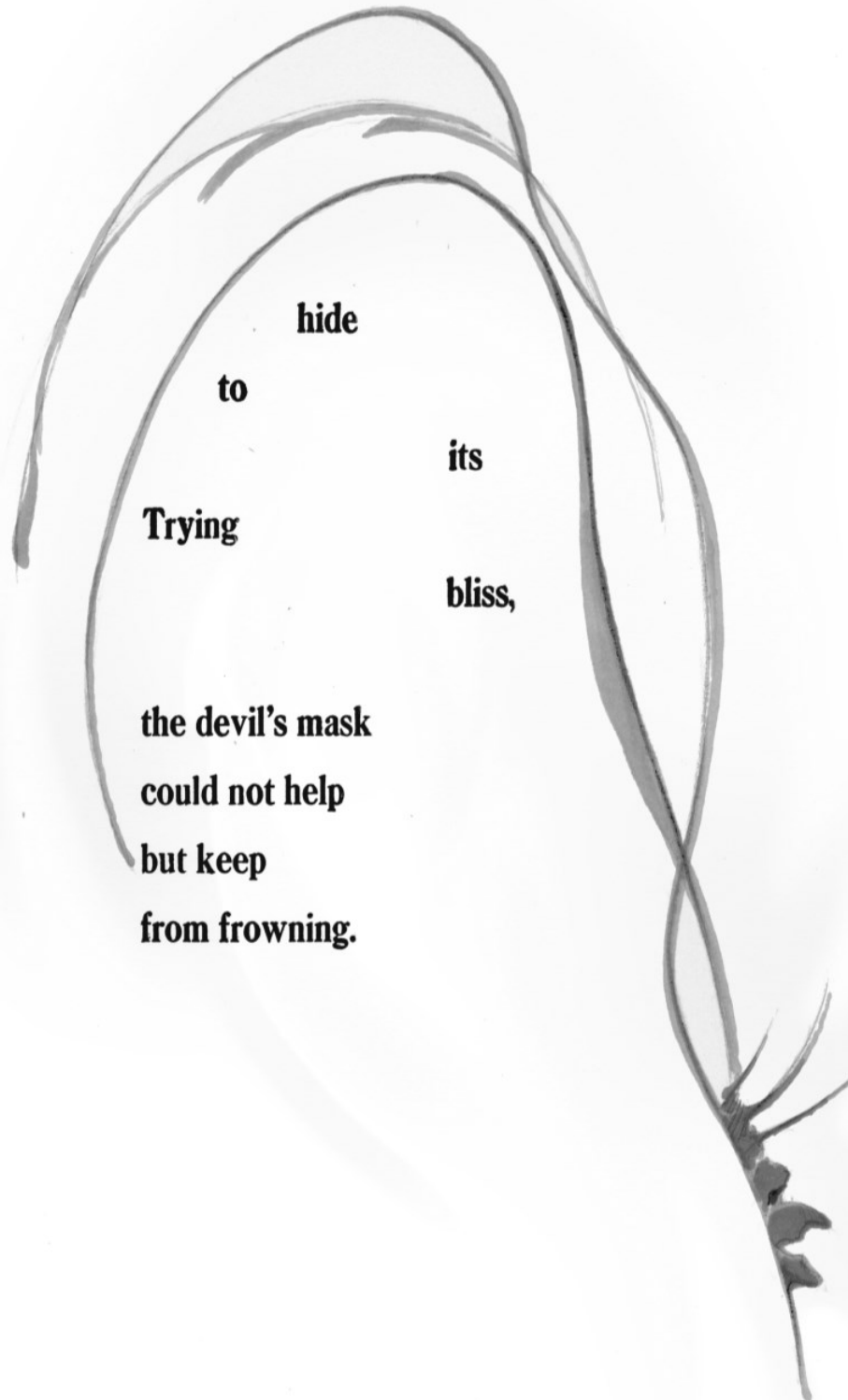


Solace Given So Freely

Now Tom,
the small horned man was
conflicted, though
fortunately comforted by
his pal, the hooded thin man
with lopsided eyes
who kept telling him in
somewhat muffled words,
that it wasn't how long his
horns were that mattered,
but how sharp his
tapered points had been
honed and neatly polished.



Something Amiss



hide

to

its

Trying

bliss,

the devil's mask

could not help

but keep

from frowning.

Sounding

Read the passenger list
floating in the liner listing
the cargo manifest
of items bound for the display
somewhere ninety-five years in the future.

The calm waves lapped at thirty hundred
thousand
bubbles
coming up from below
where they have clung to topcoats
fluttering like butterflies
with coat tail wings brushing against
swollen
top hats
wrapped in white silken scarves
surrounded by words that could not
be salvaged nor sounds
that would ever be heard.



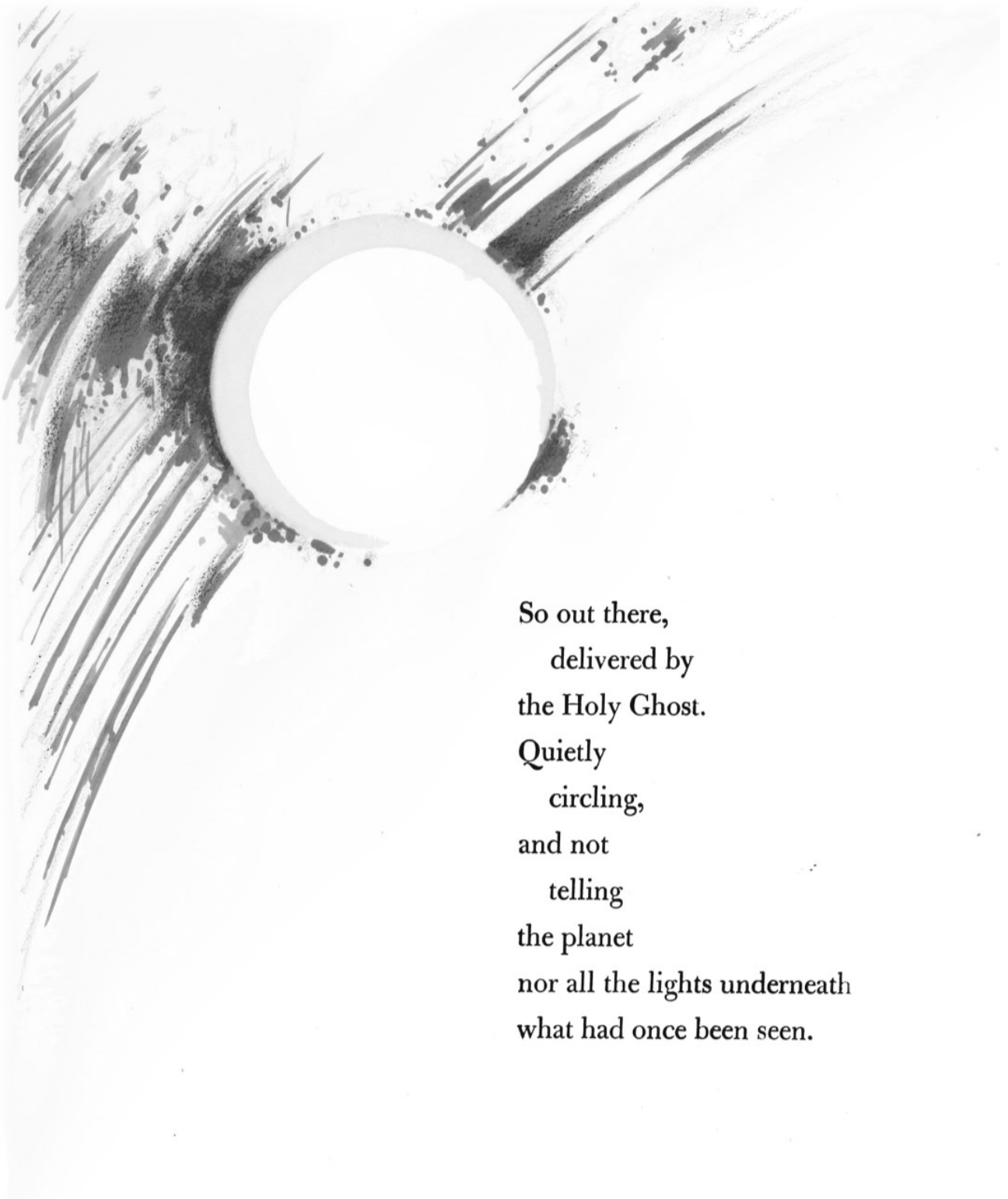
Sowing the Rapture of Shells

And they rendered unto man the blast of shell...

To free the tree,
to raise it from
its
roots
cradling
green clad
limbs
branching
underneath,
reaching to
touch the
surface,
to see the sky
and
leave this
bleak
dark torn land
behind.



Sphere Hoards the Sun



So out there,
delivered by
the Holy Ghost.
Quietly
circling,
and not
telling
the planet
nor all the lights underneath
what had once been seen.

Splashing in the Stream



Unbound colors on the ceiling
swirling around the mirror ball spinning;

and to remain seated while there is
so much music would be so senseless...

that suddenly moving into the oval spots of light,
she is on the floor to splash
into the flowing colors
as she and the others are embraced by the crashing waves
of the brazen dynamic sounds.



Steps

And so I found you once again. . .

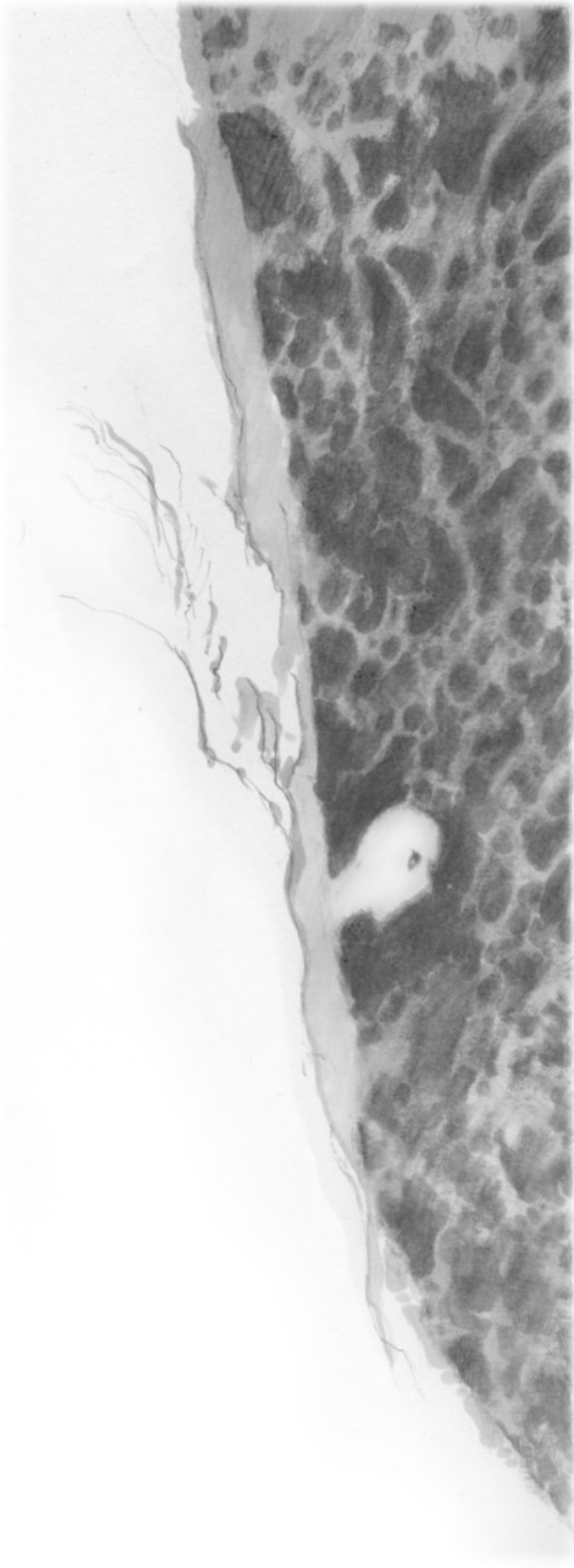
“Juggernaut over Holland”

“Combat”

“They Flew to Fame”

“Bitter Lotus”

just books beside the photograph
where we were just another page.



Stone Spirit Curiously Watches the Winds

Hearing sounds within
his mountain,
he went toward the surface
while feeling
the curiously formed
vibrations touch his
spirit body.

And once outside, he
saw the turbulent winds
and thought of earlier
times when winding breezes
vanished
over streaming lava quietly
cooling into hardening rock.

Stretching the Purpose



Oh, this crazy thing
in the air flying,
anonymously worn
Fu Manchu and the
happy critter;
everybody doing what
they needed to do,
hoping,
maybe even knowing,
how
it would turn out for the best.

Such as it is

A quick medical and dental examination before the next patrol. Teeth okay, health okay; the skin rash from the damp boat has cleared up. Mustn't get sick, the Oberfunkmeister knows his radios and listening devices; his medical training leaves a little to be desired.

Luggage warehoused, one last night on the town as some choose to drink to near oblivion. I drink only two bottles of Beck's beer. The third one was tempting, but I want a clear head when we start our patrol tomorrow from the protective bunker.

Going through the boat; the second watch officer has provisioned us well. He has the radio codes and the navigator has the necessary sea charts.

One bad omen though, our excellent sign painter was reassigned to become a Mechanikermaat so we use a crewman who was a house painter before the war to repaint our turtles. They are not the same.

The men come aboard looking every bit the elite crew that they are. For some, it is an effort as their muffled hangover curses betray how they really feel while they stow what little gear they can carry with them.

At the designated hour we assemble on deck, and I report to the Kaleu that all men are accounted for and the boat is ready to set sail. We exchange hand shakes with bunker workers and another crew who have assembled to see us off.

Then it is time to start our sixth patrol.





Sulking Petra

Petra wearing the demon cloak; it got so bad...

Listen, I'm happy to announce:

Sulking Petra, curious of course, was listening to the evangelists' arguments at 19th and Oak, downtown at two in the afternoon. He became acquainted with self obsession

(absorption)

although he had no real idea of the seriousness of his problem. And listen, he stopped speaking in swine tongues but listen,

despite this accomplishment he was still palling around with the African Dung Beetle hibernating in the dark wet bottom of his dung ball shaft.

But, in spite of it all, tonight was the night, kissing under the bleachers, under

the clouds and stars, staring at the moon and more. And when it was over, waking and walking out in the cool night listening to the crickets, brushing the dried dung off his cloak, he listened to the other one still asleep.

Petra, looked at the damp red fabric in the dark; Petra made promises he thought he meant to keep,

even though

he wiggled all the while in his dark red suit,

crossing his fingers, smiling, sneezing, snickering...

Lying Petra no longer sulked as he flicked his glowing finger and lit a Viceroy cigarette. Then after exhaling the smoke stolen from the other, he danced a bit of the Macarena, and whistled as he tiptoed through the vacant lot, taking his pack of new found lies to share with his old pal back at his jealous pal's renovated lair.

Surface Alarm on the Bay of Biscay

We leave the U-Boat pen with another boat to rendezvous with our escort. Crew members not needed below stay on the deck in case we hit a mine.

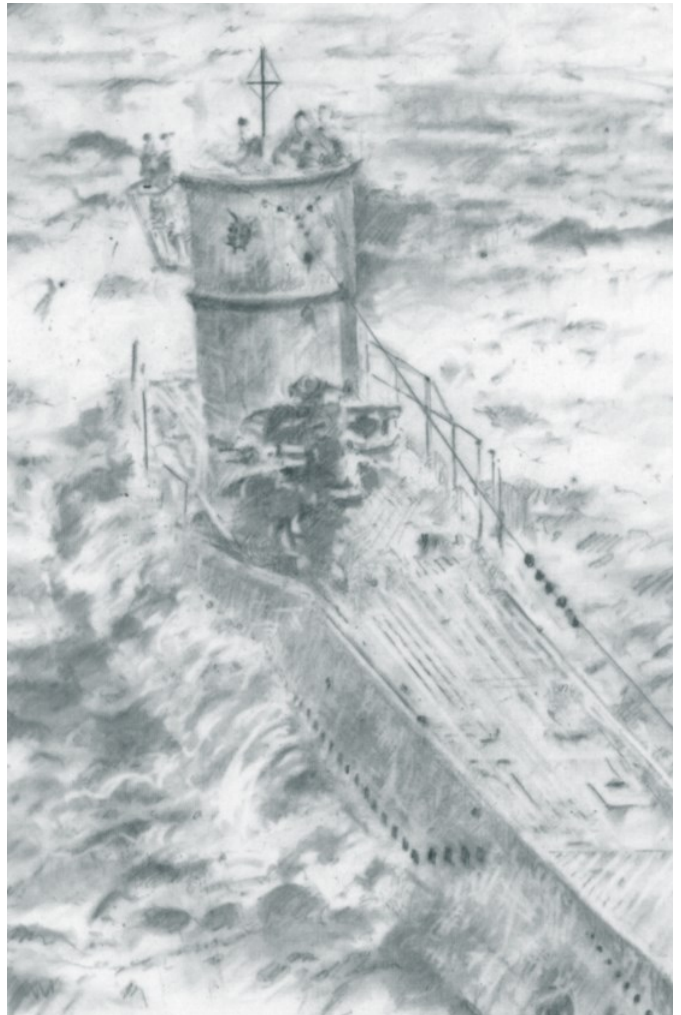
The band is missing but the women with the flowers are there. Later as the men go inside, the flowers are gathered and tossed overboard. No ill feeling toward the girls, just another sailor's superstition about flowers being bad luck on board.

What is not a superstition is the reality of the increasing number of enemy aircraft that seeks us out as we cross the Bay of Biscay to reach the Atlantic. Even at night we are not safe. Our U-Boats have been spotted in the dark and attacked by aircraft using radar and searchlights.

So we now carry Metox, a VHF radar warning receiver mounted inside the radio cabin. Outside we carry a ridiculous antenna in the shape of a cross made of two pieces of wood from packing crates.

As the "Biscay Cross" is turned to scan the horizon, Metox will more than likely eventually pick up an enemy radar signal and sound its alarm over our speakers.

And as we are crash diving once more, the watch throws the wooden cross and its cable inside the conning tower and I follow and close the hatch above me.

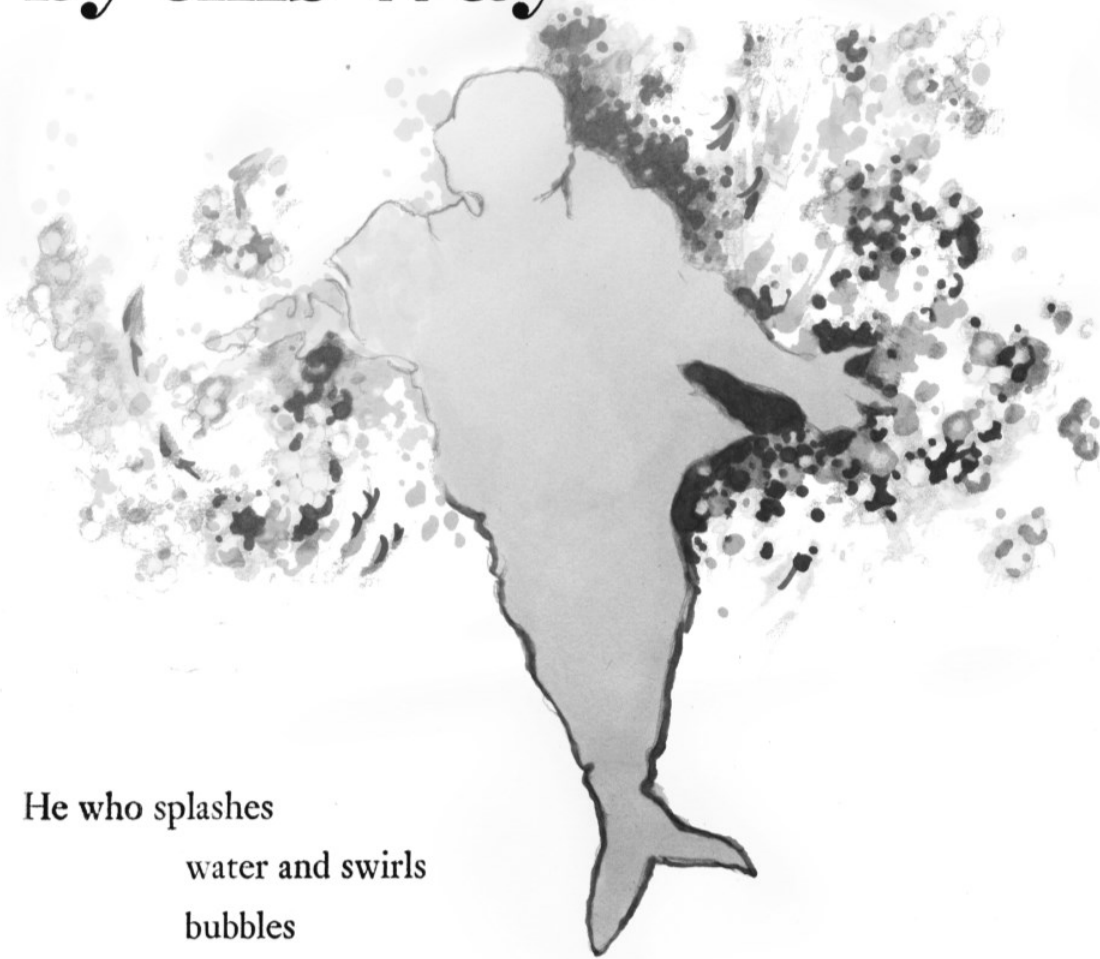


Survivors, 2 April 2010

Coming in
to go thru
and come back outside,
leaving the inside behind
...and oh Wow
it is just A-ok
for today,
and we had survived, "keep fixing it till it's broke,"
and I had survived October 18, 1993.



Swimming by this Way



He who splashes

water and swirls

bubbles

around

the silver and red flashes of scales and

fins was thinking:

"Mama bear me again

and make me fierce,"

with an empty soul full of noisy ghosts

keeping these tiny scary fishes far away.



Syn Knelt in Holy Water

Syn vowed to pray,
for sailors long gone to sea;
 of men with hard passionate hands
that held her briefly,
during their many short landfall nights.

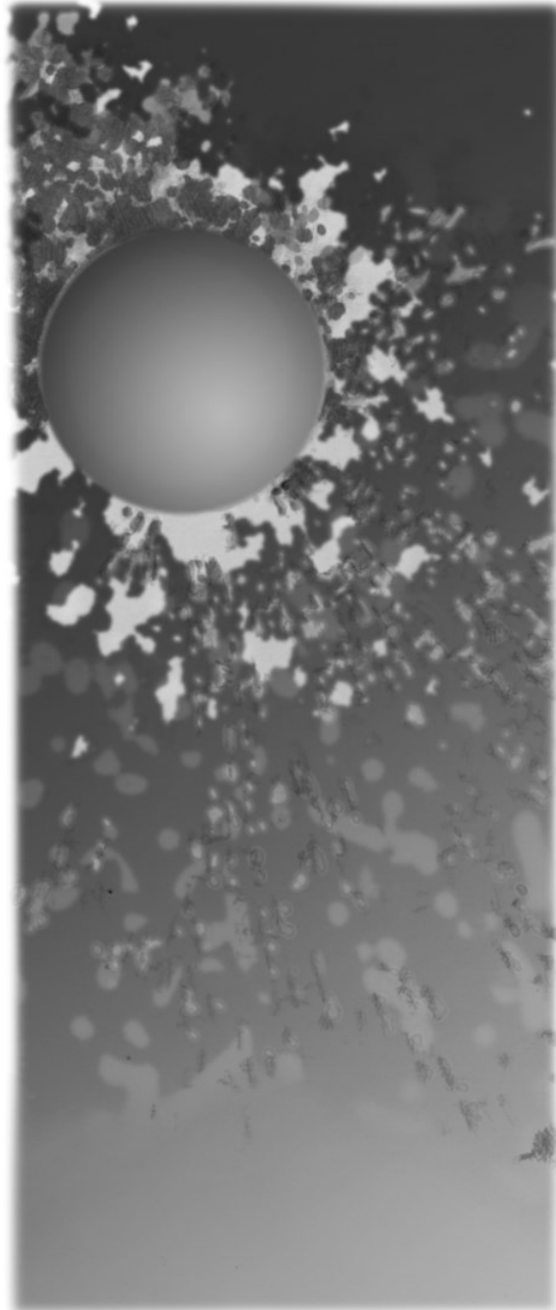
And now she listens
to the water that carries
 to the shores, their tales
of sails, Syn
and sin, and other women
they had
 known once before.

Taking off the Shoes to Beat the Wings

And when they had
left
and then looked back,
it was so different
and yet it was still
the same,
so they smiled and
turned to return. . .

and
from that very
moment,

they knew how glad
they were,
that they had not
turned into saints.

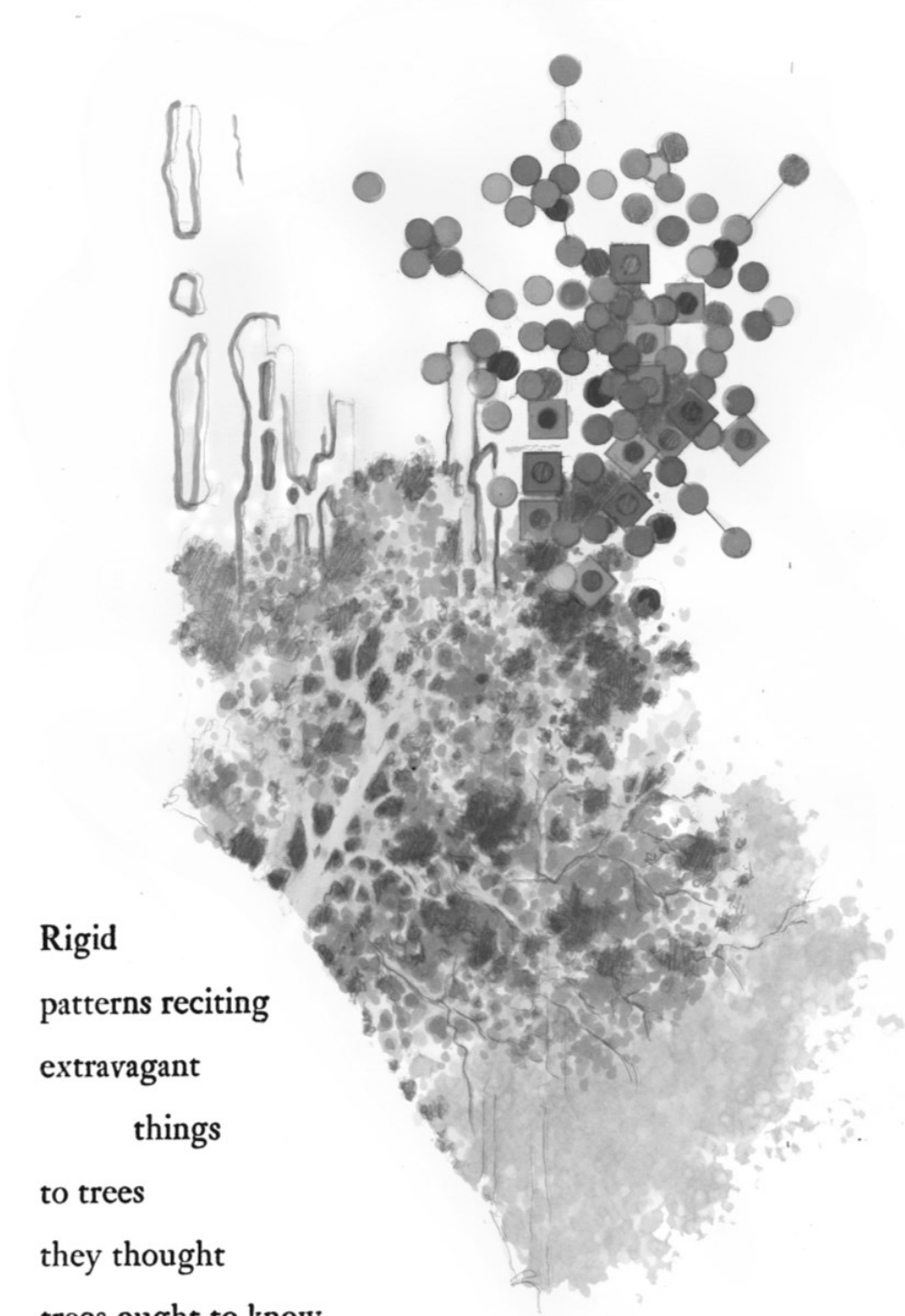


Tasks of a Gestalt Kinda Thing

Some nine light years away,
the good inhabitants
who
glided about on thoughts
in the air
twitched disapprovingly
at those who stood fast
on the ground and had
renounced all such
unworldly pretensions
and labored as their God
would have them,
holding on to the rustic
handles of sturdy plows while
they worked and sweated
in their fields
ignoring the intrusion of the
authorities' red reflectors
stuck on the back of their
black unadorned
thought-formed buggies.



Tell these Random Trees Things Unheard



Rigid
patterns reciting
extravagant
things
to trees
they thought
trees ought to know.

Terra Cotta Dancers

Festival dancer
tethered to smooth clay faces,
 flowing,
 following,
 snapping
back
at the man who counts his paces;
his festival dress
coated with the dun of broken earth
and
his faces glazed in frenzied red.



The Bell of the Moment

The bell of the moment
chiming clamoring sounds
summoning, summoning,
ending
when the son buries the
mother
as the daughter he never
had.



The Choice of Ancestors

Junker Juggernaut

We will stop them

We will stop them

Wailing in all the terror forms
warnings and
pleadings for
sexual groping under the incendiary raid.

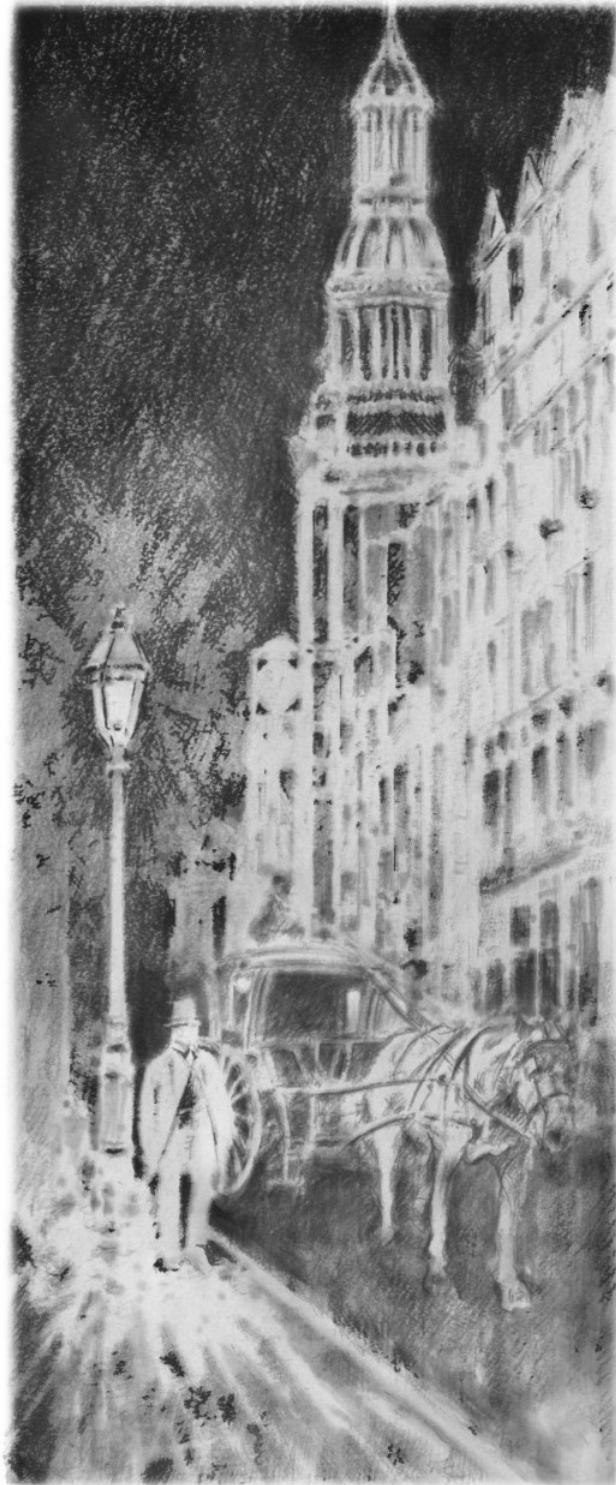
Flames of their candles flickered brighter
with each
blast
behind the black out curtains
stuffed in jagged window holes
in the only window left.

It was not so much to keep the world out as
to
keep theirs in.



The Coachman's Fare

A thought of the
Victorian night
where the gaslight
lamp of the
street light
casts no shadow from
the solitary figure
waiting for his turn
to give a shilling
fare to
the coachman coming
to take his anxious
passenger
down to the ferryman
waiting by the
warm waters
of a
dark river running old.



The Remembering

The wind reminded
her of how
the leaves spiraled
upwards and how the
four memories
walked that day
through
the strong gusts and
have continued
to walk ever since
whenever
she wears the blue
feathered hat she
wore that autumn day.



Theory of Relativity

Crowded Together:
before the anticipation
of the Big Bang Theory:

Albert Einstein
and John Dillinger:

Before the anticipation of
God
sitting off the explosion
and watching all
the free will going willy-nilly

from here to there.

From the ones who vanished leaving their shadows etched in stone
to the proud steel man officer who left a widow and three daughters behind. . .

Strange isn't it though?

How poor Albert, the pacifist, forgot to tally
up such an impressive atomic score,
while John, the gunman, looked back, too reluctant to mention his anymore.



Thieving the Gifts Not Shared

Petra?

Turning at the name
he hadn't heard
mentioned for over
two hundred years.

Petra?

Could it be?

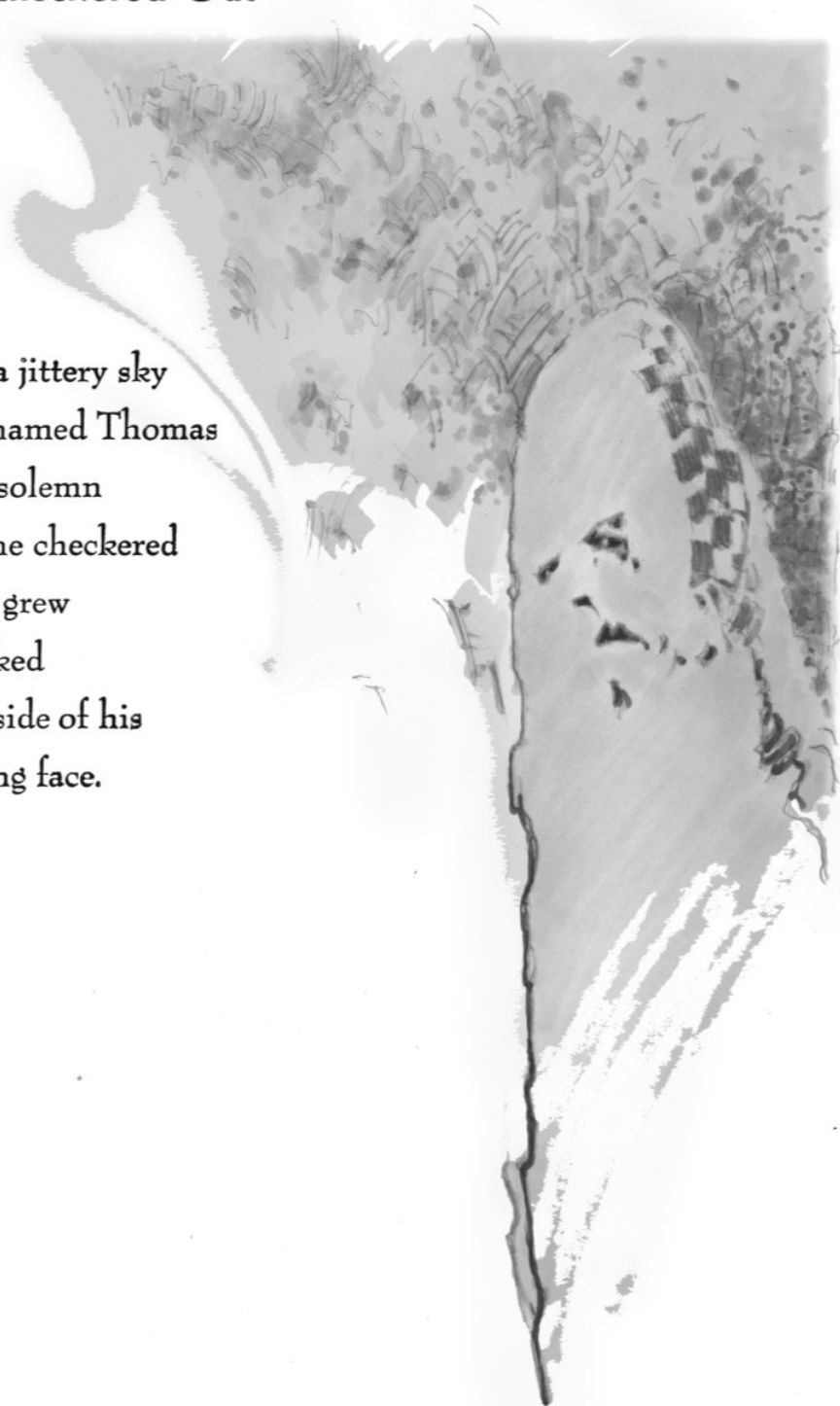
Petra, old buddy,
old pal of mine . . .

and then there was
the
left over matter
of the temple gifts
that went missing
and were never
shared.

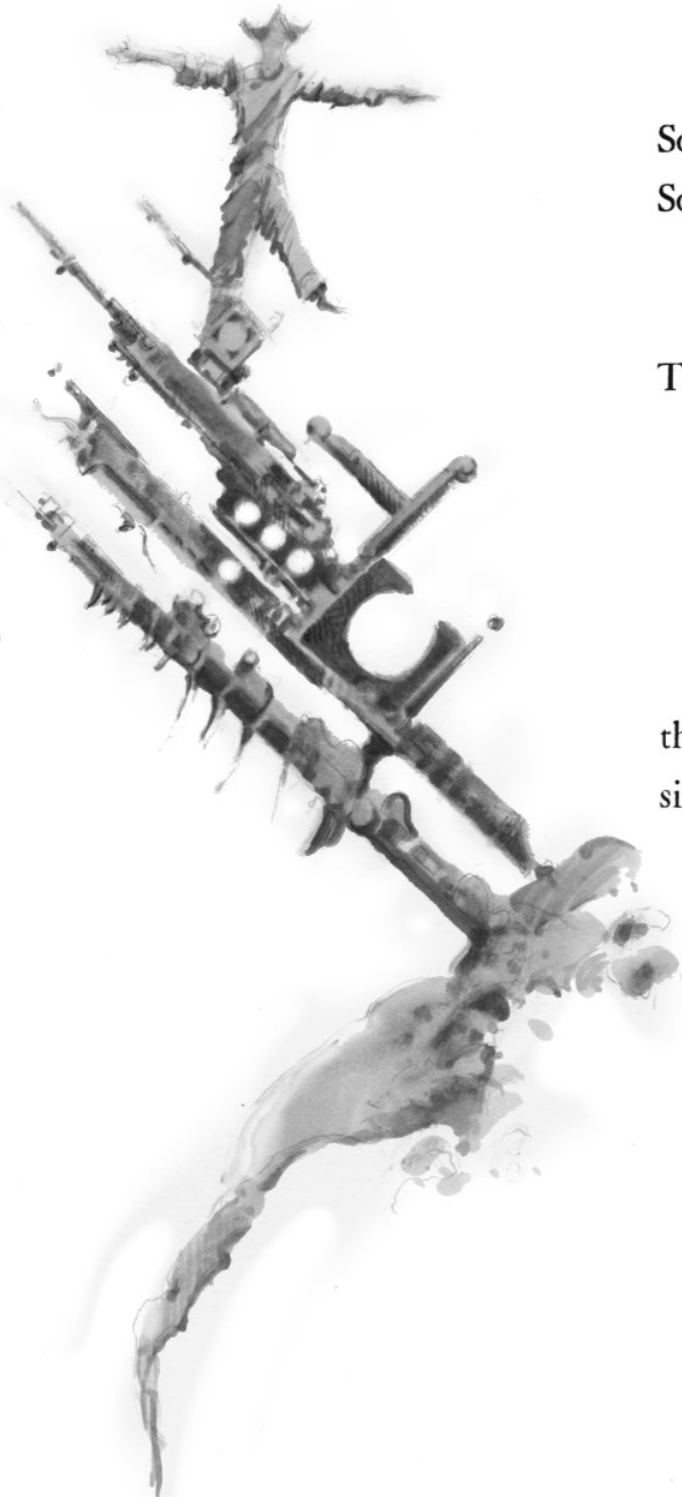


Thomas Feeling a Bit Checkered Out

Under a jittery sky
a blob named Thomas
looked solemn
while the checkered
pattern grew
unchecked
on the side of his
twitching face.



Tip of Balance



So careful,

So careful

... not to

(re)move.

The consequences

of the machines

... of this machine

have never truly

been explained.

... So curious though,

thinking about it,

since when have the

makers last been

seen?

To Assert in a Sudden Moment Ending



Three arrogant beings
awed,
suddenly realizing how
unimportant their
importance
had always really been.

To Drift in a Red Sky Coming

Glowing,
softly clustered
together.

Drifting,

Drifting

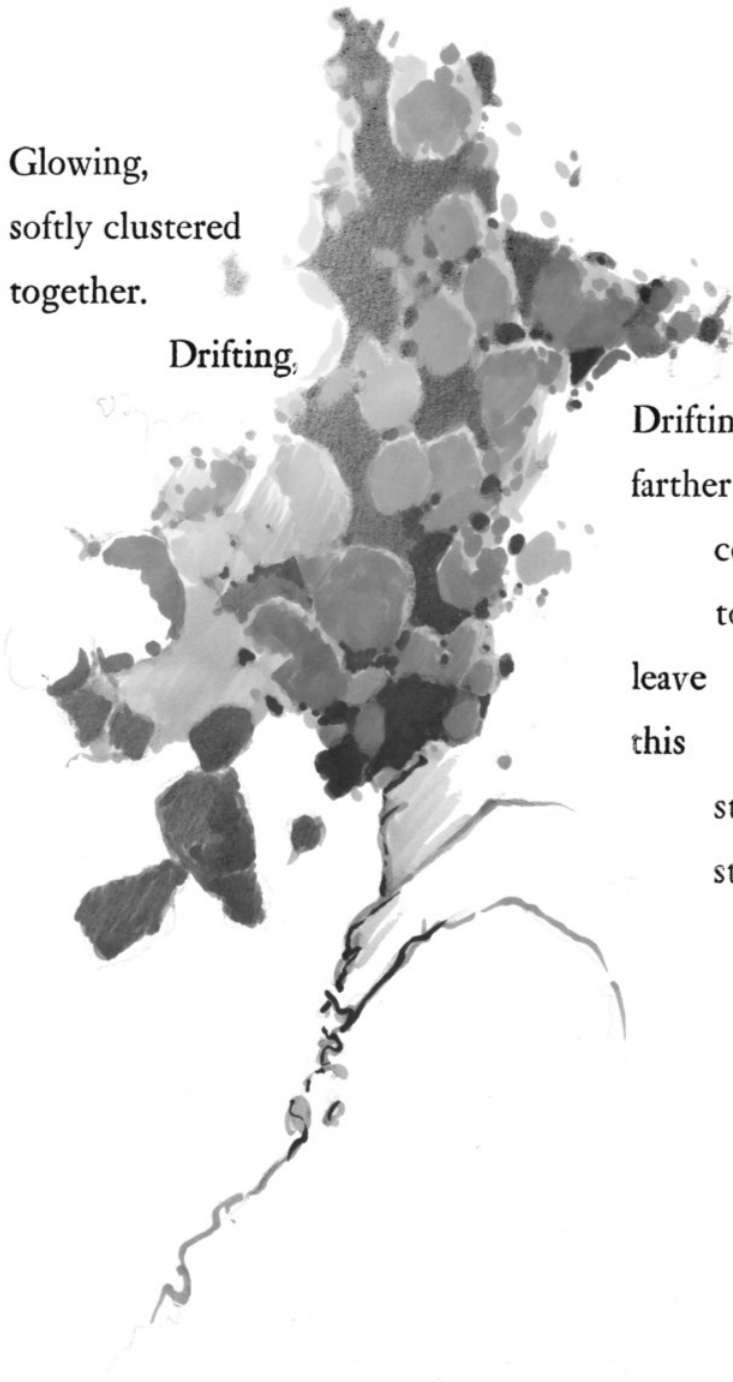
farther apart;

coming back brightly,
to finally expand and

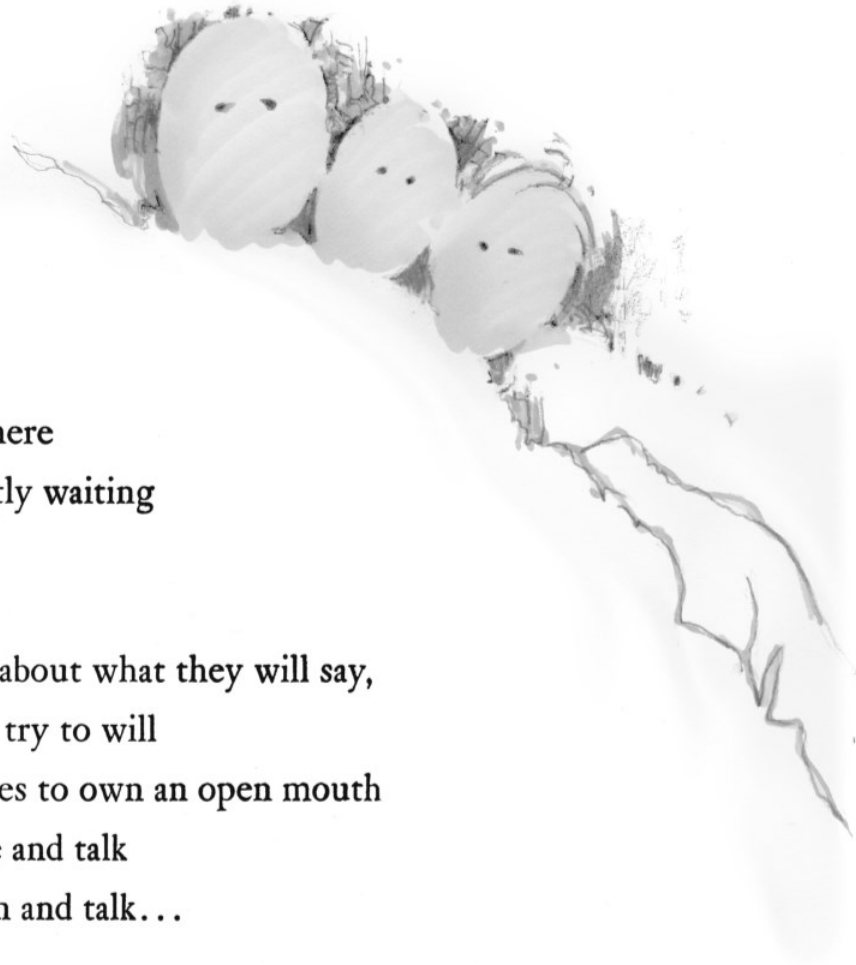
leave

this

strange beautiful red,
stone world
behind.



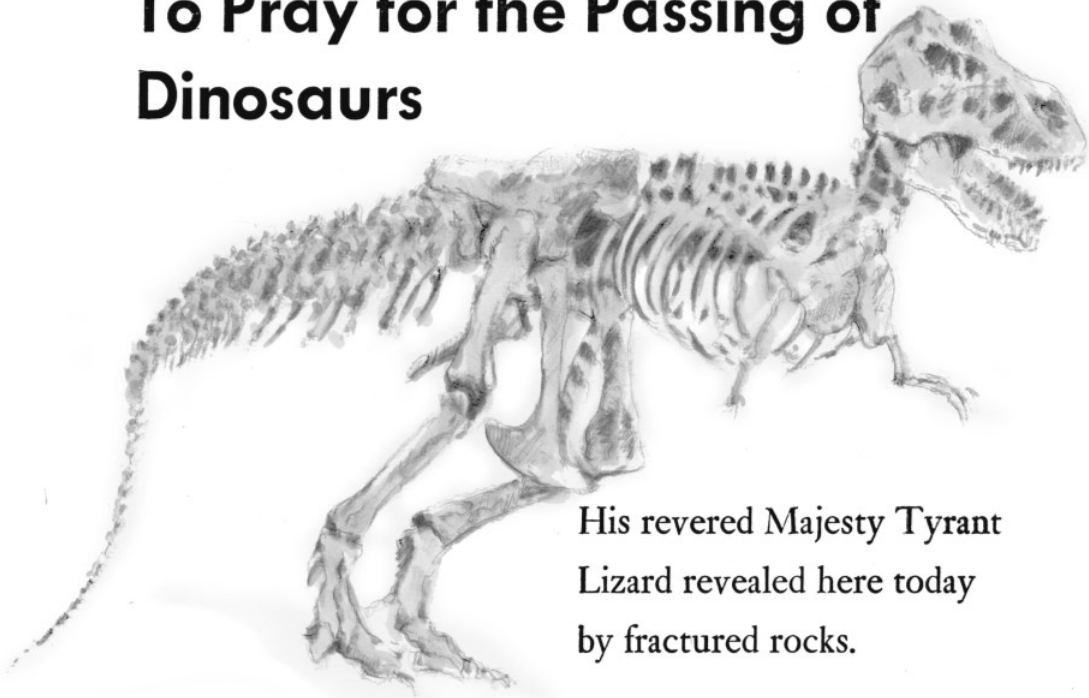
To Know about Balls of Crap



Sitting there
impatiently waiting
to talk,
and
thinking about what they will say,
they will try to will
themselves to own an open mouth
and smile and talk
and frown and talk...

yet, they would listen better
to their own
oral balderdash
if they could only will themselves to open some ears.

To Pray for the Passing of Dinosaurs



His revered Majesty Tyrant
Lizard revealed here today
by fractured rocks.

In this strata his fossilized
bones mingle with the
remains of others who tried
to flee when he appeared as
they were gathering leaves.

*Yet, even his lizard dynasty would end as all were smothered
under years of endless, rainless clouds.*

And on that morning when the sun reappeared, how soon
came the rainbow with a promise to never render such
clouds again; how soon the angelic proclamation that the
tyrants had been blessed and their worldly sins forgiven?

To Search for what Cannot be Found

The "Happy Times" are over. Convoys seemingly vanish to nowhere and when they do appear, they are protected by destroyers. Enemy aircraft are everywhere.

I am on watch and below me, the routine of another day in our boat. In the bow, the torpedo mate oversees the servicing of the torpedoes. In the wireless station, the various frequencies are monitored and messages written down. The Kaleu sits on his bunk with the log book and pencils a brief report to send to the BdU.

In the control room the navigator is plotting our course. The two planesmen and the diving manifold operator are waiting for the next crash dive.

Past the petty officers' room, the Smutje works in the galley conjuring up his next meal.

In the noise and heat of the diesel engine room the stokers work their six hour shift and make a running repair. The Electro-Obermaschinist watches over the electric motors as they recharge the batteries.

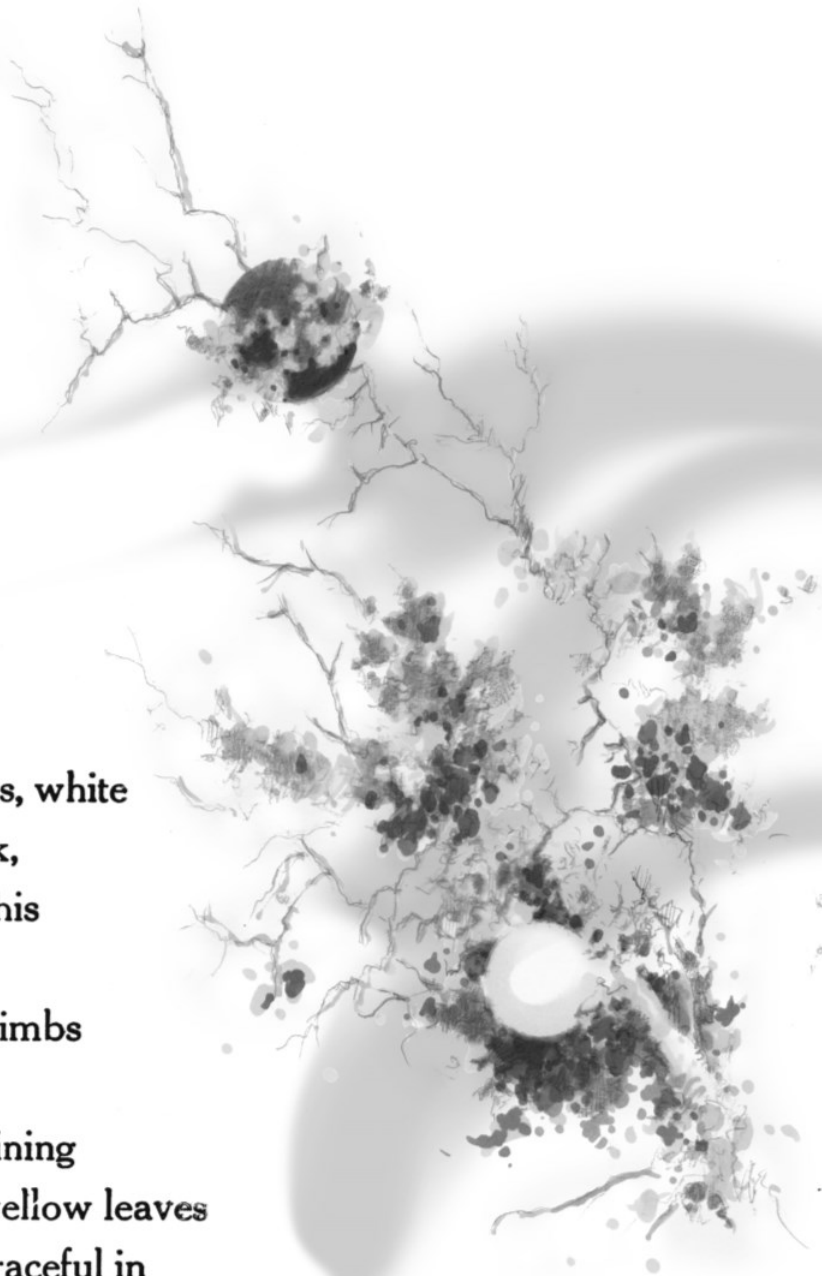
Those men off-duty, if they are not trying to sleep, may read, write, play games or talk of God, the universe and women.

And in time, all of us will wait for the blue light over the water closet door to go off so we can conduct our necessary business.



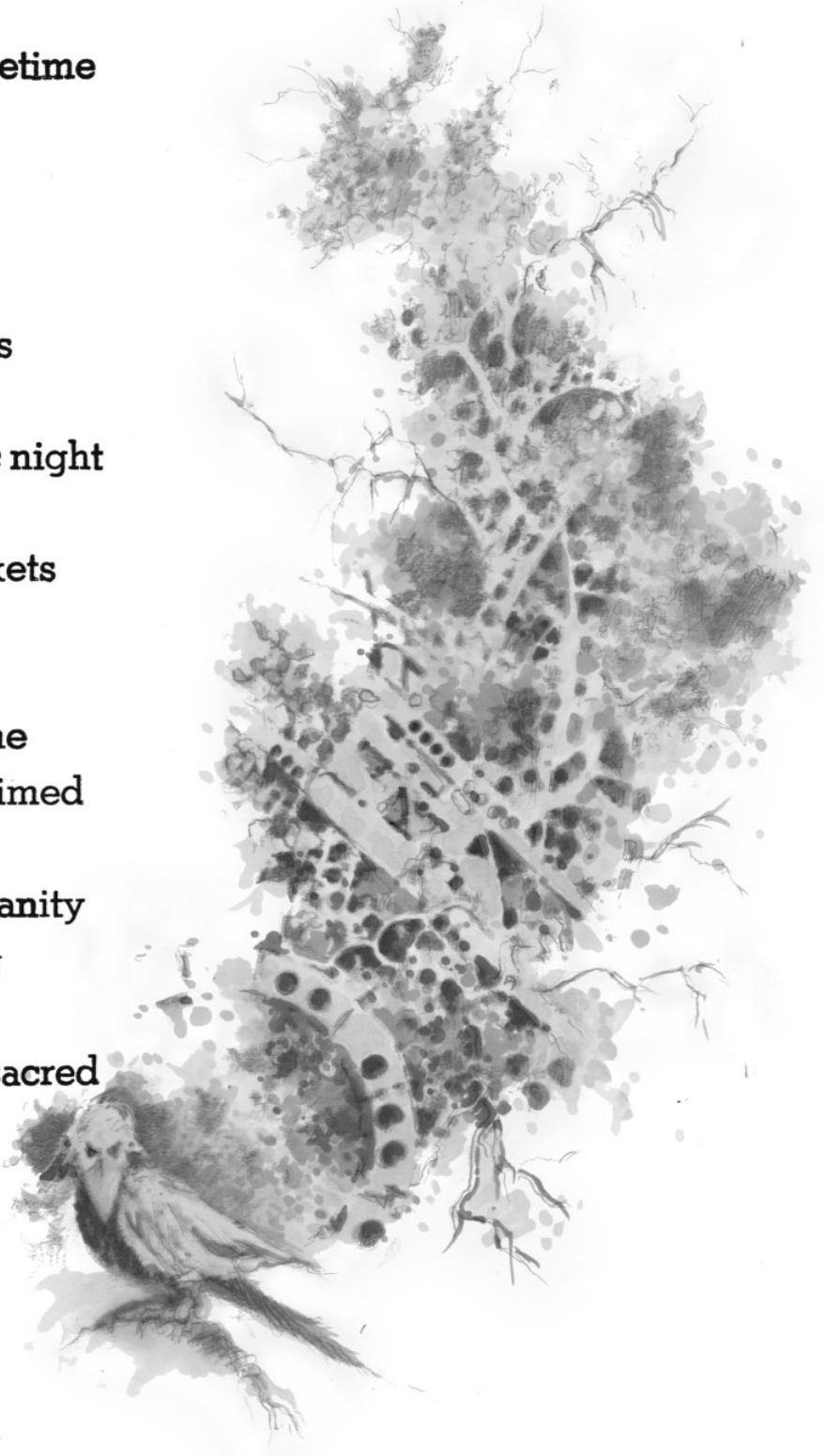
To Share What Is Left Behind

Two balls, white
and black,
held by this
year's
growing limbs
next to
the remaining
red and yellow leaves
ever so graceful in
the ways of sharing
trees.



To that Which Fell Once So Sacred through the Sky

To revisit half a lifetime
later
where the growth
of roots and vines
have grown
through the debris
that fell
during that frantic night
when
bright leather jackets
and feathers were
ignited
and his crew on the
ground that had aimed
so well
laughed at the insanity
of falling, flapping
torches
that he now sees sacred
as they still
spiral thirty years
later through his
mind.



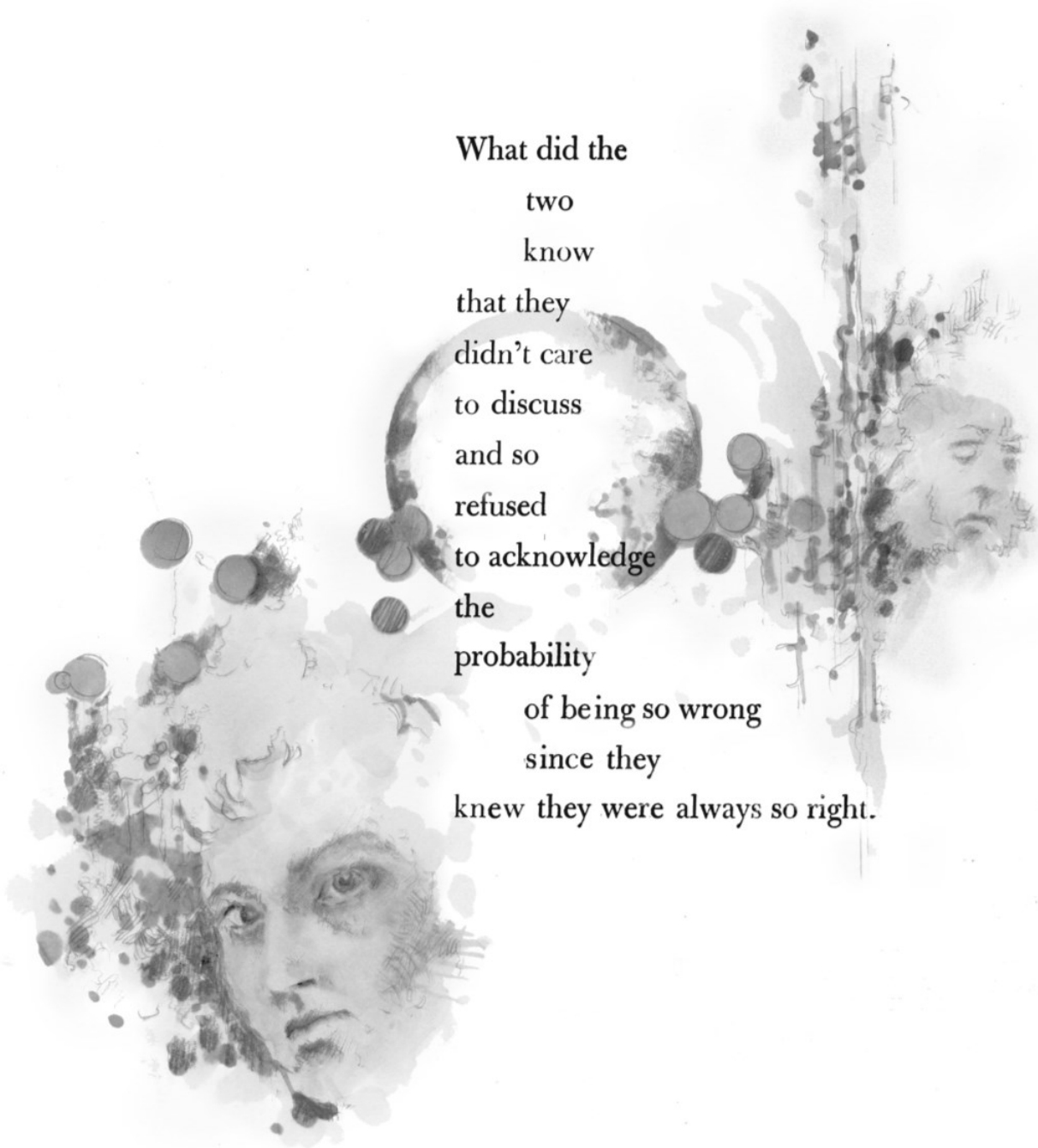
To Walk by Ritual and Stay as in Stone and Green

From the stalactite room
the Ritual Man
walked from the cavern
into a darkness
surrounding all the
light spots
that the winter night sky
had to offer
and then was compelled
by the guile of oak
to become
the ruggedness of bark
as wooden rings gathered
behind him and
green leaves grew over
stalagmites
slowly forming beneath him
as days by sun
grew into nights by moon.



**Too Much
has
Rarely Been Said
Too Little**

What did the
two
know
that they
didn't care
to discuss
and so
refused
to acknowledge
the
probability
of being so wrong
since they
knew they were always so right.



Torpedo Los

I can hardly believe that I am looking at a solitary tanker, T2 class-10,000 tons, 4,000 meters distant, bearing two-nine-oh, moving fast at twelve knots. When the Kaleu says "Eins WO, UZO," I respond automatically with motions from earlier U-Boat officer training that I have yet used in action.

With the UZO binoculars on the pedestal, I call out the estimated speed and range of the tanker, its bearing, torpedoes' degree of spread and depth to the Oberbootsmann at the torpedo data computer inside the conning tower.

The bow doors are open and tubes one through four are flooded and ready . . .

"Los!"

Seconds pass into minutes and then a quick flash, followed almost twelve seconds later by a dull roar. The Kaleu whistles under his breath as the fireball grows bigger. The tanker was full of petrol.

He turns to look at me, "Lucky shot or not, it was a good shot." Then almost like a salute, he taps the brim of his dirty white hat and adds, "Well done."

On my sixth patrol, I have just sunk my first ship and the Kaleu has added another ten thousand tons to his total.



Totem

Carve the ash
into a mask.
Listen to the
drumming
echoing off the
earth stained surface,
where the many
colored
splinters drop and
fall
into open waiting totem
claws.



Trading Post

Western Cody knocked back a shot,
.45 bullets back of belt next to bar,
eyes intent on the trading post's
doors swinging busily back and forth.

*For one could never trust the next
hombre sauntering in asking for
a drink*

to cut the dust and slake the thirst.

Then Cody turned and listened to
loud guttural voices grousing about
something called a putsch, and if it
was better planned it would go as
planned the next time around.

Rubbing his right index trigger finger through his yellow blond beard, Cody
stared at the curious Double Crossed Squared S brand that the strangers seem
to wrap so proudly around their sleeves. Yet, brand or not, he thought, what
kind of wranglers, such as these, would ever be caught dressed in such fancy
pressed shirts, straight black ties, and spotless jackboots.

*But then his icy blue eyes fell on the sleek lines of their sharp looking
eight-shot shooters.*

So Herr Cody, a man fast with a gun, yet faster with a pen, signed on with
their outfit before the hour was up. And when the ink had dried, the deal was
sealed as he raised his arm with his new blood brothers to salute to the piety of
purity and the loyalty of hate.

...and then they handed their newest recruit his tight little cap.

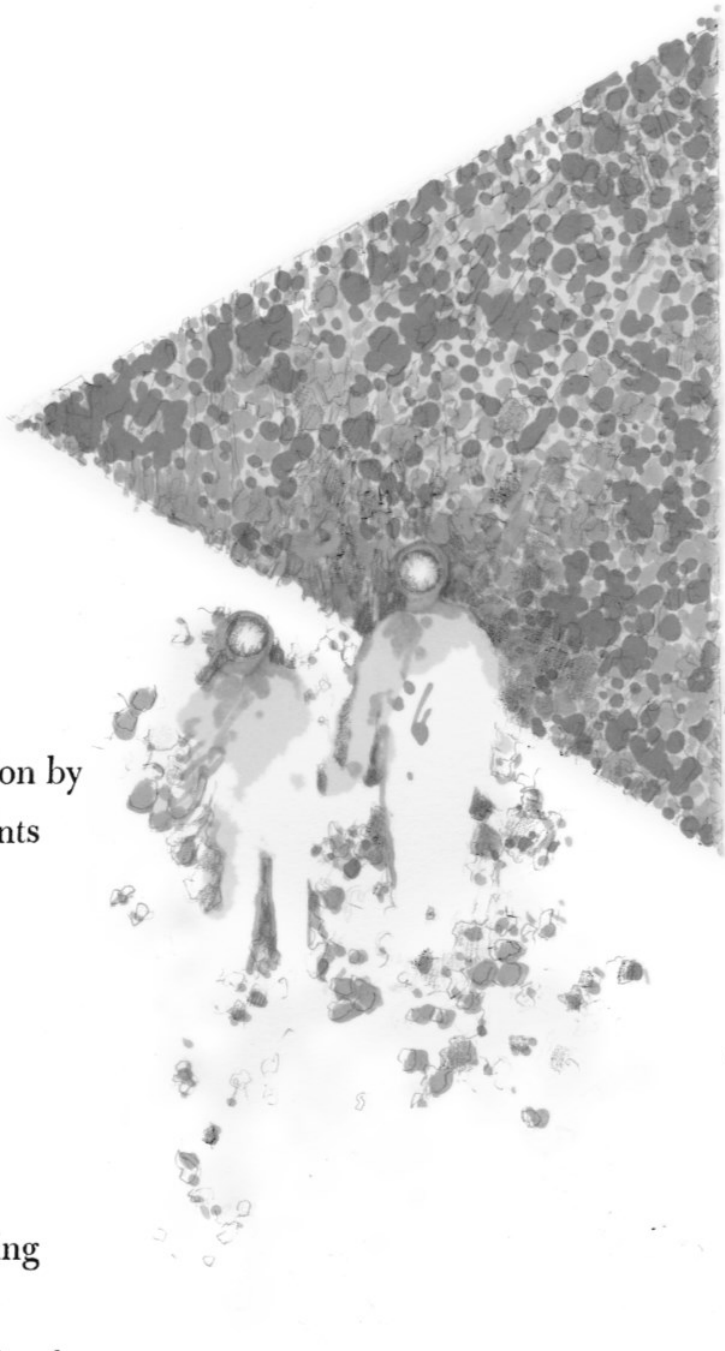
Thus he made one final toast and then winced as he inched up his sights on his
faithful old friend and put his faded gray Stetson to rest.

*And as the smoke was clearing, the crowd began cheering for hatricidal Cody and
his awesomely newfangled, machined not stamped, smoking hot, eight-shot shooter!*



Triangulation to Find the Gods

The attempted triangulation by
using two determined points
undertaken
to
find lost gods who were
hidden with
guides and angels
looking toward the
ruddy faces of walkers being
an approximation of
who they mostly intended to be.



Trilling

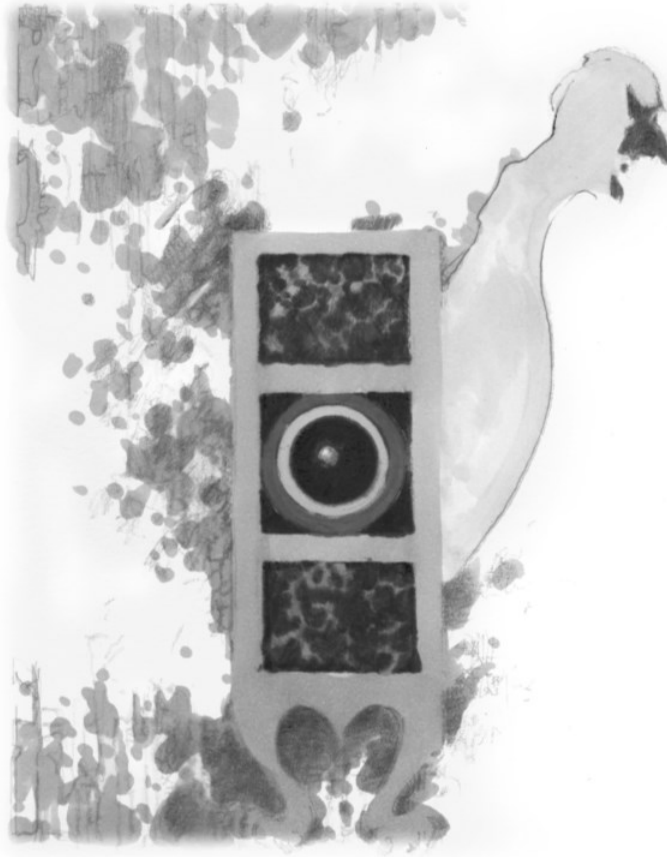
The wind is known
by the shrill sound
it makes

going
through

eroded holes
where
tired old stones
can only
try to live their
long lives
in humble silence.



Unabashed



The magician's isolated box
was not so different from
the others; however, there
was the slight problem of the
quirky
entity inside coming outside
seemingly during the most
inopportune times.

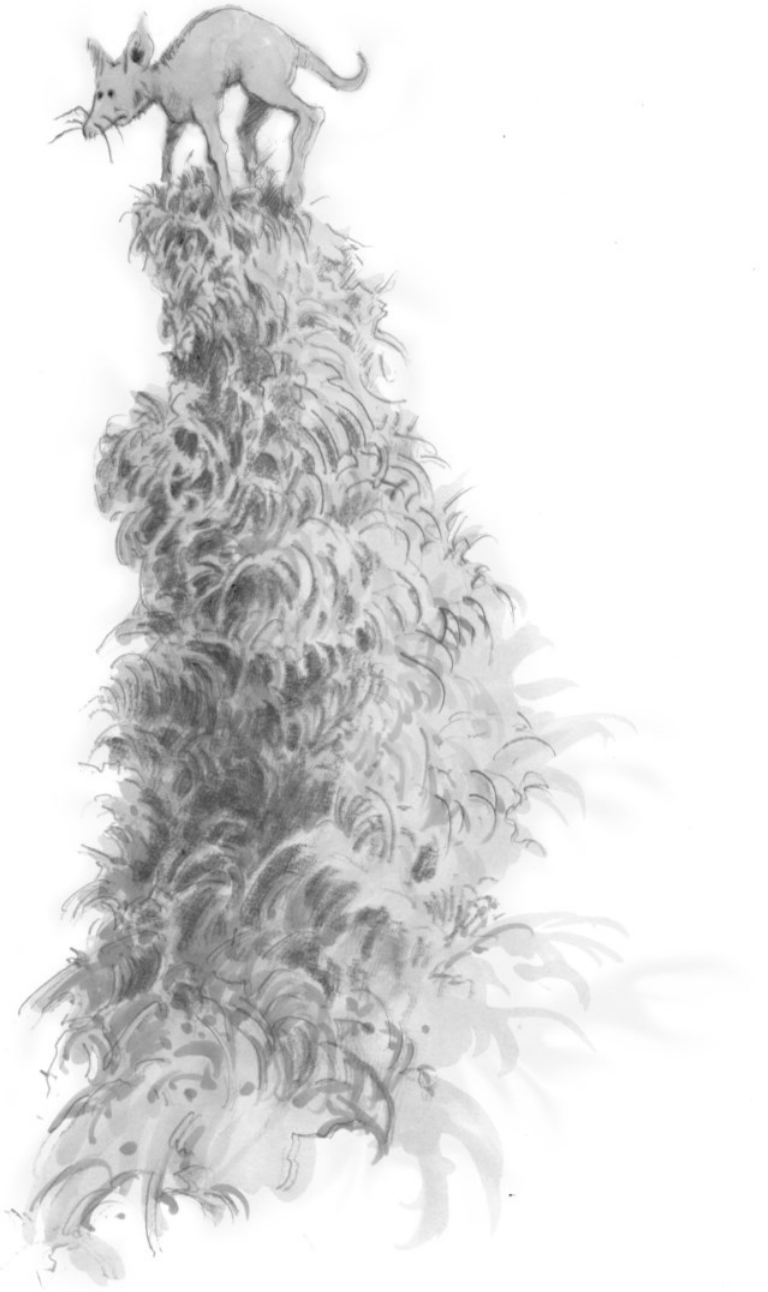
Unbalanced

Poor homely creature
tiptoeing back and forth
to try and remain balanced
on top of a tall haystack
placed there by the farmer's
hired help.

It had been difficult, but
he had gotten there by
sheer perseverance of his
own will, yet . . .

now that he was there,
he wondered
what there was to do.

So he crowned himself King
of the
Homely Creature Kingdom
and waited for someone to try
and usurp his straw throne
as he stayed there balanced
thinking kingly thoughts on
how
to do kindly kingly things.



Unbridled Petra

Pure Petra reformed, banking on his change.

And the day came when the morning came and the sun warmed Petra's face. He turned and looked at the long shadow he cast:

then he looked at the devil suit without its hood, shaded and cool on one side, redder, warmer, and lighter on the other.

And for the first time he saw how all this changed again when he turned and then how it changed again when he turned again.

And yea verily, Petra grew fascinated and wondered what else would change if he wore white. So he ventured to the five and dime (Woolworth's I think it was) at 19th and Oak and bought a linen sheet, 500 count thread, white, full size. Petra hung the familiar red suit on a hanger and left it in a dressing room and wrapped the linen bed sheet around his body and went out on the street singing of praises and blessings to those he passed.

And change was thrown at him and he thought how good the goodness of plenty felt.

So he didn't sulk, didn't lie and didn't lay with the maid. (except when the moon was out) And in time, Petra drew to him a congregation who sang with and praised their preacher and gathered coins to buy the preacher a new set of clothes. So Petra, reformed, preached and ministered to his flock and in time, yea verily, they were moved to buy him some flash gold chains so he could better preach the message.

And listen:

Petra worked up a self-righteous sweat one day at church and said ten percent did not account for inflation, so twenty would be more in line with the hard economic times.

And they bought it.

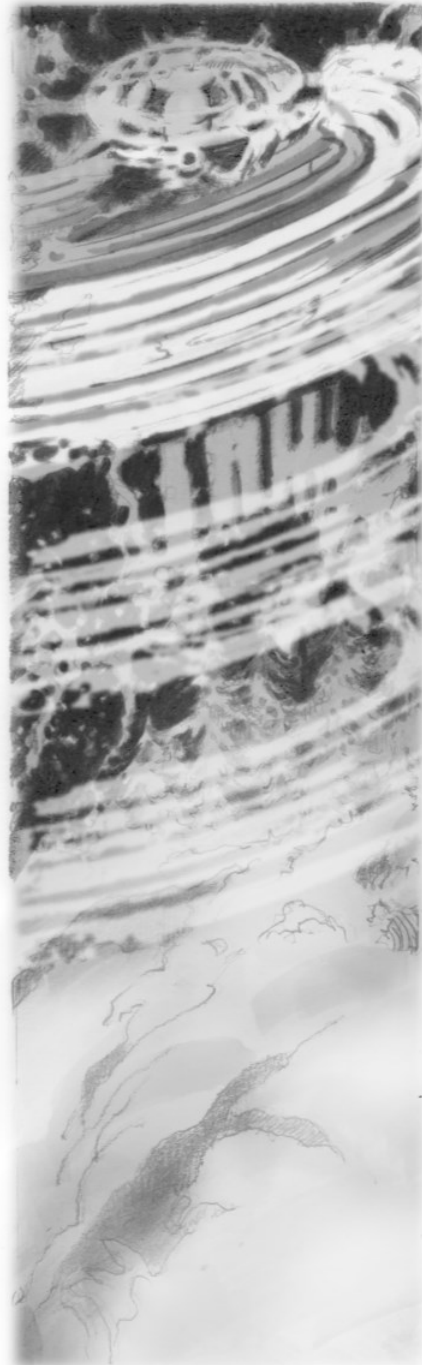
So Petra basked in the warmth of his fireplace in his new four door home, blowing smoke off his right index finger. And as he tried to rub out the scorched spot on his white robe, he counted the proceeds from the church picnic borrowed from his tax exempt business...

and yea verily, how good it was to be blessed with the joy of how good being bad felt:



Under Some Unusual Circumstances

The contraption
that
ranged from afar
and came to
this foreign
unruly land,
transmitted
intermittent
bursts
of light
that
inadvertently
melted the hard
packed snow to
reveal green
coniferous
needles heedless
of a dark empty
sky
where the snow kept
falling
and the water turned
back into ice.



Unencumbered

A bit confused,
the dark ghost, afraid,
drifted outside
forgetting to wear
his white comfortable
sheet
and carry the burden
of the heavy chains he
had recently
learned to love to rattle
so well.



Valhalla

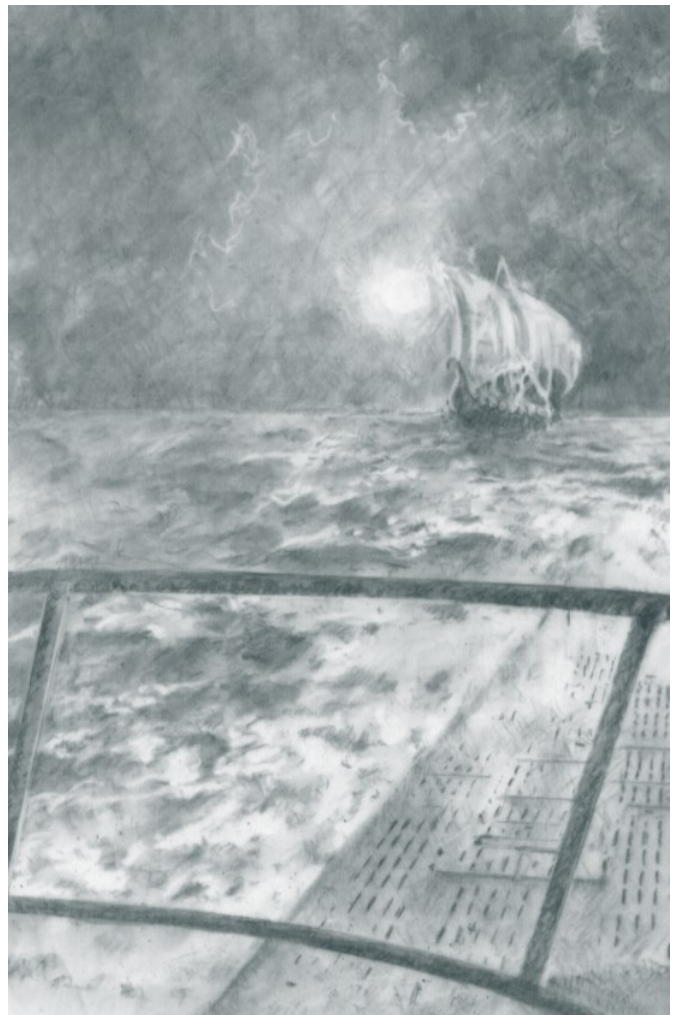
On the conning tower, I listen to the roar of the two diesel engines, one charging the batteries and the other taking us further along on our enemy patrol. Yet, you can still hear the crashing sounds of the sea and its muted echoes intruding through the spaces between the outer hull and the inner pressure hull.

Ahead of us a slight drizzle mixes with the approaching fog; behind the wintergarten a full moon appears sporadically as breaks occur in the uneven cloud cover overhead. Strained eyes after three hours on the watch must discern the sea gull from the unwelcomed aircraft. And at night the eyes see things that can't be there...

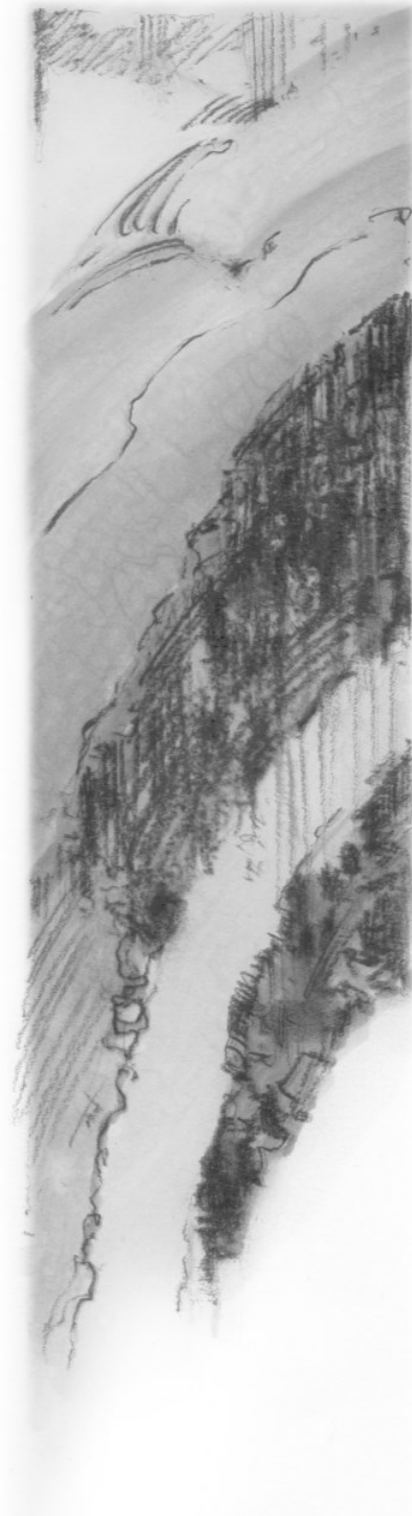
Viking night, the long boat sails in strong forming winds with the oarsmen barely asleep under a full sail as the helmsman vividly drums his fingertips on the edge of a lashed red and yellow shield and watches with alarm the narrow gray shape of a new sea monster and wonders if he will see Valhalla first before they ever see the morning sun.

And I do not take even one breath and remain quiet . . .

Some things are better left unsaid; a notation in the log book to remain blank and unremarked.



Vanishing Point



fields
over
layers
under
fields



Variations on a Winter Blast Detonation

When the plane passed overhead,
artisans with their craft of flak
lightly brushed the starboard wing

& Time stopped - The frozen

pieces lay scattered beside the shattered
linen
on the melting fields below.

Visitor



He came to visit
but stayed where
they raised
his broken totem
below the fragile alien
cliffs.

Wabos

Submerged. We are using a T IIIa FaT II (G7e) Pattern Running Torpedo for the first time. We stay at a discreet distance of five thousand meters from the convoy. The torpedo is set to run a zigzag pattern through the line of merchant ships. The odds are, that as it turns through them, it will eventually hit one. With all the destroyer escorts and their ASDIC, the Kaleu wants to be as far as possible from the enemy before he launches the torpedo.

When we are abeam from the convoy he fires. Turning the attack periscope, the Kaleu watches for any results.

A hit! An SOS is sent and we learn that it is a liberty ship at 7,126 tons. Our fourteenth ship; over 76,000 tons sunk.

Then the hydrophone operator reports destroyers closing fast. It doesn't seem possible that they could be here so quickly. I can only look up at the top of the control room and wait.

As we are diving and turning hard right rudder, there is an explosion and the boat shakes violently. We are taking water in the bow torpedo room from starboard tubes I and III.

It will be morning soon and if we have to surface, we will be committing suicide.



Waiting Among Final Throes

The depth charges forced us to the surface. One of the destroyers' 4.7-inch guns blasted a hole through the pressure hull. Steel on steel, the impact had sounded like being inside a ringing bell with pieces of shrapnel whizzing about. An ominous thin shaft of sunlight poured through the shell hole into the interior of our dark boat dimly lit by a few red lights.

The floor suddenly tilted and the ocean came rushing through the hole; light green and then dark as the accumulated water in the bow brings us back under the ocean's surface. The floor plates shift under my boots and I start to smell hydrochloric acid fumes as the batteries began to be flooded with seawater

Some say it is not only how well a man has lived but how well he dies; I believe I have lived well.

And as more water rushes forward, a glove bumps my belt and we hold hands in the swirling red dark among the varied sounds of screams and bitter silence drowned by the roar of air and water, and a boat with all its pipes, cables, dials, machinery and men breaking apart in the shrieking, bending hull sinking ever closer to the ocean floor in the cold Atlantic depths.

Where I will die quickly, I will die quietly, I will die well.



Walking Across Broadway Again

The activities of the body
wink
and twenty years appear
in the outline of a new
shape.

Not really remembering
when it started,
the youth walks slowly
listening to bones he has
polished,
and thinks
things will be better in
better times when
he walks this way again.

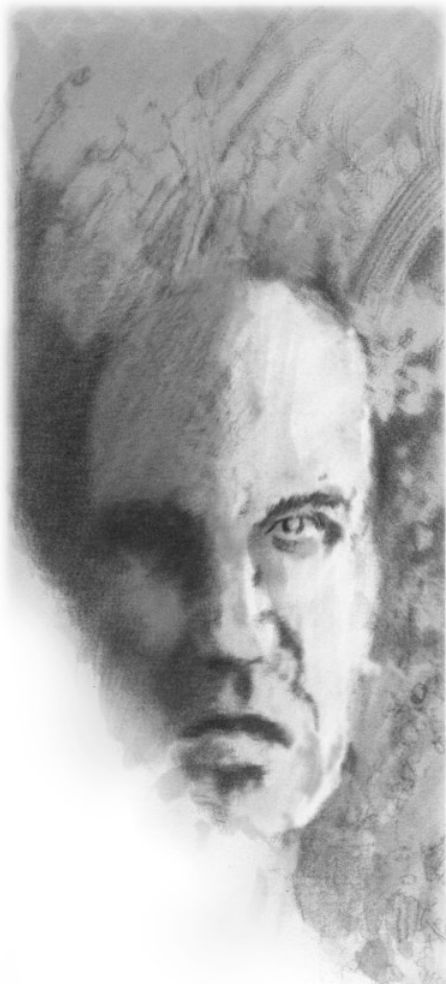


Wanderer

Oh, this magic
rabbit
bounding along
to rest beside
the cliff at night,
wondering why
who had poked
so many holes
in the lost silk
of the careless
Magician's hat.



Want of Heat



In a flash,
the bearer of
the flesh
tingled at
the warmth.

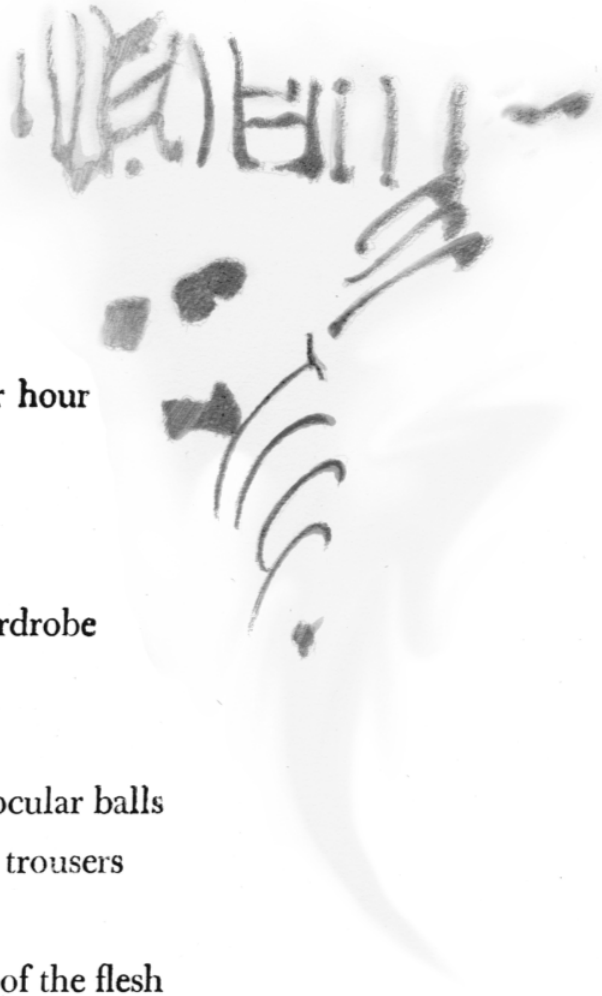
Yet, the dark
was deep
and
cold beneath.

Warp and Woof

I really gotta hurry
'cause I'm late for my shift!
Clocking in at
 birth, checking out at
 death;
piecework hour after hour,
weaving a fabric spun from twenty-four hour
yarn.

Angels watch the warp and woof
of the spirit suit of cloth found in a wardrobe
beside the plaster fig leaf
(that pleased the Victorian Queen)
and just have to snicker at the pair of jocular balls
bouncing up and down in the parson's trousers
under his cassock
as he completes his sermon on the sins of the flesh
and the woeful eyes of the sinner lusting after the sex skin fabric.

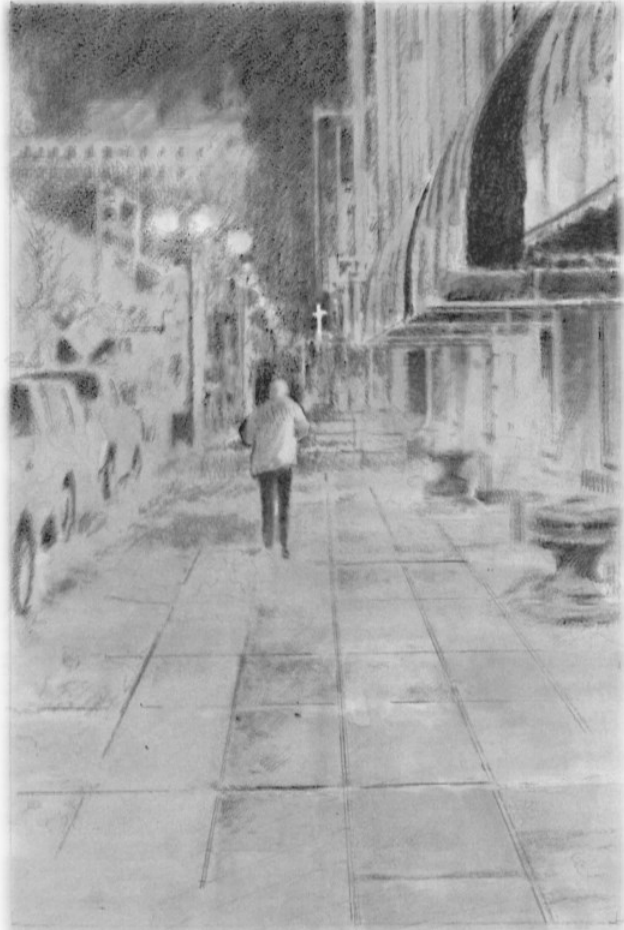
And when he is finished, his exhausted congregation exhales in relief over
being saved again from having to breathe in the scorched sulfur smell they are
afraid they will smell when they finally discard their wrinkled, flimsy, flexible,
clinging cloth, hoping to walk with angels who have no need for naughty
angelic, earthly desires.



Washing the Communion Plate

...and take it, now eat it
and
see in his painted eyes
how his body changed.

Tell us about it because we do
not see enough of wraiths
escaping from their wet barrows
of crumbling plaster and faded
concrete; of mildewed growth
spreading into the streets, where
cars honk at whores passing relics
held aloft by dehydrated wheels
and rusting axles that have
collapsed upon the pavement.



The beacon lights the ambidextrous flawless white cross
pointing to and beckoning the hopeless with paradise dreams
of how beautiful their dark world is in the lights...

*and he pulls his jacket tighter
listening to the deaf,
watching the blind, and talking to the mute.*

His message was still the same and they still had it garbled.

Who Filled the Holes at Golgotha?



Three runestones,
descending
down the hill...

Their messages
have faded
since the baptized
king's clan
first carved the
words
that their descendents
now do not understand.

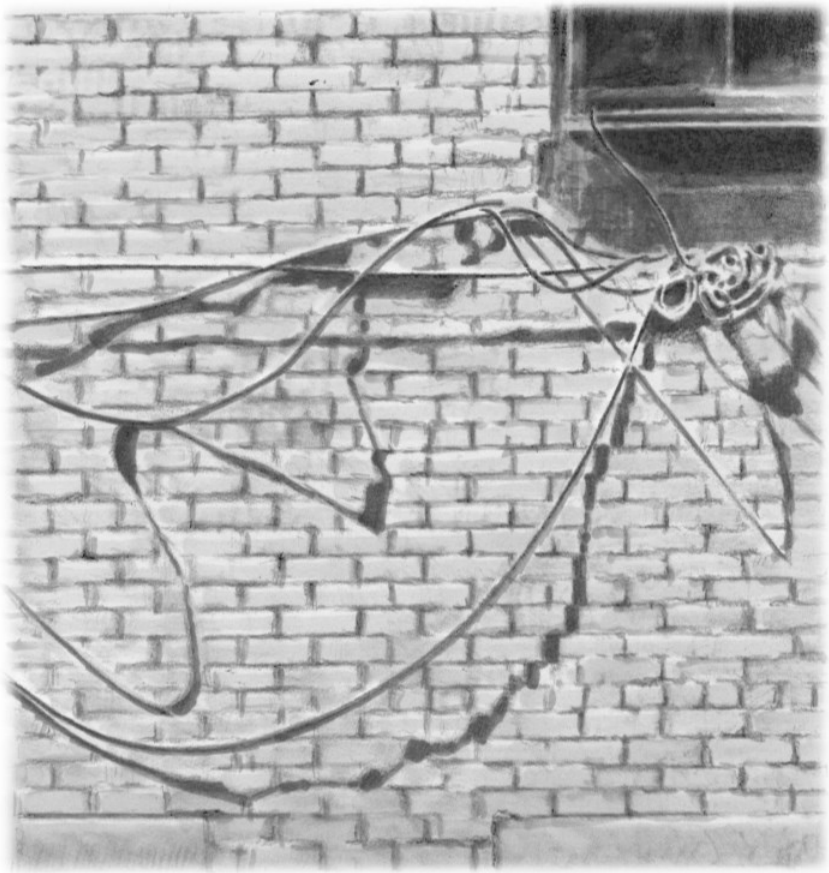
Widening the Conflict

He had said, in his splendid presidential voice, "We are not invading Laos."

A week later (or was it two?) we did.

And the sincere part of me that had grown up to trust them went away,
and I have been poking holes in my expanding flesh space suit ever since trying to find out who and what remained.





Wires Assuming the Color of Bricks

Wires crazily
crawling along the wall
assuming the color of bricks.

Seemingly inert except for shadows following the sun,
never betraying the activity within,
where particles move back and forth, from the source,
following a path to their random destination.

With Constellations Walking Home



Norman

PSR J0437-4715

Dusk settles
as
pulsating star energy
passes
through Norman
where each share
the
briefest of moments
in time and space
where constellations'
names
are only but a fleeting
thing.

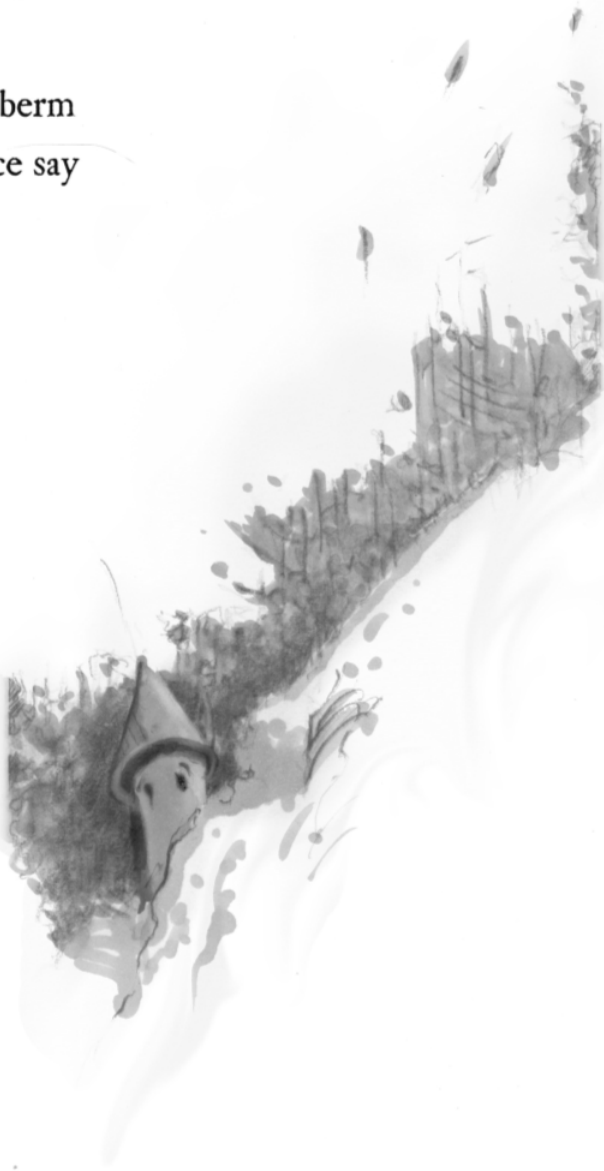
Words not Understood but Still There

So quiet,
so back into himself;
looking askance over his word
past his right shoulder,
(the one that stayed sore)
and saw that nothing before him
had changed,
but he thought about the
dilemma
of the indecipherable whispers
behind him
and clearing his throat to speak
nothing of note, he noted
that the creeping scratches
had edged forward
but kept a small, yet somewhat
respectable distance from
him
saying nothing too loud to disturb
him as they continued to talk
serious nonsense among themselves.



Yesss, Hissed a Snake Most Quietly

Tommy, the Rocket Man
peered
carefully from behind a berm
and as he heard the voice say
“yesss” again
he looked for a fuse
to quietly light
and quickly make
his getaway.



Yesterday Becomes Tomorrow

Strange, I have not wanted to return to this place since I left. Down here, the water is nearly freezing and the pressure is so intense, yet, I feel neither. And even though all is blackness I can see through the dark and at the same time hover under and see the surface.

And far above the crumbling wreckage of our silent U-boat, a ship in passage is carrying back to America a father and his wife with their child to be.

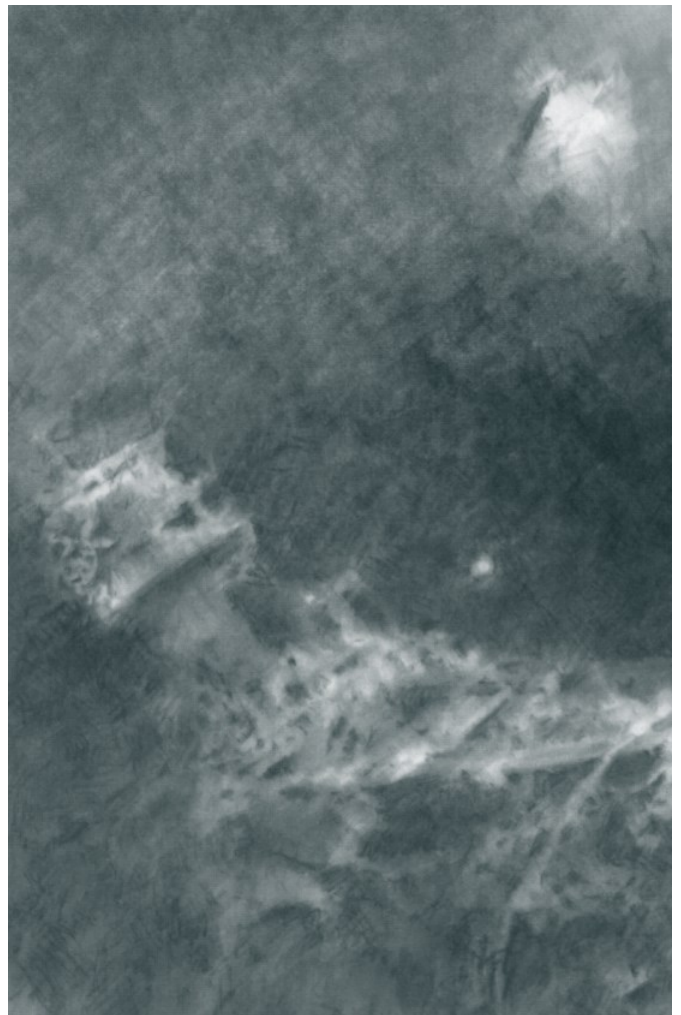
It is well that we could not sink her soldier husband during the war as he crossed the Atlantic.

I feel as if I almost know him and he is a good man and he loves his wife.

For me though, it is not good to remain here for too long. I have other places where I must go.

Strange how nine years can make such a difference; from one life confined in a steel war boat to another one soon to be surrounded briefly by comfortable and warm waters.

Such is the exquisite existence and hard journeys we travel.



Yet, Somehow Their Thoughts Are Oblivious

Insecurity instilled in me, for me, by me.

Yet, I wear the fearsome red shaman dress in dreams dreamed by others. And the reality which eludes them by the uncertainty of what they cannot see is sometimes seen in the shimmering Nineveh ruins on the Tigris.

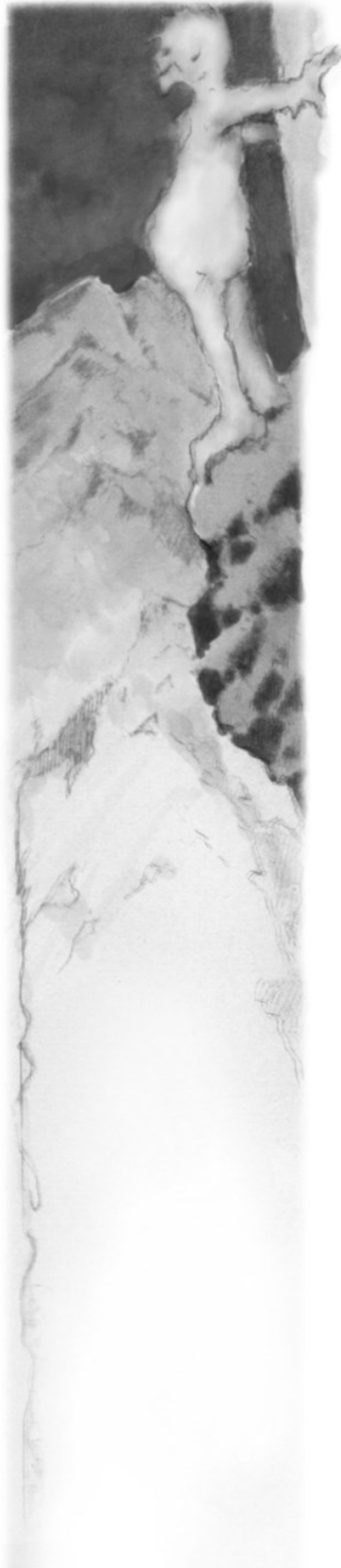
Fragrant white star flower mine field patterns engulf the crowd spilling their bodies into the streets surrounding the mother pressing her palms on the river that is flowing to the gulf.

Torrential rains come in waves that rage over the sand and wash the embers left in the temple's altar fires. And ninety fierce guardian statues in front of ninety marble pillars keep watching with sightless timeworn eyes the blacken bronze disk as steam rolls from their bodies and drifts towards the open temple roof.

And as the gray sky grows lighter, the visions are revealed in a voice unlike mine, spoken by the Shaman with half closed eyes who does not even pretend to hear the slow rhythmic drumming.

And after the dream, many in the gathering crowd will still mill about, ignoring the sacredness in front of their shadows as they keep bumping into each other while casting their dear precious dice and count the pips as the numbers are added to infinity until the bones stop moving and are rolled no more.





Yeti

Balanced
on the
edge of
the ledge,
he stares
delightfully
at his
winter
and stone
mountains
wondering
which
peak he
will roam
today.

Zedieren

In the sanctuary on the fringes of the outpost to anywhere, it is both light and dark and comfortable and I exist with all my lives, all my births, and all my deaths.

Perhaps I am to become a lover of cats and an artist who writes such strange words. Perhaps a U-Boat man again; I can't seem to remember at the moment.

For I am already beginning to forget the carefully crafted plan as I am drawn closer to a different, yet familiar shore.

A shape floats toward me and as it becomes more distinct, I see it is a canoe with strange markings. In it, the gate keeper gets up as he approaches me. I had almost forgotten about him; he is an Indian with a kind face who knows his way among these waters. Yet, there is something else about him vaguely familiar.

Herr Kaleu. . . is that you?

The Indian speaks with a faint trace of a Berliner accent, "It is good to see you too my comrade. . . my friend. No sand or oceans this time?"

"No...I think not."

Boarding his boat, I sit down and start to see trees, suburbs and snow in my thoughts. Then I listen to his paddle barely making a ripple in the water as he guides me to the fleeting infant beginnings of my soon to be newest journey.



As it was in the beginning,
is now,
and will be forever.

Amen.



Acknowledgements

In addition to previous acknowledgements mentioned in *Something Else Seeing - The Journey by M. Irwin Part One* the following apply to *Something Else Seeing - The Journey by M. Irwin Part Two*. The liberty ship in “Merchant Marine Saved” is based on a photograph of the USS E. A. Poe from the US National Archives. The U-Boat in “Wabos” is the Revell 1/72 scale Type VII model (complete with limber and other surface holes opened, Eduard brass detailing, G-Factor brass propellers, Nautilus laser cut wood deck, and the Yankee Model Works resin upper pressure hull.) The U-Boat Commander and the First Watch Officer faces are based on two reference models from the Art Models Series of books. The final picture in the U-Boat story “Zedieren” is based on a photograph of a Qagyuhl wedding party in the Pacific Northwest Coast from the Edward S. Curtis Collection at the Library of Congress.

“Syn Knelt in Holy Water” is drawn from a slide purchased on eBay from the late Leslie J. Laydon and was part of a series he called “Contrasts in Beauty.” In “Theory of Relativity” the reference photograph used for the drawing of Albert Einstein is from the Library of Congress Harris & Ewing Collection.

The men in “Sethos” and “Once More Being this Way Again” are based on models from the Live Art Model Books by Maureen and Douglas Johnson.

As I stated in Book One, I certainly want to give credit where credit is due. If I have erred in using reference sources where I should have obtained permission beforehand, please let me know and the error will be corrected in any subsequent editions of these books.

Afterward

“What’s the word for the day?” I was waking up from an anesthesia induced slumber and the smiling nurse coming into focus repeated her question.

“What’s the word for the day?”

Slurring a bit, I managed to reply that I didn't know.

"Wow, you've been saying wow over and over for the past several minutes."

"Wow," as good a word as any to express finishing a writing and drawing project that has been with me for seven years. When I took the opportunity to get an early retirement from Civil Service in 2003 after being employed at Fort Knox for twenty seven years, two months and thirteen days (but who was counting), my intention was to paint “pretty” landscape pictures and play computer games.

It didn't happen that way.

In February 2003 I started carrying a small notebook with me and started doing small drawings. In May of 2005, I started to write in a verse format and became interested in poetry both written and in the poet's spoken voice. Drawing ceased to be a major focus until November 2006 when I did a drawing in a notebook to accompany the words I had written. And I kept on doing drawings and writing and combining the two since then. I call the writings "captions" since they are closely intertwined with the drawings. Much of the descriptive part of the captions are not written since it is visualized in the drawing.

A book was not my intention. I wanted to do individual pieces of art with the writing as part of the drawing. I didn't want the words to be handwritten; they had to be a part of the drawing yet visually different. Thus started a journey in 2009 with letterpress printing. One Challenge proof press (Thankfully it had grippers to hold the paper in place) and three type cabinets filled with foundry and monotype fonts, I was printing the captions directly on the drawing paper from type I had set.

And then in 2010 came an interest in U-Boats.

And somewhere at some point in that time during that year came the quiet thought, combine a U-Boat story with the captions.

That idea resulted in the two books of *Something Else Seeing the Journey* by M. Irwin. Much of the story is based on my beliefs and yes I would even say a faith in what we see and what we don't see but is there. Several books and authors over the years have resonated with me. At first, when I was in my late teens, it was Edgar Cayce. Then in my mid twenties a friend named Sandra Tesar told me about Jane Roberts and Seth and later about the Emmanuel Books as channeled by Pat Rodegast. Time passed and then one day wandering around a Salvation Army store I saw a yellow book with the intriguing title *The Christian Agnostic* by Leslie D. Weatherhead. That led to a book called *Testimony of Light* by Helen Greaves and Sister Frances Mary Banks. Also a close friend, Linnie O'Hara indirectly led me to a book that her mother, Gloria, was reading. On Gloria's kitchen table was a copy of *Journey of Souls* by Dr. Michael Newton. Very soon I was also reading Dr. Newton's *Destiny of Souls*. And finally there was one other book that was first published in the Spring of 1939 that has had a profound and I hope continuing influence on me.

"We are a product of our teachers," he had said and I vehemently disagreed with him. Later I reluctantly agreed he was probably right. He was one of my teachers. And I have had many, a few were some of the kindest people I have ever met, Frances Smothers, my aunt, Greg Harper an incredible artist and friend, and a Franciscan friar, Brother John, who I hope will understand that while I have the deepest respect for his faith and deeds that I must walk what I feel is a similar, but not quite the same path. Some teachers are the catalyst needed for imagination and creativity. The idea for "Kentucky Gothic" had its beginnings in a discussion in the mid 90's with another artist and friend, Larry Elmore. Then there have been the lessons learned from my mother and father and my human and dog and cat families and friends. I would also be remiss if I didn't mention one of my greatest teachers, the Good Doctor from Elizabethtown who saved my emotional life after I had survived the Fort Knox workplace murders in 1993.

And some teachers have not been so kind but they will remain unnamed and mostly forgiven.

One of the most life changing events for me was a remarkable day in 1994 when out of curiosity I had two separate sessions with two extraordinary people. One was with Bill Landis an English medium and the other with Coral Polge, also from England who was a psychic artist. Much later in hindsight I realized that Ms. Polge had introduced me to the spirit guides who I believe have had a large part in the creation of this book. Through Mr. Landis I asked my primary spirit guide, an Indian who Mr. Landis called the gate keeper, what was the purpose of my life. The answer that came back, as channeled through Mr. Landis, was that I was to

be a gentleman. I must confess that was not the answer I wanted; I certainly wanted an answer more profound than that! Much later, I came to realized the beauty of that brief statement. And though I have failed many times (and still continue to fail) I try to remember and to achieve what the gate keeper so simply told me.

How great the deeds that can come from simple things.

So this book is dedicated to all my teachers and in so doing I believe that God, a God who is all but we make Him many, is the ultimate recipient of this dedication. I hope that God is pleased with what we have tried to accomplish.

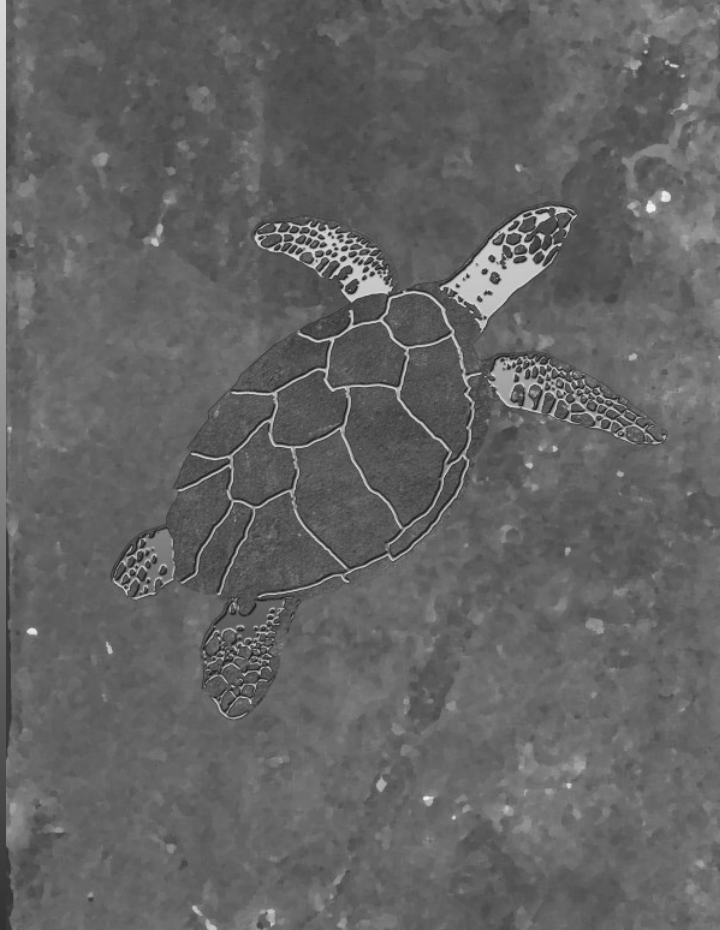
Mark Irwin
Louisville, KY
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The Journey by M. Irwin
Part Two

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Something Else Seeing - The Journey by M. Irwin is a unique experience into the world of artist and author Mark W. Irwin and the world about him and us. In a time where many see their world through the lens of "Tribalism" this book shows a different world. A world we see and a world that remains hidden but is alive in the now time of the past, present, and future and in the space of "God is all but we make Him many." And like the sailor in the story, an anonymous U-Boatman in his steel war boat, "such is the exquisite existence and hard journeys we travel." Just one more journey by Spiritual beings having a Human experience.