

chrysalis

The Cover photograph
and letter below were
submitted together.



Dear Chrysalis Staff,

I am submitting
a picture I took of
a papier mâché sculpture that
I made. This is the best I
can do with the equipment
I have. If you want to
take a better picture that
would be okay with me.

Thank you.

Debra E. Williams
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chrysalis**vol. 21, '74-75**

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title

**written on
textures of sound
painted with
hues of experience
wrapped in
boundaries of time
sailing on
currents of emotion**

**rising
falling
over the unexplainable
poetry is . . .**

HEARTS

Hearts can be broken many times--
 They heal quite nicely.
One must be careful of the scars, though.
Artificial hearts, of course, are almost
 Indestructible--
Plastic, you know; never wears out.
Why, you could open a coffin
 A hundred years from now,
And lying in the bone dust
 The heart would look brand new.
Of course, they may remove them to use over;
 I'm not sure of that.
I've been thinking of trading in the old pump;
 Quite a lot of trouble lately;
Rusty, so to speak. Yes, I might be
 More at ease with one of
The plastic ones.

SWEET HELL WITHIN

Sweet hell within, the all-consuming fire
That wracks the soul, and, smoking, smothers thought,
Has hope laid dead and lashed upon the pyre.

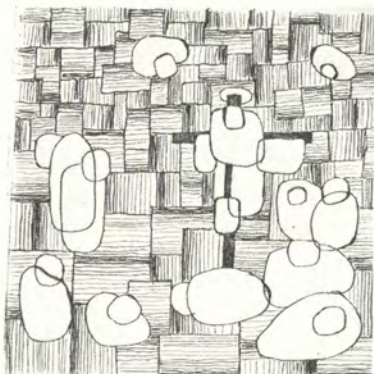
When fancied love is fancied pure desire
And fancied unrequited, then is brought
Sweet hell within, the all-consuming fire;

That, lapping reason, swallows it entire
In that quick sickness--madness--which when caught
Has hope laid dead and lashed upon the pyre.

The suffering is great, the torture dire
That burns the stomach's pit--an evil draught,
Sweet hell within, the all-consuming fire

That drowns all motion in an ashen mire
And, smoking, hiding that direction sought,
Has hope laid dead and lashed upon the pyre.

Who claims he never suffered love's a liar,
For every boy in school has well been taught
Sweet hell within, the all-consuming fire
That lays hope dead and lashed upon the pyre.



AD HOMINEM

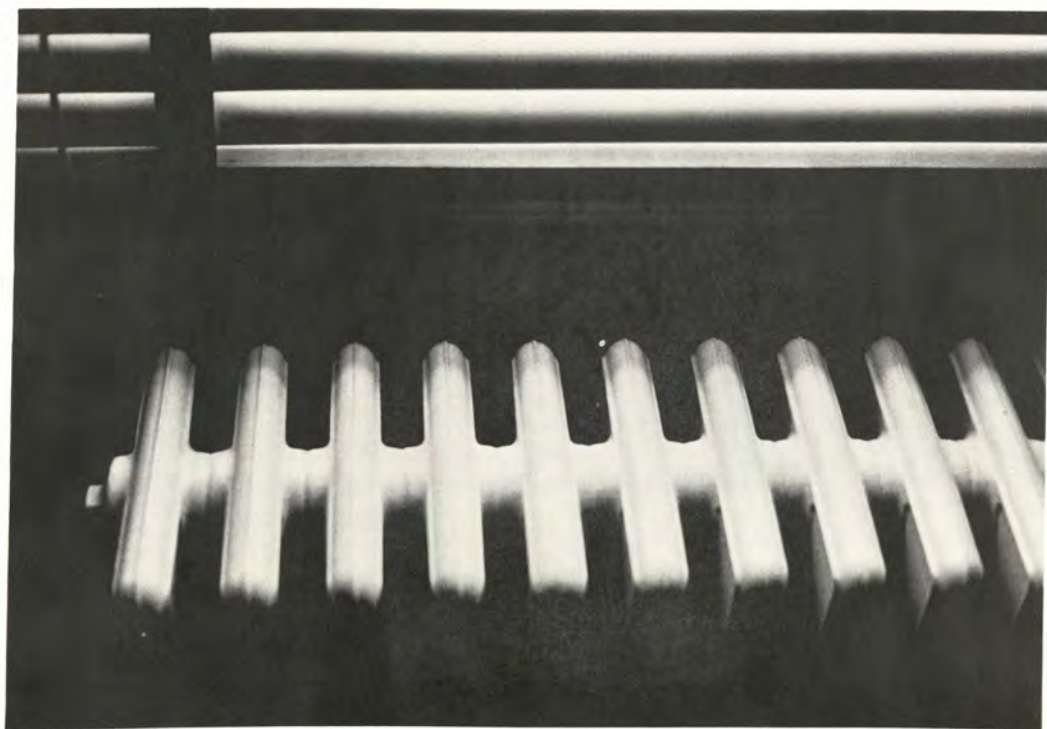
Abracadabras
Sierras Nevadas,
I wish my mouth was the sky.

Et cum spiritu
Two of us too wearied to --
So sweetly I feel you sigh.

I lift up my cup,
It thinks itself up --
Taste the bliss of devotion.

Adamantine, Eve,
So soft now, conceive --
Do drop man in motion.





(diamante)

Bear,
Honey-loving, Bruin,
Grumbling, Growling, Snarling,
Gargantuan, Grizzly, Lofty, Monarch,
Soaring, Darting, Diving,
Trembling, Breath-taking,
Butterfly.

THE FIRST DAY

Corn flakes sloshing in his mouth
 His dog barking at the school bus
 Mother's kiss,
 A lump grows in his throat
 Faces talking, shouting
 His house disappearing from the window.

 He becomes the clay of society.

COMPARISON

Comparison can be so ugly;
 Let me just say that I feel
 Scraped out, as dry as an old orange rind.
 My belly hurts. My arms hurt, with a strange
 twinge,
 Down the forearms and near the wrists.
 My breasts hurt, with a heaviness, a tension.
 This body hurts.

Let me say, too, that I feel
 Solitary, as brittle as a Chicago winter tree
 Crackling in the frozen wind
 At dusk, blue-gray cold and silent and alone,
 And very empty.



Wind Woman

**Wind woman lies, she does,
If you don't believe her.**

**When wilder, cries she does,
If you can conceive her.**

**Leave loving, love leaving,
Woman warns, she does.**

**Lent lordship, lordship lost.
Wait woman; she doesn't.**













CHILDREN OF THE BROKEN VOW

Children of the broken vow,
Like seeds beside the garden path
By mere misfortune dropped and doomed
To strive beneath the weed's green wrath.

Are stifled, smothered in the bud;
Compete for life beneath the crowd
That towers deafly overhead
And cannot hear the disendowed.

Children of the honored vow,
Like seeds in neat soft-tilled rows laid,
Do not for lack of nurture pine,
And are not stunted by cold shade.

The hand that weeds the garden row
Does honor to the ancient vow,
But what hand tends the pathway's edge
Beyond the region of the plow,
Those children of the broken vow?



the fourth month

The camels were first.

We invited the japanese.

and encouraged their goal.

We'd save the wheat

and blocks in New York

and hungry ones in India.

Bodkin advises it

Congress approved it

States adopted it

Boards council it.

We fight wars

execute humans

destroy the environment

cheat, hurt, accuse, refuse.

blindly nodding, condemning,

and judging.

Late one night, without apparent reason, that we can discern,

a mother hamster ate her babies neatly.

POEM TO THE GERMAN MACHINE GUN

(1916)

for Wilfred Owen

**Hail, hail, New King!
Lay low the field,
And loudly sing in your staccato tongue
The single biting word of your hot wrath.
You are a god--an angry god--
Held high upon a trinity of steel
And ruling that fell waste between the lines
Where rattling swords have given way
To your new sabre-rattle, spitting blades
Like melon seeds, and killing men like flies.
Teach them to pray and think of death,
Of gas, of trenches like foul shafts to hell,
The stench of sickness and the British dead,
And make them live like rack-ribbed rats,
Afraid and hungry in an earthen maze
Gone sour and breeding vermin--vermin and
A mutant strain of poetry.**











THE OLD MAN

Grey whiskers on a wrinkled face
Boney fingers clutching a cane
Faded blue eyes squinting

The world changed.

Pieces of memory float through his mind
Scratchy voice relates the past as
My eager young ears gather each word

Life, an entertaining tale.

His grave touched only by the snow
Reports his age on its tombstone
My tearful eyes search for his face

But they only receive the wind's sting.

The Lightweight (in a cafe)

Fifty-one years old,
and grizzled and scarred.
A few pounds heavier,
but still strong and quick.
His hands are stronger now
than they were in his fighting days.
The long hours at the mill
have bettered any trainer's work.
He's warm in the thoughts of
his warring days,
but happy with the ease
of these passing years.
A sip of coffee and the
last bite of toast and . . .

Two young punks enter,
they force the aging owner
to open the register
Change falls to the floor.
Nickels-and-pennies-and-dimes.
And before they can move toward the door . . .

The Lightweight is up!!

Cap tossed aside,
sleeves pushed up to the elbows.
They laugh at him. (Round One)
-- two short, quick strides
-- a left hook to the jaw
And one is laughing in his dreams,
and the other has lost his smile. (end of Round One)
The second punk puts up his guard.
"Come and get me old man," he says. (Round Two)
-- a feint to the right
-- a jab with the left
-- a loud smack
The punk takes the blow
and gives a roundhouse swing.
-- a duck
-- another feint
-- a left-right jab combination
The punk staggers back, but
still wants more. He lunges,
trying to grab his wiry opponent.
-- a side-step
-- a blow to the ear. . .
But the punk grabs his coat
and tries to shove him into the wall.
-- a head butt to the chin
-- a step back
-- a false left jab
The punk tries to duck. . .
-- a smooth, powerful, well-timed right-hook to the jaw
The punk crumbles. (end of Round Two)

The Lightweight returns to his coffee and toast.
They're still warm.
The police arrive.
Wondering.

Both of them are thirty pounds heavier,
both of them are thirty years younger;
he's sipping his coffee,
and they're laughing at old men in their dreams.

**A poet with advanced degrees
is like a dog with extra fleas;
He barks no louder, itches no worse,
And finds he's lost his taste for verse.**

Maquillage

**Blond eyes return the stare
In the mirror over the sink.
First, a dab of clay
Spread on the forehead and chin.
Then, two bright touches of rose
On the bones under the eye-corner.
A sable brush for peacock eyelids,
A whisper of dove white on the brow bone.
Charcoal lines and black filaments adhering.
Brick lips.
With water and soft tools Tecumseh made his mask.**



Howbeit!

Always

a

hurly-burly hubbub

of

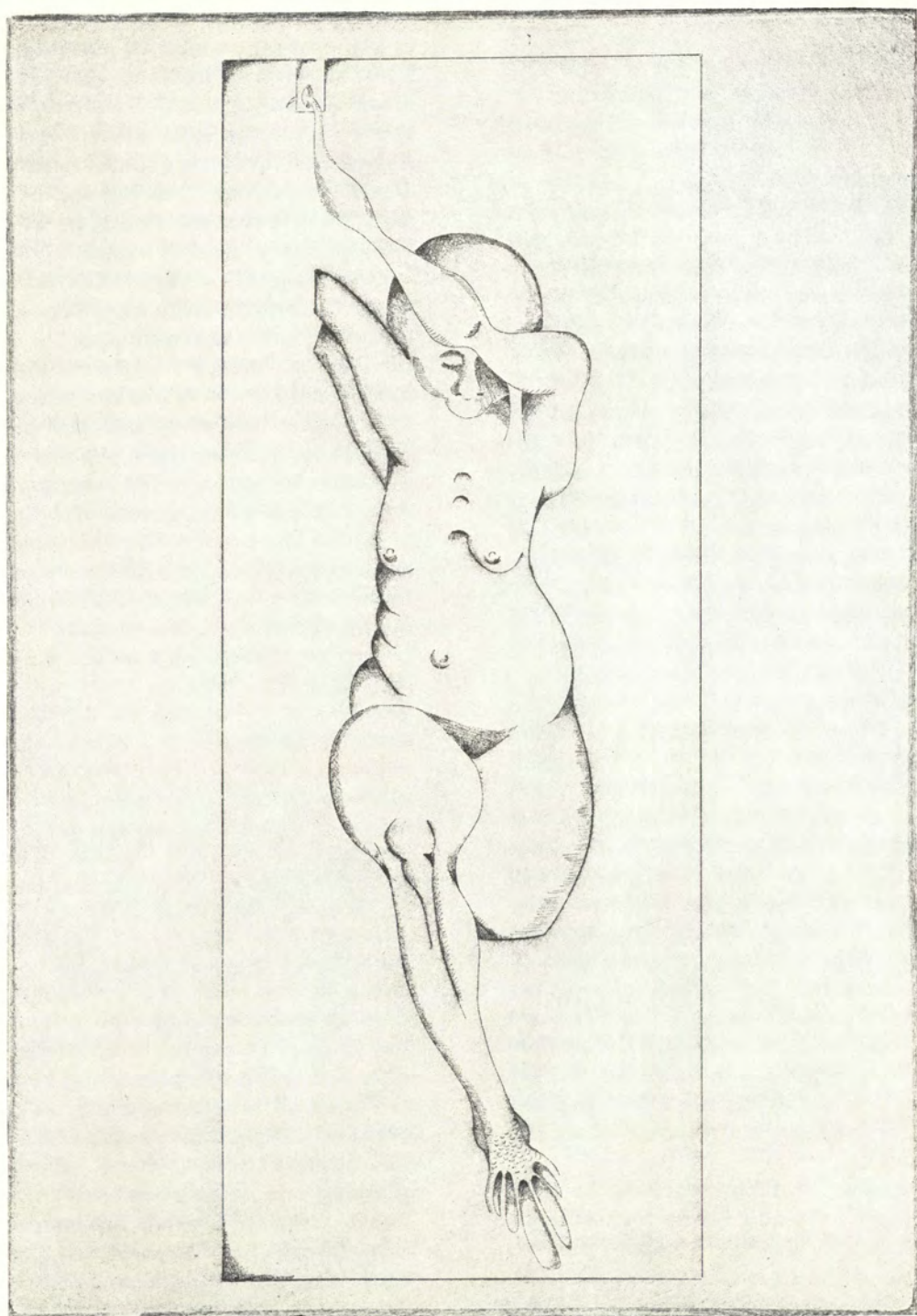
bah humbug

Humanity.



Feelings

**Dew-studded web-like,
Delicate strands,
Linking one to another,
Each to all.**



The Comedian

The theatre had not been used for some time. It stood empty and cold, a monument to nothing, in that part of town reserved for Negro hookers and their pimps. At night men from the suburbs drove through in big cars and bargained with the whores.

Now, in the quiet of the afternoon, the Negroes stood and looked at the workmen who came to open the theatre with its peeling paint and broken marquee. They stood across the street or sat on the steps of tenements and looked on as the trucks pulled up one by one with loads of lumber and glass for the theatre. They watched the workmen break in the boarded over doors and saw the dim city sunlight pour in on the faded red carpet of the foyer.

A fat man in a thin summer suit stepped out of a car and stood before the theatre, mopping his wide sweaty forehead with a handkerchief. With him was a thin man, younger, who looked about curiously as the workers scurried about their duties. The thin man was dressed poorly in a light suit, once good in quality, but now worn through with age and that strained look of good times gone bad too suddenly. He had a lean, hungry, sensual look about him. His thick black hair was shaggy in the back, almost covering the curled collar of his jacket. The sharp line of his large beak-like nose met a thin, somewhat cruel mouth. His stubbly beard, gone too long without a good shave, thickly covered his face and down his neck. He stepped backwards, hands on hips, and looked up at the lopsided marquee.

The fat man spoke. "I tell you, Jackie," he said, "This is the beginning of a new career for you boy." He removed the sticky butt of a cigar from his mouth and began wiping his heavy jowels again. "Yes sir. A new beginning. We'll put you up there

where you belong. Your name in lights, Jackie."

The other man clicked his tongue meditatively. Then he spoke. "I dunno, Abe. Things have been down so long I just don't know." He kicked at a broken hunk of sidewalk lying in his way, then turned and squinted at the Negroes watching from across the street. "It's not the best of locations, Abe," Jackie said with a laugh. "It looks like a bad Hollywood version of a ghetto."

Abe laughed, a deep blubbering sound which seemed to come from his stomach instead of his throat. "Oh, it's the real thing," he said. "But that's the kind of humor that's gonna put you back in business again." He put his arm around the thin shoulders of the other and said in a fatherly way, "Trust me, Jackie. Trust papa Abe."

Jackie looked into his manager's eyes for some reassurance, some guarantee, found nothing to quiet his fears and said affectionately "Sure, Abe, sure. You and me, just like old times. Right?" Arm in arm they entered the theatre, no longer deserted and cold. It was now the home of Jackie Lomax and Abe Fields on the comeback trail.

ii

Jackie Lomax sat looking at his eyes looking into his eyes looking into his dressing table mirror. He saw a picture of a not-so-young-anymore man framed by the broken and sickly light of a border of yellow bulbs. He saw a man living on the edge of a promised land of broken dreams and shattered ambitions, struggling from day to day to keep his head above water, surviving only through a life-preserving sense of humor.

He could remember being in the grade school yard in Indiana and hearing the shrieking cries of the other children, "Kike, kike, kike," like the piercing cries of the sea birds on his native Jersey coast. He could never understand why his aunt and uncle had moved him away from his homeland and into an exile of kike cries. It was all so strange, this new land with its new and frighten-

ing secrets. So queer and new to a ten-year-old from Jersey.

The children were the strangest part of all -- with their fat ham-like fists and stocky frames, so menacing to the slender Jewish boy. And more than once he would look into those Midwest blue eyes looking for an explanation as the ham-fists struck him, bloodying his uncomprehending face.

And he remembered how it felt shuffling home in the clear, cool afternoon to his uncle's house, bearing his badge of shame like a bloody beacon for all to see.

He remembered how his aunt would watch for him from the kitchen window, and would come running to meet him on the front steps, wiping her hands on her apron and clucking like a worried mother hen.

"Oh, Jackie, not again. Come inside and let me clean you up."

"It's okay, Auntie. Really, it is."

"Now you come with me and get cleaned up. Oh, I don't know why they can't leave you alone. Nasty bullies."

And after getting cleaned up and fed milk and cookies and receiving his aunt's warm hug and kiss, he would sit and wait for his uncle's return from work. Those afternoon chats with his uncle--one exile to another, one generation to another--sitting on the older man's lap and breathing in his deep winery odor; these were the hours of consolation to the young boy as he nursed countless cut lips and black eyes. At these golden hours of refuge, the old man attempted to explain to him the reasons for the hatred, the history of a people and a nation.

"Uncle Jake, why do they hate us so much?" he asked.

"It's hard to say, Jackie. Hate is a funny thing. People just start hating without really knowing why and then before you know it, they're hating without even thinking about it."

"Has it always been that way for us?"

Not always, but most of the time, yes." the older man replied. "We Jews have a long history of being persecuted by someone or another. You know

what persecution means?"

"Like hating?"

"That's right. Like hating. When God made us his chosen people, he told us that we would have to suffer for our faith. Here, fetch me my Torah and that other book."

And the old man would tell Jackie the tales of the great Old Testament prophets and kings. The boy was filled with wonder and a kind of holy terror at the tales and longed in secret for the return of a mighty bearded holy man to deliver him from his persecutors.

He went on believing and hoping until the day he faced Billy Bradshaw at noon recess. Bradshaw, the minister's son, with his thick red hair and cold blue eyes exemplified the universal cruelty of children. "Yer a dirty Jew," he said. "My old man told me bout Jews. Where's yer cap, huh?" and he pushed Jackie against a wall. The young exile felt the electricity tingle his face as the nerve endings alerted for the blow to come. Jackie tried to think his way through the haze with the litany of hate still pounding in his ears. "Jew . . . jew . . . jew."

And then he knew. His faith in Old Testament prophets and saviors disappeared as the boy approached. He saw the bigger boy clearly in the foreground, others out of focus in the back. He heard his own voice say, "We wear caps to cover up our hair. That way we save on haircuts," and he heard the bigger boys laugh. He was surprised to hear himself continue mocking himself and everything he knew and believed in and was even more surprised to find that he was escaping the beating he almost felt was owed him by the others.

That was only the beginning.

He sat in the theatre dressing room and remembered how he kept on laughing at himself down the roads of his life and through all the years. Bleak memories of his street shuffling days in Chicago, New York and Baltimore filled his head; those days spent playing strip joints and steamy raw bars for a few dollars and beer and cold cuts. Then memory blended and merged into the salad days in the Catskills, playing the circuit of rich Jews who came to hear themselves and

their heritage mocked to the tune of a \$5 cover. Briefly he felt again the sweet warmth of the New York night and smelled the rich pine air and the powdered and perfumed ladies who provided him a brief respite from the agony of his own crucifixion.

That night at Benjamin's, the most chic of the chic Catskill resorts. He was sitting at the bar after his 10 o'clock show, soaking up a few drinks before bed. The old man approached him quietly, with a certain restraint and dignity about him.

"Good evening, my son," he said.

"Hi. How ya doing?" Jackie said.

"I saw your show just now." the old man looked at Jackie with an intense, searching look in his eyes.

Jackie said nothing. He always felt uncomfortable with fans, especially Jewish ones. They invariably came up to him and, wringing his hand, gushed over him; "Say, that bit with the Jew and the Mick. That was really funny." "No, what killed me was the one about why we always go to temple on Saturday and not Sunday like the goyim. Whew! I about split my side." And then he would receive the usual invitation home for a "good Kosher meal" and an invitation to meet some pimply kid, "a good Jewish girl."

But this old man was different. He didn't gush, he just stood there for a few minutes and looked at Jackie. Jackie grew increasingly uncomfortable under his rigid scrutiny. Finally, he spoke to break the silence.

"How'd you like the show?"

The old man continued to look at him, saying nothing. Jackie shifted nervously on his stool, looked away, but then returned his gaze to the old man. The old man took his hand, and placing it on Jackie's shoulder began to speak.

"You must be a very lonely man, to hate yourself so. But I fear your hatred is not limited to just yourself. You hate a whole people, a whole nation. To hate yourself for what you are is stupid. To hate others for what they are is stupider still. Remember this, Jackie." and he turned to walk off. A sudden thought occurred to Jackie, and he asked

"Are you a rabbi?"

The old man turned around and looked at Jackie again without saying anything. Then he turned and left the bar without looking back. Jackie lit a cigarette and thought over the old man's words.

And he then saw the decline and fall and the days of steady dissolution--the marriage, divorce, finally the pills and booze. He remembered those nights when he just couldn't go on for all the alcohol and junk needed for him to face those people once again and say all those things he never really got accustomed to saying.

He remembered those shows when he would come on stage confidently and launch into his first routine, only to find the image of the old man in front of him--right there in the front row. And again and again he found himself choking on his words as they came pouring out of his mouth.

And he sat and watched as the audiences grew smaller and smaller until they practically stopped coming altogether. He remembered the pain and the countless series of shiny suits and microphones in smaller and greasier cafes and the endless number of audiences all come to laugh at the young Jew boy crying in the wilderness of his life.

He saw clearly in his mind's eye that time in Philadelphia when he broke down and cried on stage and had to be taken away amidst great heaving sobs and "I can't, I can't, I can't" on his lips. The days of treatment and rest followed and those days when he would sit in dim cafe nights and wonder who he was and where he was going to. And he saw in the distorted mirror reflection the end result of 32 years of a life wasted in self-hate and in incessant need to cry out his anguish on stage for an hour's worth of love.

iii

"You all right, kid?" Jackie smiled weakly as he came through the bathroom door. "Sure, yeah," he said.

"It's just nerves, Jackie. Hell, even the biggest get nerves before a big shoe. Right?" "Yeah, Abe. Just nerves. I'll be okay in a few minutes." he said. "Show time in ten minutes," Abe said and left the room.

Jackie sat down on his dressing chair to stop the trembling. He looked at himself in the mirror for the last time, checking his appearance with the mechanical precision bred into him through years of show business. He looked weak and fragile. Glancing at the bouquet of flowers and the telegram from Abe, he drew himself up and walked out the door.

"Ladies and gentlemen. The star of tonight's show is one of the top comics in show business today. I'm sure you are all familiar with his name: it's practically a household word." Jackie listened backstage, hands gripping tightly to keep the terror hidden. "This is his first appearance in this lovely city, so let's give him a real hometown welcome. Here he is, Jackie Lomax!"

Jackie stepped out onto the stage to a weak rendition of "Happy Days Are Here Again." He reached out for the microphone and gripped it tightly. He licked his lips and stared in a quiet frenzy at the crowd silently waiting for something to happen. He heard himself begin to speak.

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen." A silence. "It's really great to be here in your beautiful community." A silence. "I understand that the muggers around here all have four legs and whiskers. But seriously, I didn't know this was a theatre. I came here thinking this was a methadon clinic." The crowd began to move nervously, as if a single thought motivated them.

"This is a typical community in a big city," he went on. "First the Irish lived here, then the Germans, then the Puerto Ricans, now the blacks. It's the only place I know where you can get a bowl of Irish stew made with sauerkraut, rum, and collard greens." The footlights burned into his eyes and he felt the involuntary tears begin to well up. He went on in a faster voice, fearing the silences and fearing even more the talk that filled them. He felt himself losing control as the first

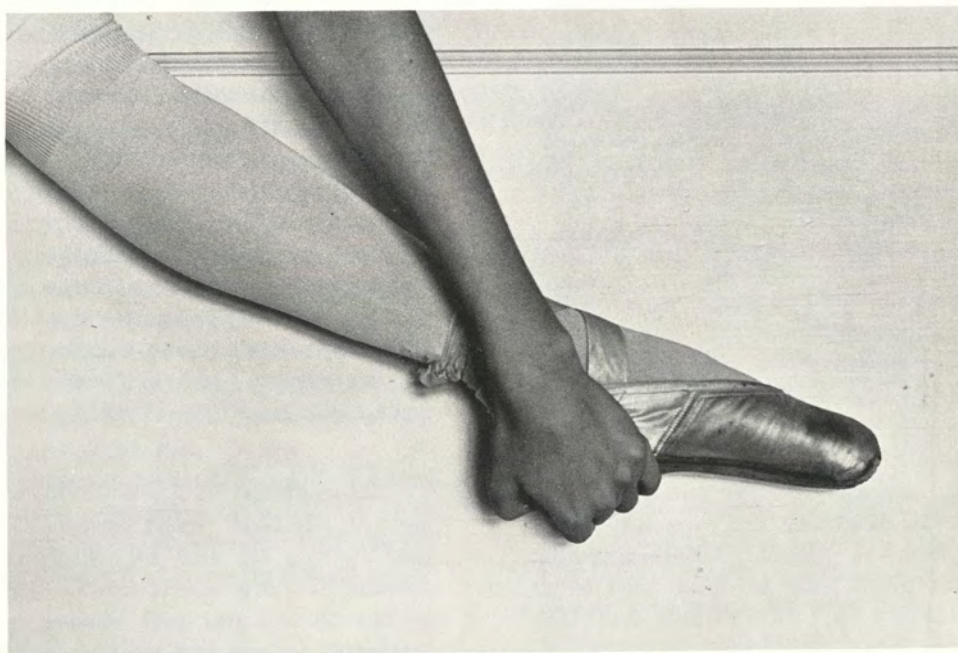
customers began to leave with backwards, uncomprehending glances at the frail young man lost in the white spotlight. More and more began to leave their seats and shuffle towards the exit, leaving the comic to face the sparsely-populated audience alone.

Jackie faltered in his steady stream of talk. He saw himself once again facing the fists and fury of his childhood and his wild imaginative attempts to escape his fate. And the black dismal theatre was cold once more as it screamed at him jewjewjew and ham-fists slapped at him once again through the cold, dark air. He felt the need to escape--to flee as he had fled from Bradshaw, from all the other audiences now merged into one screaming, hateful monster, from himself. He heard himself begin again, "I wanna tell you something funny about Jews. . ." and stop. He felt himself looking about the place in a dream, unconsciously counting the faces and looking for a receptive one. He said nothing.

Abe hurried on stage. "Let's hear it for a great trooper, folks. He's a little tired, having just come in from a massive tour of Europe where he played for the crown heads in seven countries! C'mon now! Let's hear it for Jackie Lomax!"

iv

Jackie stood in the doorway and watched the women ply their trade across the street. A wind had sprung up and was flinging a cold drizzle against his face and hands. He turned up the collar of his trenchcoat and stuffed his hands in his pockets. Across the street the whores had taken refuge under awnings and storefronts while the police sat safe and warm in their cars. He watched the women for a while until the rain grew harder and colder. Then he stepped from the doorway and crossed in front of the theatre with its freshly painted marquee "Jackie Lomax Returns" and rounded the corner of the building. As he passed the stage door he stopped to take a last look at the place. From the downspout on the side of the building he heard the laughter of the rain as it gurgled and splashed on the pavement. He smiled and walked on.





THE CHRYSALIS
1974-75
presents

SOLO FOR JULIE . . . MICHAEL FINLAYSON

33 $\frac{1}{3}$
RPM

PLACE
COIN HERE IF
SOUNDSHEET
SLIPS

MICHAEL FINLAYSON - acoustic guitar, chimes, drums
STANLEY WHITAKER - electric guitar
RAY FARRARA - alto sax
KENT KROTZER - flugelhorn, recorder
JAMIE AYRES - bass

MFD. IN U.S.A. BY 47755
EATON
SOUNDSHEETS DEERFIELD, ILL.

DON'T BE A SQUARE
about next year's Bi-
centennial. The Chrystalis
is planning a special issue
to integrate the Madison
bygone era with the new
1976 era. Plan on creat-
ing something squarish
or not, and help celebrate!
DON'T BE A SQUARE