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Cover Page Footnote

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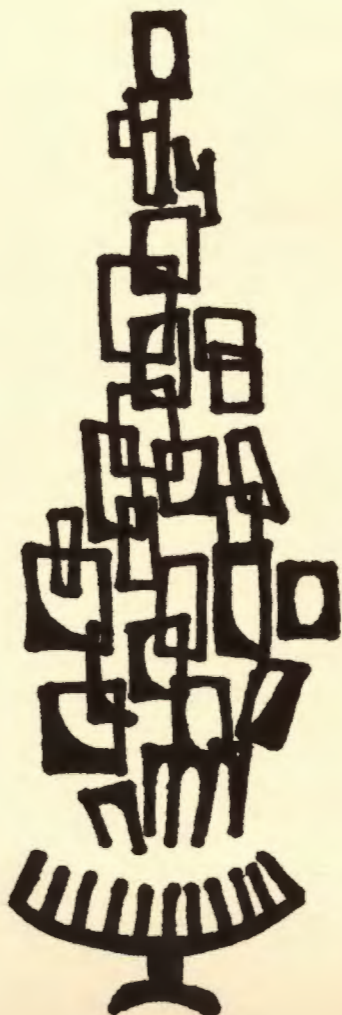
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You moved closer to me in the bed
 and whispered that your feet were cold.
 My hands were warm—So I held you
 And warmed your private kingdom.

I watched you that night
 sleeping,
 smiling,
 dreaming
 Of someone dancing across your mind
 But I knew somehow it wasn't me.

Maybe I should have left then, or told you
 That Love is much more than warming cold feet.
 You were too young to realize it though
 And at least you smiled while you slept

J. Stotz Jr.



It may be affirmed with great truth, that
 there is hardly any human creature past childhood,
 but at one time or other has had some Poetical
 Evacuation, and, no question, was much the better
 for it in his health.

Alexander Pope
Peri Bathous

I second the emotion: each of us has at least a little bit of poetry penned up inside him, and to spew it forth now and again does the world absolutely no harm. The worst that can be said of one's effort is that yet another bad poem has been added to the burden of bad poetry already in existence.

I'm probably the last person in the world to be writing a paper on poetry, being possessed more of risibility than of sensibility. I pay court to the sublime, and have very little traffic with the beautiful. And though I might not know a good poem when I see it, I can usually smell a bad one from a distance of three stadia. Not unlike a cancer, a bad poem should be labeled quickly so that it can be done to death before its creator has a chance to fall in love with it. I know, because I've doted on many a soggy bit of verse of my very own. And speaking of lousy verse, I hope sincerely that someone with sense gets to the moon first, before some crazy romantic arrives and begins composing sonnets on how beautiful everything looks in the earthlight.

College poets—hmm. Even weeds grow according to the soil supplied. The better the soil, the better the weed; the worse the soil, the worse the weed. If your soil is growing thistle, exclusively, look to it. In other words, even a poet should have talent, and that talent should be assessed realistically: all the wishful thinking in the world will add not a single cubit to one's store of talent. In the talent department — I'm — decidedly — a featherweight—long ago I assured myself that I would never expire from either a surfeit or dearth of that commodity. If anything kills me, it'll be my big mouth.

There is a harmless type of insanity with which most college poets are afflicted: hearing bells when none are ringing. That is, the majority have little or not talent, but their savage little egos drive them to the production of ever more drivel. Again, no harm comes from their doing so, and as Pope says in his homely, albeit unpoetic metaphor, they will be the better for the purge. The other type of insanity is suffered mostly by us critics: we fail to hear the bells when an entire carillon is at work directly overhead. That is, we do not recognize a good poet when he is right in our midst. I have yet to find a good college poet, but even by the law of probability there must be a few in existence.

I daresay, however, the critics are not altogether remiss, jaundiced and myopic. There are many ways in which college poets sin against their talent. In their enthusiasm (which is not to be sneered at, by any means)