

in her underpants. Eat at 5, walk back, teach three hours and walk the two miles home, eight for the day.

AN EXQUISITE OMBRÉ EFFECT

Walking the asylum grounds, a village by itself, really, gaining on two men walking, one trailing a stick. By their extreme sense of leisure, they almost seem tourists. But they are so self-contained. Lovers? Dragging a stick? Large children -- which is impossible! So, peasants on a large estate! And I a guest ending a stay with their master, having eaten and made wisecracks with him and his lady, shattered nuts, drunk, seen the estate through their eyes. For some reason these two are delighted to see me, but I hardly know them and walk ahead to the pharmacy, closed with a note, return a few minutes later, etc. etc.

-- Jim Klein

Rutherford NJ

ONLY THE ORDER OF EVENTS HAS BEEN CHANGED

I don't make up these stories. I don't have to. Just three days ago a battery thief shot it out with the cops under our house, although I missed it since our air conditioner is far too loud. Shortly thereafter, Lee telephoned to say that Moonyeen in Australia had finally

been able to ship Reggie
the kangaroo head he wanted
for his skull collection,
but since it's illegal to
mail kangaroo heads, it
arrived in a box labeled
MODEL, WITHOUT GLUE. Then
I left the house, and
the woman next door had
ejected her drunken husband
onto the sidewalk and was
flinging his clothes at him
piece by piece, including
individual socks, and he
was taking pot shots at her
with a heavy-duty Sears
staple gun. I decided
there were a dozen things
I should be doing and that
I should do them immediately.
But when I got in the Datsun
the words on the rearview
mirror said THINGS IN THIS
MIRROR ARE CLOSER THAN
THEY APPEAR, and then I
really began to worry.

O RACCOON

I was driving through Albany
with Richard the trapper
and he told me, "I visited
your city of New Orleans
some years ago,
mainly Bourbon Street
where I was introduced
to a fuchsia drink
they called a Hurricane.
Later, I was lying
on my face in Jackson Square
protecting my tongue
and listening to a man
on a nearby bench
talk to a black raccoon
which wasn't there.
He was patting its head."
"If it wasn't there," I asked
"what made you certain
it was a raccoon?"