

the wormwood review number twenty-four with an index  
covering 1964 through 1966 inclusive and cover art and  
center-fold booklet by charles bukowski





the wormwood review

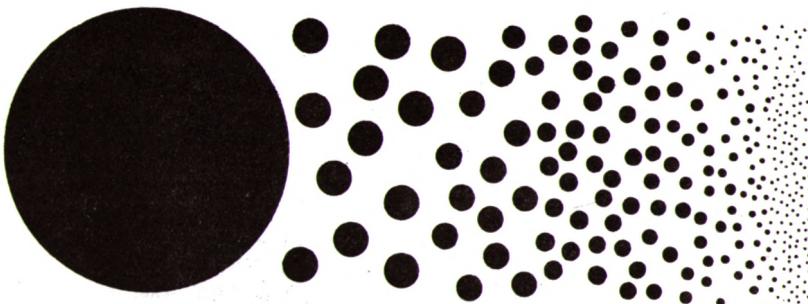
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only the happy people  
fascinate me.  
the unhappy ones,  
unused, urgefull,  
i know them well.  
but the happy others  
i'd never seen before.  
incompetent, competent, wellpaid  
all kinds exist.  
i talk and try to find  
an entrance  
but circles of happiness  
surround them  
with no entrances  
or exits.

— Darlene Fife

New Orleans, La.

Parading Warrior

Ever wake up  
hung over  
and hung up  
full of silly  
ready to race  
but her mouth's  
stuck with sleep  
and her pussy  
a shrivled mass  
of matted hair  
oblivious to  
lance up  
parading  
warrior  
poised to conquer mountains  
of squealing maidens  
it it came  
to that?

Rita

The place this form takes  
fills in,  
reminds  
of space emptied  
by aunt Rita.  
That she was ignored  
in pain, fear,  
eats at every corner,  
fiber of my  
bagged soul.

Talon Zipper

For skirt  
or neckline.  
Nine inches  
long. Metal.  
Zips like magic.  
Instructions  
and price  
see other side.

Flyswatter

Round-headed  
flyswatter has  
hole in center  
like ack-ack  
gun sight but  
I dont aim  
I swing cussing  
like a punched  
out fighter  
spine tensed  
for what  
must come.

Make-up Man

What he's  
at is an  
act, a play,  
an outside  
job of re-  
furbishing  
each wrong face  
as it turns  
up god-fashioned  
yet unacceptable.

— Phil Weidman

North Highlands, Calif.

Central Park North

The weather

tower seems to be  
a church today.

Negro  
boys

scale the semi-  
circumventing rocks  
as if  
in play.

Today the streets are wet  
with last night's rain.

Driven  
ghosts of night

make their way.  
It is three o'clock.

The soccer  
squads are

forming on envelopes  
of damp grass  
while bankers bench themselves.

Today

the sun is moving  
out toward the pali  
-sades

over the Hoboken docks.

1.

Reading Pliny  
in a broken book  
my Grandfather once looked through  
Quid platanon opacissimus?  
Quid illa porticus verna semper?  
I remember his house outside Baltimore  
the banked lawn and sycamores  
over a low stucco wall  
and the car roared up  
over the top of time  
into the Twenties  
the house coming into view.  
"That's where we lived,"  
my Father said  
when he brought us back there for a look.

is book  
 th its broken back  
 umbered pages  
 d letters to a friend  
 like my Grandfather's  
 rtune

0/10/29.

--- Ben Pleasants

Los Angeles, California

Nuns

Surely more Baptist than Roger Williams  
 I am surprised to come upon  
 Nuns on every single travel.  
 Today, for instance, four appeared  
 With five prancing loud nymphets  
 In bathing suits of flowered net;  
 The nuns were habited.

Through my window that looks at the sea  
 I watched the girls wade out to their knees  
 Followed by nuns -- only three  
 Through the water, up to their ankles  
 And even beyond; the fourth nun,  
 A sandpiper lady, chose to run  
 Instead of having her picture taken.

Before I could dress and get down to the beach  
 For a casual stroll the group had finished  
 A quick picnic of sandwiches,  
 Potato chips, and Fanta drinks;  
 They were engaged in a jumping match.  
 The skittery nun stood and watched.  
 She also smiled at me, I think.

The girls went out of their matted heads  
 When the contest dwindled to two of the sisters.  
 The fatter one was acclaimed the winner.

Once I knew a Baptist lady  
 A missionary who carefully mothered  
 Seven daughters, and none considered  
 Ever becoming a missionary.

## Golden Anniversary

Frightened and smiling she could not lift her wedding dress.  
He did not consider trying  
Although he recalled the evening together they lifted the dress  
Frightened and smiling.

The children were strong. Together they made the dress perform  
Antics and capers in front of the mirrors  
And laughing the youngest bore from the attic the form whose form  
Remained unaltered.

They dressed the form in the crowded mirrors. They helped her  
stand  
Beside the man, and once more  
The couple smiled behind the form with another stand  
For the frightened photographers.

-- Hollis Summers

Athens, Ohio

## Strawberries

How  
do you say  
how

strawberries smell? I want  
a poem like strawberries

smell. Today  
I want to give you

that, but how  
do you say how  
strawberries smell?  
I'll tell you  
what. Go

to the store and get  
some. (On the way, you will  
see things. I have

no idea what.  
Last time I walked  
out North

Grand Avenue  
to Vespa's I saw

a matted cocker-  
spaniel.)

Anyway, please  
get some straw-  
berries and  
smell them, and

you'll have the poem  
I would have

written today. (Perhaps  
we should have  
books suggesting

scavenger  
hunts.)

Weekend

1.

Friday night, driving up  
to Downers Grove (about

five miles from  
a tornado, we found out

later) we saw  
a lot

of lightning. It was dark,  
and the sky seemed one  
black sheet, but when

the lightning struck,  
there

were piles of clouds,  
with sinkings and  
protrusions. Then,  
suddenly, black

again until  
the next

lightning.

Saturday afternoon in a hot  
Chicago we saw

Neva, an old friend  
of my parents. Seventy-three  
and still going

strong. Mixes  
things up, but not  
because of senility. A

self-  
educated

Missourian, she's always  
mixed things

up. Saturday she was telling us  
about a guy

who died. She pointed to  
her head and said "It was  
a suburban hemorrhage."

Great gal! A month  
or so ago I  
finished a long poem trying

with difficulty to find  
a song in another

old lady. With  
difficulty.

Neva is easy. I wish  
you could meet her. Anybody

surely could hear  
her song. She tells,

honestly and with  
zeal, things

that have happened.

Sunday riding back to  
Springfield on the Gulf,

Mobile & Ohio, I saw  
a white fence

rising over a hill, turned  
to a shape by the shape

of the hill, perfect, rising  
over the hill. A

white fence.

... Miraculous! That  
I was conceived  
upon Jessie Curry, by George

Curry, and born into  
a world of lightning,

Neva, a white fence ...

-- David Curry

Springfield, Illinois

Cheromanic: 1966

The two massive (bronze) statues  
labeled civic justice and civic  
virtue guarding the bridge  
approach and holding up the web-  
cables of that bridge --  
one day stirred, stretched  
and dropped their load  
(cables, concrete and traffic)  
into the water. He (Justice)  
smiled at she (Virtue) and  
an incredible but tender act  
was performed right there --  
after which with an air of  
resignation and (perhaps)  
sadness, they resumed their  
positions, raised up  
the cables and froze.

-- M. K. Book

Lincoln, Nebraska

## Pilgrimage

### 1.

Before leaving I was joined  
By two others who also wished  
To make the journey. I remember  
Being glad to have the company  
And I must have liked them  
For we laughed a lot and they knew songs.  
The three of us were together  
For the whole trip and grew very close.  
I don't remember their names now,  
Or what they looked like.  
On the day we left a man  
Was taking photographs and took  
The three of us by our horses.  
We all laughed a lot. He said  
He'd give us copies when we got back,  
But we didn't see him again.

### 2.

When we met Vanessa we were reminded  
Of what our guide had said  
Before he disappeared, he had spoken  
Of a witch in the mountains and although  
There were no mountains when we met Vanessa,  
It occurred to us she still might be  
The person of whom he spoke. Not  
That she appeared to be a witch or acted  
Like one in any way, but, then,  
We had been told she could  
Become whatever she wished,  
Take on any shape.  
For that matter, if she were a witch  
She could keep us from seeing the mountains.  
When we left her with the few coins  
That we had, we felt ourselves fortunate  
That nothing had happened, that we had gotten away  
So easily, although she had been with us  
Until dark. But even then  
We never saw her mountains, and when, after days  
Of traveling, we finally reached some mountains,  
They were bare and colorless,  
And there was no one to be seen.

### 3.

At night when the others were asleep  
There was always the sound of something moving  
Just inside the darkness, circling

And recircling the camp. I never  
Saw what it was, and the others,  
When I told them, never believed me.  
It always waited until they were asleep  
Before it began circling and recircling  
The camp, as if it were important that I alone  
Should hear it, although I never saw it.  
Sometimes I can still hear it.  
It's been many years since I've come back.

4.

I am not sure now  
Of my original reasons for leaving  
And making the journey. I remember  
That it seemed important, that  
It was something I should do.  
I am sure there were also  
Other reasons, important reasons,  
Although I don't know what they might have been.  
Originally there must have been many reasons,  
Although, now, I don't know  
What they might have been.

5.

Another thing of interest  
Is the obelisk. This we found standing  
In the center of a flat plain. At least  
It seemed to be the center,  
But we were probably mistaken.  
We didn't know its importance or  
What it meant. But it woke within us  
Some memory that we couldn't grasp  
Or even understand. At the time  
We were only conscious of our fear and awe  
And that there was something we should know  
But didn't. When we passed on  
And it was finally out of sight,  
We felt relieved, but as we continued  
We grew aware of a sense of loss  
Not to be described.

6.

At one point we heard news  
Of three people in trouble a few miles away.  
We thought it might be one of the parties  
That had left before us and hurried on  
To see if we could help. But on our way  
We were stopped by a series of objects

That appeared, and surrounded us,  
Kept us from going on. We remained  
There for some time, forgetting about these others  
Apparently in need of help.

7.

We later found  
That these objects only gave  
The appearance of danger, whereas actually  
They were perfectly safe.  
But at that time each thing  
Seemed to deserve the fear we gave it,  
As a token of our debt or  
Perhaps of our esteem.  
In any case, when we found ourselves  
Encircled, we stopped, frozen,  
And remained for a time  
That we later lost track of,  
Not realizing there was no cause for alarm.  
When we began again and finally arrived  
We were much to late to be of any use.  
There was nothing there, although we had originally  
Heard news of three people in trouble  
A few miles away.

8.

It was raining when we reached the final pass  
And almost dark. In the dim light we could see  
That the way would be difficult;  
Rocks had fallen, covering the path.  
We decided to stop and leave in the morning,  
But in the morning it was still raining.  
We stayed in our tents. It rained for five days.  
When it stopped we learned that the rain  
Had washed down more rocks, that the pass was blocked.  
For a while we talked of finding some other way,  
But decided that the wolves, always a danger,  
Would now be even worse, that we  
Would quickly lose our way on the mountain.  
For days we stayed in our tents while other pilgrims,  
Braver than we, sought other paths.  
We never learned if they got through.

9.

In our frustration we thought of our plans,  
Of the distance we had come. The weeks  
Spent on the way meant nothing now,  
And we would have to return

With no sign of what we had achieved.  
We sat in our tents and thought  
It more than we should have to bear,  
Seeing the problems already solved,  
The distance come, and the distance  
We would have to travel  
To reach home.

10.

A few days later we decided to leave  
The entrance of the pass and make our way  
To a village some miles to the east.  
We had heard there was a shrine there,  
Similar to the one on the other side of the pass,  
But smaller, much smaller. After that  
We would begin our journey home.  
The destination made little difference;  
Our only wish was to leave  
The shadow of the mountain which pressed upon us,  
Reminded us of things better forgotten.

11.

Our journey home passed without incident,  
And we saw no person or thing that seemed  
Of significance. The people we did see,  
Natives and tribesmen, avoided us,  
As if we were the danger,  
Not the land itself.  
And finally, when we reached home,  
Nothing was changed. Buildings and people  
Were all as they had been before,  
While few knew that we had been gone,  
Knew of our troubles, or the difficulties  
We had passed through.

--- Stephen Dobyns

Iowa City, Iowa.

Orgy

Tommy's back yard smelled  
of grapes as I stepped off  
the cindered alley & crept  
through the log grass  
beside the garage

carefully

carefully, as the evening  
before I'd put down his beard  
in front of patricia, so he  
knew I was shooting on  
his candypants whore  
& he collected guns & only  
needed an excuse to Come  
with one to his shoulder &  
my scheming meat framing  
his .44 bore

the back screendoor squeak-  
ed & sung & a tic turned me  
halfway to run till I heard  
her sick starvingdog call ...

-- Hurry, Baby, Come! Tommy's  
gone for the day ...

each fated step was quick  
to the door as I reached  
for her sweaty red sunsuit  
& her eager wet smile

then Tommy stepped from  
behind the blind screen & I  
cursed the Time we were born  
in -- the wars that had trained  
us & the hate that we had  
as the hot highpowered slug  
dug deep in my belly & my  
last view of our Time was  
my wild final Come, mirrored  
slack-jawed & sleepy in the  
half-lidded eyes of Patricia  
& Tommy & the world as it  
died

6/65

just lately  
I've seen through it  
I've seen through it all  
once, you know  
I was quite religious  
but now  
there is nothing, nothing

yet still I pray

O Nothing, that  
which is Cipher, which  
is Naught

please  
do not slay me with your  
drab despicable days of  
loss, of dumb terror  
fulfilled, of pain ...

You! Peasants!  
                  you can't  
know how much I need  
to laugh  
                  how badly I only  
want    to    laugh

& what if the dam should  
suddenly burst  
if suddenly I should run  
headlong, frothing, haphazardly  
hurling shrapnel grenades  
into high-noon crowds?  
if suddenly tossing aside  
the dull ugly ache of it  
all, I equalled the senseless  
with my brute senseless act?

O My, wouldn't I  
shine?                    wouldn't  
I shine then?  
wouldn't it be I then who  
had created God  
at last?

8/65

-- William Wantling

Normal, Illinois

### Waiting

the sounds of dusk    the scent  
of shadows touching grass  
a clock    my eyes    the place  
where that highway dips  
and bends and where cars  
seem to freeze, for one  
long moment fail to grow  
before their windshields come  
and pass this spot: there are  
so many faces in this lonely  
world that are not you

-- Dennis Trudell

Iowa City, Iowa

night's work (including buffalo bill) by (& with illustrations  
by) charles bukowski --



Buffalo Bill

whenever the landlord and landlady get  
beer-drunk  
she comes down here and knocks on my door  
and I go down and drink beer with them.  
they sing old-time songs and  
he keeps drinking until  
he falls over backwards in his chair.  
then I get up  
tilt the chair up  
and then he's back at the table again  
grabbing at a  
beercan.

the conversation always gets around to  
Buffalo Bill, they think Buffalo Bill is  
very funny. so I always ask,

what's new with Buffalo Bill?

oh, he's in again. they locked him up. they came and got him.

why?

same thing. only this time it was a woman from the Jehovah's Witness. she rang his bell and was standing there talking to him and he showed her his thing, you know.

she came down and told me about it



and I told her, 'why did you bother that man? why did you ring his bell? he wasn't doing anything to you!' but no, she had to go and tell the authorities.

he phoned me from the jail, 'well, I did it again!' 'why do you keep doing that?' I asked him. 'I dunno,' he said, 'I dunno what makes me do that!' 'you shouldn't do that,' I told him. 'I know I shouldn't do that,' he told me.

how many times has he done that?

Oh, god, I dunno, 8 or 10 times. he's always doin' it. he's got a good lawyer, tho, he's got a damn good lawyer.

who'd you rent his place to?

oh, we don't rent his place, we always keep his place open for him. we like him. did I tell you the night he was drunk and out on the lawn naked and an airplane went overhead and he pointed to the lights, all you could see was the taillights and stuff and he pointed to the lights and yelled, 'I AM GOD, I PUT THOSE LIGHTS IN THE SKY!'

no, you didn't tell me about that.

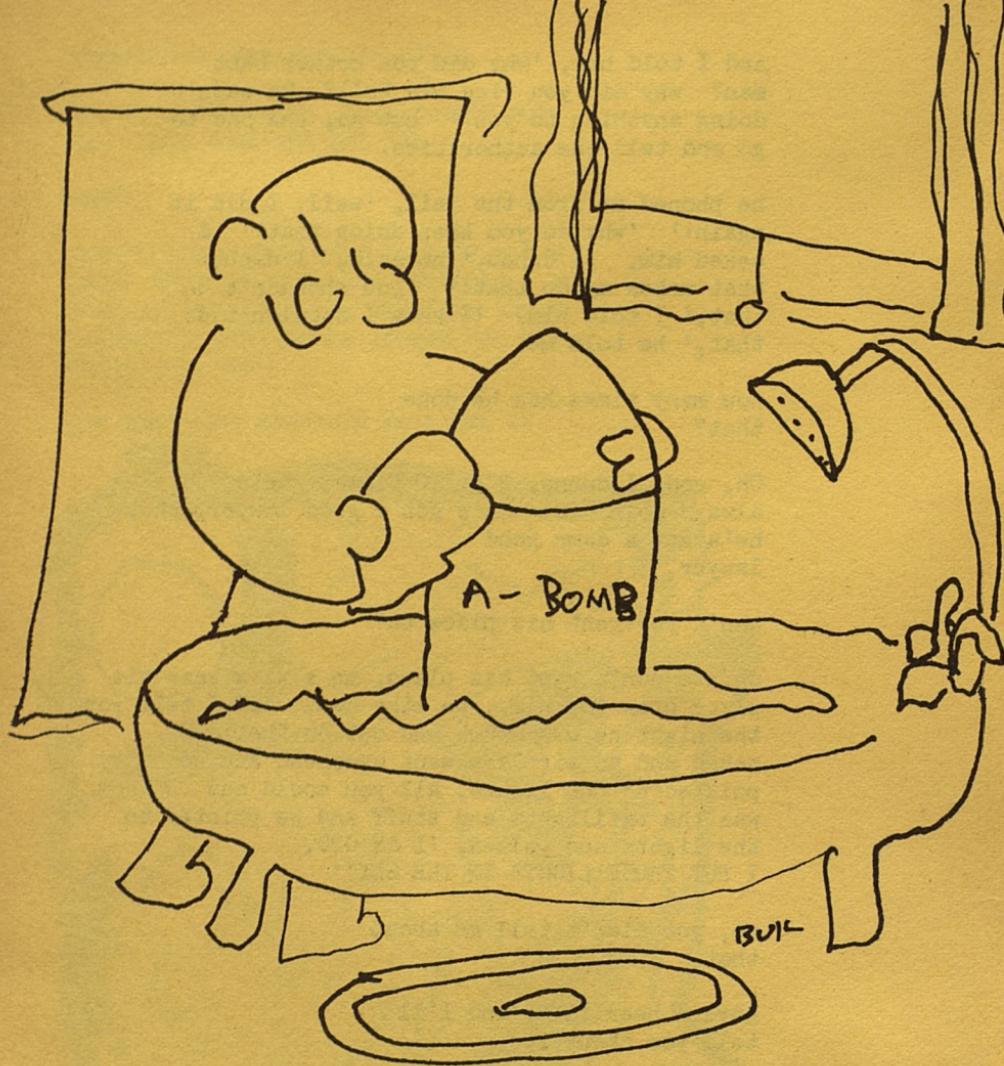
have a beer first and I'll tell you about it

I had a beer first.

a little atomic bomb

o, just give me a little atomic bomb  
not too much  
just a little  
enough to kill a horse in the street  
but there aren't any horses in the street

well, enough to knock the flowers from a bowl  
but I don't see any  
flowers in a  
bowl



enough then  
to frighten my love  
but I don't have any  
love

well  
give me an atomic bomb then  
to scrub in my bathtub  
like a dirty and lovable child

(I've got a bathtub)

just a little bomb, general,  
with pugnose  
pink ears

smelling like underclothes in  
July

do you think I'm crazy?  
I think you're crazy  
too

so the way you think:  
send me one before somebody else  
does.

### The colored Birds

it is a highrise apt. next door  
and he beats her at night and she screams and nobody stops it  
and I see her the next day  
standing in the driveway with huge curlers in her hair  
and she has her huge buttocks jammed into the same black  
slacks and she says, standing in the sun,  
"god damn it, 24 hours a day in this place, I never go anywhere!"  
and then he comes out, proud, the little matador,  
a Jewish pail of shit, his belly hanging all over his bathing  
trunks -- he might have been a handsome man once, might have,  
now they both stand there and he says,  
"I think I'm goin' for a swim."  
she doesn't answer and he goes inside to the pool and  
dunks into the fishless, sandless water,  
the peroxide-codeine water,  
and I stand by the kitchen window drinking coffee  
trying to unboil the fuzzy, stinking picture --  
after all, you can't live elbow to elbow to people  
without wanting to draw a number on them.  
everytime my toilet flushes they can hear it. everytime they  
go to bed I can hear them.

soon she goes inside and then comes out with 2 large colored birds  
in a cage. I don't know what they are. they don't talk. they  
just move a little, always seeming to twitch their tail-feathers  
and shit. that's all they do.

she stands there looking at them.

he comes out: the little tuna, the little matador, out of the pool,  
a dripping unbeautiful white, the cloth of his wet suit gripping  
clearly against his balls.

"get those birds in the house!"

"but the birds need sun!"

"I said, 'get those birds in the house!'"

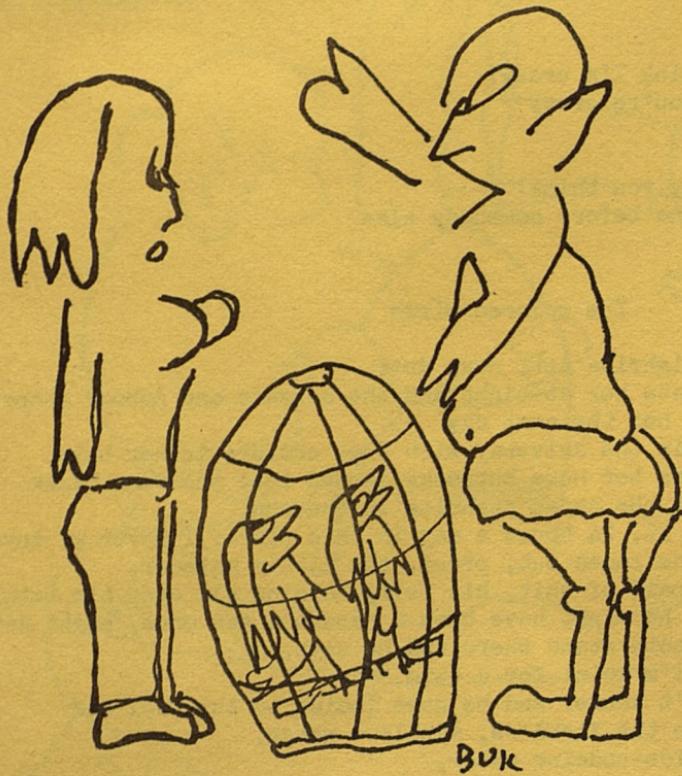
"the birds are gonna die!"

"you listen to me, I said, '--- GET THOSE BIRDS IN THE HOUSE!'"

she bends and lifts them, her huge buttocks in the same black  
slacks looking so sad.

he slams the door. then I hear it.

BAM!



she screams

BAM! BAM!

she screams

then: BAM!

and she screams

I pour another coffee and decide that that's a new one: he usually only beats her at night. it takes a man to beat his wife night and day. although he doesn't look like much he's one of the few real men around here.

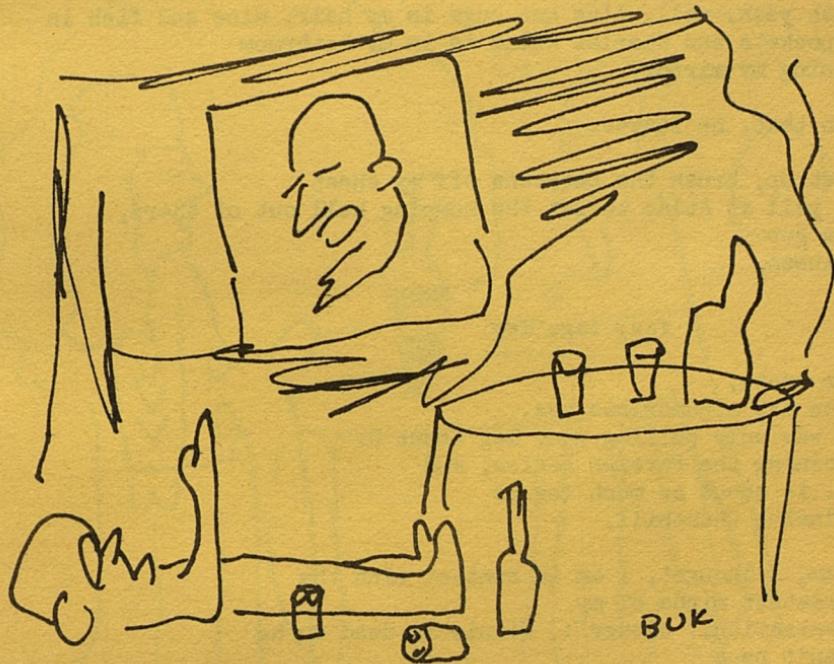
Somebody always breaking my dainty solitude ...

hey man! somebody yells down to me through my broken window,

ya wanna go down to the taco stand?

hell, no!

I scream from down on the floor.



why not? he asks.

I yell back, who are you?

none of us knows who we are, he states, I just thot maybe you wanted to go down to the taco stand.

please go away.

no, I'm comin' in.

listen, friend, I've got a half a foot of salami with greasy sides and the first fink walks in here, he's gonna get it in the side of his mouth!

don't mess with me, he answers, my mother played halfback for St. Purdy High for half a year before somebody found her squatting over one of the urinals.

oh yeah, well, I've got bugs in my hair, mice and fish in my pockets and Charles Atlas is in my bathroom shining my mirror.

with that, he leaves.

I get up, brush the beercans off my chest and yell at Atlas to get the humping hell out of there, I've got business.

fag, fag, fag

he wrote,  
you are a humorless ass,  
I was only pulling your leg about D.  
joining the Foreign Legion, and  
D. is about as much fag as  
Winston Churchill.

hmm, I thought, I am in contact with the greatest minds of my generation. clever!: Winnie is dead so he can't be a fag.

the letter continued,  
you guys in California are fag-happy,  
all you do is sit around and think about fags. just the same I will send you the anti-war materials I and others wrote, although I doubt it will stop the war.

ten years ago he had sent me a photo of D. and himself at a picnic ground.  
D. was dressed in a Foreign Legion uniform,  
there was a bottle of wine,  
and a table with one tableleg crooked.

I thought it over for ten years and then answered:

I have nothing against 2 men sleeping together so long as I am not one of those 2 men.

I didn't infer which one was the fag.

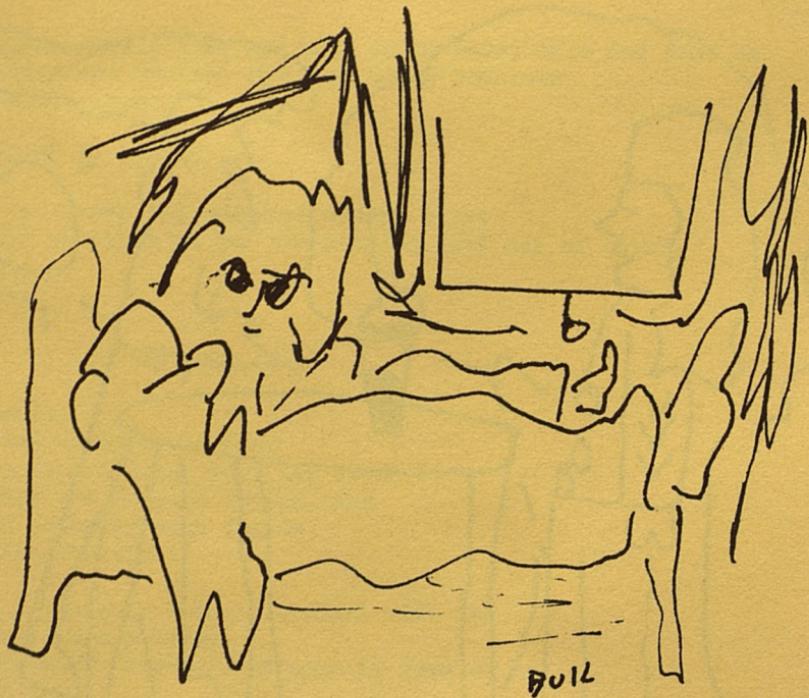


anyway, today I got the anti-war materials  
in the mail, but he's right:  
it won't stop the war or anything  
else.

#### The Screw-Game

one of the terrible things is  
really  
being in bed  
night after night  
with a woman you no longer  
want to screw.

they get old, they don't look very good  
anymore -- they even tend to  
snore, lose  
spirit.



so, in bed, you turn sometimes,  
your foot touches hers --  
god, awful! --  
and the night is out there  
beyond the curtains  
sealing you together  
in the  
tomb.

and in the morning you go to the  
bathroom, pass in the hall, talk,  
say odd things; eggs fry, motors  
start.

but sitting across  
you have 2 strangers  
jamming toast into mouths  
burning the sullen head and gut with  
coffee.

in ten million places in America  
it is the same --

stale lives propped against each  
other  
and no place to  
go.

you get in the car  
and you drive to work  
and there are more strangers there, most of them  
wives and husbands of somebody  
else, and besides the guillotine of work, they  
flirt and joke and pinch, sometimes tend to  
work off a quick screw somewhere --  
they can't do it at home --  
and then  
the drive back home  
waiting for Christmas or Labor Day or  
Sunday or  
something.

### a beginner's bibliography of bukowski:

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prose.
- 3.. Flower, Fist and Bestial Wail (1961, poem booklet) Hearse  
Press. Eureka, Calif. (28 pp. unnumbered, offset in white  
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by Ben Tibbs. Copies are rare.
- 4.. Poems and Drawings (1962, poem-drawings booklet) an extra  
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(26 pp. 1ttrpress in yellow wrappers -- 15.3 x 23.5 cm.)  
no limitation noted. Totally devoted to C.B., 3 drawings.
- 5.. Longshot Pomes for Broke Players (1962, poem-drawings  
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al.
- 6.. Run With the Hunted (1962, poem booklet) Midwest Poetry  
Chapbooks, Chicago, Ill. (32 pp., offset in red wrappers  
-- 14 x 21 cm.) no limitation noted. Publ. by R. R. Cus-  
caden.

7.. "The Outsider of the Year Award" (1963, poems, letters, testimonials, etc) The Outsider 3: 57-78, 92-96

8.. It Catches My Heart in Its Hands subtitle: New and Selected Poems 1955-1963 (Oct. 1963, poem book) Loujon Press, New Orleans La. (97 pp., lttrpress on cream paper with colored paper divisional inserts containing holograph repro., wrappers over boards -- 18.7 x 25.7 cm.) 777 copies. Intro. by John William Corrington, photo cover by Henri L Chevrier, photo of C.B. by John Stevens. Photocopy of C.B. letter dated 11/23/63 in later copies.

9.. Grip the Walls (1964, poem booklet) Wormwood Review Press, Storrs, Conn. (8 pp. offset -- 14 x 21.5 cm.) 600 copies, 24 signed with illustrations. Issued as detachable booklet of Wormwood: 16, pp. 15-22.

10.. Crucifix in a Deathhand subtitle: New Poems 1963-65 (Apr. 1965, poem book) Lyle Stuart, Inc., N.Y. (101 pp., lttrpress on colored papers with illust. wrappers over holograph reproduct. on cover -- 21.4 x 31.6 cm.) 3100 sgnd. copies. Designed, printed and handbound by Louise and Jon Webb of Loujon Press. Cover and illustr. by Noel Rockmore. Introduction by C.B.

11.. Cold Dogs in the Courtyard (1965, poem booklet) Literary Times & Cyfoeth Publications, Chicago, Ill. (24 pp., lttrpress in brown illust. wrappers -- 13.9 x 21.1 cm.) 500 copies. Cover by Betsy Milam, forward by C.B.

12.. Confessions of a Man Insane Enough to Live With Beasts subtitle: Fragments from a Disorder, See: Human Race (1965 prose booklet) Mimeo Press, Bensenville, Ill. (52 pp., mimeo on colored papers in pink illustr. wrappers -- 13.8 x 21.6 cm.) 500 copies. Cover is by Anna Purcell, intro. by Steve Richmond, publ. by Douglas Blazek.

13.. The Genius of the Crowd (1966, poem booklet) 7 Flowers Press Cleveland, Ohio (22 pp., handpress in green illustr. wrappers -- 11.7 x 15.4 cm.) 103 copies. Pages printed on cream colored envelopes, cover and text prints by Paula Marie Savarino. Press handling by d. a. levy.

14.. All the Assholes in the World and Mine (1966, prose booklet) Open Skull Press, Bensenville, Ill. (28 pp., mimeo in brown illustr. wrappers -- 13.8 x 21.5 cm.) 400 copies. Cover by C.B., dedicated to Wm. Wantling, publ. by Douglas Blazek.

15..

Out Early to the Quarry, to See What They Had Done

1.

Even before dawn you can  
see the white barn that's filled  
with corn. Our farmer  
landlord raced winter  
to harvest  
this field, driving his machines  
even at night  
with lights, up to the far  
end (the quarry  
end) and turning back  
toward our house --

shotgun  
on his lap in case  
he flushed a  
pheasant.

2.

Crossing the  
empty  
cornfield I wondered

what becomes of county fair fellows  
who lie down with sticks  
of dynamite, set them off, then  
stand to prove  
they're not dead yet.

The one I saw  
loved  
his work or so the Sunday  
paper said.

He was one-hundred percent deaf.

3.

At the quarry I found  
they'd blasted  
the wall

my daughter and I had  
climbed  
(pretending the mountains named  
after presidents)  
and they had  
pumped away the water where

we'd caught sun  
fish big as my hand  
with a homemade fly. The straight  
hard wall, fallen  
now like a bitter old  
body. Stone  
crushers and dead  
fish  
where the water was.

I found the two wires  
(red and green, wrapped  
in plastic) that made our house  
shiver.

4.

New  
cracks grew  
in all our walls.

5.

I didn't stay at the quarry  
long. Back home  
I found the big kitchen table  
catching  
the first sun over  
the barn and my children  
were stirring upstairs.

The baby  
sucking his thumb with a cricket's  
sound.

6.

Lines  
of repair

not cracks, in the walls  
of the brown  
milk pitcher set in the center  
of our kitchen  
table. The glue is white  
until it dries clear and disappears  
from sight. Milk will not  
spill through those lines of where  
our pitcher is no longer  
broken.

I put sweet noisey flakes  
 into the bowls and  
 I climbed the stairs to carry  
 my two children to their  
 breakfast.

I brought them what I'd found  
 at the quarry: a stone  
 spiral  
 broken by dynamite. (Like  
 a fossil  
 I thought of a shattered  
 inner ear.)  
 Their mother was able to heal it  
 with a touch  
 of the almost miraculous  
 glue she'd used to fix  
 our broken brown pitcher.

-- James Hazard

Oshkosh, Wisconsin

She was crying for tomorrow  
 She feared age & its skin  
 But her tears made her  
 ugly today

Victim

turned loose  
 what would I do?  
 run nude in a field  
 maybe sing a lot  
 touch people & children  
 feed animals  
 bathe in a spring or creek  
 exploit my freedom  
 my being  
 my self  
 but  
 I'm society's child  
 &  
 I'll never run free  
 in the rain

-- Ruthie Wantling

Normal, Illinois

## 40 Years of Pure Hell

we sit down  
at times of insight  
or internal revolution  
& write a few lines  
chopping off fingernails  
of thought  
to prove we are still  
alive  
like tonight

I remember  
the faces on the men at work  
as they presented the president  
of the company  
with a camera  
for retirement.

they were amazed  
that anyone could actually  
get out of this work mess --  
I also remember  
the look on his face  
amazed  
that we could honor him  
after he tried to kill us off  
with lousy pay, long hours  
& poor working conditions.

he rambled off a few  
words of thanks --  
the peasants played their  
parts admirably --  
& then he mentioned about  
how he would use the camera  
on the hunting trip he was  
going on --  
guess he intended to kill a few more  
before he went for good.

## A Girl Made of Sand

Her breasts were green olives  
with long stems  
altho I should say she had short stems  
because she was small  
with beige thighs  
sphynx mouth  
& a cramped rumple bag honeywell  
that churned  
in organ-spasm giant clam shell  
candy-weeded high connection!

that's it! all those words necessary  
as you would know  
if you've ever been lucky enuf  
to tumble with her in the marigolds  
behind the garage.

ah, she was Africa  
all vines & jungle heat  
& I was a wounded dinosaur!

but I can't continue;  
I shouldn't have started  
these words are sand, sand  
that filled the mouths of Egyptians  
centuries past, that fill the eyes  
I use to look back.  
such an ordeal to try to relive!  
such an ordeal to play with sand!

newspapers will still be printed tomorrow

#### Song to Myself

"The life of the Unusual Person  
in this land is bitter -- "  
-- Sheri Martinelli

you are not dead  
you are not dead  
but only stars  
care about you,  
only red birds  
& poor dead things  
thousands of years  
old  
with sadder eyes,  
much sadder  
than kisses.

-- Douglas Blazek

Bensenville, Illinois

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## Eddie Reed and His Radio Rangers

For seven months, just off and on, Eddie Reed explored the grounds of Central Park. No one wondered why. If asked, he would have said that he was looking for a place where there just wasn't anything.

He figured (rightly and alas!) there really had to be one in a big old bag like this, where anything is possible. And what more likely place than Central Park?

So from August to next March he looked and cogitated. Looked again, recogitated, and by-the-Living-God, he found it: a tiny, perfect, round hole in the one dimension that covered up everything else.

"Now, that is something to remark about!" thought Eddie Reed, And the great gold/green and backward/flying bird that passed agreed.

Then it occurred to him he'd have to think just what was to be done about this (naturally) unnatural phenomenon, and Ed, remembering the childhood picture/story of the small dutch boy and dyke, he placed his finger in the hole, wondering what Nothing felt like,

If at all.

A couple thousand stars went nova on his eyelashes, and some big Nothing gave and burst, and presently he heard the voice of all the Universe next to his ear.

It sounded like a tiny, sexy moan.

-- Carl Larsen

New York, N. Y.

## Maestro Insana's Room: 27

He never had his picture on the cover of Time or his name in Who's Who, But he did have a picture of Caruso Patting him on the head and his name Painted in black Gothic letters on the door.

-- Oliver Haddo

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

## Our Readers Write Us

Well, it's almost that time again when everyone  
has to register his purpose in existence  
at the Central Bureau, after all,  
others are waiting to replace us  
when we can no longer justify our lives,  
and it's a nuisance form at best,  
but, if you let the deadline slip by,  
it's suicide, at least with suicide  
it's cleaner than the kind of accident  
you're apt to have when the Central Signal  
starts beeping in your direction,  
I remember my friend Cissy  
who tried to make it as Love Object  
(just one chance in a hundred the machine  
would woof up her form for the Check)  
and the investigators found  
that her lover has finished himself  
two years previous, poor girl  
had nothing else to fall back on,  
so the Final Notice arrived,  
and Cissy, featherbrain to the end,  
decided to beat the rap by pretending  
the letter got lost in the mails,  
well, she did fine for six days,  
but on the seventh she cut her finger  
while peeling a pomegranate at the kitchen sink,  
gangrene set in, of course,  
and no doctor could treat her now that her name  
was struck off the List of the Living,  
so we went through the fever  
and smell and pain with her,  
nothing but a little blackmarket morphine  
to ease her out, and that cost us  
an arm and a leg, well anyway,  
what I am thinking is,  
now that my youngest is fifteen  
I can't keep qualifying as Mother,  
so I might switch to Poet, a difficult category,  
but, once you get into it, you're set for life,  
maybe subversive stuff to keep spirits up  
in the colleges and don't the police  
need a chance to try out  
their new crowd control methods,  
or I could go for grandeur,  
a brave heart for the changes we must all endure,  
the thing is it's my old age I'm worried about  
losing out on if I don't find something secure.

-- Dolores Stewart

Pembroke, Mass.

it is now  
i watch your body  
it is now  
that i love you most  
it is now  
we smile  
i recall your mouth  
yesterday i opened you

today shall be no different  
tomorrow will be the same  
you said so yourself  
when we met

will  
you  
keep  
your  
promise?

#### forest creatures

silent river  
whispered my call

you on the thorned flower side  
me on the secluded riverbank

will you swim over?  
or shall i gather some logs  
and drift over

then i can fuck you  
it will be a good fuck  
i promise you that

i can't swim  
but i can log it over  
i shall call you my river mistress  
i shall kiss every part of your body

when we embrace  
will you kiss me?

or can i choose  
which part i want kissed.

-- Gene Bloom

New York, N. Y.

Epistle

My friend Lew  
writes he has  
changed his address

and now  
lives up the  
river

in a  
large stone  
house

with a  
high wall  
around it

and no rent  
whatsoever  
to pay.

Playing It Safe

"Let us hope  
for the worst,"  
droned the pessimist,  
pulling a frown down  
to his chin,  
"For then,  
however bad things are,  
we sha'n't be  
disappointed."

Unburied Corpse

For years  
the corpse of marriage  
lay unburied in the house,  
disguised, after a fashion,  
as a more or  
less decorous  
makeshift.

Concerning Lulu

She knew  
her groceries not  
it seemed  
and therefore  
in her ignorance  
mistook not only  
carrots for corn  
but likewise a loaf  
for a lover.

Unevent

Once  
a huge Dwarf  
and a tiny Giant  
met at  
a Cocktail Party  
but both  
at the time  
were on the  
Wagon  
so neither  
ever got  
to know the other  
well.

Casualty

The old elm tree  
that from time  
out of mind  
shadowed a corner  
of the graveyard,  
died last night,  
we are sadly informed,  
of a bad attack of  
claustrophobia.

-- Charles Shaw

New York, New York

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Wormwood will continue publication through another three volumes (i.e. through issue number 36); at that time we will take another self evaluation. Checking through the past twelve issues, the following statements of "intent" have appeared:

"... non-beat, non-academic, non-sewing-circle and non-profit. Wormwood is interested in quality poems and prose-poems (proems) of all types and schools -- the form may be traditional or avant-garde-up-through-and-including-dada -- the tone serious to flip, the content conservative to utter taboo. A good poem should be able to compete with the presence of other poems. Wormwood is not afraid of either intelligence or wit -- both are rare qualities...."

"Wormwood believes that a good poem should be able to compete with the presence of other poems of different styles and content."

"Wormwood seeks good poems of all styles, schools, moods and manner that reflect the temper and depth of the human scene."

"Good poetry is a group of words totally occupied by any man. Bad poetry is the result of any man totally occupied by words."

"...seeking an art based on fundamentals to cure the madness of the age, and a new order of things that would restore the balance between heaven and hell. We had a dim premonition that power-mad gangsters would one day use art itself as a way of deadening men's minds....' Hans Arp: Dadaland"

All of the above statements are still valid yet to the editorial eyes and ears of Wormwood. It might be added that we are not a regional magazine; therefore, we seek poems wherever they are written -- not confining ourselves to New York or San Francisco or the United States. Wormwood is not part of a clique, a cult, a sex, or a political party, and does not seek to create a new clique, a new cult, a new sex, or a new political party. OK?

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David Stalzer

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Aspen Bookshop, P.O. Box 743, Aspen, Colorado  
Asphodel Book Shop, 306 Superior Ave., W., Cleveland, Ohio 44113  
Better Books Ltd., 92-94 Charing Cross Rd., London WC2, England  
Briggs' Books 'N Things, 82 East 10th St., New York 3, New York  
Cornillon's Manichee, 55 Adams St., Somerville, Mass.  
Earth Books, 244 Ocean Park Blvd., Santa Monica, Calif. 90405  
Free Press Bookstore, 424½ North Fairfax Ave., Los Angeles, Calif.  
Gotham Book Mart, 41 West 47th. St., New York, N. Y. 10036  
Paperbook Gallery, Business Dist., Storrs, Conn. 06268  
Peace Eye Book Store, 383 East 10th. St., N.Y., N.Y. 10009  
Red Lion Book Co., 960 Embarcadero Del Norte, Goleta, Calif.  
Tompkins Square Books, 97 Avenue B, N.Y., N.Y. 10009  
Trent Book Shop, 1 Pavilion Rd., Trent Bridge, Nottingham, Engl.  
University of Wisc. Book Store, Union Lower Level, Milwaukee,  
Wisconsin 53211

Because of their lack of business ethics -- if poets don't have ethics, who does? -- the following book stores should be avoided since they do not pay their bills even after repeated requests. If the only way they can stay in business is to cheat on the little mags, then Wormwood cannot continue to support them: Abington Book Shop (Kansas), Artists' Workshop (Detroit), City Lights (San Francisco) and New World Book Fair (Philadelphia).

Wormwood regular subscription rate: \$3.50 per 4 issues with the 4 issues released at irregular intervals within the period of a year's time. Single copies are \$1 postpaid anywhere. Patrons' and Contributors' subscriptions are \$12 and \$6, respectively, for 4 issues with signed bonus books and prints added to make this a bargain at twice the price.

Wormwood is a true little magazine and because of this we cannot undertake extensive correspondence and cannot criticize manuscripts. We appreciate all poets enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelopes with their work. All poems are copyrighted for protection of the poet.

Exchange Magazines (\* = new magazine): continued from Wormwood:23

Dust, Box 123, El Cerrito, Calif. 94530 (\$3.50/yr.)  
Earth, 244 Ocean Park Blvd., Santa Monica, Calif. 90405  
East Side Review, 414 Park Ave. S., New York, N.Y. 10016  
Edge, Box 4067, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (\$2/yr.)  
Elizabeth, 103 Van Etten Blvd., New Rochelle, N.Y. (\$1/copy)  
\* En HAA, Revista Literaria, Apartador 8612, Correos de Quinta Crespo, Caracas, Venezuela  
Entrails, 283 East Houston St. (Apt. 2), N.Y., N.Y. 10002 (\$4.01/year)  
Epos, Crescent City, Florida 32012 (\$2/yr.)  
Este Es Press, P.O. Box 1492, Taos, New Mexico  
Exit (22 Bostock's Lane, Risley, Derbyshire, England (\$2/yr.)  
Floating Bear, c/o DiPrima, Box 951, Poughkeepsie, New York  
Folio, 4167 Cliff Road (P.O. Box 31111), Birmingham, Ala. 35222 (\$3/3 issues)  
\* Form, 8 Duck End, Girton, Cambridge, England (\$5/yr.)  
The Free Lance, 6005 Grand Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44104 (\$1/copy)  
\* From a Window, Box 3446, College Station, Tucson, Ariz. 85719 (75¢/copy)  
\* Gato Magazine, Box 654, Los Gatos, Calif. 95030 (\$2/yr.)  
The Goodly Co, 724 Minor Ave., Kalamazoo, Mich. (\$2/yr.)  
Grist, 1237 Oread St., Lawrence, Kansas 66044 (\$4.50/5 issues)  
\* Hanging Loose, 80 Ave. C, N.Y., N.Y. 10009 (\$1.75/yr.)  
\* Hors Commerce Press, and Dyptich, a Magazine of Prose (\$1.50/issue), 22526 Shady-croft Ave., Torrance, Calif. 90505  
Human Voice, Olivant Press, P.O. Drawer 1409, Homestead, Fla. 33030 (\$5/yr.)  
\* Iconolatre, 71 Ryehill Gardens, West Hartlepool, Co. Durham, England (\$3/4 issues)  
\* Illuminations, 1927 Hayes, San Francisco, Calif. (\$1.50/copy)  
Imago, c/o Dept. English, Univ. Alberta, Calgary, Alberta, Canada  
Interim Books, c/o Congdon, 102 West 14th. St., New York 11, N.Y.  
Intrepid Press, c/o DeLoach, P.O. Box 175, Kenmore, N.Y. 14217  
It, University Village (Apt. 8), Platteville, Wisc. 53818 (\$1/6 good issues)  
Joglars, 292 Morris Ave., Providence, Rhode Island 02906  
Le Journal des Poetes, 147 Chaussee de Haecht, Bruxelles 3, Belgium  
Kauri, (temporary address: c/o Dept. English, American Univ., Mass. & Nebr. Ave., Washington, D.C.) Apt. 4W, 362 East 10th., N.Y., N.Y. 10009 (\$2/yr.)  
\* Kayak, 2808 Laguna St., San Francisco, Calif. 94123 (\$3/4 issues)  
\* Klaactoveedsedsteen, 1-3a Muhltalstrasse, 69 Heidelberg, Germany (\$1/copy)  
\* Labris, Begijnhofstraat 60, Lier, Belgium (\$3/yr.)  
\* Lampeter Muse, c/o R. Deutch, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y.  
Mainly, Carregraff, Graig Las Talybont, Brecon, Wales  
Manhattan Review, 229 East 12th. St., N.Y., N.Y. 10003  
Majoon Quarterly, Renegade Press, c/o Asphodel, 306 W. Superior Ave., Cleveland, O.  
Message 66, 46 rue Richer, Paris 9e, C.C.P. 5 195-59, France (20 fr./yr.)  
Midwest, 409 W. State, Geneva, Illinois 60134 (\$2/5 copies)  
Moonstones, 955 Vanderbilt Ave., Niagara Falls, N.Y. 14305 (\$2.50/4 issues)  
Motive, Box 871, Nashville, Tenn. 37202 (\$3/8 issues)  
Move, 7 Ryelands Crescent, Larches Estate, Preston, Lancs, England (contributions)  
\* My Own Mag, Jeff Nuttall, 37 Salisbury Rd., Barnet, Herts, England  
\* New American-Canadian Poetry, c/o Gill, R.D. 3, Trumansburgh, New York (\$1.50/yr.)  
New Era, P.O. Box 1000, Leavenworth, Kansas 66048  
Ole, 449 S. Center, Bensenville, Illinois 60106 (\$2/4 issues)  
\* Out of Sight, Gino Clays, 1642 28th Ave., San Francisco, Calif. 94122 (\$4/yr.)  
\* Outcast, Box 2182, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501 (\$1/copy)  
The Outsider, Lujon Press, 1009 East Elm St., Tucson, Ariz. 85719  
Pajaro Casabel, APDO Postal 13-541, Mexico 13, D.F.  
Penny Poems From Midwestern Univ., c/o English Dept., Midwestern Univ., Wichita Falls, Texas (\$1.50/10 issues)  
Poesia de Venezuela, Apartado Postal 1114, Caracas, Venezuela  
Poesie Vivante, 11 rue Hoffmann, Geneva, Switzerland (\$5/yr.)  
\* Poetmeat, 11 Clematis St., Blackburn, Lancs, England (\$2.25/ 3 issues)  
\* Poetry Australia, South Head Press, 350 Lyons Rd. Five Dock, Sidney NSW, Australia  
\* Poetry Bag, 1407 University, Columbia, Mo. (\$1/issue)  
Poetry Newsletter, 2019 18th St., Sacramento, Calif. 95818 (\$2.50/6 issues)  
Poetry Northwest, Parrington Hall, Univ. Washington, Seattle, Wash. 98105 (\$3.50/yr.)  
Poetry Review, Univ. of Tampa, Tampa, Fla. 33606 (\$2/4 issues)  
Poor Old Tired Horse, Wild Hawthorne Press, Stonypath, Dunsyre, Lanark, Scotland (\$3.50/ 12 issues)  
Prism International, c/o Dept. Creative Writing, Univ. British Columbia, Vancouver 8, Canada (\$3.50/yr.)  
PS, Alan Swallow, 2472 South 4th St., Denver, Colorado 80215

Exchange Magazines (\* = new magazine): continued

- \* Quoin, 1226 West Talmage, Springfield, Mo. 65803
- Reactions, Jean Beguelin, Hirondelles 13, Bienna, Switzerland
- \* The Resuscitator, John James, 12 Marlowe Rd., Cambridge, England
- \* Showcase, 1637 Paloma, Barstow, Calif. 92311
- The Sixties, Odin House, Madison, Minn. 56256
- The Small Pond, RFD 3, Box 101-A, Auburn, Maine 04210 (\$1 for individuals and \$2 for institutions/ year)
- The Smith, Room 535, 15 Park Row, N.Y., N.Y. 10038 (\$3.50/ 4 issues)
- \* Smoky Hill Review, Robert Day, Fort Hayes Kansas State College, Hays, Kan. 67601
- \* Smyrna Press Newsletter, Box 418 Stuyvesant Stat., N.Y., N.Y. 10009 (\$1/yr.)
- \* Something Else Newsletter, 160 Fifth Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10010
- \* South & West and Voices International, 2601 S. Phoenix, Ft. Worth, Ark. 72901
- \* Southern Poetry Review, English Dept., North Carolina State, Raleigh, N.C.
- \* The Southern Review, Drawer D Univ. Station, Baton Rouge, La. 70803 (\$4/yr.)
- \* Spanish Fleye, Fleye Press, c/o David Harris, 600 Huron St., Toronto 5, Canada
- The Sparrow Magazine, 103 Waldron St., West Lafayette, Indiana 47906
- Spectrum, P.O. Box 11762 Univ. Branch, Univ. Calif., Santa Barbara, Calif. 93107
- Spero, 1517 Jonquil Terr., Chicago, Ill. 60626 (\$1.75/copy)
- \* Steppenwolf, 3332 Harney St., Omaha, Nebr. 68131
- \* Tarasque, c/o Trent Book Shop, Pavilion Rd., Trent Bridge, Nottingham, England
- Fish, 2527 West 37th Ave., Vancouver 13, B.C., Canada (contributions)
- \* Tlaloc and Loc-Sheet, Location Press, Flat A, Grosvenor Court, 3 Grosvenor Rd., Leeds 6, England (\$1/6 issues)
- Today, 221 West Madison St., Chicago, Ill. 60606 (\$3/yr.)
- Tzarad, Night Scene Publ., 69 Brockmer House, Crowder St., London El, England
- Vagabond, J. Bennett Jr., Gollierstr. 5, 8 Munich 12, Germany (\$2/4 issues)
- \* Verb, 1323 East 14th. Ave. (no. 15), Denver, Colorado 80218 (\$2/6 issues)
- \* Vincent, Mad Brother of Theo, c/o Murphy, 641 East 9th. St., N.Y., N.Y. (\$1/copy)
- Vol. 63, Board of Publications, Univ. of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ont., Canada (\$2/yr.)
- Weed, c/o Ball, Apt. 4, 22 Young St., Kitchener, Ont., Canada (\$2.15/6 issues)
- \* Work and Whe're, Artists Workshop Press, 4825 John Lodge, Detroit, Mich. 48201
- \* Writer's Forum, Dept. 2D, 910 Riverside Dr., N.Y., N.Y. 10032 (\$4.75/12 issues)
- Writer's Notes & Quotes, 142 W. Brookdale Pl., Fullerton, Calif. 92632

Late Additions:

- \* 121 (One Two One), c/o Silberman, 58-15 263 st., Little Neck, N.Y. 11362 (\$1.50 per 3 issues)
- \* Mile High Underground, c/o James Ryan Morris, P.O. Box 448, Boulder, Colorado 80302 (\$4/12 issues) -- first issue has excellent resume of the life of the late Alan Swallow.

Abstracted from a letter fm. Jim Lowell of the excellent Asphodel:

"My raid developed from a marijuana investigation by the local narcotic gestapo. It seems a high school boy, coming off a not too successful LSD trip went home and his father found in his possession either a copy of the Marijuana Quarterly or the M. Newsletter (I still don't know) and of course my address was listed. Anyway the father made a complaint to the police, etc. Then on two consecutive days plain clothesmen purchased at the shop copies of the MQ and several other Levy publications. A secret indictment was drawn up charging me with "sale & possession." They used this as a device to search for narcotics. They came in with a warrant for my arrest but no search warrant -- they said when narcotics were involved, no warrant was necessary. They confiscated 9 cartons of books and periodicals and searched the place for narcotics. Of course, they didn't find any. As for the publications taken: virtually every publication of d. a. levy, Darazt (London), Causeway (Toronto), Clive Matson's Mainline to the Heart, The Beginning, Robert Duncan's Faust Foutu(!), Anselm Hollo's Words From the North, The Great Society #1, Moonstones #2, The Eight Pager (in fact, all publications of D. r. Wagner) & I wd. imagine a few others -- I still haven't had a receipt from them. & to top it off an excessive punitive bond was set (\$10,000) but through the efforts of the local ACLU it was reduced to \$1000."

So while this is pending, d. a. levy is dodging a warrant for arrest. Moreover the Peace Eye Bookstore in N.Y. is closed under similar circumstances. Moreover Steve Richmond's Earth Books has been raided because his Earth Rose periodical said "Fuck Hate" on the cover -- trial pending. City Lights Book Store, moreover, in similar circumstances. D. r. Wagner's mail under surveillance. Blazek's Ole and Wormwood reported to the F.B.I. -- no action. Something's in the air -- a touch of mass paranoia so delicate as the cold feeling low in the spine as when a finger-nail scheeches on the blackboard. History seems to be setting the stage for another spectacular.



editor : marvin malone

price : one dollar