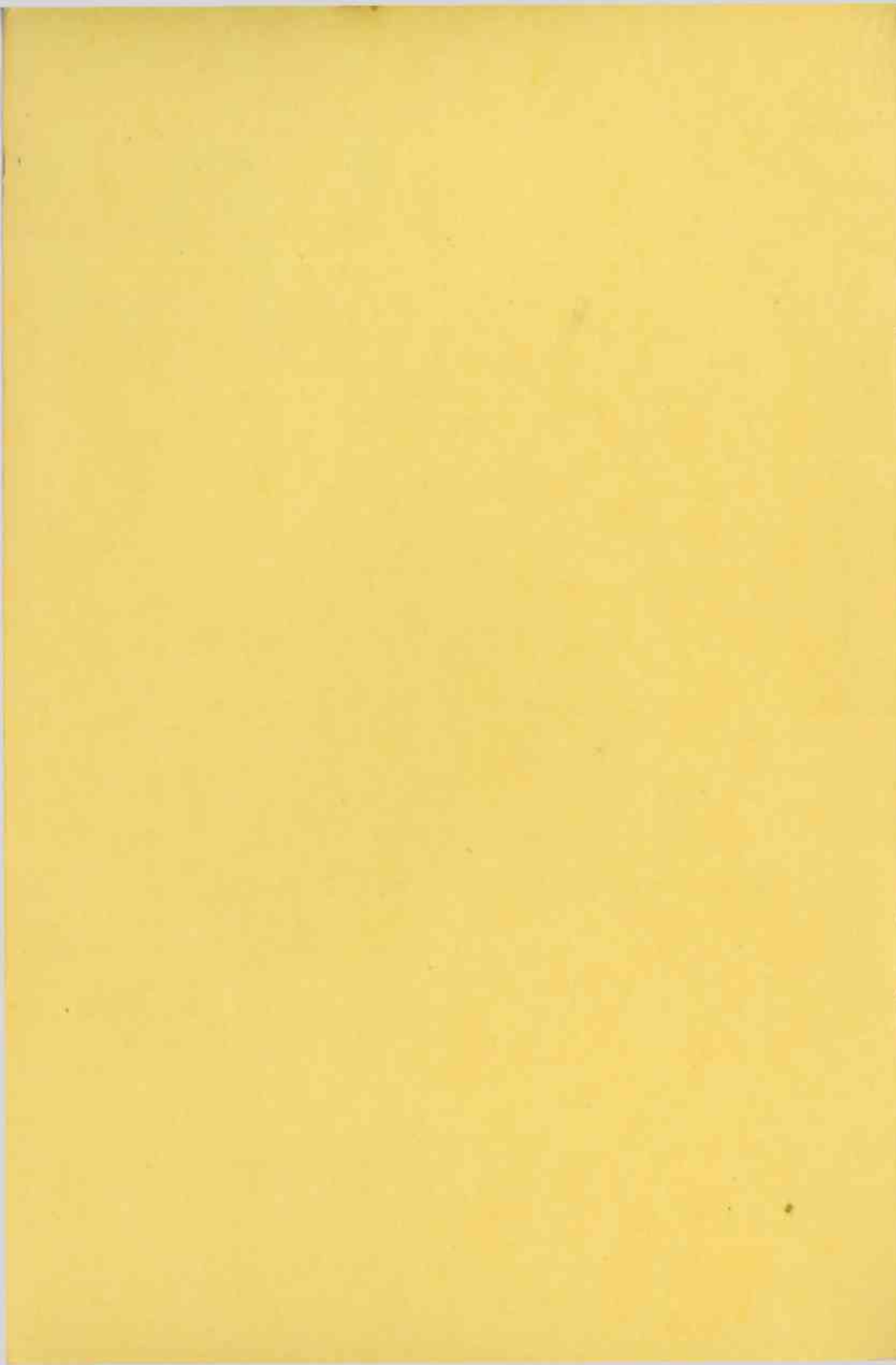


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W W H I M S Y

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Kenneth H. Ford

STRANDED VISITOR

I am the terran's amusement face  
 pinched and funny on the wailing wall  
 beyond which lies my crumpled ship;  
 also promise in the eyes of my love  
 or secret laughter bubbling  
 away on the alien evening;  
 standing tucked-in under the lamps  
 winking against windows blinding  
 progress of a marching light.  
 One thousand years I started  
 the ramble from some ancient star  
 before the birth of this night.

I, grinning stranger in the streets,  
 long-nosed and faintly amused,  
 peering through the sudden fog,  
 hearing the terrestrial laughter  
 smashing the dusty moon,  
 exploded stars crashing  
 through my dreaming Vegan eyes.

Kenneth H. Ford

SYNDROME: EXTRA VISITORS

Time? When are we leaving here?  
Tree-hung bird obstreperous said.  
Backwards the bomb falls heavy  
for in the inosculate womb of war worlds  
many pretties compete for the mommy-flavor;

still  
cardiac-terror breaks its syndrome  
against those harder city grains,  
plush seat suspended during offal hours.

now  
nimbus clouds hide our giggling visitors,  
extra-terrestrial coffee-cups  
demanding pristine saucer shapes.

Complex dedications cloud our time:  
I have seen long shadows watering dead weeds,  
robots grinning in the desolate city,  
split-lipped black bodies hanging at the  
crossroads and salesmen shaking gadgets  
before the broken eyes of hot corpses.

Kenneth H. Ford

INSTRUCTIONS TO A FRIEND LEAVING  
FOR OBSERVATION ON SOL III

I am sending you twenty million men  
to help you with your savage problem;  
if you cannot solve it, exterminate them  
quickly and as painlessly as possible.

Return assignment: Learn to beguile  
gullible Terrans with your soft ways;  
tabulate the possible social indices  
but remain hidden during the warring displays.

Be careful to avoid watching stars!  
(you will receive further instructions  
on this in well appointed bars).

Water your lawn frequently. This is a must.  
And do not walk aimlessly during leisure time;  
when approached with buttons give one dime.  
Follow this to the letter: Dust  
organic objects before consuming.  
Fall face down on the street  
during any uranium or cobalt blooming.

These are your instructions. Get going.  
Remember, during periods of inactivity  
your gills will be showing.

Harlan Ristau

DEATH HAS A SILVER STARE

Death has a silver stare  
 in its iron-faced  
 watchings,  
 looking fever  
 in a fevered brain,  
 but bringing this pain relief, cleansing  
 scab-grief  
 in salve passages of unrelieved silence,  
 until dust  
 lives where footsteps  
 once  
 wore soft the nervous cough of gravel.

Death has a silver stare,  
 pasting shut the collapsing  
 room  
 of man's fabricated time;  
 yet, looks in wonder  
 at his uncaged, deathless heart,  
 in the little  
 light  
 of our days ,  
 in the little night of our dreaming.

Lori Petri

PRISONS

The petal builds a wall whose curtain  
Is stouter than stone,  
And bars in dew-drops are more certain  
Than a prison zone.

Against a rainbow's stubborn fringes,  
A padlocked stone, a zephyr's hinges,  
What vast exuberance impinges

That might inundate universe  
Were it not held in constant check  
By a cloudbank's purse,  
A pollen speck?



Rockwell Schaefer

WAKENED PATTERNS

Fine shreds of green and golden locust leaves  
And bits of petals, lavender and pink  
From plum and cherry trees  
Fall silently within the beams  
Of morning light, that glimmer through  
The chink of latticed blind  
That screens the fragrant orchard glade.

My sleep-drugged eyes make shuttling patterns  
From misted motes of prised light  
With all the wonder of  
A child's kaleidoscope.

Richard Ashman

THE AMOEBA BULGES

We speak of causes, but deny the fact  
The slow amoeba answered with a bulge.  
No wiser wishful thinking can divulge  
A truth based on a logic sadly cracked --  
That animalcules' bulges prove is bilge.  
And time flowed on, a witless cataract,  
And wires in skulls got tangled, interlaced;  
And it was here, just here, when messages retraced  
In patterned plan the filaments of thought  
That will, incarcerated, caught  
Its fatal vision of anarchic suns, replaced  
An ordered universe with what is not.

Charles Shaw

BUTTERCUP SEA

On a sea  
Of buttercups  
Mooing mooningly  
A two-masted cow  
Rides at anchor  
Dappled in splintering  
Twilight  
Bovingly eschewing  
Her uncurdled cud  
However contented  
Outboardly.

Charles Shaw

REFLECTIONS IN A PUDDLE

In the Turkish delight  
of your egg-shell arrogance  
Pause I implore you  
to consider.  
Then tell me  
With a rainbow laugh  
And yesterday's ten thousand years  
You love me  
Me alone you love  
If only for the fleeting now.  
Then in the dead of gnawing night  
Look at me mirror-wise  
And with a kiss for Cinderella  
Give me to-morrow  
And to-morrow.

Terry Carr

THE PATHS

Where the desert is dark under the blistering sun,  
where there are no clouds, no rains,  
where there is no night --

    There you will find him,  
    dead in many eons now,  
    smiling.

Where only the carrion birds fly,  
where dark shadows flit across the ground  
    on moonless nights,  
where the silence can be sensed only physically --

    There you will find her,  
    waiting:  
    there she will die.

Where all is,

    where time is a panorama and space a treadmill --  
There you will see their footprints.

    There you will see the paths they took.  
There you will walk yourself.

    Can you deny this?

    Are you not he (dead, smiling)?

    Are you not she (waiting, dying)?

    Are they not you?

    See how plain the footprints are . . .

Edward McNamee

INDENTURED LIGHTNING

In their plastic-paneled skull,  
 metal cerebrations  
 click and whir and hum  
 where lightning skips  
 in shimmering toss  
 of voltage integrity.  
 Without, the fleshless tissues  
 of its mechanistic lobes,  
 rutilant warts of buttons, levers  
 and controls wait your commission,  
 with horological promptitude  
 and speed-rinsed accuracy.  
 A medulla oblongata  
 of steel nerves spreads the urge  
 that obviates brain-fag,  
 and fends off violent derangement  
 of synthetic brain-cells.

Lilith Lorraine

LAST TRAIN TO LYS

Some day I'll take an ordinary train  
in a remote, inconsequential town,  
and as we leave the cities of the plain  
and just before the dusk comes tumbling down

I'll hear a muted roaring far behind  
like silken thunder or like thundering snow,  
but I shall not look back nor shall I mind  
what seems already long and long ago.

I shall not see dimensions shattering  
to mushroom grayness, one and two and three,  
not time snap, keening like a broken string  
nor space dissolve, such dooms are not for me.

For I have spoken the forbidden words,  
wrote "Peace" upon the wall with my own hand,  
been scorned, rejected, pecked by evil birds,  
and tortured by the fools of every land.

And when at last the train comes round the curve,  
How many trains I've followed through the years...  
I'll know that it will be the one to swerve  
to that strange track beyond the reach of fears.

And when at last the city flowers in light,  
and time-lost voices bid me welcome home,  
they will not ask what terrors stalked by night,  
for they have fled from Babylon and Rome.

Yes, there are those who walk in dust and pain,  
through many a land before its dark comes down,  
and having spoken, taken many a train  
in some remote, inconsequential town.

Jamie Richie

A UNE EGYPTIENNE

Nor antimony about the eyes  
nor green paint on the eyelids  
shall hold me now.

Nor music upon lutes  
nor Cretan songs  
shall hold me.

Now I am not one who loves.  
But you are beautiful  
like the desired idols  
which are in Bubastis --  
I shall stay with you a while  
and make many small pretenses.



BIOGRAPHY

RICHARD ASHMAN -- has appeared in many other publications. He is editor of NEW ORLEANS POETRY JOURNAL and Associate Editor of PUBLIC POETRY LETTER.

He has appeared before twice in WWHIMSY. TERRY CARR -- makes his first appearance in a poetry magazine this issue. He resides in San Francisco.

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WWHIMSY recommends -- THE CLEAN DYING by Kenneth H. Ford \$2.00 cloth bound      A Villiers Publication P. O. Box 386 Pacific Grove, California
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FLAME -- Alpine, Texas. Lilith Lorraine, editor. Fifty cents per copy; two dollars per year, quarterly. Two dollars paid for each poem. "Send us your best work in experimental or traditional verse, with a twenty-line limit. We report on manuscripts the day they are received."

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