





CORADDI
FALL ISSUE

1977

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BALLET

Sitting
In reflection
Of fire kindled in thought
Mirrored in faces of passing
Strangers.
The sound of cellos and pounding drums
Lit the candles of my dream
Beneath a blackened sky:
Snakelike, with wary approaches,
As though the world would end in a single touch
They moved together, watching each other,
Bending from the heat of their encounter,
At last with tremulous decorum, they blended fires,
Stuck fast for an instant in a shooting flame,
Then parted in darkness to become again
Mantle piece objects for passing notice.
Whispers
In fiery touch
And blackened wicks with smoke
Spiraling to curtains to end
The dance.

by June Milby

THE SEASON OF MOULTING

by Margaret Hoffman

Between the shifting of the tide,
The rise and fall of time's dark
Dreaming, the shrimp boats oscillate
As scythes above the ocean foam.
The moon like a talon seeming
Perches above a long, black beach
At right, and winds shuffle sea oats
Together whispering arcane
Incantations of something lost,
Something lost in this season of change.

Between the barnacles and sea
Anemone, between the crevices
Of rocks, the tentacled, black eyes
Of Fiddler crabs flicker, appear
And disappear beneath the waves.
The wind whistles past and last
Month's hollow shells scuttle by,
Across the phosphorescent beach,
Scrawling hieroglyphics in the sand.
And while the Fiddler crabs await
The millennium of some shell,
Some new form with which to perceive
A beach, the winds shuffle sea oats
Together whispering arcane
Incantations of something lost,
Something lost in this season of change.

Although a quarter moon revolves
Above a long, black beach at night,
The talon disappeared between
The rise and fall of time's dark
Dreaming. Although the shrimp boats swing
Still upon the ocean waves
The scythes have vanished out of sight
Far, far away and left the beach
Nothing more but a moon and boats.
And softly winds shuffle sea oats
Together whispering arcane
Incantations of something lost,
Something lost in this season of change.

TO MY NEPHEW, NEWBORN

MIRIAM A. KILMER

When with her slender, opalescent hands
Levana first raised up your tiny head
To fill you with the wonder of the stars
You wept, and were confounded in your dread.
Thus have you joined the ranks of human-kind
All weak and trembling for that we have seen
The universe spread out before our eyes
Definite, magnificent, serene . . .

CHECKERS

My sister Candy died last week.

My family sure ain't lacking for kids but we're sure gonna miss my sister. Her name was Candice Louise French and she was seventeen years old on June the sixth. When I had my appendix taken out during Easter vacation she used to play checkers with me. Man, I didn't never get tired of playing checkers with Candy; we won some and we both lost some. I guess things was about equal.

In our family, Candy was next to the oldest, the oldest being Ralph who is very good-looking and wears his hair Afro even though Mama doesn't like it much. He is very smart and going to college to be a teacher. Next is Candy and then Lester. Then is me. My name is Danial Boone French and I am ten years old. Next to me is Margo, who is seven and very fat and stupid. Then is Amanda the baby who is four. My mama's name is Lucy and this is her second time married. My daddy was killed in Vietnam when the war first started. My step-daddy Sam is just no good. When Dr. Martin Luther King died he went out and got drunk and we did not see him for a week. My mama cried and cried.

This summer fat Margo and me got to go to day camp. We stayed till five o'clock ever day when Freddy Wilkins would drive us home in the big blue bus. It was a good camp and though the counsellors were all white they were all nice and didn't care if you were black so long as you didn't peep in the girls' dressing room or lose your underwear. At the end of camp we had "lost and found" and ever day some kid lost his underwear. I

never lost mine, but Margo lost hers and everbody knew it was hers because they were so big.

My sister Candy worked at the camp. She worked in the Youth Corps.

There was also this boy named Butch in the corps and he hated those white people who run the camp. In fact, he hated everbody white. I don't guess I hate white people; they are just stuck up a lot but I don't like people who say "nigger". You shouldn't say "spik" or "jap" either, my Sunday school teacher says. She is colored, too.

But anyhow Butch didn't like those people, especially Sherman Setzer who was camp director. I don't know, I kind of liked Sherman even though Freddy Wilkins who did canoeing was my favorite. Sherman, he made everbody be good, and saw that nobody went out in the off-limits part of the lake or nobody shot nobody else with a rifle. Twice a week we rode horses, and Sherman took care that nobody fell off.

Outside the campcraft shelter we were making a path to go down to the lake. We were lining it with rocks that we painted with whitewash. There were some rocks too heavy for us kids to lift, and one afternoon Sherman saw that Butch and his buddy William wasn't doing nothing so he asked them would they move the rocks.

Butch grinned real big and said, "No, man, it's ten minutes after three and we don't work after three o'clock."

I don't know why Sherman got so mad because Butch was telling the truth. Anyhow, the next morning Sherman made Butch and William pick up rocks and Butch got real mad. We were making birdhouses out of

popsicle sticks and we heard him talking. He said some words I'd get whipped for using, but what he meant was that he wasn't gonna listen to any white man telling him what to do.

Butch wanted to "get even", so in a way it was Butch's fault what happened to my sister Candy.

It was on Tuesday when it happened, and my group was riding the horses. Sherman was after me to keep my heels down but it was not very easy because my sneakers were wet. I had not dried off good after swimming, and I felt like I was walking around in a mudhole.

I remember how white Sherman went when William came running up.

You think white people are white but they aren't really white unless they are scared. And Sherman was scared, I could see. He told William to stay with us and tie up the horses and he run down to the lake.

It was an hour before they found my sister Candy. Her and Butch and William and Ann had gone in swimming without telling nobody. They went down to that end of the lake where nobody was supposed to go because there were deep holes. I guess Candy probably fell in one of those holes and she couldn't swim good.

I cried when the men put my sister on a stretcher and took her away, and Margo cried, too. Freddy Wilkins took us home and the man from the rescue squad had already told Mama that my sister was drowned.

My baby sister Amanda wanted to know what "drowned" was and Mama told her it was being dead in

the water, and then she sat down and cried and cried. My step-daddy went off and got drunk.

We buried Candy On Thursday and all her friends from school came. So did Sherman Setzer and Freddy Wilkins. They were not the only white people at the funeral, but there were not many. After the preaching, Sherman came up and told Mama how sorry he was that Candy had got drowned.

Butch came, too, and he said that if it hadn't of been for Sherman, Candy would still be alive. Sherman hadn't been doing his job; he was a lousy white bastard.

Mama said Butch was wrong.

"Death don't know no color, Danial," she said. "The Lord called Candy that day and that is why she went out where she wasn't supposed to."

My sister wanted to prove she could do something, I guess. My Sunday school teacher says it's right much like checkers. The black men are over here, and the red ones over there, and they cross over and mix up but it's still one against the other. And they can't move both ways until they're kings. Well, the blacks aren't kings yet, maybe, but the only other way the whites can move is backwards, anyhow. Sometimes losing a black man hurts a red man; maybe he gets jumped or he's cornered so he can't move. Like my sister's dying hurt Sherman Setzer. Maybe he could have stopped it, but maybe not, so there it is.

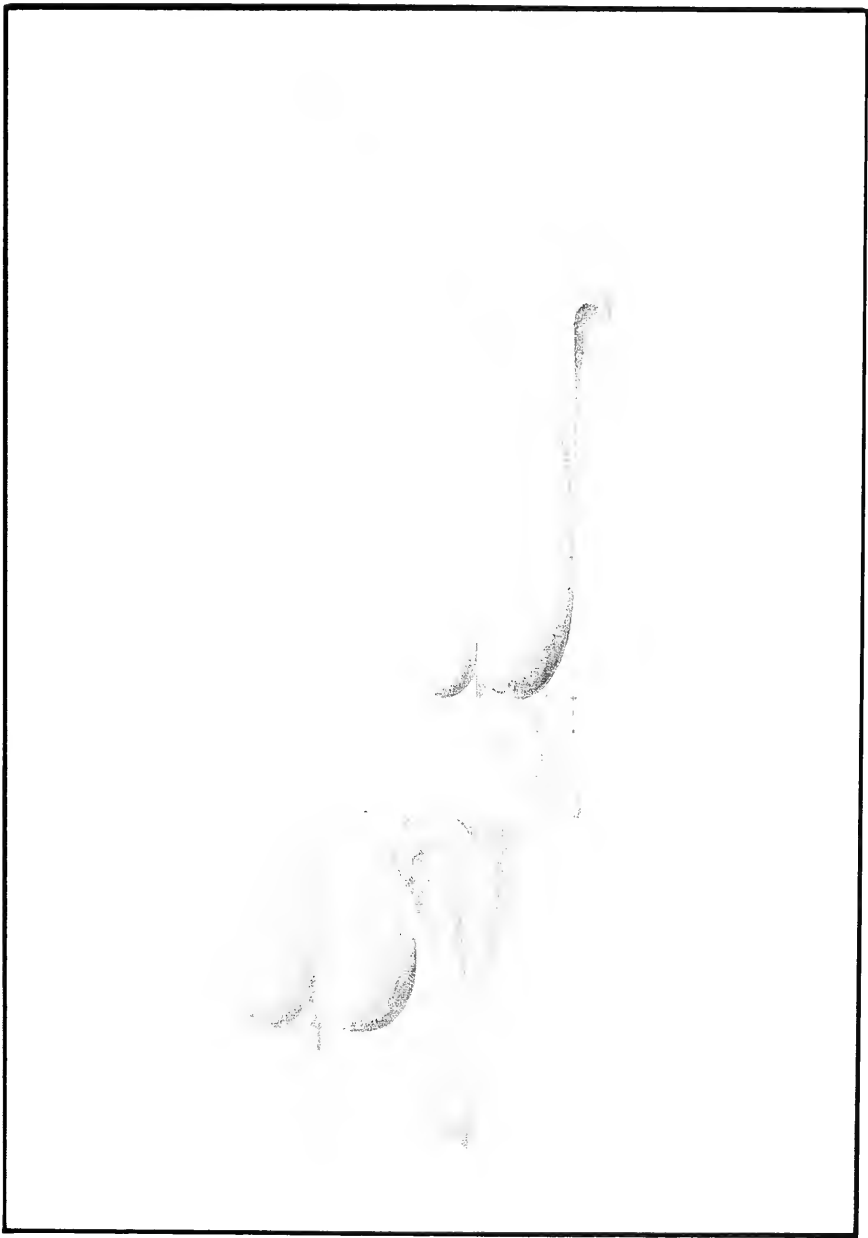
Somehow I don't much like to play checkers anymore.

—Susan Varner Houck









remember lewis brown

Ellen Gilmer

I used to hate Lewis, really hate him. Everytime he looked at me my throat would get tight and the same dull, nauseous feeling would creep around in the pit of my stomach—like water seeping through a cardboard box. And I would always look away as quickly as possible—away from the watery, leering, twitching eyes that peered from behind lenses as thick as the bottom of my mamma's good crystal sugar bowl. (I can still remember sneaking into the kitchen on early Sunday mornings as a child, before company came, to stare at sunlight through that freshly washed and polished crystal sugar bowl. I liked it especially. When I turned it on its side and looked at the world through its fat, concave bottom, everything merged in a multicolored blurr of distorted imagery near the center.) Later, watching Lewis glare unsteadily out through those goggles of his, I wonder if he saw something of the same warped picture.

Greenbrier was a small town where everybody knew everybody else. Looking back, I realize that Lewis and I had been in the same class since the first grade, but I

don't remember noticing him until about the fourth grade. Before that I just remember him as a part of the fuzzy mass of faces and names I always thought of as "the kids at school." But in the fourth grade Lewis became an individual. He never did anything big, but just little things that were kind of outstanding, you know, like eating the left-over banana peelings out of the trash can after lunch and carving his initials all over the middle finger on his right hand with a rusty old pocket knife he had. (Then, at recess a bunch of boys would crowd noisily around him, nudging each other and saying, "Hey, Lewis, watcha got carved on your hand?—Let's have a look." and "Hey, Lewis, I hear you're pretty good at skin engravin'.—Well, are ya—huh—are ya, Lewis?" And poor Lewis, confused at being paid so much attention, would grin proudly, stick up his finger, and promptly get the banana peelings knocked out of him.) But besides getting beat up all the time, you'd think he would have gotten blood poisoning from carving with that rusty old knife. But he didn't. He never died or even got sick, so evidently it

didn't faze him. He probably didn't even think to worry about it. Of course, if I'd been as nearsighted as he was I probably would have had to concentrate so hard to keep from cutting the end of my nose off while I got the letters right that I wouldn't have had time to worry about anything else.

Lewis did "write with the end of his nose," as the teachers said, but I guess he had to get that close just so he could see the pencil marks. His desk was always the first one in the middle row, right at the front of the room, so he could usually see what was going on, but sometimes when we'd have to copy a grammar lesson or a writing exercise off the blackboard, he'd have to get up and walk smack up to the board like he was going to tell it a secret just so he could make out a word or a letter that wasn't quite as dark as the rest. One funny thing about Lewis, though—whenever he was signing his name or his initials, whether it was on a Six-Weeks Test, on the cover of a new spiral notebook, or in the skin of the middle finger of his right hand, he always used small letters. The teachers used to get slightly annoyed, and then angry, and then really mad, and yell at him what was the matter didn't he have any self-respect and why on earth was it he could remember to capitalize Tuesday and July and Thanksgiving and not his own name. But Lewis only grinned self-consciously, confused at being paid so much attention, and went right on writing his name in little letters.

Lewis never got along too well with the other boys. He wasn't any good at sports, and he was always the one who got shoved or kicked or pushed in the mud. And he couldn't defend himself, even with words, let alone with his own two fists. He never even tried to fight back. But then, to do that he would have had to take off his glasses which would have completely erased the enemy as far as he was concerned, so I guess it was just as well he didn't try anything. I guess you kind of had to hand it to him for being so peaceful about things.

Without the other boys for friends, that just left us girls. Lewis wasn't really shy around us—he just couldn't think of much to say, so most of the time he just sat and stared. His interests would usually stay with one girl for just about a week, and then, when she didn't show any signs of a favorable response to the attention he was paying her, he'd begin to look elsewhere. If he had just looked, though, it wouldn't have been so bad. It was that nervous, bleary-eyed glare of his that made you feel so creepy and nearly drove us all berserk. But nobody ever said anything to Lewis about it. How could you talk, I mean really talk, to a person like that, anyway?

I remember one day—it was in the sixth grade—when I overheard Lewis telling Rusty Vaughn that he was

going to get some sort of a gun. Rusty laughed. "Good god, Lewis, you get a gun? Why, you couldn't even get it pointed in the right direction, much less sight through it. Hell, Lewis, you can't get a gun."

"Yeh, hell, Lewis," echoed the other boys standing around. But Lewis did get a gun. He came back after Christmas vacation that year with a big smile spread all over his face, and I knew right then that he must have gotten his gun. After that, whenever he talked, it was about his gun and how he was learning to shoot tin cans and squirrels and things.

Sometime during junior high school Lewis got a dog. It was a big mangey, floppy-eared hound that followed him everywhere and even waited for him outside the schoolhouse every afternoon. Lewis talked some about the dog after that, and he still talked about his gun once in a while, but those were the only things he ever really said anything about. Otherwise, he kept pretty quiet and pretty much to himself, always sitting in the very back of the room in all his classes although, of course, he couldn't see anything. I don't remember much about Lewis from high school. He just sort of faded back into the haze of names and faces I always thought of as just "the kids at school." I do recall a couple of things, though. One was the night of the homecoming dance our junior year when Rusty Vaughn and I left the steaming gym for a walk in the crisp November air and ran into Lewis. He had on a good pair of slacks, a sweater and tie, and he was alone except for his dog. Rusty reached down and patted the dog's head. Then, smiling, he said, "Hey, Lewis, whatcha got carved on your hand, huh? Let's have a look." without blinking, Lewis raised his finger. But there weren't any initials. Instead, he had carved the neat outline of a rifle. It showed up real well in the glare of the street light overhead. Rusty wasn't smiling anymore. He just reached out and rested his hand on one of the narrow shoulders for a minute. And it was a long time after we'd left Lewis and his dog standing under the street light before Rusty said anything. The only other thing I remember about Lewis from high school was at graduation when he tripped both going up and coming down the platform steps as we got our diplomas. Of course, everybody laughed, but it didn't seem to faze Lewis. He just grinned a little stiffly and kept right on walking.

Well, it was over a year ago we graduated. I've been working almost that long as a receptionist in the Public Health Center over at Covington, so I haven't seen much of anybody from around home—not even Rusty Vaughn. But I did go home last weekend to visit Mamma, and I saw Rusty while I was in town doing some shopping for her. He smiled just like always. "Hi, Mary. How are you?"

"Oh, I'm fine. How are you doing?"

"Fine. Say, how's the job over at Covington going?"

"Oh, okay. I like it pretty well, really. It's fun meeting people and all."

"Public Health, huh? Well, if I ever need your services, I'll let you know." Then his smile faded. "Say, that reminds me—did you hear about Lewis Brown?"

"Lewis B . . . ? Oh, Lewis Brown." I shook my head.

Rusty nodded. "Well, he shot himself."

"What? Oh, no. When?"

"Last night. They said he was cleaning his gun and it went off, but that doesn't seem too likely."

"You mean he . . . you think he did it on purpose?"

The picture of a smiling Lewis after that Christmas in the sixth grade flashed through my mind.

"Well, he'd been trying to get in the army, but, of course, couldn't pass the physical." Rusty shook his head. "I've never seen anybody who wanted to go to Vietnam so bad. Of course, he couldn't have done any fighting if they'd let him in, but just try and tell him that. Well, I guess the same thing would've happened to him if, by

some chance, he'd gotten over there fighting. Just would've been a different hand pulled the trigger. —Say, Mary, there's a dance in town tonight. Wanta go for a while?"

"I'd like to Rusty, I'd really like to, but Mamma's having company for dinner, and I need to stay home and help her. You know how she is about every little thing having to be just right."

Rusty laughed. "Yeh, I remember. Well, take care, and we'll see you again soon, huh?"

"O.K. Bye, Rusty."

That afternoon at home I picked up the paper and turned to the obituaries. Our home town paper had always been famous for its typographical errors, and I smiled as I found one. I wasn't smiling at anything funny — just smiling. In the middle column of the page at the very top of the row of names I saw a name printed just like this:

lewis brown

And I guess that was just about the nicest thing anybody could have done.



NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

ELLEN GILMER is a junior English major from Lewisburg, West Virginia.

MARGARET HOFFMAN is a junior English major from Danville, Virginia. She has been previously published in CORADDI and THE BROWN BAG. This year she is serving as Exchange Chairman for CORADDI.

SUSAN VARNER HOUCK is a sophomore from Morganton.

MIRIAM A. KILMER of Vienna, Virginia, is the only freshman represented in this issue.

PHILLIP LINK, a senior, is an art major from Reidsville. As Art Editor for CORADDI, he did the lay-out for this issue.

JUNE MILBY, published previously, is a senior from Fayetteville.

BARBARA TODD SHAW, a senior from Charlotte, has had photographs in the CAROLINIAN and the PINE NEEDLES, and is editor of the annual.

BIX SHERRILL is a senior from Belmont.

SALLY ANN TODD is a UNC-G sophomore.

CORADDI SUBMISSIONS

Deadline for Winter Issue—DECEMBER 13

Deadline for Arts Festival Issue—FEBRUARY 14

MANUSCRIPTS

1. Clean, first copies, double-spaced, typewritten, are preferred.
2. Verse of any length and prose pieces up to approximately 15,000 words are acceptable.
3. Manuscripts may be given to staff members or brought to Room 206, Elliott Hall at any time during the year.
4. The author's name and address must accompany the submission so that it may be returned.

ART WORK

1. The artist's name and address must accompany the work.
2. Art work must be picked up from the CORADDI office. This is to protect the work from being damaged.

ELIGIBILITY

1. Any undergraduate student is encouraged to submit his work to the magazine.
2. For the first time, graduate art work will be accepted in regular issues of the magazine.
3. For the Arts Festival issue, work from graduates and undergraduates from **any** institution of higher learning may be accepted.

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