

CHARACTURES
AND
POETRY

The Charactures

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THE COMIC

There is a person who many have met, someone who doesn't yet know which, if any, person to be. Lost in the limelight and living on laughter, The Comic keeps re-clothing a soul one mask to another. Gifted extremes always tightrope the edge of neither, never quite balanced when the pendulum begins its sure-coursed swing. Arising high apex, now back falling blackening abyss, riding mooded shifts momentary escape but living somewhere hidden *Inbetween*. Into unknown, granted asylum given only to few. Coming full circle and on through barriers, returning to the same new spot over and over again.

Tragic ironic, funny and sad neither intended. In each is found the same, an unknown person caught in the confusion of *Inbetween*. Living to work this tension, pushed from side to side, few withstand the constant pull of balanced opposition. Again and again same questions asked, The Comic answers by quick-witted vision, turning the onrushing instant tide. Lost to the limelight like unspoken words, racing around unguided in those who now let them escape, carried away by laughter.

Immediate relief and lightness ensues, the world regains its whirl and rekindled glow. The moment has passed and lights go out, again the unknown person turns and goes. Strolling along streets where other feet step, saved by time and imagined real. The Comic now empty lets down all masks, revealing only another unknown bearing secrets concealed. Quickly the night life fades into another round, back in front with heads turned around. There it goes, here they come, all seeking new voice. Now find what's been given by the one of many who shows what *characture* confusion means in the creative flow as essence in chaos gathers and fills open form. The Comic now senses a beckoning spirit whose call catches the open ear. Together they work and tighten the tension, full pendulum swing full circle again. Over and over they work that circuit still bounded by body in time, banded-like angels, exploding gloomed image with gusting laughter that moves only out, the unknown person, The Comic's only friend.

Buffoon clown jester all common to one who sees when
each gets caught in the flux, where life's meaning finds
one standing atop a bottom looking high into the depths,
where double visioned meaning stands face to face.
Mirrored reflections of self alive in eyes that dance with
joy, stained by tears of laughter which fill unwritten
space. Joy and sorry laughter tears, complete another
circle, another coin tossed, flip-flop again, another
unheard, speaking voice.

—*The Charactress*

THE CABLE CAR

The Soul of San Francisco, first dreamed by one now loved by all. A glorious past alive. Clang, clang, rumble shake, pull and tug uphill weight, quickly turn to runaway descent, uphill downhill cross-town rails. Climbing high to breathtaking spires gripman's leathered hands hold tight vistas of modern day Atlantis in pinnacles of wonder. Fleeting moments slip past, hesitation then shift to downward slant while stomachs sink...slowly winding along its route clinging to the hillside like magnets forged its sturdy wheels.

Along thoroughly winding narrowed streets The Cable Car carries another flow of riders to just where each wanted to go. Freely hang passengers on the sides or from al fresco seats, pulling in together all compressed, swish...the return car clangs past on its way to the opposite turnaround. Friendly people from both sides of their seats, like tree ornaments dangle in the mystery of time.

Visitors hop aboard for promises of surprise, cloaked in swirls of misty fog or in nature's warmth on another perfect San Francisco Day. For some an old standby for others a newfound thrill, together ride through the streets on common rails beyond trudging struggle of traveling the hills.

San Francisco's Cable Car is tradition. An image born too late cut short by time, since 2 August 1873 landmarked the City's golden early dawn Andrew S. Hallidie's inspiration brought the world's first to its home. First, last and only one, San Francisco's treasure survives like the Phoenix arises from its own. Cabled networks 'neath the street, mile upon mile of underground steel, stretched taut and tight by huge turning interfaced wheels, pulling cables steadily, relentlessly, until day's and evening's end.

—*The Charactress*

THE FISHING BOATS

Rigged for work and manned by old salt tradition, from out of the Bay in morning fog rumbles The Fishing Boats taking leave. Named vessels each is unique, all scouts in search of the catch. Guided swiftly by a sure and steady hand at the helm, first seeking here then there, circling wide life-filled pools below...quickly now, drop-baited nets. Lower sinks into darkening, deepening mysterious world beneath. Reel up hoist aloft wriggling moments of death. Silvered scaled rainbowed flash, caught by first rays of morning sun. Again and again, over the edge, idling motors keeping pace with a moving school, drop now again re-baited pots. Clawed pink red creatures trapped by roped circles woven for single purpose, lured in by morsels earlier caught then singly hooked in glistening circles round the mouths of watered caves. Pots full, nets squirming with life, poles taut and sharply bent by fighting weight struggling to stay free. Steady working back and again, fill troves high with treasures found only in the sea. Today's a good one early chests are full. Homeward bound a little past mid-day chugging steadily along coast side bulging at the seams. Captain's satisfaction purrs in the deep drone of mechanical noise, lines flying in victory winds waving tribute to commemorated and christened names painted on the bow, each a personal prayer to the sea.

Rugged wary seaworkers return, safely guided toward wharf's edge by wisdom spanning centuries. Bayshores envisioned, home again home. Hailed by friends berth spot in sight, slowly maneuvered to a few short hours of rest. Cut the engines, tie the lines, now ready hoist proudly overflowing boxes of success. Line up one next to the other while already admiring smiles agree, there's something special about living in close tie with the sea.

In chug others one by one, yellow rain-slickered figures with wet weathered faces, giving thanks for yet one more voyage. Lives tied by watered lanes moving between land and sea, striking out each day before dawn for spots farther beyond than the human eye can see. Some young, some old, some *Inbetween*. Business or pleasure same souls they are, many languaged voices found by common venture. Overhead gulls flap a noisy winged landing, alertly poised atop rolls of netting, keen eyes cast for any

moment to grasp, resting gently in soft rolling motions,
The Fishing Boats now scrubbed and clean, quietly
berthed, silent.

Prepare for tomorrow, checking, re-hooking the network
of lines, wondering alone and to teach other what
tomorrow's elements will bring. Home to some,
workhorse for another, vacant and alone at times,
abandoned hull carrying now gilded women's names
half-worn, rust red bottoms showing time's use. A
haunting invitation to sea spirits found joined by vessels
that go beyond the bounds of land.

Tarrying far out into the horizon with fully outfitted rigs
bobbing in morning's light...from out of the foghorn's
returning call rumbles daily The Fishing Boats, guardians
and protectors of age-old faces, seafaring souls whose
eyes always strain to look beyond, to catch just one short
glimpse of the other side.

—*The Characturess*

THE ENVISIONORNERY

Characture of Mervyn O'Leary

Shuffle shuffle, cane cane, here comes Mervyn O'Leary, San Francisco's Ocean Beach Envisionornery ready to make and meet his daily challenge. For this long-retired fireman even downhill is an uphill climb. The blustery, fighting Irish, smiling intensity continues burning in spirit as one caned step after another steadily takes him from bottom to top of Sutro Hill, turning here, there returning to the Pronto Pup for coffee and talk. Ocean Beach regulars mingle and mix at the beach in front of the Cliff House early morning each day, greetings hailed to welcome as each arrival comes and goes.

A couple more minutes and there's Merv sittin' on the bench...what's the topic for discussion today? Who's here? Could be sports, could be weather...but could be death, something he thinks all the others are spending their time avoiding. Political philosophy, ethics, medicine, physics and metaphysics are some of Merv's favorite subjects but are discussed only with the few who've got it together. Once intensely athletic now crippling pain restricting his emphasis from body to mind achievement. Whatever the topic you bring, Merv's read it and hold's ready Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Shakespeare, Voltaire and others at beckoned call.

With no mistake, he knows where he stands, he's thought about it. Better be prepared to back up any taken position, he'll blow you away like fog with one blast of wind. Barbed words fly out to negate your being and irritation momentarily flares, "you don't know what you're talking about" and the Envisionornery again throws you back upon yourself. What more can he do?
Revoke your birth certificate!

Face to face, eye to eye, that's Merv. Standing fast is his best speed. But then tolerance returns for others who are not quite there, taking the time to listen between the words his vision sees through the ornery and dialogue now follows reason.

Up and off the bench, there goes Merv, up the downhill. With companion walking on cane side, one constant, one

temporary, always, inquiring, together beach-hill climbing. He's learned to take life as it comes, "I've accepted what I've got" and "I can tolerate the pain" except for the constant injustice which maintains much hurt and experienced pain. One caned step down after another, it's his decision. Going downhill is the toughest uphill struggle. He returns to his car parked at the bottom of the hill, one more daily challenge met to make sense of all the rest. Another lesson, another learned. Victory visits for a body willed from bottom to top and up the downhill again. He'll be back tomorrow...the Envisionornery will will on.

—*The Characturess*

THE RASCAL OF OCEAN BEACH

Characture of Ralph Basye

“Ya hungry?” The independent attendant of Ocean Beach asks of those who approach. Voiced or just silently said, “What is it that you’re looking for?” Untrusting birds turn toward Ralph and find kindness as they fly up into his lap, “How ya doin’?” Reaching into his left-hand jacket pocket, Ralph pulls out a peanut, cracks it open with both hands. The bird looks, waits and accepts the gift. “Anyhow,” pigeons, blackbirds and seagulls fly off, as both of Ralph’s hands go sort of straight up and fall down to again rest upon his knees, “I first got started in the printing business as a ‘press feeder.’ That was in 1916. I just walked in and asked for the person who did the hiring.” By now at least six members of the Ocean Beach Mafia, 65 years and older, have gathered around. Ralph continues his story, “I can do that!’ That’s all I said.” Ralph goes on to explain that you look for the simplicity and then go from there. You imagine yourself doing whatever it is and then fill in the steps to get there.

Ralph continues, giving a clear description of events, making sure you understand, “You know how they do letterpress printing?” While attending to those in the immediacy at Ocean Beach #17, where he locates himself, another person passes by the bench on which he sits, “Hi Ralph.” And within the flow of conversation comes a return, “Nice day for a walk.” Or he calls out a pleasant greeting, “Very well thank you.” Ralph watches what others do. He can be present and attend to both the immediate situation and the surround. This way he can watch how others approach to see what they are looking for. “Everyone is trying to do something.” Ralph looks to see what it is that the person is intending toward, then sort of reaches into his own events and emerges with a word-gift. “If I give to ten people and only one really needs it, I am thankful.” Even when approached at Ocean Beach for some money for something to eat, Ralph reaches into and out of his pocket. “Giving a few coins to people is like feeding the birds.” The flow of conversation, moves on as Ralph gives a more penetrating description, “I remember when I was only six, we were really poor. My mother and two brothers walked up the railroad tracks about a half-mile and

picked wild strawberries. That afternoon my mother made a strawberry shortcake. We were all going to have a big piece. Then, the people from across the way just happened to come over when we sat down to eat the strawberry shortcake. So, we all took a smaller piece.”

Someone asks Ralph, “When were you born?” A smile develops at the corner of Ralph’s mouth, “I am almost a firecracker; a delayed fuse.” With a laugh, “I was born 7 July 1901, Topeka, Kansas.” He pauses, “Just outside of it.” The just outside of it, reveals the personal independence of the rascal who comes to Ocean Beach because he likes the openness. If you look real close you can glimpse the quick-witted smile at one corner of his mouth. Ralph tells one story after another which brings forth your own smile, too! “Yeah, I was here before this Ocean Beach Wall.” You sort of feel the restriction of the wall while Ralph continues, “I was out here with a girl. We went out and walked around in the sand dunes.” Now you begin to see the real rascal. Ralph continues, “Yeah, I left for California in 1922.” The little smile emerges, “In 1922, I won \$100 in a baseball pool, bought a 1917 Touring Car for \$75 and headed for California. I went to L.A. first then came to San Francisco where I was in the movie, *Broadway Bill*. Mickey Rooney was the star. I was part of the local color in this race horse movie. There I was in the infield of the race track. I was supposed to jump up on the fence and shout as the race horse, *Broadway Bill*, fell and died as he reached the finish line.” Ralph pauses, now you look for that smile to develop at the corner of his mouth, “I don’t remember if I got up on the fence or not.”

“Anyhow,” as both of Ralph’s hands go sort of straight up and fall down to again rest upon his knees, “I came to San Francisco in 1924. Moonshine, speak-easies, gambling, it was all here. I even went to Reno, Nevada before gambling was legalized, in the late Twenties, it was there!” As a person approaches Ralph is already looking in that direction. “What’s happening Ralph?” Ralph returns, “Just having a little conversation.” Ralph is a conversationalist. He holds people around him the same way he does the birds eating out of his hand. Then someone asks Ralph, “What was one of the most exciting events of your life?” Without pause the response comes, “One of the most exciting events I had was in 1921. I

went for a ride in a *Jenny*. As we flew up, I looked down, the first thing I saw was the graveyard. Anyhow, we continued on and then flew over my folks' home. Later my mother said 'I knew it was you. Who else would be flying over like that!'" The smile develops, "My family has a tree but I just came from a branch all by itself." Then he says, "I always just wanted to have fun." He smiles and says, "I am unpredictable."

Some members of the Ocean Beach Mafia have now walked on only to be replaced with others. Ralph remains. "Look a ship is coming into the Bay." Turning from the horizon he attends to the immediacy, "Look at the two young puppies!" No sooner said, the puppies come over as birds all around him wing off into the sky. Then he attends to a little girl dressed in pink and blue with white stockings walking alongside her mother. Ralph smiles. The little girl looks, smiles and waves. Ralph says, "Hi" to youth. He doesn't try to impress people. He's just Ralph. This printer of 50 years retains the quickness of eye. Each afternoon he is there with his car parked at Ocean Beach #23. He feeds birdseed to the birds two times. "The peanuts are for dessert." Then he walks slowly along the walkway to #17 and provides the desert for the birds. Here as Ralph reaches into and out of his pocket, for peanuts or events, is the cream of reflection given to those who happen to pass or wander by. After a short time the return walk from #17 to #23 begins. Just before *The Rascal of Ocean Beach* gets to #23, he remarks, "Here come the scouts," as two birds fly toward him. Arriving at #23, pigeons come walking from the parking area toward Ralph as he, too, moves toward them. Ralph clears his throat and comments, "We meet for a short time." He smiles and says, "This is when I feed them the third time. This is the last supper." Ralph throws birdseed on and around the birds, then says, "So long." As Ocean Beach brings wonder to its there you then know Ralph will always be there.

—*The Characturess*

THE AWESOME PHILOSOPHER

Characture of Thomas Langan

Standing here, at your door, a moment lasts forever. Suddenly, life's changed. Into your world he strides, a genteel philosopher whose readiness to be astonished, appropriates him well. Tall in stature, warm in nature, inquiring in thought...awesome indeed!

American born, Germanic roots apparently sent to explore. Vast openness appears on the horizon of each new question as again and again he is set to wonder. Strong penetrating mind tempered gentleness impelled by compassion. One moment he's light perhaps next somber, each rising out of the other allowing delightful surprise. Asking the right questions, gathering information in short periods of time.

Mature in years, lively in heart, sensitive to the surround, the global thinker who loves traveling by trolley. The professional life might drive another less resilient to become a recluse. But no, out he reaches, choosing those to help, confined by frustrations imposed by time and called to speak and write. Unpretentious about often-pretentious work; a scribe whose words carry wisdom on aerial wings into human light.

Conversation reveals a host of scholars settling round his name, dropping in as though truly present, at the mention of their names. These constant confidants in thought are ever ready for instant variety in frame of reference. Out pops famous personages in contemporary philosophy, each enacted in mirthful spirit, attending anecdote or personal story; each a friend to the man. Truly an aristocrat in Confucian terms, deeply steeped in Catholic tradition, an educator for whom life quality will forever foster authentic questions.

Witty, poignant, wise...what new venture might alight, next thought? Considered options, rational selection, giving way to higher voice issuing an appeal from within, called to responsible action in serious work enjoyable tasks of learning. A confident stride into the future...

Standing there, now again, outside your door, bidding farewell. The same everlasting moment now graced with promise for the future by possibility of return. Awesome indeed!

—*The Charactress*

THE SCULPTRESS

Characture of Connie Fischer

Connie the sculptress...she sculpts images with words. She's moving across boundaries, going here, going there, on her way up...she shows others the secret she has learned about the power of the written and spoken words, about the ability to use the power of speaking together in order to show us other ways of experiencing the same world. Her words cut into the empty pages like marks in an emerging image, as it has been just first glimpsed in its blankness. She moves into that world and sculpts upon the pages the guided tour she traveled in another's world. These images speak out the tensions which exist between discrepant ways of experience and offer images of the Real, a way to transcend the polarity, yet let it remain conserved and active. That is the way she is moving, cutting a clear path of the Real with the power of the word.

She's strong...she's proud, she's loyal...she's a lady of action who does things! But she's attuned, she's aware, she knows, she's there, she's moving up and out and bringing back the lines of contact. She's spreading the word.

A woman of warmth and humor...of flashing wit and high spirit...another who likes to stand in the sunshine!

—*The Charactress*

THE HOLY GHOST WORKER I

Characture of Rudy Bielek

As a familiar character on campus you first came to me in a time of beginnings. Rudy—*The Holy Ghost Worker*—seemed like an angel to me. I shall never forget our beginning Rudy...those first days of teaching for me, our conversations together and your constant and faithful encouragement during tenuous times of my own. You were always there...and you remain there for me now. If only there were words to reveal the quality of the vision which seems to spring from your heart. As a true messenger of the Spirit your presence on campus brings the truths of a religious life to people who may never find it without you. As—*The Holy Ghost Worker*—you reach so many like myself who discover through you Duquesne's true educational gifts. Your spirit is the heart of Duquesne. Speaking not only for myself but for many others who have come to love you as I have, you make our lives buoyant with your ever ready willingness to give to others without thought to your own comfort and needs. Gifts from the heart flow naturally from your being. As the angel that you are Rudy...may God Bless you and watch over you now and forever. I will always carry with me the inspiration which flows from your presence and which has on occasion lit up darker hours of my own existence. I have grown richer in my own faith through being with you. The gifts of yourself unknowingly given to those of us who know you illustrates for me the true meaning of the Spirit in action. Your life shows it each day. You have taught me how to look at a new world, one whose vision is inspired by your faithful heart.

—*The Characturess*

THE HOLY GHOST WORKER II

Characture of Rudy Bielek

Up the elevator, down...there's Rudy working on all levels. Here and gone working in the foundations, sweeping us up into visions with practical application. He just seems to know how things work. People are his strength. None too big, none too small...sooner or later he "pegs them down."

There he goes...hands signaling the pictures in his thoughts, watchful heart looking for students who need someone's help. He catches those who might otherwise fall through the cracks. Rudy finds them one by one...picks them up, dusts them off, helps them shine. He's like a little elf who brings good words when he speaks. Encouragement is natural to his expression. And his daily labors behind the scenes do far more than keeping an office straight or ending his week with a paycheck.

Rudy...here he comes, there he goes, in then out...cleaning, sweeping and caring. One never quite knows where he'll appear. From the highest to the lowest, he sees them all. In the gym, down in the archives, up in the administrators' office. Each place he's sent he gets things done while simultaneously enjoying his unique talent of teaching others how to "conversate."

As the local morale office on campus his presence naturally livens up lackluster moods...he settles differences...saying what needs to be said...to whomever may need to hear it. Conversating with Rudy keeps the spirit alive and working *Inbetween* the people he sees each day, from one person to the other he moves with trails of human kindness following in his wake.

Students, priests, nuns, fellow workers, secretaries and their administrators...right down the line, he likes them all...introducing faith to hope in charity's name. Rudy—*The Holy Ghost Worker*—a one-man rescue team whose dauntless efforts have sustained many a disillusioned dream.

Up...down, in then out, here he comes...there he goes, it kind of makes you wonder who he “really” is while he’s busy helping others discover who they *can* be.

—*The Characturess*

PASSION FOR COMPASSION

*Characture of Leo Zonneveld**..Along comes Leo...*

...a man in search of...and for life's call whose ear remains always open for the listening...what do you ask of life?...“Oh...to find God I suppose”...seemingly a simple answer even though wisest in the end...the life-road leading to that pinnacle long and circuitous, fraught with many a humanity's puzzle...to what end can this solitary quest lead?...to brilliant illuminating Light, Knowledge, Love...unending rounds of prayers continually offered up for ever-and-ever-increasing more...this lone man in search of...less suffering for all...passion for compassion...flame burns brightest of them all...

...Along comes Leo...

...distinguished profession, key member to a European nerve-center of diplomacy—professional communicator—wherein dreams can be made real with but a phone call, thrives the spirit of a peace-maker by heart...“Always leave a little room for negotiation,” free-flow aspirations come to the ground...for an “old walking encyclopedia of high-tech knowledge,” trusted “science man”...a 20-year tour of duty in the service of two Queens...“I've been to Heaven 100 times,” still...despairing often times...meticulous, careful, still flowing artist, portrait painter only of heart's vision...family life foremost, diplomatic post a path for convention...truly listening first to one, then on with another...and yet another...exchanges in deep on occasion, “no not for me,” then on with another...

...Along comes Leo...

...sensitivity floods to the fore, illuminating dark secrets hidden till dawn's twilight hour...artistic flair at eye's first glance, form, grace and balance, one not without the other...life's questions remain unanswered but more than that, questions posed have not even yet been imagined...father, scientist, dreamer, visionary...still not all yet discovered ...Teilhardian soul's-dreams, human

energy projects vigorously pursued, elusive remains
 humanity's finest hour...matter and spirit comingle with
 never the slightest question's ripple...husband,
 philosopher, writer, high-tech master—now what?—
 Still...Not Enough! *Light, Knowledge,*
Peace...beckoning to fuller and fuller existence, fanning
 the flame...passion for compassion...deeply lived
 expression, all for the brotherhood of man...OLJ Masters
 standing at the helm, perhaps instilled more deeply than
 ever imagined...soul-dreams breathing to life for him, a
 man destined to become...from Alpha's humblest
 beginning to Omega's all-inclusive end...

...*Along comes Leo*...

...there—deep within—flickers life's tenderest light...

..*Along comes Leo*...

—*The Characturess*

A WESTERN SAGA

Roy C. Rogers rides again!!! Or yet!

Our story opens with two sinister looking mystics, each upon his own Pony, high above the valley overlooking a small, but universal town. These two hombres dressed in black, astride great steeds of black, are temporally situated upon an ominous and tenuous hillside. Got the picture? The total figure/ground was bad. Now to add to the wholeness of the story we shall enlighten your existence with their names: Merlin-Pony and Sorté. Of course, the historical, traditional and absurd question for a psychologist to ask would be, "What is their purpose upon this hill?" We cannot relate this to you, we can only describe it through reflection of what we saw, otherwise the whole context would be changed and we wouldn't want that!!!

Now we don't want the readers to think and we don't want them to have second thoughts, just to feel, therefore we shall describe how this picture came into being.

About two days ago our two bad guys were riding through Dodge minding their own experiential business, when lo and behold...they came across a badder breed!!! Deadly Watson and his somewhat systematic Clark L. Hull. One may ask, "How can one say badder when it doesn't exist?" Our presentation is that it must be so, because Deadly Watson, the really bad one, started the terrible mess and Hull came along and made the whole mess worse, so what is worse than bad, is badder.

Now that we have the spectrum, that is a multiplicity of colored confusion, we may begin with the confused events that systematically and eventually transpired.

In the beginning, Deadly Watson evolved into Dodge, throwing his weight around, eventually taking over the town. People were aghast. Then one sultry Saturday afternoon, old Systematic Hull showed himself, making absolutely sure to keep that sinister hypothetical construct hidden from view. He said to Deadly W., "You're the best bad guy I've ever seen." But the way I see this situation, you're not very systematic. It is a universal fact that people have drives, habits and

incentives!!! If we utilize these to the fullest extent and not just condition them the way you want to do, we can easily take over the bank. Well, by Monday they had the town. Tuesday was the day they set to rip off the bank. They had been so forceful in their implicit approach, that the bank should be a cinch.

On Tuesday morning they stepped into the street, Deadly W. walking very tall and Clark L. looking very systematically formulated, except that his postulate was hanging over his belt!!! But he did have a lot of drive and the incentive was money, that green stuff. Was that the hypothetical construct of the world, even in those days?

Everything was set! All the assumptions were in place, all the corollaries were put together. What a system! What a conditioned! Reaching the middle of the street, they were at the point of no return, they were definitely and objectively, objects of no return. Then, along came two persons (previously mentioned above), good old Merlin-Pony and Sorté. Hull looked up in a very systematic and scientific way, he saw the threat. The next instant his assumptions were out and they fired five times (but in a very systematic and scientific way). The first two shots very systematically blew holes in the two mounts upon which his opponents were riding, the third hit a water trough, the fourth killed his partner and the fifth was a reaction potential and he shot himself in the hypothesis. In the meantime, Merlin fell off his Pony (which is rather difficult to do). Sorté drew his gun (which turned out to be a beautiful likeness indeed) and fired into the air. The bullet struck a sign which fell, striking old Clark L. right smack on his S-R, reducing him to a fractional anticipatory goal response. He fell to the groundless. Before he died, he asked, "What was the cause?" Merlin-Pony quietly stated, "It was just an unmeasureable and unsystematic phenomenon."

Now the townspeople wouldn't go for this, so they banned together against good old Merlin-Pony and Sorté and threw them out of town on their existential phenomena!!! Oh, how that must have hurt!!!

Now we can transcend to the point in time overlooking the little valley. Actually, you can see that they won the fight, but lost the battle. So, upon continuing their search

for truth or reality of ideas, they rode down the hillside looking for a dude named Hussler, who could hussle any approach. As they got down into the valley, they approached a little tavern, from all sides!!! They walked in and here they met, another bunch of really mystic weirdoes. Of course there was Hussler, Haydigger and Nasheskee, not to mention Shultz. They were all here! Someone said, "Where is Roy C. Rogers?" A bullet was fired. How many can a bullet kill? Where was Roy? Did someone die? Who will carry on the approach? The Germans, the French or Roy. Is Roy really the leader? Could he be the leader? Or is he guided by his company? Again, who will carry on the approach? We have presented it the way it happened. Now the reader should decide.

—*The Characturess*

THE CONTINUING WESTERN SAGA

At our last report we found the disputed field of honor, the intellectual *Land of Oz*, surrounded from all sides by the mysterious and loosely bound force of mystical weirdo's, usurping the power and authority of the traditional psychological Honchos, cultivating and nurturing the seeds which have been planted in the historical fields of knowledge, the slowly budding and unfurling leaves on the tree of life. The residential *House of Being* has been surrounded, the sacred cows of knowledge formerly spread hither and thither throughout the land have finally been brought into the fold. The strays have been identified, rounded up by the sacred cowhands and branded with the secret seal of power.

Our contemporary hero of the first saga chapter, Roy C. Rogers, has been continuing his now strenuous chore of treating others as significant and worthy, a contemporary do-gooder wielding his weapon of *Unconditional Positive Regard* in a rather unsuccessful bout with the rigidly structured and traditional framework of the human being as "Thing." We are in a spot, no movement is in sight. How will the dilemma end? Can they be saved? Can they move forward? Can they prevail? Such is the wondering of the loosely knit band of "*Beings-In-The-World*," the motley crew of bandoleros of DOO-KANE, a team of cloistered in power. There is *Haydigger*, *Sorté*, *Hussler*, *Merlin-Pony* and the *Social Psycho*, *Rosenstock-Who's He?*

Far off in the distance, across the arid desert space stands the question and beyond that the horizon of doubt. Which way will the wind blow? How far will the phenomenological seeds scatter in the eye of the hurricane of dispute which races toward the young budding life-trees? How deep will the pelting drops of moisture penetrate into the dry desert lands of unknowing? Who in the mystical weirdo camp will inherit this task of driving the maverick herd, the primal horde, through the hostile deserted land? Who will brave the brunt of the hurricane of dispute? Who will whet the appetites of the "*Up and Comers*," the little muchachos of the future? Even in the cloistered little town of DOO-KANE, the locale of the "*Beings-In-The-World*," a split seams on the verge of opening a new wound of battle.

The ultimate question lingers on the lips of the champion thus far, *Merlin-Pony* and his fore-sighters. The question burning in their body-subjects is: Who is the new person in town? Who is the mysterious stranger who threatens each person's existence and spreads terror in the hearts of our traditional controllers? Who is Dasein? Dasein, the terror of the West, a villainous member of the "*Beings-In-The-World*" gang, rips a tear in the fabric of the taken-for-granted ground, the garment worn in the "*Land of the Psychos!*"

All throughout the quiet little village of DOO-KANE exists an atmosphere of tension, a wondering and respectful contemplation of the fearfulness, the power of the heretofore misunderstood powerfulness of Dasein. *Hussler*, the galvanizing force, the once upon a time leader, turns to his faithful sidekick of 17 years, *Haydigger*, his apostle in the night and says, "You ain't saying nothing!" But *Haydigger* persists. Martin sports their joint weapon, a cold bright shining *Reflectionary .44* slung lowly on his "hip" of knowledge and then he spreads the word, "Dasein is coming, Dasein is coming. Hide the Structures! Hide the Structures! Something new is on the way, something transforming is in the air, I can feel it in my existentielle!" "Hurrah, hurrah, the deadlock must be broken" blurts a *Screaming Nasheskee*, "before I go crazy."

Who can master the ultimate weapon which dispels the blackness of unknowing, the all-powerful "light gun" of the future? Will it be the *Rat Men* who lurk in the recesses of tunnel vision and predict their own control, a rigid town of puppets who live on each other's string? Or will it be the *Freedom Fighters*, the DOO-KANE seven, the *Big Guns of the Black Forrest*? The DOO-KANE seven are on the field of honor. How shall they fare? But alas, a deadlock has emerged on the impasse, thwarting a united effort. They too have been caught up in the dilemmatic horns of the sacred cows. Alas the future looks grim, as the ill winds of dissention blow through the cloud of unknowing, through the shifting whispering sands, spreading through the land like a fine layer of distrust, clouding the reasoning of their visionaries, **Faith and Trust**, the irrational ground of the "*Beings-In-The-World*." The future is up for re-making. Who can meet the challenge? Who can open a

new path? Who can bear this Cross of Reality?

Out of the duskiness, the clamor, the choking blinding swirls of the hurricane slowly advances two heroic figures of the morrow, the *Upholders of Faith and Trust*, the reaffirming grounders, the named members of the flexible varied supporters of the not-yet existing *Path of Recovery*. Two independent saviors bound together under the banner of Fellowship step forward, **Weedhopper** and **Feirefiz**. The new breed, the Innovators, the Pathfinders, advancing the stock of knowledge, the sacred cows of thought, into patches of newly lit ground.

The drive is on, move those sacred cows! Lead that primal horde! Two daring saviors joined together by choice to trim the horns of dilemma on the sacred cows of knowledge, pushing on to greener pastures for all. But how? How shall they forge the new path? How will they keep the horns of dilemma from trapping them in their own mire? The “Light Gun” the laser beam of light which unites rather than isolates is their weapon. Here they are, **Weedhopper** and **Feirefiz**, carrying jointly the names of one another, sharing membership and partnership of another brand: the *Existential Existentialles*. They outdistance the *Phenomenonalles*. But wait, what is this ultimate weapon they carry in their research bags strapped on the back of their trusty steeds of temporality? The light, the spark, the waylayer of mistrust an *Experiential Montage* the secret weapon against isolation and division, the unifier supreme. Just what will be their outcome? For that we must wait. It resides in our futures together, one which has yet to be created as the land of *Social Psychos* takes its own space in the shifting whispering sands of disintegration, searching for a re-footing, a re-grounding of the visionaries of *Faith and Trust*, the irrational grounds of all that has been done thus far. What will be their fate?

Tune in again for the next exciting episode of the continuing saga starring **Weedhopper** and **Feirefiz**, the *Pathfinders of Tomorrow*.

Recorded by the Scribes of the future,

—*The Characturess*

AN INTEGRAL MOMENT

Put yourself in San Francisco, which we will equate with the beauty of all beauty you have known, with a woman who loves. What do we see as a feeling experienced when pinning a dainty, fragrant rose or gardenia, which is the essence of respect, fragility, beauty and uniqueness, on this woman? What do we experience when out of the abundance of flowers available, we select *one* and it becomes precious? To the person selling them it is *possibly* just an income, a common everyday reality.

What, do we experience as this unique moment and delicate bit of reality are joined with a force that could motivate the world? The cars continue moving the same, the clerks continue walking their narrow paths and only 45 seconds of your life has passed. But you are changed. You know things are different for you and within you. You have opened yourself to your experience, the sounds, smells, sights, perceptions and your life has happened.

You were aware of it, you were feeling it, you were it, alone yet sharing, with the rest of the world acting upon you and the sensory enveloping environment.

Not all of this total environmental presence is cognized yet it is felt. It is taken in and assists in the translation and promotes the process of giving meaning to that moment. It will be carried with you, extended and will eventually change its form with further experiences.

—*The Characturess*

THE NATURE OF A TREE

It is another hot summer day in this historic foothill town where pickups with four-wheel drive outnumber comfortable passenger cars by four to one. The rugged terrain with its still-unpaved roads, untamed land, invites only the hearty and robust in spirit to take any permanent root.

A single four-way stoplight controls the flow of traffic at the heart of this gold-rush frontier where one incoming highway splits to leave, right or left. Here history has concealed itself yet remnant; remain to imagine the boisterous, wide-open adventurous wooden-planked pathway of civilization from the 1800's to now.

At this crossroads is Joe. He owns the local cafe. As an astute observer of humans and nature, he sees the changes wrought by time. The light regulating a steady stream of traffic into town turns red. Vacationers in cars anxious to move on are idled.

With a loud, continuous rumble of low-toned grinding brakes, Joe recognizes without looking that a heavily laden logging truck is grinding down to second gear in lumbering, halting anticipation of the quickly changing green light to red. The old red truck grinds to a grudging stop. Joe feels its load without looking. Another future lumber stack in the rough is driven precariously into a rugged heap.

The logging truck groans with its burdensome load at the red light. Just then Joe hears the silence when the logging truck at the light dies. Joe turns to observe. The truck starts. At the counter of Joe's cafe are four philosophers who were on their way to Reno after having recently attended a conference in San Francisco. Here they sit at the crossroads of life, stranded since they cannot think their car started.

Idealist: I look at those trees on the truck at the stoplight and I know that reality resides within the mind. The ideal is not what I see it is an imitation of the real. It is beyond you and me.

Realist: I see the trees on the truck. Reality is here. I see the form in its wholeness. Although there are trees in general distinctions are possible.

Pragmatist: Trees are a function of our experience. Trees are more than form. Trees are of value. I see trees from a practical view.

Existentialist: I shudder at the sight of the once-towering pines no captives of the truck at the light. Just hours ago nests of hawks lived in their now missing limbs, stood tall to let winds whisper and sigh in their green-needled branches, in time and space, nourished by roots now cut free.

With a loud jerking instant of change from red to green, the rugged, weathered logging truck lurches forward. Smoke streams begin to bellow from the twin exhausts as it rolls downhill toward the final leg of its journey to deliver today's last load to future already seen. Joe then turns and asks the four conversants: Is it possible for the four of you to get in one car and decide which way to turn at the intersection?

—*The Characturess*

SITTIN AND A'WAITIN AT THE CROSS ROADS

He's a rugged old soul whose proud straight posture shows his spirit's been strengthened by withstanding many a storm. He's like a rock...unshakeable, his Faith sustaining these 84 years now, pushing towards their close. The old Irish monk's spirit, overseeing and overlooking the heart of the steel city on the campus Bluff has been tempered by time like steel forged by fires in Pittsburgh's mills scattered along the river below. Up there...where landscapes of time have carved out a modern day university's life from soil which brick by brick and hand by hand established this Spiritan outpost some 100 years ago...up there roams the strong spirit of a wise old man in the person of Brother Jerry, the most unforgettable character I have ever known.

"Sleep, eat, work and pray"...that's been life each day for the 64 years of his service. And now there the old man sits a'waitin under the three flagpoles a little past noon, the first rays of springlight warming him in the new summer's sun. Waiting for another with a moment to come along. Hands idled by time with a heart still yearning to give. He's a walking, talking storybook full of life, wit and wisdom. "Do you like stories?" he asked. "Oh yes, I love them" and quickly then, like so many others before me, he knew he held me...right in the palm of his hand.

There he sits now a'waitin, telling story after story, handing down the wisdom. Go ahead, ask him a question...you'll get your answer...but probably not the one you expected! Because talking with him is like seeing your own image reflected in the mirror. He shows you yourself by helping you find your own answer. And each who comes finds what he needs. Time and again we've found it true...going to him to ask a question. The answer comes in the story he tells...and it sets you to thinking. Later it hits you..."Oh yes,! see what he means." Back you go to show him what you've learned and there you find him...sittin and a'waitin.

Swapping stories with those who visit, singing little songs to me over the phone, growling like a gorilla in the middle of his story, sharing funny moments bringing comfort...sittin there on the edge of his bed in familiar

holy repose...“thinken’, thinken’ and thinken’” Pipe in hand, smoke swirling up and round the room while a tired old man “figures”...looking for answers to the eternal questions nobody else knows.

Any fair day when the sun comes shining you will find him...coming straight down the middle of the university’s walk, standing tall and straight as an arrow. With cane in hand helping to support the age he pauses for the moment, easing back into the breeze, hat pulled down tight a little to one side shading damp blue eyes with bespeckled faded vision. But one kind of sight has given way to another...a quick peep over the tops of his glasses and his soul sees many a wonder missed by others. On he moves a many-seasoned man like weathered leather, steps now being guided by memories and pulled onward to meet new friends. And still he goes on giving. Always quick with a good word for others, ah yes, Brother Jerry’s a very holy man.

And now there he sits a’waitin, summing up for his final scenes. Greatest gifts yet to come, sharing with others too the path his soul now travels...full of question with yet the wisdom to prepare for his final acceptance and surrender. The old monk’s vision shows you things you’ve never seen. Like what he recently shared with a class full of young nurses who spent quite some time with him in his room...talking and laughing they wanted to know just what it’s like...to be sittin and a’waitin. Telling stories and handing down wisdom, chuckling at himself and your reactions...a little crook at the side of his mouth giving his secret joys away. Making you laugh, letting you see, showing you just where to look for the peace of mind you seek going to him and paying a visit you find the door’s already been opened...knowing you’re expected. And each person who comes discovers something he seeks and each who asks hears from the old monk what he needs. It’s funny it seems, there are as many faces to Brother Jerry as there are people who’ve met him.

“You got to treat everybody the same” that’s one of his rules and one he struggles to follow to the letter. Never really knowing what he’s thinking but full well knowing he’s still giving you something. His years have been a series of coming and goings young friends moving on

and he's still staying...a stronghold of hope telling you each time you fall..."just get up and go on." Up you get and on your way...never again to be the same. He's the strongest, toughest, gentlest man I've ever met. And make no mistake about it...he'll sit back and wait, full knowing just where you're headed. While off you go on your mission thinking sure this time you know what you're doing..."I knew you'd be back"...he quips as you return a little later, wiser from your lesson and a little more willing to listen, there you find him...sittin and a'waitin.

And there in his room open to full view hangs his own personal story, framed moments of history attesting to his victory. An award stands out which puts the old Brother's name in the Duquesne Sports Hall of Fame...hanging right next to his honorary degree, a Doctor of Humanitarian Services the old wise man is...pretty hard for anyone to top. Each day you'll find him there in his room, in the same spot now 20 years. Sitting in his chair in the morning with sun streaming in on him through the windowpane, listening to the radio and taking a short snooze. Still getting up at 5 and down to the kitchen for coffee. Then into the chapel singing and praying, still helping all of us while he's sittin and a'waitin. With soul nourished and spirit refreshed back he moves towards his room looking forward to whoever will visit.

"How does he know that?" so often we've found ourselves thinking. "Why is it...each story he tells...so much of what you've wondered appears right before your eyes?" It's probably something you've been asking...and then up pops Brother Jerry, right out of the blue-acting all the time as if he was the one who had been looking and waiting for you. Yep! That's the way he does it...keeping one step ahead no matter how quick you think you are. Each time you approach a turn in the road there you'll find him already...sittin and a'waitin. Fresh stories in hand. Yes, the ways of this old wise man make a particular kind of sense. He helps you look, he helps you see...and then in his gentle favor, he helps you accept what you find.

"Give to God what you promised and to your fellow man what he is entitled." If you think it's easy...well, just try

it! And if a man is judged by his deeds, then each act of kindness by his generous heart given is one small treasure laid up in his heaven. The soil of his soul over these many long years has been toiled and enriched, heavenly virtues flowered now ripening to full fruit in the light of the Spirit...the fruits of human kindness. "You got to earn your way to heaven" he tells us and it's all a matter of degrees. And for us it's been quite a treat finding such a teacher, the gardener...he's helped make sense out of life by showing us something higher, putting the finishing touches on my husband's 10-year education ...helping to spirit a new work through. So many people he has been, so many parts he has played for so many like ourselves who asked for help in their struggle to be free.

And now, as he sits a'waitin at the "cross roads" he finds lessons of his own being handed down from above: "You can't see, you can't hear, you can't get around...so there's not much else to do"...but to sit a thinken', catching up on the past, looking at the life lived for serving others. And when that moment comes when souls are weighed in heaven, Almighty God surely will be pleased to find one's life coming as close as it can to perfection...in givin', givin' and givin.'

—*The Characturess*

THE PHILOSOPHER OF LIFE

Characture of Viktor E. Frankl

One person's life captured by time, suffering, struggling and surviving freedom's demand. Slowly eclipsed by history's on-going story. Reaching out beyond, one voice stands chronicled step by step, displaying the as-yet unfolding drama of the human dimension. Wrought from sacrifice and giving direction to life, the will to meaning echoes Viktor E. Frankl's call to the human spirit lost in the dark. Self-Transcendence, the essence of existence, reflects the experiential nature of breaking-through-boundaries opening conditions subject to decision.

Not to be free from finite circumstances standing in the face of the abyss of nothingness, yet exercising the freedom to choose we rescue and immortalize human meaning, valued and ideal. Transcending ourselves through the freedom to choose bears the existential weight of the statue of responsibility, the monument of our existence. Life's flickering flame assailed by pain, guilt and death brings poignant meaning, resounding the height, depth and intensity of the passion of Frankl's unsung song "We Are Here!"

The Characturess

THE WRITING CARUSO

Upon foaming fringes of salted sands along San Francisco's Gold Coast wanders the free spirit of man whose heart yearns to fly. Deep within the chrysalis of time miracles of life gain for in his eye, catch the first breath of life from his word. This, the poet in our hearts, finds character and destiny following trails left by his pen, The Writing Caruso...a man captured by time. Strolling the glassy watered edge, soaking in sounds and rhythms of life, surrounding aloneness, lost by time. Meeting each passerby with intuitive reception, yet rarely a word spoken...without interruption and the scene moves on.

The poet reaches a destination only a short half hour thereafter. Resting in repose, pausing, turning to overlook buttressed rocks below where waves of humanity are seen, crushed against world's edge...enshrined and clouded softness by morning's rolling fog...onward he moves, untouched by the clamor which tears at souls within...steady is his pace. Consorting for quiet moments with Sutro's soul from the pinnacle of his vision, long since gone from now atop this vista, opening onto unending sea that surrounds...spirit still with the heart of the old gentleman pine. One remaining guardian at the gate. The poet gazes as no other, touches as not a man, gifted with the word. Home he returns enfevered again, ringing words play round his ears, no patience left in the fingers that will not flurry to the time kept by kaleidoscopic visions cascading through his being...struggling wildly to grasp the smoke firmly with a single stroke of his typewriter keys.

History manifests from latent dormancy with the work. From where does this branch flower in its home tree? The Writing Caruso, composer of visions, only but one upon whom predecessors bestowed a golden glory...not the first of 18 to live, a legacy given by one operatic forefather but the first born, a single one. Life the river's winding flow through deeply gorged, canyoned earth, rushing life seeks the open sea where family's name swells to rise from a life pooled source, rebirthed and given expression once more. The Writing Caruso, still yet unknown, destined by history to accept only one chosen fate. Relentlessly pursued and privately found,

imagination soaring alone to heights unlearned, grasping there essence in pure sound. Inward he turns, strikes the right key, chiming each word according to its tone...letting a melody carry him on...harmonies escape as if stored in his heart, rhythms conducting words to rightful place, all arranging together to paint far distant horizons, simply with words. From his hands, in tune with forefathers' spirits, Enrico and Luigi before him 200 years ago, the Old Country song gives life again.

—*The Charactress*

BLACK MADONNA

Cloistered atop the “Hill of Light” in Czestochowa, Poland resides the symbol of Polish spirituality, standing not only for the unity of a people and the independence of a nation but signifying the very existence of a country for the past 1014 years. The Black Madonna of Czestochowa is a small, wooden icon, venerated for centuries, carrying the promise of religious and national freedom. Since 1362 the Mother of the World has time after time responded to the call of the Polish people for Her help, intervening on their behalf in an hour of need, issuing an undeniably effective protection. Her image holds the place of honor in every Polish church, giving voice to the hope for unity reaching far beyond the historical, social, cultural and national boundaries, rooted in the hearts of the faithful.

Resisting invasion after invasion, the Tartars in 1382, the Hussites in the 1430’s, the 300 year struggle with Teutonic Crusaders, the 17th century battle with the Swedes, the Turks, the Russians and forward into a future to be witnessed only by their future, the Polish nation has been the cross point in the continual migration of peoples and the middle ground of continental upheaval. At each point in battle where victory by invaders seemed imminent, where Her image was endangered, where in fact Her Reality appeared at the mercy of their hands, Our Lady’s world wide symbol of protection halted the troops at Her door. Freedom, the victory won by Her Son, provides the undefeatable sign of hope for perfection in redemption. The Madonna’s presence, Poland’s greatest symbol of their common hope, is the ever renewing of inspiration, the bread of daily life.

After partition of Poland between Austria, Prussia and Russia, a populace divided under new foreign rule, remained united in spirit through their faithfulness and devotion to the Madonna. The meaning of the Black Madonna for Polish spirituality cannot be separated from the historical events which have engendered a culture imbued with Her Beauty and given expression to Her meaning each day through the actions of the faithful.

The mutual self-giving love which flows *Inbetween* the Polish people and their protectress demonstrates the

tireless, living faith of love first fostered by the Holy Spirit, issued through Her upon the moment of need. A meeting of the East and West in the Church first announced the promise, hope and victory found in universal religious freedom. Candles lit, prayers rising reverently into the light all revealed the personal love for the handmaiden of God who galvanizes a common spirit to once rise and meet yet another approaching darkness awaiting on each horizon bordering the cherished homeland.

Her marred image bears testimony to the brutal scars upon the soul of a nation, the Hussite sword in 1430 unable to destroy the unconquerable yearning for freedom in a heart. Hidden for long years by the Paulites from those who would destroy Her image, the treasures laid up in Her Heart continue to flow out in limitless generosity, the life giving waters of life pouring into the open sepulchers of awaiting hearts. The gentle purity of Her being upheld in glory as a new spring wildflower wafting in the meadowed breeze peacefully co-exists with Her potential to mettle the human spirit, to temper it like fire-blazoned steel, providing and inner strength to withstand the blackening smokes of violence and the flash of steel, issuing a return call for justice to the people.

Legend has it that Saint Luke the Evangelist depicted Her beauty on this piece of wood, which was from the time of Her Son wrought by the hands of His protector, Saint Joseph. The larger Truth remains through the symbol of freedom, unity within, unity with others, the suffering soul of a nation found in a heart pierced and wounded for Her own Son. The Black Madonna of Czestochowa speaks a vibrant message of love to the women of Poland whose centuries-long duty has fallen to the laps like the bereaved bodies of their own sons. The deepest essence of Polish spirituality comes to life in the heart of Mary, personified and inspired by the portrait once arrested but the Spirit never imprisoned, the portrait of Mother and Child, reflected upon a wooden bough once filled with life of its own.

—*The Characturess*

THE GENTLEMAN OF OCEAN BEACH

Characture of Charlie McCarthy

Charlie can bring to picture before your mind an experience you feel is your own. The vividness and vibrancy of Ocean Beach comes alive in each description. The Electric Car run near and around Lands End, Charlie rides each time as he calls forth the experience while you walk alongside. A walk, you see, with Charlie is a walk through the history of San Francisco's Ocean Beach. "The Electric Car went down into Sutro. Sutro was quite a complex. There was even a salt-water pool. An ice rink, too!" Charlie, then, waves to a passerby, "Good Morning, nice day!" Moving along, Charlie turns and continues the ongoing experience along Ocean Beach. "Way on down around Taravel street there was 'Taits at the Beach' with beautiful gardens and landscaping. A little further on down was 'Shorty Roberts,' a restaurant that was a hangout for local politicians." Charlie, then, smiles, laughs and says, "Shorty had a horse that would swim the Golden Gate." Charlie walks over to the Ocean Beach rail, pauses for a moment at #15, "This ramp here was built for the Coast Guard. Each day they would carry their boats from across the street, from where they had their own building, then, go down the ramp to practice in the breakers. Right close to where the ramp is now was the Beach Chalet. The one now across the street at the edge of Golden Gate Park was built later. People would ride the equestrian trail to the Chalet on the beach where, underneath, there were stalls for their horses. Right there on the sand."

Already moving along now Charlie says, "Our family would come out here to the beach for picnics. I used to gather firewood. We would put our granite coffee pot over the fire." Charlie, then, smiles, laughs and says, "We just threw the grounds into the pot. We had to use a strainer for the coffee grounds. But it was good coffee." As Charlie continues walking down Ocean Beach his silver hair, now, glistens from the sunlight which has just burned off some San Francisco fog. "A little warmer now. Just walking from #1 to #28 you can go through four different temperatures. In just a few minutes it can change."

Now at the end of the walk way Charlie turns, pauses for a moment at #28, looks at the Cliff House in the distance, “As people looked out from the Cliff House they used to comment about the Mail Carrier, with a horse and a buggy, who would go along the sand dunes. With a sudden disappearance it looked like the sand dunes would swallow up the horse and buggy. Then it would reappear only to disappear.” On the way from #28 to #1 Charlie continues, “The police used to wear khakis not blues as you see today. Arthur Dolan was famous out here for saving people in the breakers. With horse and rope he would go out into brave the breakers.”

Continuing along Charlie waves to a passerby. Takes his hat off when he meets a lady. Smiles as his silver hair and sun-tanned face display The Gentleman of Ocean Beach. Walking along within the continuity, Charlie has moved you through the continuous ebb and flow of Ocean Beach. You, then, begin to feel the appreciation Charlie displays for Life. For Charlie everyday is beautiful whether the weather is whatever. He extends his appreciation to whatever there may be. Charlie has a way of establishing and stabilizing visions previously achieved while allowing new insights to spring forth. San Francisco’s own since 15 April 1908. He utilizes the past to illuminate and enrich the present and the future. In this way he appreciates and extends the Lived and the Living. And just before it is time to go your own way, Charlie smiles, his eyes bespeak of kindness, only, then, Charlie says, “We had a nice walk!” Somehow, just for a glimpse within that moment, you feel what it means to go a bit of the road together.

—*The Characturess*

ACADEMIC COOKBOOK

Introduction

The following is the Academic accepted method for preparation of even the met, “esoteric” and exotic forms of phenomena as they appear in the Judy Child’s Cookbook Awards Pamphlet prepared by the Phenomenal Professors on a yearly basis. Cookbookin’ the phenomena, annual givens—the Dissertation Blue Ribbon is awarded for the most inane, leveled down and blasé phenomenal choice. Phenomenal choices must be critique able, labeled “not a phenomenon” at least one time during its development and to be open to question at all times by the Professor at—otherwise known as the Resident Oppressor and Picky Poo. Following desecration of the experience of inspired fellowship during the year 1977—the oppressor has selected the most likely candidate for 78—Commitment—by Dawg, to receive—the elitist and most sought after covetous blooper-scooper award in the higher realms of ethereal altitudes of human potential.

Following are a few preliminary cookbooker “recipes for action” for preparation of typical commitment treats.

Main Course Commitments

A. Selection of A Commitment

Upon arrival at the local commitment store, proceed directly to the specially marked “blue section” of the atom. All commitments are blue (their first structural component) as they are typically a Sunday fair; being symbols of devotion, loyalty and should be used with caution as they are spiritually binding. Individuals with weak constitutions should avoid the commitment as a gourmet delicacy as commitments have been known to frighten even the stoutest hearts in the bright of day. After arriving at the blue commitment counter, usually located between the Head and Heart I’lls—one should find a wide selection of commitments to be chosen from. We do not select our commitments, they choose us. Commitments are always in charge of their duty-bearing responsible purchasers.

1. All good commitments should be securely packaged upon first inspection. You will notice that each commitment is “graded” by US INSPECTORS of the Department of the Already Committed located at the dispensaries of Mayview and Woodville. The US INSPECTORS are immediately recognizable by their persistent clinging to the “white knight” image,—always appearing in those funny white coats which tie behind time back. Always insist on an already Committed Inspected Choice Grade A= 4.0 GPA points. These commitments seen to yield the most satisfaction fulfilling the urge to commit.

2. As mentioned before, color is most important in selection of the proper commitment. Look for the good “blue” in color, not too fat, not too lean. You want plenty of “meaty” texture for your commitment, a nice and plump, tenderized peace and one as boneless as possible. No sense adding bones of commitment to the already-weighty dooty aides of commitment. (As you know, the price of commitments been rising steadily-particularly, since the oily shirks from across the big white waters have introduced an artificially-bionic substitute for the real lifetime commitments previously available.) As we were saying, we want as “bone-free” a commitment as is available. You may prefer your selection in the form of strips, sliced, or “pounded” commitment takes, simply ring for the attendant and he will prepare your selected commitment and accompanying harness, trimming it to suit your needs—just ask for Father Time The Commitment Cutter.

3. After selecting your main course commitment you are now prepared to gather the essential “commitment-condiments” which are chosen in hopes of enhancing the spiritual blueness of your commitment. Side dishes might include half-baked ideologies, stewed Spinoza in verboten juice or hells-a-raisin popovers. A choice white wine will supplement the quality of your commitment, highlighting the savory-flavored characters of the uncommitted, a necessary dialogal structure in preparation of any kind of commitment. Winos often reveal the mistakes in commitment selection, a perfect cover-up for error or hidden bones in the commitment. Winos are very important commitment condiments for supplying the blue Monday weakly snivels that sometime

follow the individuals who lack commitment in their diet. (It should also be noted that low-cal commitments are available for those who need to keep their ontological weight at the desired level.)

B. Preparation of Commitments

Now that you have been chosen by your commitment, your duty lies in the ways that you handle your new responsibilities, your karma-resolving commitment dinner. Preheat the pressure-cooker life ovens to 5000 or — 3 Celsius.

1. Preparation of all commitments should be undertaken in the soberest of attitudes. As the ovens of life are warming in preparation for the commitment, one should prepare the commitment for its fated or destined project. In order to preserve the spiritual blueness of the commitment and to retain the tender juiciness, first roll the commitment in Shak n' Bak—place in plastic huggle, making sure that all parts of the Vita Blue are covered in the life-sustaining crumbs of the Shak n' Bak mixture. When someone asks “why” your commitment is so “crusty” and has resulted in such a tender and succulent commitment you can say: “Its Shak n' Bak—n' I help'd.” After rolling your commitment, arrange it with the bluest side up on the commitment rack. Insert the desired seasonings and blending of personal flavoring. It should be noted that as one removes the commitment from the pre-packaged cardboard container, one should let loose the binding threads, which have cramped the commitment into a society respectable shape, enabling the commitment to grow and evolve into the inherent, and already present possibilities of that particular commitment. Each commitment must be allowed to flour into full development through the freedom from bindings—the commitment will retain its full flavor only when resting in freedom. Freedom is the most important dimension for the bringing to perfection of any commitment, it is symbolic of the loving life—nothin' says lovin' like somethin' from the oven...

2. Now that you have been chosen by your commitment and taken the necessary preparatory

steps for your new responsibility, place the commitment in the ovens of life, making sure that the temperatures remain constant as possible — wild fluctuations in temper — or flares of intense heat are given to drying out even the juiciest and most tender commitments. Keep a sharp eye on your commitment through the see-through oven doors, being careful to observe the development of a golden brown crustiness as the browning edges indicate a blending of forces in flaky surrender.

C. Serving Up Commitments

After a good thorough baking in the ovens of life and after a lengthy subjection to the tests of the loving oven, the commitment is ready to be served to its purpose.

1. Upon removing the commitment from the oven, it requires a close re-inspection. Is this the way you first envisioned your commitment? Is it getting enough heat? Are the ovens of life hot enough, or too hot? Are you burning (heaven forbid) your commitments behind you? Commitments require constant checking as they rest on their racks of freedom. A good, properly prepared commitment will provide constant substance and meat to everyday existence if adequate space and attention has been given to its development. If the cookin' has been "underdone" return the commitment to the lovin' oven for further and future serving to purpose — a half-done commitment may give rise to an inability to "stomach" the commitment.

2. Each commitment must retain its spiritual blueness after baking. If at any time, the brown fermenting and oozing dread of "obligation" attaches itself to the cookin' commitment, the commitment will be spoiled and should immediately be canned or put in the ostracizer — nothing depletes the spiritual blueness of a commitment like the fermenting acids of obligation. Keep your commitment healthy and spiritually sustaining and it will be a continuing source of sustenance and nourishment.

3. Serve your commitment with lavished-love, underlying devotion and the urge to commit will be a starring recipe for action in life...A — "bean committed"

—sprouts the tenderest herb gardens which flavor a full-bodied life.

Additional commitment recipes for action are available upon request. We have commitments for “just desserts” such as the Pure Whip Commitment (which requires a professional prune welder for proper preparation); Vegetarian Commitments for the non-flesh eaters’ foray into commitment-land or the Involuntary Commitment for those who are unaware of their anchored possibilities of existence. Simply enclose in a pre-addressed and stamped envelope your preference and returned address.

Send to: THE ACADEMIC COOKBOOK
—Commitment Recipes For Action In Care of: Looney
Tunes Department/Butch Cassidy and the Sundance
Kidd, two cases of the already committed—Your
commitment recipes will be forwarded in plane-browned
wrappers and secret names will be decoded.

—*The Characturess*

INBETWEENNESS:
THE INTERPENETRATING FLOW

Have you ever seen the Golden Gate Bridge at sunset when the clouds and fog cloak its topmost spires with the hue of golden light, casting a glow from the setting sun that reflects to emblazon water's edge? One span on one side forever anchored, reaches out toward the other side, a single expanse begins and without whose returning reach from the other side would fall, plunging into the depths that lie below.

The other too reaches out, singular counterpart to the alone expanse. As they do meet and touch—the two complete each other—to be both, while together providing a singular pathway, distinguishable as something now freely flows *Inbetween*. Each previously alone, separated by the yet-to be traversed expanse, now one together.

Something new exists, connecting what was previously considered apart. Despite that both still are and remain distinct, a new way exists *Inbetween*, opening up and establishing a viable pathway, allowing a mutually interpenetrating flow *Inbetween* where together, one takes you to the other and the other returns you to yourself.

—*The Charactress*

*INBETWEENNESS: DARKNESS APPEARS
AWARENESS SHINES*

There is something in life that connects us all. That would be spirit, although it may be described by people of different cultures in significantly different ways. Regardless, it exists, it is, it happens. This sense of what my first be felt as *simpatico*, as commonalities, as something that is understood and felt rather than cognitively analyzed and deduced indicates that it is something a cut below it is foundational, grounding and life affirming in its ability to be inclusive rather than exclusive. It enjoins in freedom and conjoins in love; it is the spirit that resides between—which lives *Inbetween*.

Can you touch the wind? No. You can feel it on your face and body, it blows past and around but you cannot touch it. It is not there in the three dimensional sense, available for human experience only as something beyond, outside our own being. *Inbetweenness* shares some of these same qualities only with the distinct difference that it does not flow from the outside in but from the inside out—to touch both ourselves and others. It too is fully experienced and can change the direction in life of those for whom it exists without preparation, just as the wind. It too is experienced as touching us but of our not being able to reach out and hold it. It flows and connects and infuses love as a natural expression of itself. It is mystery. It is itself without reference beyond itself. Pretty metaphysical sounding in essence. It moves without being of it sown. It initiates action without physical dimension and it sustains life without recourse to what resides or live apart from it. What is it?

Inbetweenness—What is it? During childhood life and all it means is related to me—to my needs, demands and all the essentials required for sustenance, protection and nurturance, hopefully of our potential to grow, flower and arrive at the gates of self-reflective awareness is some integrated and fully functional way. Despite life's challenges and obstacles, it is possible to transcend, to prevail, to ultimately, successfully.

As a vulnerable, inquisitive and needful youngster the meaning and function of others in life are simply restricted to the one meaning of the source, the provider,

the vast array of what is possible and necessary to sustain the existence of what exists. That which is embedded most firmly in the unknown as yet, cosmos of human existence and reality.

As time carries one into future and newly emerging patterns of growth, psychological and physical development, the world itself and those most significant to sustained existence begin to renew themselves as centers of polarity. There comes a time early in life, around two years or a little earlier when all in life is not accessible for one's own satisfaction—a space opens up between I want and you cannot. One learns no! But besides the denial of what has been accessible and now has established a limit, now a glimmer of reflective awareness as a center of independent action begins to be a presence in the presence of another or others who occupy and somehow can now deny my space. We become a participant as well as and inhabitant of a world of barriers, of doors now which close rather than remaining always open. Darkness appears. The future now is born.

The opening up of a space, the birth of distance from is an expression, a natural one, of the experienced condensation of becoming a self-reflected being, an enlightened center of vision, a source of action by which the I emerges to envision its own being.

From this moment in time the doors of freedom and unity with the cosmos, the veil of inclusiveness is rendered. The sense of I am apart from all that is begins to spread its wings. Then treasures of heaven of unknowing are locked from experience as it has been known via the physical being. Awareness shines.

It is one's space which opens up *Inbetween* the budding awareness and the recognition that there is an other—indeed many others—which distances experience of self from the all. This is the natural emergence and dynamic human creation of one experience and reality of *Inbetweenness*.

—*The Charactress*

DIMENSIONAL FLOW

Flow

I have been invited into another's existence...the doors opened to me and I accept I too open the doors. I walk and I look and I feel...I experience agelessness, eternity...the past is present, the future is present...in the I am and the to be...I feel beauty, love, warmth, unity, communion, tranquility. All of these adjectives to denote traveling through space and time and climbing into the heights and depths of consciousness. A release. No other world exists...just eternalness within...timelessness...the secrets of the past are revealed in all their glory. I see myself, I see others, I see expansion...I see the intricacies of life. I touch gently and it responds, alive...and welcoming by entrance, inviting me to explore its existence, eager for me to discover...what I already know lies within. Life and eternity lives within this house, in every conceivable texture, color, sense, touch and shape. The past live gently and naturally beside the future, coming together to present to me the present. The essence of life is apparent to me...respect, gentleness and regard with each afforded its own mode of uniqueness, it capturing its own beauty. I can follow the paths, I can see where they have been, I can map their past, I can feel their present and I can love them. Life pulses with this house.

Flow

I am drifting, in this little boat, safe and warm with the sun warming my soul. To the depths, comfortably, resting and watching the beautiful birds as they swoop and climb and can to me their secrets. My little boat is carrying me to—somewhere and I willingly go, aware of the beauty surrounding me and yet a distant place calls to me. I hear, I respond and my little boat, carried by the overwhelming but friendly power beneath me, whisks me to this distance—this place that entices me...where am I going, what am I doing, I care not, it is safe, it is warm, it is beautiful. I arrive and I bid my little boat a gentle goodbye...It is magnificent...beauty surrounds me as I make my way into a soft and gentle meadow. There is beauty in every view, a stillness prevails, with only the sounds of beautiful birds as they call their love songs to

one another through the ages, there is water, babbling over stone and running to its union, there are beautiful flowers, all open to the world and full of gentle color, all waving in the gentle breezes, whispering the secrets of life to the gigantic pines who are singing their melodious tune to the white fluffy clouds in the blue endlessness of the sky. The flowers are damp, with soft velvety petals extending their petals to me, inviting me to reach down and touch their fragility, to experience...a red rose catches my eye, I go over to it and I behold its loveliness. I am taken into this flower, I go down and through and become this rosebush upon which this fragrant entity resides. I am a rosebush...Me as in all the way of being, rooted and these roots sinking down into the rich fertile soil, thirstily drinking and feeding from its fullness, vitality flowing through each of the branches, leaves, thorns and finally and ultimately, up to the beautiful gift of my being, a rose, a beautiful rose, opening and pouring its heart out to the world. I live in a beautiful soft, sunshiny and dewey meadow, surrounded by lacy, soft and luxuriously soft and splendid grass, like cushions of clouds and the hum of the birds and the bees fills the air and I provide for others refuge and holding by branches high to absorb the sun...and time lapses me, I become dormant and quite still...sleeping peacefully through the winters time, preparing to emerge again in the cycle of life.

I have drifted to the shore, the gentle waters lapping the contour of the beach and I am pulled into the warm and powerful waters, I go down...down and down into their irresistible depths...like soaring in the air and I glide and circle and absorb the color, the mystique and the power of the sea...and I go down, down, into the darkness...the powerful magnificence of silence encompasses me and I drift into a cave, one of plants and coral and little fishes and something shines at the back. I work my way toward this to discover its lure, I reach it, I pick it up and feel the texture, it is warm, alive and pulsating...It tells me its secret and I carry it within...up to the surface and spewing forth on the surface like a whale surfacing, sucking in great gasps of air...finally I am one the beach...and walking along, the tides roll in and out and the white foam brings upon the beach a little creature...“I cannot live without...help me...love me.” I walk around and immediately reach down can cast it back into the sea

and I say to this little creature...“I love you...but I cannot hold you...you must be your own, you are not stranded.” I look up and I am tired, there is something upon the waters, coming in...closer and closer, I cannot see what it is, I am too exhausted and something keeps calling me from afar, it keeps pulling me and I want to go with it, I am open to it...

Flow

I am climbing this mountain, alive with creatures existing in harmony, greenery all around and a barely visible path leading me to the sun, to the top and I veer off to the side, along a trail full of crisp air and piney scents, as I go on, into...whatever awaits. I come upon this campfire and its warmth and beauty draws me near, I put wood upon the fire and a wise man sits quietly by the fire and I look upon him...and he says, “Ask my child, what is it you wish to say?”...and I say, “I have no questions, I have nothing to ask...I feel from within what I want to know.” He goes on to say, “Sit my child and rest yourself, share with me my humble existence.” As we sit we talk and the wise man says, “You are wise not to ask, you know already and you need no other to seek...follow yourself and you shall see...and he gave to me an eternal rose, one that shall never die, it shall live forever in the depths of my soul and I left to continue my journey.” I have been there before...in the clouds another planet, just this afternoon while lying in the grass...I made it to there...and I want to go beyond...but I am too exhausted.

Flow

I cannot. I cannot go to where I have been through words. I cannot describe living within the existence of another. I opened myself and another flowed in...communion occurred...it was the beginning...I am open to the future and I welcome it.

—*The Charactress*

SUNDOWN

Sitting on a cold hard and round stone—the top of a series of steps. It is the area intended for poetry readings, the little alcove—a small clearing. Sky is barely visible—pink with lacy green and a golden glow in the center. A damp woody aroma fills the air speaking of a cool stillness and cushiony damp softness beneath the growth.

My heart is still beating fast from the last hours' encounter with ping-pong. There is little noise, I hear various birds—the roar of the busses rounding the bend at the street below—and the breezes rustle through the treetops and gently brush my face. It is difficult to still my mind and relax as it jumps from one idea or thought to another—it seems very crowded as I look for the causes of crackling in the undergrowth as little creatures wiggle around in secret. Almost everything seems a shade of green, from light to dark. There is a tendency to look for the birds that seem to be remaining where they are as they converse with one another.

Occasionally I hear an owl who seems hundreds of years old—perhaps its sound is why it is considered to be so wise, its hoots are muffled and sound as ancient and knowing as I can think. Now I am amongst the growth that seems like a forest, sitting between two large green plants with yellow blossoms. The smells are different, sweeter and the closeness of my surroundings seems to be wrapping around me. I hear mosquitoes and see flying bugs. The birds feel closer too—its almost as if you can feel the glory of being a plant.

The temperature is cooling now as the sun disappears and most all I contact is by sound. They seem clearer and more distinct as I stop looking so much and simply listen and feel. One bird is chattering incessantly and its repertoire seems endless.

There is stillness now and the breezes have stopped. It is very still and seems a crime to break the beautiful silence. I am beginning to get cold and the plants feel warm not like the cold hard stone I first sat upon. How beautiful the end of a day is when one pays attention. It is relaxing—my body feels more relaxed, as I start to give myself over to the surroundings. The earth is damp and

soft and smells good. My senses seem much more aware
and my body tingles occasionally from the coolness.

The sun is gone now—and everything seems black and
very still. The birds have stopped their callings and the
only sounds that remain are made by humans somewhere
except for the rustle of creatures scurrying along in the
undergrowth and the sound of the wind rustling through
the branches. It is difficult to notice shapes of plants,
except the ones very near.

The darkness seems to set my imagination into
movement as the cause for noises and movements cannot
be detected. There are others moving about—something
comes out of a tree—cracking limbs and sounding like a
wild beast in the forest. Time seemed to slow down and
my own rhythm of breathing and heartbeat seems to have
slowed with it. Its like day is summer and night is winter.

I feel more relaxed and yet more alert to what is
happening around me.

—*The Characturess*

THE JOURNEY

As I begin the journey I find myself in a little wooden boat. It is very small but large enough for only one and I can feel the mist gently kiss my face as I snuggle down in the boat and lose myself in the swaying gentleness. The boat begins to move and to pick up speed. All of a sudden it takes to the air and leaves behind the deep blue mysteries of the sea. I am gliding as one with the boat, soaring into the air through the gigantic billowing clouds, up, up and up the air becomes colder and there are no others—I am alone. I distinctly feel I am not in control of this boat. I am not taking my own path. I look out and I begin to recognize a path.

The path is the one my plane followed a couple of months ago as I winged my way back to California to my father's death. I can sense the turbulence and feel the sting of the hot razor sharp pain as it zings across my heart—and I struggle against it as I reach out for my man—he is there—and I continue the journey to find the comfort and safety of his love—now I travel with him and he carries me along to “our place”—San Francisco, our beautiful San Francisco. A myriad of images flash into my mind, like a merry-go-round as I gather the moments of love and unity that we shared in our city and my body shudders as our depths merge into their familiar singleness.

Fair

I am truly excited. I am going to a fair. As I begin to feel the anticipation arise I regress back in time. Pounds begin to fall from my body and it quickly and fluidly changes shape—I am now seven years old—and I am going to a fair. It is thrilling and I have butterflies in my stomach. Before I get in the gate I sense the total life inside—it glows, it sings and it invites me to share in its tingling moments and rainbowed glow. The movement is swift and I am taken in and find myself on a Ferris wheel as it spins through the dark of the night and the air swirls around my ears as I look out across the great expanse of the earth when I realize that I am very much higher than the top should be—I have gone far above the earth and am looking back through the night—suspended in space—the wheel stops and my seat sways between the

moment of life and death and I give a little gasp as I feel caught between these moments—its like the instant between breathing in and breathing out—this apex of a moment became extended and I was caught in this instant not knowing if I would continue to swing—then the movement continued.

Costume

I am in a large room with a very high ceiling and dim lights. Before me are racks with every kind of costume imaginable—as I begin to sort through them I discard one after another as I look for one this is “just right” for me— I am looking for the sun—but then I think—no that is impossible because that is what you are now—I feel compelled to be something different tonight. Gradually, it becomes a kind of game and the phoniness of the costumes strikes me as peculiar. They are all “people” costumes—that seems strange to me because I liked to totally change my form and meaning—to experience a total new experience. So I choose from another rack—one that seems far in the back—I am a pansy. The deep purple velvety feel pleases me—and the soft yellow glow that generates from my center fills me with vitality. I like this—I look around and I am tucked in green meadows—I sway gently with the wind as it gently moves my entire body—and I see that I resting beside a clear sparkling stream as it giggles along knowingly—and I think—I know you—I know who you are, I am not alone. What I gain by this or what I win is true harmony, what I avoid is—nothing—I avoid nothing because the cyclic movement of life is the same—what one makes of it is what is unique. I like being a flower—but I prefer being the sun.

Wishes

I have no wishes—no—I do have one—I wish that Frank Eichensehr would have taken my offer to undergo a kidney transplant—he is with me tonight also—tonight is uneasy.

Long Hallway

I am walking down the hallway, a dark brown wooden hallway with many doors leading off of each side—I

think, “I could go in there or there or in anyone, they all open. But I do not want to go into them I want to go through the last one at the end that faces “out.” It is locked, I look for the key—I think where would the key be—as I contemplate this problematic I decide that the only place for the key is on the other side of the door—so it must be locked from the other side. I slide a piece of paper under the door and push through the keyhole with a hairpin—there it is—I push and it falls to the floor—I pick up the key and open the door—it is the door to the universe—space, solitude and eternity—now I understand why all the other doors were open—they were limited.

Book

The book that I see is a purple satin book with gilded pages of gold—and I find only one word inside—love.

Vessel

The vessel that I am carrying is a ruby red glass. It is breathtaking, the color is so pure that it seems transparent. The color seems to move inside in swirling patterns, all shades of red. I has a fluted edge around the top, like lace—and it is gently sprinkled with the most delicate little flowers ever seen—white lacy ribbons string the flowers together across the vessel as the color swirls around inside, like the colors of a flame in the quickness of its life but this color moves continuously and it appears to be a power unknownst to me—I walk up Mt. Olympus and a sunbeam strikes—a fusion of color and sound gives forth a flash of brilliance and the vessel becomes warm in my hand and the power begins to seep into me as I stand there and I can feel the movement inside ad it throbs, it is uncanny.

Mountain

I felt the rumble of heat underneath my crust and a force pushing up—growing and growing until I begin to move and go toward the sky—very hot—very rigid and steaming. The turmoil of the creation bothers me—yet it is necessary. Then I begin to cool and feel more gentle and grass springs up, trees begin to grow at my base and ice caps—no a glacier it developed over millions of

years— Snow is all around and the clouds swoosh around my peak. A lake is at the top—so magnificently colored and clear—so majestic, untouched, unseen—it clearly reflects perfection in its stillness and mirrors the vastness of space and time—all I can do is behold it—and I try to feel where it is—it is at my heart—life come and goes and ages pass as life goes on and I am still. The clouds begin to move and to take form, to take shape—they become a giant eye as the sun streams through and rainbowed colors shimmer in the air. Day changes to night and night to day—I become active and then still as night is soft and day is light. I grow old and ancient with the cycles relentlessly giving way to one another and my ground takes in a culture—and provides the fruits of existence. I change back into a human—and the one thing that I missed was making love to my man. I missed the warmth of him as he rests so near.

High Plateau

I am on a high plateau and it is so still—like eternity—nothing moves, no sound. A star shines above and I gaze into its brilliance and it generates in to me as I move toward it and it pulls me—I become one with the star.

Fire

I have nothing to throw on the fire.

—*The Characturess*

QUIET CALMNESS

Logs appear and flow along in the stream and then go out of sight. From where I am the sky is barely visible. The sun beaming off high branches, trickling down the leaves and giving off a pink effervescent glow, bringing forth a lacey green golden flow as it percolates down to the bottom floor of the forest, drenching the tops of flowers.

A damp woody aroma fills the air speaking of a cool stillness and cushiony deep softness beneath the growth.

The forest knows I am here. My presence is felt. It is very quiet. I see a squirrel high above watching me intensely. A bird announces its presence and another answers. High above in the trees another realm of existence is going on. A hawk jumps to another limb for a closer look and then it slowly leaves. I can feel its presence by its movements through the forest. All is quiet again. Suddenly the hawk flies in low and slow and lands in front of me. It looks at me then turns and walks off slowly toward a little alcove, dimly lit. As I gaze toward the alcove I notice a little plant about three inches tall watching me. "I could have stepped on you little plant, I did not know till now you were there."

"Thank you! Hawk."

The sound of breaking sticks and rolling over flowers is on the path. It is person. Do not see me! I do not want to be seen. I become smaller than the plant and I hide beneath a tree. Hawk looks at me and nods its head. As I look down the path that winds and weaves the flowers and trees seem to surround me as my vision goes dim.

There is no need to move my head. I still smell the undergrowth and my hearing ever so much is accentuated. Again I hear a little crackling in the undergrowth as the little creatures wriggle around in their secluded places. Almost everything is a shade of green, from light to dark. The birds begin to quiet. The plants seem to be wrapped all around me. The temperature begins to cool. All boundaries are lost. I am elsewhere. I hear an owl. Its hoots are muffled and sound ancient and knowing. The sun is gone now. Everything is very black and still. The birds stop their calling. Slowing down the rhythm of breathing and heartbeat of the forest. I am more alert. Hawk comes to see me, looking at me, touching me. We take to the air and fly.

THE WILY PHILOSOPHER

Characture of Suncrates

Of all that is known and not known, of all that be and not be, of all that see and not see there is one and not but one Suncrates. He will teach you without teaching while hiding in plain sight on this side of there and that side of here. This multidimensional philosopher cuts across and goes beyond thought to an understanding which makes sense on one dimension but does not necessarily make sense on another.

Only in degrees of the imaginary can his scholarly dedication in a heartfelt beat resound and possibly be found. All exists before our knowledge on a continuum in which interactions can move in any direction spontaneously leaving our interpretations of his way as yet unknown but known. Without substance Suncrates is empty.

But in the curvature of his way empty is whole.
Suncrates is MT yet whole.

His appeal to the infinite makes us take our positions there on that side of here. Everything that constitutes the past, the present, the future is en bloc. The curvature of Suncrates' understanding is so profound it is there but we cannot see it.
"Don't worry!"

—*The Characturess*

THE OUTTHINKER

Characture of Jim

Intuitive understanding.
Delightfully difficult, “Do Not Bother Me!”

Who is he? Jim is Jim. Fire in all but one house. Energy
abounds. An accelerated mind with no patience, no time.

A teacher who teaches teachers.
Moves without being seen in the classroom while
touching each heart.

With playful spontaneity and moving with incessant
change
he has come into the understanding of the unity of all
things.

—*The Characturess*

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT EVENT IN OUR LIVES

One cold winter evening in January I was reluctantly driving along with a cold 6-pack of beer in the car. I was on my way over to someone's house that I didn't even know. I was to be at a party. It was a weekday evening and I felt especially tired from working all day. My mood was not one of great expectations, nor one of joyful glee at the prospect of the evening before me. I was quite ready to be bored.

After arriving at the house and as I walked up the driveway toward the front door I happened to glance up and see a face in what was apparently the kitchen window. I was struck by her presence in the soft evening light in a way which I as yet have trouble describing. She was for me something special from that moment. As I sort of stumbled along, being transfixed by my own sense of attraction to her I arrived at the front door just in time to drop the whole 6-pack of beer all over the porch.

Awkwardly I scurried around gathering up the cans, hurrying into the house to get a closer look. After all, my first image of her was only from the shoulders up. When I looked at her I couldn't believe it... she was so tiny, so small, so neat! She was attracted to me too! I could tell by the way she and I spoke without words. We knew without saying that this original meeting was the beginning of what was to become the most significant event of our lives. Through this first evening, we were always aware of one another, glancing expectantly at each other.

It was 12 months later in December that we were married. This beginning with my twin flame in love has become the focal point for our mutual expression. Together we have gone where neither of us could go alone.

Our original meeting was only a beginning. Together we have pursued our mutual aims and goals finding avenues open for joint expression. We have throughout our shared time and space provided one another with opportunities to develop and enhance our individual talents and abilities. Meeting "The Sun" as

I have named her has turned my life around. Now we
face a future together.

We have come to understand what it means to have
just one other person in our lives upon whom we can
depend in any situation, one who will be there when it
is essential. Our chosen path has been one of hardship,
struggle and sacrifice in many ways. But it has been
based upon our most prized value, freedom.

The quality of that which has risen *Inbetween* us as we
now stand and face one another in the dawn of yet
another new beginning calls us back to our founding
spirit. We have freed one another, renewing the vision
which first lit up as our eyes met for the first time.
Together we have learned the power of unity and
harmony that springs from the life of the heart.

The Writing Caruso
—*The Charactress*

STOW LAKE

On my daily bike rides I frequently ride around in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. One of my favorite things to do is to pedal around for a while and then walk my bike around the path which encircles Stow Lake. It really isn't possible to ride it there because there are too many others who walk around the lake and it would be too dangerous.

A particular experience which stands out for me from my Stow Lake walk is one which truly allowed me to actually see and understand intuition at work. As I approached the area just before the boathouse I noticed a young mother with her two children standing near the edge of the lake. They were enjoying the fun of feeding the ducks which live on and around the lake. The ducks were quacking and paddling furiously toward them to get something to eat. The boy was standing a little further back from the edge than his younger sister whose feet were right at the end of the lake. The mother was standing in back of both the children. They were talking to the ducks and holding bags of bread from which they tossed morsels at a time to the hungry mouths of their feathered friends floating atop the reflecting pond.

Amidst the quacking and flapping I noticed one large white goose which was working its way through the feeding group, its gaze was fixed on the little girl whose bag of bread was hanging from under her arm and she was totally engaged in what she was doing. The mother looked up and saw the goose angling toward her girl. She watched as the goose swam closer and closer, the young girl oblivious continued happily throwing bread to the ducks. The boy also noticed the goose as it approached and he backed up a bit.

As I continued to walk towards them it soon became apparent to me that the goose was going to go for the bag of bread all at once rather than wait for the meager little bits to be tossed to it. Patience was not present!

Quickly the goose reached the shore and began to scramble hurriedly up onto shore. The mother quickly reacted by telling her children to get back, to move away from the edge of the lake. She immediately saw danger

for her daughter in particular as she was too near the goose. The goose seemed to look straight into the little girl's eyes and its neck arched. I knew from my own experience that the goose was going to strike the girl. The mother yelled at the girl, "get back, the goose is going to strike you!" The young girl dropped her bag of bread and jumped back fearfully and quickly as the goose re-focused its attention on the bread she had dropped and began eating it straight from the bag.

Just as I was walking past the mother, I said to her "They will!" She looked quizzically at me and replied unknowingly, "Really??" Intuitively she recognized the danger and successfully warned her daughter to move back and the young girl obeyed and dropped the bag of now goose food when so doing. The mother's cognitive understanding arose only after my affirmation that her actions and statement were correct, that she had indeed recognized that the goose would strike her daughter, when she replied to me by asking "Really??"

The Writing Caruso
—*The Charactress*

THE ROCK GARDEN

Sunnie and I spent a few days together in a space that had been extended to us as an open invitation. In this tree-shaded and life-inhabited space, we felt most free. The summer afternoons were spent together gathering those meanings of life that were sustaining and at the same time exhilarating. This garden was our place to be.

We were discussing one particular area that was filled with trees, bushes and rocks. It was a little below a wall of rough rock where we practiced archery. As we talked an idea began to develop, to build an archery range from the large piles of stone.

It was to be a primordial space, outlined with stones both large and small, weaving pathways which would lead to the target area. A space in the center was designated to be for communal gathering, for building fires and being together during the evening hours.

We set to work and I do mean work! We began to bring this little dream to life, working side by side. Never once did Sunnie complain she worked right alongside of me, pushing and shoving, rolling and lifting rocks. Her strength and determination amazed me as she helped in what seemed an impossible and unlikely task.

Our hands quickly grew blistered as we struggled with our task. We built, we shared, we laughed at one another and we perspired in the dirt and soot. Slowly, shapes began to emerge as envisioned. Rocks fell and some were so heavy that it took the two of us to move them into place.

We would sit and look at one another during short breaks and grin through the dust. I would hold her smashed fingers or toes and she would remain patient as I leaped around wildly with bugs on my hands that darted out from under the stones as we moved them.

Moving toward the fulfillment of only a small dream was our goal for the moment but one that took its place in the wider context of our longer spiritual journey together. It was a commitment we made, a vision we shared, a spirit that moved us onward in spite of the many hardships.

Sunnie's endurance, her perseverance, drove me on too. She participated beyond my expectations and even at the time perhaps beyond my wishes as she wrestled with rocks I could hardly bridge. We talked, we shared and we were together as we so often feel. The hardships, although chosen, were in a way a joy. We accomplished a lot and we grew closer. Two full days of sweat and toil, our dream had come alive. When we were finished, both trembling from the heat and exertion required, the effect was stunning.

We might have been in the darkest forest of medieval days, as we gazed at our archery range that had been courageously forged from one haphazardly piled and strewn heaps of rock and stone. During these two days the rest of the world had dropped away, we were simply one, together, such is life.

The Writing Caruso
—*The Characturess*

POETRY

—*The Characturess*

DIGITAL HAIKU

In it we to us no.
If at go by so.
Is on of as?
Be up.
Ok?

PHOENIX

How often is it I wonder,
that the Phoenix of life
stands to face the abyss of time
as it creates the space of
being stretching beyond our
meaning without respite?

From this incessant exposure
of vulnerable self in search of light
arises from the ashes
the indestructible bird
without flight.

GOLDEN GATE PARK

Seagulls standing atop the pine trees
 mallards floating on the pond,
 and over across the meadow
 the old buffalo grazes off the land.

Green grass waving, moved by spirit's breeze,
 reflecting rainbowed waves which crest
 and break at your feet,
 fanning sprays of liquid life
 shimmering into space
 where the alert foot traveler finds
 icicles in the sand.

PASTS-FUTURE

Sand waves of time
 drifted cross the past
 in gusting life's shadow
 without matter.

NIGHT FANTASY

You come to me from the night of my soul
 suddenly we meet in darkest hours of love
 never to be seen...
 still I know somewhere I live with you
 like the song in my heart
 which yeans to be
 free.

APPEAL TO TRUTH

With morning's fog mottled sky
once more atop the hill climbed for life
still one burning question alive
only time can tell.

Then a single breath
sweeps the fear away
into the far distant past
as twelve tones begin their appeal.

Joy mixed by pangs of memories
once paled the glow
still twelve tones strike a new appeal
now remain forever
never to be known.

Note: This is my reflexive presence in a moment of truth.

WHO'S LIGHT SHINES

Who is it for which one light shines?
Where shines the one light, can it be mine?
When is it my light the one who's it...
That can be all that will
Ever shine.